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PRINT NETWORKS AND YOUTH INFORMATION CULTURE: YOUNG PEOPLE, AMATEUR PUBLISHING, AND CHILDREN'S PERIODICALS, 1867–1890

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Thousands of young people throughout the 1870s and 1880s participated in the production of amateur newspapers and actively developed print networks to facilitate communication and the circulation of information among geographically dispersed peers, most of whom they had never met and would never meet in person. These young readers were not content merely to inhabit, as individual readers, the spaces created for them by professional publishers, editors, and authors in an expanding children's market in the late nineteenth century, nor did they limit their interactions to those expected and encouraged by editors in the pages of children's magazines and weekly story papers. These young amateur journalists sought to establish and expand peer social and information networks through and beyond the boundaries of the spaces created for them in children's periodicals. This dissertation examines how these amateur print networks were established and maintained, as well as their multifaceted relationships with children's magazines and weekly story papers. It also explores these social and information networks, along with amateur practices regarding documentation, dissemination, collection, and preservation, as indicators of a late nineteenth century youth information culture.

To my parents, who set me on this path.

To my younger brother, who earned a PhD first and made quitting unthinkable.

To Richard, who endured the consecutive production of two dissertations — his, then mine —

which is at least one more than anyone should ever have to endure.

And to Hazel, who entered the world near the beginning of this process —

such small, exquisite chaos.

Finally, to Molly, who left the world near the end of this process —

you are missed.

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CHAPTER 1: PRINT NETWORKS AND YOUTH INFORMATION CULTURE: AN INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 "A Very Nice Little Paper": The *Lake Forest* (Illinois) *Gem*, 1867

The inaugural issue of the *Lake Forest* (Illinois) *Gem* appeared June 1, 1867.[1] This four-page, two-column, monthly newspaper, edited by Wells C. Lake and William J. Fabian, claims to be the "first printed periodical of this city," a claim repeated in William Arpee's 1963 history of Lake Forest, Illinois. According to Arpee, "[The editors] set up a little printing press in the back of David Lake's grounds, across the street from the [Lake Forest] Academy building, and published monthly missives."[2] The first number of the *Gem* contains original fiction, jokes and anecdotes, local news, puzzles, an updated railroad timetable, and advertisements for local businesses. It also includes a note signed "L. M. J." (presumably the initials of Lewis M. Johnson, principal of Lake Forest Academy from 1864 to 1868[3]), which declares, "We are glad to welcome into our rural home the first number of the 'Lake Forest Gem.' It bespeaks an enterprise among our Lake Forest boys which is very commendable. We have long needed a paper to make known to our community items of news, and interests and thrilling events which are daily transpiring." Additionally, the first issue of the *Lake Forest Gem* contains poorly printed advertisements for two children's periodicals, *The Little Corporal* (Chicago) and *Oliver Optic's Magazine: Our Boys and Girls* (Boston). The *Gem* cost twenty-five cents for a six-month subscription or five cents per issue.

[1] "*Lake Forest Gem*, Lake Forest, Illinois. Monthly for six issues, 1867, and published by Wells C. Lake and William J. Fabian," Digital Collections - Lake Forest College, accessed April 28, 2015, http://collections.lakeforest.edu/items/show/6680. For additional information on the *Lake Forest Gem* and its editors, see "Lake Forest Gem, 1867," *Collections Cameo* (blog), Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Historical Society, November 2013, accessed January 30, 2017, http://www.lflbhistory.org/research-collections-cameo.
[2] Edward Arpee, *Lake Forest, Illinois: History and Reminiscences, 1861–1961* ([Lake Forest, IL]: Rotary Club of Lake Forest, 1963), 81, http://hdl.handle.net/10111/UIUCOCA:lakeforestillino00arpe.
[3] Arpee, *Lake Forest*, 271.

This modest effort did not go unnoticed. The editorial column of the second number of the *Gem* (July 1867) proclaims, "We feel much indebted to the Waukegan [Illinois] *Gazette* for their favorable notice of our enterprise…. Many thanks for generous offer of aid and counsel." The editorial column of the September 1867 issue of the *Gem* includes a similar expression of gratitude for a notice in the *Lake County* (Illinois) *Patriot*. However, these notices from local newspapers were not the most prominent the *Gem* received. The *Lake Forest Gem* is mentioned favorably, on more than one occasion, in the pages of *Oliver Optic's Magazine: Our Boys and Girls*, which had thousands of subscribers and was edited by popular children's author "Oliver Optic" (pseudonym of William T. Adams) for Boston publisher Lee and Shepard. In the September 7, 1867, issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, the following appears: "The 'Lake Forest Gem,' whereof Wells O. [*sic*] Lake and William J. Fabian are the proprietors, is a very nice little paper."[4] In the November 2, 1867, issue, the *Gem* receives more praise: "The 'Lake Forest Gem' is a Liliputian [*sic*] sheet from Illinois, which displays much sound judgment, as it speaks in the highest terms of Our Boys and Girls."[5] The *Gem* is mentioned again in the November 9, 1867, issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, when one of Fabian's rebuses was accepted for its "Head Work" (puzzles) department: "W.J.F., the enterprising proprietor of the Lake Forest Gem, Lake Forest, Ill., 'prizes our Magazine above all others.' Such commendation from the discriminating pen of an editor cannot but encourage us to persevere."[6] These mentions in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* by one of the country's most popular authors raised the profile of the small, locally focused *Lake Forest Gem* and its editors, Lake and Fabian, among young readers nationally. At least one reader wrote to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* asking for more information about the *Gem.*[7]

[4] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, September 7, 1867, 471.
[5] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, November 2, 1867, 599.
[6] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, November 9, 1867, 616.
[7] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, October 5, 1867, 535.

As discussed in chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation, a large number of these kinds of queries led Adams to establish a "Wish Correspondents" department in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* to facilitate connections among readers, which was particularly useful to those interested in amateur journalism.

By the time the last two mentions of the *Gem* appeared in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in November 1867, the paper had already ceased publication. An editorial in its sixth and final number (November 1, 1867) announces the paper's suspension due to "pressing *School* duties" [emphasis in original]: "Some of our subscribers may not be aware that our Senior editor is but 15, and our junior editor is but 13 years of age, and neither having ever set up a type before undertaking the publication of this paper. We have done the best we could, and leave it to our friends to say whether the enterprise should be called a success[.] We are proud to believe that the Gem has at least an honerable [*sic*] history." The final issue also includes the following notice: "The Gem Job Printing Office will hereafter execute all kinds of printing in the neatest style, and cheaper than others." It appears that while the young men had abandoned the unprofitable work associated with amateur newspaper production, they planned to continue engaging in the potentially profitable work of job printing to occupy their out-of-school hours.

This dissertation begins with the extended example of the *Lake Forest Gem* for two reasons. First, the brief existence of the *Gem* coincides with the first year of the period covered by this dissertation, 1867. The year 1867 is significant to this dissertation because it is when Boston publisher Lee and Shepard launched *Oliver Optic's Magazine* (1867–1875), with Oliver Optic (William T. Adams) at the helm, and also when B. O. Woods and W. S. Tuttle patented a small clamshell printing press that became the Novelty Press,[8] the first of a number of relatively compact and inexpensive printing presses that were marketed throughout this period to parents

[8] Elizabeth Harris, *The Boy and His Press* ([Washington, D.C.]: Smithsonian Institution, 1992), 27.

and their children. *Oliver Optic's Magazine* makes an interesting case study given the popularity of Adams's adventure novels, which were marketed primarily to boys in their teens but widely read; Adams's relentless but savvy commercialism (note how two of the three mentions of the *Gem* in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* promote the latter as much as or more than the former); his strong editorial and creative hand in the magazine; and the evidence of reader questions, requests, and complaints — all of which elucidate expectations for what young people should have known, what interests they should have cultivated, and how they should have behaved, while at the same time highlighting tensions between those expectations and young readers' interests and desires, principal among them the desire to build or extend peer networks, local and long distance. *Oliver Optic's Magazine* played an important role in the early establishment of exchange networks within amateurdom, and Adams is referenced extensively within amateur histories as a strong and influential supporter of amateur journalism. With the introduction of the Novelty Press and similar presses after 1867, hundreds of young people, mostly boys, set up "printing offices" over the next two decades — in their homes, in outbuildings, in corners of established businesses — where they printed amateur newspapers and books that were then circulated locally and through the mail, reaching young people around the country. Many press owners, like *Gem* editors Lake and Fabian, also engaged in job printing (or at least advertised themselves as job printers) within amateurdom and without, in an effort to earn money. While not all participants in amateurdom owned or operated small printing presses, these presses, in conjunction with other factors, helped to transform what had been primarily a local practice[9] — the creation of newspapers, often handwritten, in the home by children and young people — into

[9] This is discussed further in ch. 4. For more information on newspapers produced by children and young people in the antebellum period, see Howard P. Chudacoff, *Children at Play: An American History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 56, and Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, *Everyday Ideas: Socioliterary Experience Among Antebellum New Englanders* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 56.

what media scholar Henry Jenkins has referred to as the origin of youth participatory culture in the United States.[10]

The second reason that a discussion of the *Lake Forest Gem* begins this dissertation is that this amateur paper highlights many of the elements that subsequent chapters explore. First, like most papers affiliated with amateur journalism from 1867 throughout the 1880s, the *Gem* was the result of self-directed activity carried out by white, teenage boys from comfortable homes, some of whom, like Lake and Fabian, were students at the time, and some of whom were not.[11] Second, the editors of the *Gem* were familiar with children's magazines, and their relationship with *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, in particular, highlights some of the dynamics between young people as both consumers and producers of periodicals. Third, the *Gem* demonstrates the tensions in amateur newspapers between local and non-local content, content focused externally and internally with respect to amateur journalism, as well as between models of subscription and exchange. Finally, the *Gem*, like the majority of amateur papers, folded after only a few months, raising questions about the nature of amateur journalism, youth culture, and the agency of youth in this context.

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[10] Henry Jenkins, "Participatory Culture and Civic Engagement," YouTube video, 7:35, posted by DMLResearchHub, August 4, 2011, accessed January 31, 2017, https://youtu.be/ZgZ4ph3dSmY.

[11] It is important to note that while a few amateur newspapers in the amateur newspaper collection at the American Antiquarian Society appear to have functioned as student newspapers under the auspices of a particular school, the vast majority of amateur newspapers that affiliated themselves with amateur journalism in this period were not "student newspapers" of the type that became popular in the twentieth century and have continued in many American high schools in some form into the twenty-first century. In this dissertation, a newspaper published between 1867 and 1890 is "affiliated" with amateur journalism if it does the following: notices amateur newspapers, lists exchanges with amateur newspapers, and/or discusses amateurdom or amateur press association politics. For information on the history of student newspapers, see Wayne Brasler and Logan H. Aimone, "The Saga of the High School Press," August 2010, accessed January 29, 2016, http://studentpress.journ.umn.edu/nspa/pdf/wheel_history-of-scholastic-newspapers.pdf. Originally appeared in Logan Aimone, *Newspaper Guidebook* (Minneapolis, MN: National Scholastic Press Association, 2009). For the important role high school newspapers and newspaper exchanges played in developing a high-school oriented peer culture in the United States in the 1890s, see Reed Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood: The Origins of the High School and Social Mobility in an American Suburb* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 123–25. For the roles that high school newspapers played for girls and in shaping gender relations between students in the same period, see Jane H. Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls: The Victorian Origins of American Girlhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 222–60.

Amateur journalists Lake and Fabian were among hundreds of young people[12] who participated in the production of amateur newspapers in the United States in the period from 1867 to 1890. The papers they created not only circulated locally, but also widely through the mail to other amateurs and interested youth. Young people who lived in established publishing centers — New York, Philadelphia, and Boston — regularly exchanged papers not only with young people who lived in cities such as Cincinnati, Chicago, San Francisco, Baltimore, and New Orleans, but also with young people who resided in smaller towns such as Hawkinsville, Florida; Batesville, Arkansas; Paris, Kentucky; and Bellefontaine, Ohio.[13] The *Lake Forest Gem*, for instance, not only notices and advertises other professional and amateur papers, but also lists several as exchanges, including *The Echo* (Chelsea, Massachusetts), *Merry & Wise* (New York City), *The Monthly Miscellany* (North Stratford, New Hampshire), and *The Nutshell*, which is described as "a pretty little sheet, published fortnightly in Portland" (no state is indicated).[14] Exchanges were fundamental to amateur journalism, which historian Paula Petrik has described as "a mass culture for teenagers who shared the experience of reading the same stories and debating the same issues."[15] As discussed in chapter 7, these exchange networks served multiple functions for the amateurs who participated in them, all of which contributed to a peer-oriented

[12] Most of the active amateur journalists during this period were between the ages of thirteen and nineteen, though some were younger and many were in their early twenties. Amateurdom as a community tended to discourage participation at either end of the age spectrum, particularly in the 1870s, foregrounding their identities as youth and their responsibilities as representatives of "Young America" (mostly white, Protestant, male, and aligned with emerging middle-class values). Amateurs are generally referred to in this dissertation as "young people," rather than as "teenagers," "adolescents," or "young adults." These latter terms are associated in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with certain normative developmental models that had not yet come to dominate popular thought in the late nineteenth century. "Young people" is also used to differentiate amateurs from "children," as most amateurs identified as neither children nor adults.

[13] For instance, the American Antiquarian Society holds issues of the following amateur newspapers in its collection: *Boys' Delight* (Hawkinsville, FL),1879; *Amateur Banner* (Batesville, AR), 1884; *Elucidator* (Paris, KY), 1879; and *Boys' Banner* (Bellefontaine, OH), 1877.

[14] *Lake Forest Gem*, Our Exchanges, October 1, 1867; *Lake Forest Gem*, Our Exchanges, August 1, 1867.

[15] Paula Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and Adolescence, 1870–1886," in *Small Worlds: Children & Adolescents in America, 1850–1950,* eds. Elliot West and Paula Petrik (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 127.

youth culture in the decades after the American Civil War. Amateur newspapers coexisted with and were influenced by contemporary books and magazines produced *for* young people, and amateurs were exposed to and also presented in their own publications a range of ideas about what it meant to be a young person and to represent "Young America" in the last third of the nineteenth century.[16]

1.2 Amateur Journalism and Youth, 1867–1890

Amateurdom (or "the Dom," as it was affectionately referred to by many amateur journalists) in the years after 1867 was made up of young people from around the country who interacted with one another primarily through amateur newspaper exchange and often through participation in local, state, regional, and national amateur press associations (APAs) that were initiated and directed by young people. Amateurdom prided itself in print on the youth of its participants in this period. The names of editors are often followed by their ages on the mastheads of amateur papers, and amateur directories published during the same period frequently include the ages of amateurs along with their names, pseudonyms, addresses, affiliated papers, and roles (editor, author, printer, etc.). Valedictories in amateur newspapers often explain that college, work, or marriage necessitates suspension of publication. For instance, the valedictory in *The Amateur Era* cites the editor's need to focus on learning his trade, and also

[16] The phrase "Young America" was not uncommon within amateurdom: one of the most popular printing presses used by young amateurs in this period was called the Young America, and several amateur newspapers from the period, including many held in the American Antiquarian Society amateur newspaper collection, are titled *Young America*, *Young American*, or *American Youth*. Amateur journalism itself was often cited in this period as emblematic of both the enterprise and vanity of "Young America." For a list of amateur newspapers in the AAS collection, see http://www.americanantiquarian.org/amateurnews.htm. For a discussion of "Young America" and amateur journalists, see ch. 2. Details on Young America presses and the Young America Press Company can be found in Elizabeth M. Harris, *Personal Impressions: The Small Printing Press in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: David R. Godine, 2004), 183.

on “the more important — Manhood.”[17] The young people who participated in amateurdom so closely identified it with youth that the term “amateur” itself in this context implied youth through the 1870s and into the 1880s. Jessica Isaac notes this, arguing:

> By re-defining the term “amateur,” the amateur journalists conjured up a life trajectory that assumed that entry into the professional work force accompanied entry into adulthood. To say that one is now an amateur because one is not old enough to be a professional imagines the structure of a work life according to age in a particular and relatively new way.[18]

The age of participants became a source of friction within amateurdom. Amateurs routinely “retired” or “fossilized” (a term commonly used within amateurdom), and though they might become active again at different points through their teenage years and even into their early twenties, by the time they left their teens, most — but not all — had ceased publication of papers. Editorial pages of amateur papers routinely complained about the presence of “fossils” in the ranks of amateur press associations from about the mid-1870s on (often tied to claims that these “fossils” reemerged solely to influence the outcome of APA elections), and older amateurs “were almost entirely driven to the wall” in 1878, according to Thomas G. Harrison, by what he refers to as the “second generation” of amateur journalists.[19] However, the character of

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[17] “Valedictory,” *Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), June–August 1877.

[18] Jessica Isaac, “Youthful Enterprises: Amateur Newspapers and the Pre-History of Adolescence, 1867–1883,” *American Periodicals* 22, no. 2 (2012): 162, doi:10.1353/amp.2012.0015. The period covered by Isaac here ends in 1883; however, by the late 1880s, as this dissertation argues in ch. 6, the term “amateur” in this context was no longer synonymous with “youth.” Instead it came to connote, more generally, “not professional,” though both young people and aspiring professionals continued to participate alongside adults who had no aspirations with regard to journalistic or literary careers, and in tandem with increasingly organized (adult) former amateurs who held reunions and became the nostalgic face of amateurdom’s heyday in the professional press. Even with this shift in meaning of the term “amateur” in the context of amateur journalism in the late 1880s, Isaac’s argument about a relatively new understanding of the relationship between age and entry into the workforce stands, particularly as age-grading of schools became the norm and high school attendance became more widespread and prolonged in the United States.

[19] Thomas G. Harrison, *The Career and Reminiscences of an Amateur Journalist and a History of Amateur Journalism* (Indianapolis: Thos. G. Harrison, publisher & printer, 1883), [57], https://books.google.com/books?id=dDNAAAAAYAAJ.

amateurdom gradually shifted, even as active amateurs lamented the decline in youth involvement. By 1890, the last year covered by this dissertation, amateur newspaper *The Drift* (Ludington, Michigan) could argue, "[I]f the Napa [the National Amateur Press Association] had more young kids and less old fossils, it would show more life."[20] The bibliography "The Periodical Press of Buffalo, 1811–1915" includes a discussion of amateur journalism, claiming that after 1892, "the craze subsided, and most of the papers and magazines soon disappeared." By 1915, amateur newspaper creation among young people was not "particularly popular."[21] For most of the period covered by this dissertation, however, amateurdom defined itself primarily as a youth endeavor. It also served as an exemplar of "Young America" among professional editors, who highlighted the precocity, enthusiasm, and "enterprising" spirit of amateur journalists, even as they cautioned the "boy editors" against vanity and attempted to police their reading, writing, and behavior. The ambivalence of children's magazine editors, in particular, toward amateur journalism is discussed in subsequent chapters.

While the recreational production of books and newspapers by children in the United States can be traced at least to the early decades of the nineteenth century,[22] the phenomenon that came to be known among most participants and observers as "amateur journalism" spread among

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[20] *The Drift* (Ludington, MI), Exchange Comments, April 1890, HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015071438413.

[21] Frank H. Severance, comp., "The Periodical Press of Buffalo, 1811–1915," ed. Frank Severance, *Publications of the Buffalo Historical Society* (Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1915), 192, https://books.google.com/books?id=Hk8_AQAAMAAJ.

[22] One well-known example, undoubtedly due to its editor's subsequent recognition as an author, is Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Spectator* (seven issues, handwritten, August–September 1820), begun when Hawthorne was sixteen years old. See James Forrest, Carrie Ives Schluter, Christy Sorensen (producers), *Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Early Years*, interactive exhibit, from the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum, 2004, http://www.pem.org/sites/hawthorne/#. However, within amateurdom, *The Juvenile Port-Folio and Miscellany* (Philadelphia), edited by Thomas Gray Condie, Jr., launched as a weekly in 1812 when the editor was fifteen years old, is referenced in several amateur histories as the first amateur newspaper, and Condie as "the father of amateur journalism." See, for example, Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc., 1957), 6–7.

young readers in the 1870s.[23] This spread was due in part to the introduction in 1867 of the Novelty Press, a small printing press that sold for fifteen to fifty dollars. The Novelty Press was quickly followed by a number of imitators, offering a variety of models that sold for as little as three dollars. Elizabeth Harris, who has written extensively about nineteenth-century small presses, notes that by 1875, manufacturer Kelsey & Co. could claim that young people owned the majority of its presses. She writes of Kelsey & Co. customers, "They were mostly young, white, and male, and were usually given the presses — or the money and blessing for them — by their fathers. They came from trade or professional families: doctors, lawyers, ministers, merchants, printers, and tailors figured high."[24] Not all participants in amateur journalism owned printing presses; some amateur editors paid to have their papers printed by either amateur job printers or professionals, and a much larger number of young people, particularly young white women, participated in amateur journalism as writers. So, while the availability of small printing presses after the Civil War is one factor in amateur journalism's widespread popularity among hundreds of young people in the United States, other factors for its success and slow fade are considered in subsequent chapters.

Due to a range of presses on the market offered at different price points or offered as premiums by children's magazines, the format of amateur newspapers varies widely; in fact, it was not uncommon for the same title to enlarge or reduce, for instance, when editors acquired a new press, changed printers, or needed to adjust the amount of time and money spent on the endeavor. However, the vast majority of amateur papers were small (in terms of both page size and number of pages) when compared with professional newspapers and story papers available

[23] Other phrases, the most suggestive of which are "embryo journalism" and the "mimic press," were used by amateurs to describe their activities, but these were far less common.

[24] Harris, *Boy and His Press*, 8. The presence of printers in this list is interesting, given the often-noted hostility in the printing trade directed at amateurs, or the "boy printers." For a broader view of nineteenth-century presses, see Harris, *Personal Impressions*.

at the time. For instance, *Post Boy* (Santa Cruz, CA) is 1 page, 2 columns, printed on a 3 X 5 postcard; *The Bull-Frog* (East Oakland, CA) is 4 pages, 2 x 3 inches; and the *Amateur Herald* (Wilmington, DE) is 4 pages, 8 columns, 4.5 x 5.75 inches.[25] The small size of amateur papers is often emphasized when professional newspapers and magazines mention amateur publications. For instance, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* references the size of the *Lake Forest Gem* in more than one notice. Amateur newspapers also frequently reference in some way the size of the amateur papers their editors received. The size of an amateur paper determined to some extent the network of exchange for that paper, and this, in turn, affected the level of participation by an amateur editor in the community. After the postal ruling of 1878 that denied amateur papers second-class mail status and the pound rates of postage that went with it (section 6.2), smaller papers were hard hit — and not all amateurs were sorry to see many of those papers suspend (section 5.4).

Estimating the number of amateur papers published in the United States from 1867 to 1890 is complicated by a number of factors: the brief run of most of the amateur papers (many never reached a second number, and the continuous publication of an amateur paper for more than a year was the exception rather than the rule); their sometimes irregular publication schedules (despite claims to be monthlies, for the most part); changes to the names of papers published by the same editors; the sale or transfer of papers to new editors, sometimes in other cities; the consolidation of papers that were not necessarily published in the same city; and the ephemeral nature of amateur newspapers. However, it is certain that the number of papers

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[25] Harry Ellsworth Dore, Frank Thibault, and Thomas H. Kerr, *The California Amateur's Directory for 1873* (San Francisco: Dore & Thibault, publishers, 1873), 19; E. William Gracey and Stan Oliner, *California and Nevada Amateur Directory for 1877* ([East Oakland, CA]: E. William Gracey, 1877), 20; H. H. Billany and C. A. Rudolph, *The Amateurs' Guide for 1875* (Wilmington, DE: Amateur Pub. Co., 1875), 57. Though they are the exception, some amateur papers rival professional papers in size; for instance, the *New England Star* (Ansonia, CT) is 8 pages, 32 columns, 21 x 28 inches. "Connecticut Amateur Directory," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), April 1877.

increased significantly during the early 1870s.[26] As one newspaper account declares, "The mania for editing had fairly seized Young America in 1870."[27] The *New York Times* reported in 1871 that a "new epidemic has spread among the boys of the country," stating that "in almost every State of the Union the amateur casuals have succeeded in establishing themselves."[28] Petrik estimates that at the height of amateur journalism, five hundred amateur papers were published per month, each with an average print run of five hundred.[29] Dennis Laurie calculates that in the decade after the introduction of the Novelty and similar presses, the number of amateur papers increased ten-fold from a hundred to a thousand.[30] More significant to this study than the absolute number of amateur titles is the fact that young amateur publishers established sophisticated networks of exchange across geographic space and created in their papers a forum for the sale and distribution of amateur books, including directories of young people involved in some aspect of amateur journalism, biographies and autobiographies of "prominent" amateurs, guides to amateur journalism, and histories of amateur journalism. These amateur directories and

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[26] For evidence of the number of amateur papers published based on substantial surviving collections, see Jessica Isaac, "Graphing Amateurdom," accessed January 31, 2017, http://jessicaisaac.net. The data suggest not only a spike in production in the early 1870s, but again in the late 1870s and early 1880s, with marked declines in surrounding years. Exchange columns, a regular feature in most amateur newspapers in the 1870s and 1880s, and amateur directories, guides, and histories published during the same period provide evidence of the existence of amateur papers that are not included in these large surviving collections. This dissertation merely notes evidence of additional papers based on exchange columns and directories, but makes no attempt to document them.

[27] George M. Huss [George James, pseud.], "Amateur Journalism," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 12, 1876, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. This article was reprinted in the first issue of *Amateur Printing Press: A Bi-Monthly for Young Printers* in July 1876, a publication of A.F. Wanner & Co., an "Amateur Printers' Furnishing House" in Chicago, IL. According to *Amateur Printing Press*, "George James" was a pseudonym used by amateur author George M. Huss. In 1877, Huss published a reprint of this article as a pamphlet entitled *A History of Amateur Journalism* (Tiffin, OH: Arthur J. Huss, 1877). While Huss's "insider" status might call into question his assessment of amateur journalism, it does reflect the sense among amateur journalists of their own history. Also, the focus of A.F. Wanner & Co. on amateur printers' needs and its investment in a publication for young amateur printers speak to the popularity of the phenomenon as well as the perceived potential for profit.

[28] "The Amateur Casuals in Journalism," *New York Times*, October 9, 1871, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Use of the term "amateur casuals" was not widespread; "amateur journalists" or "boy editors" were the most common terms.

[29] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 345n4.

[30] "Amateur Newspapers," American Antiquarian Society, 2004, accessed February 4, 2017, http://www.americanantiquarian.org/amateurnews.htm. From the same source, "The Amateur Newspaper collection at the American Antiquarian Society consists of tens of thousands of issues. There are more than 3,900 titles, from every state except Alaska and Hawaii."

histories are local, statewide, regional, national, and in some cases international in scope.[31] Amateur papers also created a forum through which amateurs could establish and perform public identities in print; make personal connections and form friendships (and sometimes rivalries) with people whom they had never met face to face; share information and knowledge; and collaborate with peers, both local and long distance.

Just as the size of amateur papers varies, the content varies as well. According to one amateur active in the mid-1870s: "During the first five years, or until 1874, the contents of amateur papers usually comprised a poem, a highly sensational Indian serial, evolved from the inner consciousness of some imaginary youth of dime-novel proclivities, a few editorials, a column of 'Amateur News,' in which was recorded the suspensions, consolidations, etc., of the contemporaneous sheets, and, sad to relate, the column was usually well filled. Next, but not least from a financial point of view was the advertising space, generally occupying the last page."[32] While variations exist in genre and format across amateur newspapers in a given period, certain dominant tendencies are identifiable at specific points. Unlike the early 1870s, for instance, the late 1870s witnessed what amateur Edward A. Oldham dubbed the "Editorial Era," during which "the first strictly editorial paper" was published and was "quickly imitated by scores of editors to whom the idea had hitherto seemed impracticable."[33] While one might attribute the appeal of the all-editorial format to these young men's desire to have their thoughts and ideas disseminated widely, attention must also be paid to the peculiarities of the amateur economy, which is discussed in chapter 5 of this dissertation. The all-editorial period also

[31] While references to Canadian amateurs and amateur publications are common, there are also a number of discussions about amateur journalism in England, which was, by all accounts, different enough in character and practice to make regular exchanges with young amateurs in North America difficult and frankly undesirable. At least one amateur publication attempts an international history of amateur journalism, which, in addition to the United States, Canada, and England, also includes sections on Hawaii, France, Brazil, Ireland, and Scotland. See Marvin Eames Stowe [Trojan, pseud.], *Universal History of Amateurdom* (Batavia, NY: Malcolm D. Mix, 1877).
[32] Huss, "Amateur Journalism."
[33] "Oldham's Oration," *Egyptian Star* (Cairo, IL), January 1880.

coincides with a particularly contentious period for the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA), as well as for local and regional APAs, during which APA elections generated impassioned editorials, vitriolic commentary, and convention-related content.[34] Not all amateurs were pleased with the shift toward an all-editorial format,[35] and that displeasure combined with other factors, including a change in postal law that directly and significantly impacted the cost of participation in amateur journalism for papers that could not secure classification as second-class matter, eventually shifted the content of amateur papers back toward the literary. However, the "literary" in the 1880s rejected in important ways the aesthetics and values that had been prevalent in amateur papers through the mid-1870s, represented by *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the weekly story papers. Amateur aesthetics and values in the 1880s aligned more with those of *St. Nicholas* magazine, which had established itself, under the editorial direction of Mary Mapes Dodge, as the premier children's literary periodical.

Some amateur papers attempted to secure a wide audience through the inclusion of serialized fiction, poetry, and editorials that covered topics well beyond issues specific to amateur journalism. Some kept a local audience in mind even while they exchanged papers with editors and sought subscribers around the country, and so included local advertising and bits of local news and gossip in their pages. Some focused exclusively on issues of interest to amateurdom, limiting their audience to amateurs and would-be recruits. Even in these cases, however, amateurs did not necessarily view themselves as writing solely for other amateurs. Amateur editors who aspired to professional literary or journalistic careers wrote for an implicit

[34] For instance, see Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 131–34, and Lara Langer Cohen, "The Emancipation of Boyhood," *Common-Place* 14, no. 1 (Fall 2013), http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/, for discussions of the "civil rights controversy" sparked by the election of African American amateur Herbert A. Clarke to the third vice-presidency of the National Amateur Press Association in 1879. See also Harrison, *Career and Reminiscences of an Amateur Journalist*, 56–58, for a discussion of "fossils" in NAPA in this period.

[35] For instance, in the June 15, 1879, issue of *The New England Amateur* (Marlborough, NH), C. E. Stone, president of the New England Amateur Journalists' Association (NEAJA), announced that the topic of debate at that year's NEAJA convention would be "That the editorial paper is detrimental to the advance of amateur journalism."

audience of adult professionals. In their papers, they frequently mentioned notices of their papers by professional publications; printed letters of encouragement received from prominent figures, such as newspaper editor Horace Greeley or magazine editor and author William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic"); or included blurbs from prominent literary or journalistic figures in advertisements for their papers. While participants in amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s argued about such things as the "model" amateur newspaper, their primary audience as amateurs, and the purpose of amateur journalism, those arguments often suggest external mediating factors and tensions regarding the status and role of youth in culture and society; the relationships between literary and commercial production; the relationships between amateur and professional authorship; and class, race, gender, and the limitations and possibilities of networked "fraternity" in the postbellum era. In any case, the creation of papers by young people was not the primarily local recreation that it had been in the decades prior to the Civil War. The networked nature of amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s allowed amateur papers to transcend geographic constraints, and these expansive print networks allowed young people to negotiate identities, values, and aspirations, and to gain information and knowledge specifically related to their status as youth in conversation with a large number of geographically dispersed, if largely homogeneous, peers.

1.3 Amateur Journalism in the Histories of Childhood and Print Culture

Hugh Cunningham and Peter Stearns have argued that writing histories of childhood is easier than writing histories of actual children.[36] Stearns suggests that this is in part because children "leave relatively few direct records." Childhood, on the other hand, "is in part defined

[36] Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (London: Longman, 1995), 1–2; Peter N. Stearns, *Childhood in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.

by adults and adult institutions."[37] While researching childhood might present fewer challenges to the historian than researching children, Joseph E. Illick's *American Childhoods*, as its plural title suggests, underscores the ways in which "ethnic, racial, class, and regional (not to mention gender) differences have led to a diversity of experiences during childhood."[38] Steven Mintz discusses additional challenges historians face when attempting to use age as a category of analysis:

> Age functions in differing ways in distinct social and cultural contexts and inevitably intersects with other categories of social organization and social difference. Historians' attentiveness to class, ethnicity, and gender shows how multiple definitions of age coexist in particular historical eras, even within a single society, and how these definitions can become the source of cultural conflict.[39]

Despite these challenges, the history of childhood has emerged as a field of study.[40]

Historians are not alone in grappling with the challenges of writing about children and childhood. Karen Sánchez-Eppler argues for the importance of including children and childhood in cultural studies: "It is not to pretend that children are fully independent actors, unhampered by the constraints of adult regulation and desire; but neither is it to see children as incapable of defining their own terms and grounds of power and meaning."[41] There has been a turn in children's literature studies as well toward a consideration of the reading and writing lives of

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[37] Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 2.
[38] Joseph E. Illick, *American Childhoods* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), [ix].
[39] Steven Mintz, "Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 92, doi: 10.1353/hcy.2008.0003.
[40] To support research in this area, the Society for the History of Childhood and Youth (http://shcyhome.org/) was founded in 2001, and *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* (http://shcyhome.org/publications/) was established in 2008.
[41] Karen Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), xxviii.

actual children. Marah Gubar notes that "because scholars presume that children's literature is an adult-run activity, the fascinating phenomenon of texts written by young people for young people has been excluded from serious study." As a consequence scholars have "cut young people out of the picture entirely: by their reckoning, nothing that actual children write, say, or do has any place in discussions of what constitutes children's literature."[42] She argues that scholars "can and should make room for more particular discussions of how young people have responded to individual texts."[43] Citing Gubar's work, Courtney Weikle-Mills argues that although "all ways of reaching historical readers are mediated," it is still important to investigate actual children's responses to their reading.[44] Kathleen McDowell also affirms the importance of including evidence of children's tastes and practices in histories of childhood and in children's literature studies. McDowell explores theoretical and practical considerations in using survey data collected by librarians, educators, and other adult professionals from children as historical evidence of children as readers.[45] There has also been an increase in scholarship that considers children's contributions to periodicals. For instance, Anna M. Redcay and Michelle H. Phillips have both explored the editor/child relationship in *St. Nicholas Magazine*; Sara Lindey has written about how boys used the space provided by story papers to "write themselves into adulthood"; and Alicia Brazeau explores literacy instruction through letter writing in *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion*.[46]

[42] Marah Gubar, "On Not Defining Children's Literature," *PMLA* 126, no. 1 (2011): 212, doi:10.1632/pmla.2011.126.1.209.
[43] Gubar, "On Not Defining Children's Literature," 215.
[44] Courtney Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens: Child Readers and the Limits of American Independence, 1640–1868* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 23.
[45] Kathleen McDowell, "Toward a History of Children as Readers, 1890–1930," *Book History* 12, no. 1 (2009): 240–65, doi:10.1353/bh.0.0021.
[46] Anna M. Redcay, "'Live to Learn and Learn to Live': The S*t. Nicholas* League and the Vocation of Childhood," *Children's Literature* 39 (2011): 58–84, doi:10.1353/chl.2011.0014; Michelle H. Phillips, "Along the 'Paragraphic Wires': Child-Adult Mediation in *St. Nicholas Magazine*," *Children's Literature* 37 (2009): 84–113, doi:10.1353/chl.0.0810; Sara Lindey, "Boys Write Back: Self-Education and Periodical Authorship in Late-Nineteenth-Century Story Papers," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 21, no.

It is not surprising in this context to see an increase in scholarship on amateur journalism since the publication of Petrik's "The Youngest Fourth Estate" in 1992. There, Petrik argues, "The issues taken up by the young [amateur] journalists capture young men and women in the mutually educative process of interpreting for themselves the complicated array of relationships in their society and reveal them in the act of exploring the possibilities of their own perceptions."[47] She supports this conclusion with two extended examples. In the first case she demonstrates how the fiction of one amateur, a regular correspondent to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, is a recasting of one of Oliver Optic's serialized fictions, with some significant differences. In the second example, she describes the controversy and ensuing debate over the election of African American amateur editor Herbert Clarke in 1879 to the office of NAPA third vice-president, and also recounts the struggle of young women amateurs to win full membership in the organization in the 1880s.[48] From these examples, she concludes that while the influence of children's authors is "pervasive" in amateur papers, the papers "also reveal a new set of values regarding money, athletic ability, and gender and suggest how both young men and women recast middle-class standards to shape the ideology of their own generation, especially ideas regarding race and gender."[49] Petrik views amateur journalism as exposing the limitations of histories of nineteenth-century childhood and adolescence that focus on socialization or structural changes because they fail to consider the agency of children and young people.

Petrik's work initially led me to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, which is discussed at length in chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation. Her argument regarding the need to consider the agency of young people helped me to formulate one of the questions that guided my dissertation research:

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1 (2011): 73, doi:10.1353/amp.2011.0005; Alicia Brazeau, "'I Must Have My Gossip with the Young Folks': Letter Writing and Literacy in *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2013): 159–76. doi:10.1353/chq.2013.0028.

[47] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 140.

[48] Petrik cites the year of Clarke's election as 1878, but other primary and secondary sources cite the year as 1879.

[49] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 125.

How did amateur newspaper production as a primarily local practice in the antebellum period develop into a networked practice of exchange among young people spanning the country in the 1870s? More recent scholarship acknowledges the importance of exchange networks to amateurdom but does not explore *how* these networks came to exist, though Isaac does suggest that children's periodicals in general supported peer-to-peer communication in this period.[50] This dissertation discusses mechanisms in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and other children's magazines and weekly story papers that enabled young people in the late 1860s and early 1870s to publicize their papers and seek peers in other parts of the country with whom they could exchange papers.

Like Petrik, Isaac also discusses amateur press associations in the context of the changing character of amateur journalism in the 1880s, concluding that changes to the postal code and other factors led to the abandonment of the "bombastic style" that had marked amateur newspapers in the 1870s, and ultimately signaled the end of amateurdom as a "youth public."[51] Lara Langer Cohen argues that amateur journalism "largely abandoned its experiment in teenage print culture in the 1880s and opened its doors to adults, including women."[52] This raises questions that are explored in chapter 6: Was amateurdom's drive toward greater stability and respect in the 1880s premised on breaking the identification of the term "amateur" with "youth," and on young people's subsequent erasure *as youth* from the practice (though individual young people continued to participate)? Did the transitory nature of youth preclude amateurdom's continuation as a youth-directed activity beyond a couple of "generations" of amateurs? Did young people lack sufficient agency to sustain amateurdom in the dual contexts of increased regulation of young people's lives, and, despite an often overlooked commercial orientation in

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[50] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 165. See also Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.
[51] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 175.
[52] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

amateurdom in the 1870s, a failure to integrate into the world of corporate literary production? According to Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, as literary production corporatized, it "crowded out the earlier hosts of amateur writers, petty publishers, and semi-independent distributors."[53] Amateur journalists' additional status as young people assured that even when their work appeared in professional periodicals in this period, it was explicitly marked in some way as *less-than* (appearing in an "amateur department" or "young contributors department"), thus denying young people avenues to professional status and commercial success.

While Petrik, Cohen, and Isaac center youth in their explorations of amateurdom, and at least in part discuss what amateurdom reveals about the developing concept of adolescence in the United States in the late nineteenth century and the roles that these young people played in shaping and performing this nascent "adolescence," Ann Fabian contextualizes amateur journalism in the history of professionalization. She argues that young people viewed amateur journalism "as a necessary stage on the route to a professional career. For them, the label 'amateur' meshed easily with the wider social trend toward professionalism."[54] She acknowledges that some amateurs "were surely just engaging in child's play," but their roles "were modeled on the actual culture of print professionalism."[55] Amateurs, Fabian argues, were not outside the market, nor were they "lovers of literature or refined gentlemen": "They were amateurs because they aspired to become professionals.... To be an amateur in this literary world was to be on its margins; these boys were on the margins not because they lacked talent or ambition but only because they were young."[56] This is supported by my observation, developed

[53] Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, *Literary Dollars and Social Sense: A People's History of the Mass Market Book* (New York: Routledge, 2005), xiv.
[54] Ann Fabian, "Amateur Authors," in *A History of the Book in America*, vol. 3, *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, eds. Scott E. Casper, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, and Michael Winship (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 412.
[55] Fabian, "Amateur Authors," 412.
[56] Fabian, "Amateur Authors," 415.

further in chapter 4, that work by young people appearing in professional children's publications in this period is explicitly marked as "amateur"; however, many active young amateurs did not aspire to literary or journalistic careers, which complicates the relationship of amateur journalism to print professionalism. Additional modes of participation in amateurdom to the two Fabian suggests — imitative play or future-oriented practice — are examined in a discussion of print networks in amateurdom in chapter 7. Fabian's work is useful in that in invites closer examination of how amateur journalism functioned with regard to "print professionalism," which has so far been underexplored in scholarship. The corporatization of literary production was still underway in the 1870s, which partially explains the shifting orientation of amateur journalism over the course of the 1870s and the 1880s. Viewing amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s *solely* through the lens of youth, given amateurs' conflation of the terms "amateur" and "youth," encourages a particular orientation toward professionalism that obscures some of the richer, more varied ways that amateur journalism operated within late nineteenth-century print culture in the United States.[57]

Petrik's history of amateur journalism compellingly articulates ways in which young amateurs were active participants in the shaping of values that differed from, but were compatible with, the dominant values of (adult) society in the 1870s and 1880s, while in "Playing at Class," Karen Sánchez-Eppler explores the cultural significance of toy presses. She demonstrates that in many children's books from that period, "it is the working child who is seen to embody play, and who hence teaches the middle class about fun." She draws particular attention to the ubiquitous figure of the newsboy, and argues that novelty presses "enabl[ed]

[57] Leon Jackson discusses antebellum authorial economies in terms of "embeddedness," an approach used to explore the amateur economy in ch. 5 of this dissertation. He argues, "[The concept of amateur authorship] offers literary historians almost no interpretive leverage. To call an author amateur is not to initiate a conversation about cultural economics but to shut one down: to say that, in essence, there is nothing to say." Leon Jackson, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 22.

well-to-do youth to play press laborers themselves."[58] In the context of urbanization and the prolonged period of middle-class childhood, which created significant opportunities for leisure for some children, she concludes, "If there are middle-class stakes in imagining the work of street children as a kind of play, they are tightly paired with a desire to recast middle-class play as a kind of work."[59] In both the figure of the mischievous newsboy and that of the middle-class child playing with a printing press, childhood is made to appear universally innocent and playful, masking the real labor of working-class children and naturalizing a set of learned behaviors for middle-class children. Cohen expands Sánchez-Eppler's argument about middle-class play as work in her discussion of the "ornamental unruliness" of amateur journalists: "Understanding the amateurs as taking on working-class identities illuminates the frequency with which they represent their hobby as *work*…. Moreover, it allows us to see that when they imagine themselves as rebels, they draw on a history of very real class conflict in America, a history in which laborers in the printing trades were often the most radical." Rebellion in this context becomes "a developmental trait — an innately teenage characteristic as temporary as it is endemic," presaging arguments that would be made in G. Stanley Hall's *Adolescence* (1904).[60] As is discussed in chapter 2, this tendency of relatively privileged boys to project themselves as oppressed and rebellious was not limited to amateurdom, or more specifically, to amateur printers; in this sense, amateur publications were participating in the discourse surrounding "Young America" also occurring in the professional press.

Victoria Ford Smith, drawing on the work of Gubar, also discusses toy presses in her exploration of collaboration between adults and children, both as represented in texts and in the

[58] Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States*, 154.
[59] Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States*, 170.
[60] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. See G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b4091807.

form of real-world collaborative literary production.[61] In tracing the history of these small presses, she discusses the differences between the marketing to adults and the marketing to children: "If the press was marketed to adults as a means to resist the collaborative nature of printing — to sever social relationships and gain artistic or financial independence — it was imagined to do the opposite for the young. Small press ventures were thought to acculturate boys by *building* relationships, many between adults and children that followed familiar intergenerational models."[62] Smith focuses on these presses as a means of acculturation for boys into the professional world of men through their contact with "those adults tasked with educating, managing, and nurturing children."[63] Situating the presses in the context of amateurdom, as this dissertation does, allows for a consideration of collaborative relationships between young people, local and long distance, through which they created their own works and participated in a variety of ways in the print culture of which they, their practices, and their productions were a part. It also highlights the ways in which the presses, in conjunction with other factors — including an increase in the number of children's magazines and story papers published in the same period — gave young men and women an opportunity to build social relationships with one another in ways that were less subject to direct adult supervision and intervention.

Cohen describes amateurdom as "not only a cultural underground but also a material one, with largely autonomous networks of production and distribution." She reconciles what she describes as the "derivative, moralistic, and monotonous" content of amateur papers with the popularity of amateur newspaper production in the 1870s and 1880s by arguing, "Instead of

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[61] Victoria Ford Smith, "Toy Presses and Treasure Maps: Robert Louis Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne as Collaborators," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 35 (Spring 2010): 29, doi: 10.1353/chq.0.1946.
[62] Smith, "Toy Presses and Treasure Maps," 31.
[63] Smith, "Toy Presses and Treasure Maps," 32.

creating an outlet for one's own thoughts, it appears that one started an amateur newspaper to join a community of other amateurs. This community is not just an *effect* of print, as has often been argued of other print cultures. Community is also the *cause* of print" [emphasis in original].[64] This dissertation explores Cohen's assertion further, situating amateur newspaper production in the context of long-standing localized practices, the desire of young readers in the years after the Civil War to participate in long-distance correspondence and association around shared interests, and in the expanding children's magazine market, which provided opportunities for peer connection, including among amateurs. In other words, the desire of young amateur journalists to form peer networks was not unique to that group, but rather part of a larger cultural moment that, in the case of amateurdom, found expression through print. Isaac suggests that amateur journalism can help to further map the depth and breadth of these late nineteenth-century peer-to-peer communications.[65] The explorations of the connections between amateurdom, children's magazines, and weekly story papers presented in this dissertation are participating in that larger project.

That the nature of amateurdom and its relationship to late nineteenth-century print culture was and is contested is evidenced by Isaac's characterization of amateurdom as a "public" and Cohen's characterization of it as a "counterpublic." Isaac argues, "By emphasizing their relationship to the concerns of the adult public sphere, Petrik neglects the amateurs' relationship to their own needs and desires at a historical moment that was putting particularly acute demands on their abilities to reconcile their ages and their identities." Isaac claims, drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser, that amateurdom represents a "strong public," in that its papers engaged in "forming opinions that then influenced the decisions made by the … APAs." Isaac articulates the

[64] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.
[65] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 165.

importance of this characterization: "Imagining Amateurdom as a public which came into existence because of the needs of teenagers allows us to understand it as a youth public that existed to define some of the terms through which the new age-based identities of teenagers would be constructed by young people themselves."[66] Cohen's characterization is equally dependent on amateurs' status as young people and their particular use of the term "amateur": "By equating 'amateur' with 'teenager,' amateurs posited teenagers as being by definition excluded from the world of letters. Indeed, the amateur press routinely presented itself as dissident and oppressed." She concludes that amateurdom is both a subculture, "that is, a group whose aesthetic practices depart from those of the dominant culture," and, drawing on Michael Warner's definition, a counterpublic "by its oppositional stance with regard to the public sphere and by its 'awareness of its subordinate status.'"[67] This dissertation argues through example that a co-construction of "youth" is occurring between amateurdom and the professional press, particularly around the notion of "Young America"; however, amateurs' sense of their subordinate status as citizens (and the resulting sense of injustice, despite their otherwise privileged status) does frame many discussions in amateur papers, in which white, middle-class boys cast themselves as, according to Cohen, "society's most victimized demographic."[68] As Warner argues, the people who make up counterpublics are not necessarily "*otherwise* dominated as subalterns" [emphasis in original], specifically citing some "youth-culture publics" as an example.[69] And, as in Isaac's investment in amateurdom as a youth public, Warner argues that participation in a counterpublic, "is one of the ways by which its members' identities are

[66] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 165–66. For a discussion of "strong publics," see Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text,* no. 25/26 (January 1, 1990): 74–77, doi:10.2307/466240.
[67] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. See also Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), especially 56–63 on counterpublics, and, in relation to Fraser's work, 114–24. Cohen quotes Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 119.
[68] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.
[69] Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 57.

formed and transformed."[70] This dissertation returns to the question of publics and counterpublics in chapter 6, considering amateurs' shifting "aesthetic practices" in the 1870s and 1880s, and in its concluding chapter, in the context of a discussion of youth information culture.[71]

One additional related element that this dissertation explores is the relationship between amateur journalism as a youth-culture public and children's magazines and weekly story papers. Children's literature in all its forms is often viewed as subordinate to "real" or "serious" [adult] literature, and the periodical form in literature is often viewed as subordinate to the book. The story paper, most of all, lacks status due to the methods used in its production, its wide distribution, its relative affordability, and its popularity among the working classes, women, and children. The segmentation of the literary marketplace was ramping up in the late nineteenth century in the United States, hardening lines between genres and attempting to constitute new readerships based on, among other things, age.[72] Amateur newspapers demonstrate wide familiarity and interaction with both children's monthly magazines and weekly story papers. In this context, some of the stylistic characteristics of amateur newspapers are not necessarily linked to practices in professional newspapers, or conversely to the rebelliousness associated with youth, but rather to practices in children's periodicals, specifically *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, which is discussed further in chapter 3. Editor William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic") was known to engage in long defenses of his character and his work even as he launched scathing personal attacks on his critics, including Louisa May Alcott, in the pages of the magazine he edited for

[70] Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 57.
[71] The concluding chapter also discusses Gitelman's conception of amateurdom as a "counterinstitution" rather than a counterpublic. Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), Kindle edition, 149.
[72] See Sarah Wadsworth, *In the Company of Books: Literature and Its "Classes" in Nineteenth-Century America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), and Sarah Wadsworth, "Louisa May Alcott, William T. Adams, and the Rise of Gender-Specific Series Books," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 25, no. 1 (2001): 17–46, doi:10.1353/uni.2001.0015.

young people. Also, Cohen's argument that amateurs "posited teenagers as being by definition excluded from the world of letters" raises several questions. First, how excluded did amateurs understand themselves to be from the "world of letters," when this world of letters is understood to include children's literature? Second, did amateurs have the agency to bring this exclusion-by-definition into being, or were they acknowledging exclusion from the non-children's "world of letters" due to the trifecta of their status as youth; their guilt-by-association with the rising class of children's literature, particularly children's periodicals; and their commercial orientation to the literary marketplace despite their amateur status? These questions are explored in chapters 4 and 5.

Finally, Cohen makes a compelling argument that amateur papers were "meant less to be read than to be made, exchanged, and collected." On the one hand, this argument asserts the centrality of the newspaper as material object to amateurdom; on the other hand, it empties the amateur paper of meaning *as a newspaper*. Cohen suggests that what amateurs produced was "less objects than feelings." The argument is connected with another Cohen makes regarding the emphasis within amateurdom on using print to describe the physical attributes of amateurs: "Rather than treating print as a technology of disembodiment, as we so often do, the amateurs insisted on visualizing one another's bodies."[73] She cites the inclusion in many amateur directories of information on amateurs' physical appearance as well as images of amateurs as examples of creating intimacy through print. This dissertation situates both the excessive documentation of physical appearance of amateurs as well as the significance of exchange and collection of amateur newspapers in the context of peer social networks in line with Cohen's arguments; however, in its concluding chapter, it also revisits the content of amateur newspapers

[73] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

— parts of which seem to have been read eagerly by amateurs — as evidence of a youth information culture in the late nineteenth century.

1.4 Overview of the Dissertation

Thousands of young people throughout the 1870s and 1880s actively developed networks through print to facilitate communication and the circulation of information among peers. These young people were not content to merely inhabit, as individual readers, the spaces created for them by professional publishers, editors, and authors in an expanding children's market in the late nineteenth century; they sought, through print, to establish peer networks beyond the boundaries of these spaces, communicating with one another about their reading, the world, and their readings of themselves in the world. These young readers collaborated in the production and circulation of amateur newspapers, developing an elaborate system of exchange and establishing formal associations from the local to the national level. Many who were not active participants in newspaper production were active readers of those productions. A study of these print networks — acknowledging the ways in which access and participation were shaped to a large extent by race, class, nationality, religion, and gender, and to a lesser extent by geography — can provide insight into how these young people negotiated identity, socialized with peers, and shaped a youth information culture in the late nineteenth century.

This dissertation is guided by three main questions. First, what are the relationships between the periodicals created by adults for young people, the periodicals created by young people for young people, and the wider print culture in the United States in the late nineteenth century? A study of the relationships between periodicals created *for* young people and those created *by* young people can contribute to conversations about changing notions of childhood

and young adulthood; the dynamics of the increasingly segmented children's literary marketplace; and the cultivation, negotiation, and reinterpretations of middle-class culture through print in the late nineteenth-century United States. This dissertation centers its discussion of nineteenth-century print culture around those young readers affiliated with amateurdom, a fairly homogeneous but geographically dispersed group, though it acknowledges the existence of other local print cultures.[74] Ample evidence exists that young amateur journalists were not only readers of, but also correspondents to, literary children's periodicals. This dissertation not only considers these relationships, but also explores the significance of weekly story papers to amateurs' reading and writing lives through debates carried out in amateur papers and traces in story papers themselves. Young readers of story papers, from both the middle and the working classes, submitted their work for publication to these "boys' weeklies" and posed questions and concerns as correspondents. Many young amateurs, particularly in the early 1870s, viewed the weekly story papers as professional venues for their work, even as they wrote for and/or edited amateur papers and corresponded with children's magazines, complicating an easy dichotomy between "amateur" and "professional." At the same time, some story papers highlighted amateur content, profiled amateur journalists, and provided space for advertisements by amateurs. Noting the amateur status of contributors and contributions, however, explicitly marked them as "not professional" in the context of professional publications.

Second, this dissertation research is guided by the following question: How did young people use print, both the children's periodicals created for them and the newspapers created by them, in the late nineteenth century to develop and maintain peer networks across geographic

[74] Carl Kaestle explains that local print cultures "involved traditions, values, experiences, practices, infrastructures, and ideologies that provided common purposes and understandings within certain groups of print producers and readers." Carl Kaestle, "Seeing the Sites: Readers, Publishers, and Local Print Cultures in 1880," in *A History of the Book in America*, vol. 4, *Print in Motion: The Expansion of Publishing and Reading in the United States, 1880–1940*, eds. Carl F. Kaestle and Janice A. Radway (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 25.

space, and what was the nature of those networks? One aspect that ties children's magazines, weekly story papers, and amateur newspapers together is young people's uses of them to develop and sustain peer social networks. Amateurs, wherever possible, sought like-minded correspondents through the pages of children's periodicals. They also compiled and printed dozens of directories — from those limited in scope to a single city to those attempting an international scope — to assist other amateurs in locating editors, printers, writers, and engravers to collaborate with on projects or to correspond with about shared interests. Finally, they not only cultivated pseudonymous public identities across print venues, but made the association of their print pseudonyms with their physical addresses a priority so that they would be findable by those in their peer networks. The networks established within amateurdom are noted in existing scholarship as mediums for the exchange of papers, but with the exception of recent work by Cohen, who argues that "amateurdom imagined its print networks as more intimate connections,"[75] attention has not yet been given to other ways in which these networks functioned.

While both children's literature publishing and amateur publishing were concentrated in the Northeast, children's periodicals had readerships of tens of thousands of young people from the West, Midwest, and South as well. Amateurdom, too, was made up of young people around the country who interacted with one another through amateur newspaper exchange and participation in state, regional, and national amateur associations. This dissertation considers how geographically dispersed young people established amateur print networks in part through the professional children's magazines they read, particularly *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. It also explores the richness of the social relationships formed through print and how these larger print networks functioned in relationship to the development of a youth information culture. These

[75] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

networks allowed young people to transcend the imagined communities, to use Benedict Anderson's phrase, cultivated through shared reading experiences that were orchestrated, mediated, and regulated by adults, into networks of actual young people.[76] These networks connected young people from different cities, towns, and regions; encouraged both local and long-distance collaboration; and created a space in which young amateurs could establish and perform editorial and authorial identities in print, as well as share information with peers on topics of interest to them. However, these networks of exchange were largely exclusive to white, formally educated, teenaged boys in families from or aspiring to the professional middle class. While some amateurs were actively exclusionary toward African Americans and women in particular, others were slightly more inclusive, though they, too, often tried to set limits on participation.[77] At the same time, the prospects of private or anonymous (or pseudonymous) communication between young people through the mail — especially between young men and women who were not acquainted in person — created anxiety among some adults. For instance, William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic"), in his capacity as editor of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, sustained an argument over several years with many of the magazine's subscribers about his refusal to publish the addresses of young women who wished to correspond with other young people who shared their interests, though he routinely published the addresses of young men. These kinds of limitations often forced young women to find other ways to form and sustain

[76] The concept of "imagined communities" was developed by Benedict Anderson with respect to the nation, which was, he argued "an imagined political community": "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 6.
[77] See Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 131–34, and Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/, for discussions of the "civil rights controversy" sparked by the election of African American amateur Herbert A. Clarke to the third vice-presidency of the National Amateur Press Association in 1879. See Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 134–40, for a discussion of women's participation in amateurdom.

geographically dispersed peer networks outside the exchange networks of amateur newspapers, even when they were active participants in amateurdom.

The third question guiding this dissertation research is the following: How did the uses of print by young people contribute to a youth information culture in the late nineteenth century, and how might this culture of information be characterized? Toni Weller defines "information culture" as both "cultural mediums of information dissemination and exchange," and "influencing culture through a broader sense of information as an increasingly important and recognized part of society."[78] Elsewhere, she emphasizes that ideas about what constitutes information have shifted over time; therefore, information must be "defined and understood in relation to the historical context."[79] One of the major undertakings of this dissertation is to explore the ways in which amateur print networks facilitated information exchange and helped to support a youth information culture among readers during the period 1867–1890. The understanding of what constituted information in this instance emerges primarily from an exploration of the content of children's periodicals, young people's correspondence with selected children's periodicals and story papers as reported in the magazines and story papers themselves, amateur publications produced by and circulated among young people in this period, and amateur practices of documentation, collection, and preservation. Within amateurdom, the sustained efforts to document current and past participation of young people and to recruit and orient young people through the compilation and publication of directories, guides, and histories; the constitutional laws and parliamentary procedures of amateur press associations; and the efforts of amateur editors to maintain comprehensive libraries of amateur papers, as evidenced

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[78] Toni Weller, conclusion to *Information History in the Modern World: Histories of the Information Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 200.
[79] Toni Weller, *Information History — an Introduction: Exploring an Emergent Field* (Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2008), 17–18.

not only by references to such efforts in amateur papers but also by the substantial number of ephemeral amateur papers that have survived into the twenty-first century, suggest a particular relationship with information made more interesting when understood in the context of youth defined as a transient and unproductive period of life.

This dissertation makes extensive use of the phrase "print culture," despite multiple meanings in use and compelling criticisms of the term.[80] A print culture approach encourages the study of all printed matter, regardless of format or purpose, including periodicals, popular materials, ephemera, and directories of the sort common among amateurs, and considers the social practices and relationships involved in its production and consumption. Leslie Howsam locates the appeal of the term "print culture" in that it "encapsulates the material nature of the printed word as well as its cultural context," and "privileges such ephemeral forms as newspapers and periodicals equally with the apparent solidity of bound volumes and accords advertisements as much attention as canonical texts."[81] As Christine Bold argues, the term "print" is "deliberately inclusive, crossing genres and media, refusing the boundaries and incipient hierarchies of terms such as 'fiction' or 'literature,' and recognizing that stories reside in the material qualities as well as written content of texts."[82] Amateur newspapers invite analysis of social relationships involved in their production, dissemination, and use, revealing a great deal about how a particular privileged group of young readers in the United States viewed

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[80] For instance, Lisa Gitelman rejects the term "print culture" as a "gaping catchall": "With science and the public sphere as its mutual cousins, print culture starts to seem related in scale to Western modernity itself and thus to jeopardize explanation in all of the same ways that concept does." What some scholars view as a framework to explore dynamic relationships and contextualize practices surrounding print production, circulation, and consumption that traditions in book history and literary history have obscured or largely ignored Gitelman rejects because it is "set loose from the very specific histories of printing, print publication, regulation, distribution, and circulation." Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 8–11.

[81] Leslie Howsam, *Old Books and New Histories: An Orientation to Studies in Book and Print Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), Kindle edition, 5.

[82] Christine Bold, introduction to *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 6, *US Popular Print Culture 1860–1920*, ed. Christine Bold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

their place in the world of late nineteenth century print, as well as the ways in which productions for and by young people intersected and overlapped. Amateur newspapers also blur the lines between terms often presented dichotomously: amateur and professional, literary and commercial, work and play, consumption and production. The extent to which this is a function of the status of amateurs as "youth" — itself an unstable category — is something this dissertation explores throughout its chapters.

Though the use of "print culture" is well established, it has been used in a number of distinct ways, four of which are elaborated usefully by Harold Love: "(1) a 'noetic world' or consciousness constructed through print; (2) the industrial relationships of book production and distribution; (3) a body of practices arising from the social relationships of reading and information management; and (4) a specialised field of study within the wider discipline of Communication."[83] This dissertation primarily concerns itself with "print culture" in the second and third senses identified by Love, as "a contexture of social and industrial relationships arising from, on one hand, the everyday activities of printing, publishing and distribution, and, on the other, the consumption of printed materials by their users."[84] Though defining "print culture" has been identified as a "seemingly intractable problem," and the term has been "used in a very loose and ill-defined fashion, often taken to mean nothing more than the presence of books or pamphlets in a society,"[85] in this dissertation, "print culture" is suited particularly well to explore the uses of periodicals by readers and the collaborative practices of amateur production and distribution in the contexts of ongoing professionalization and expansion of the market for

[83] Harold Love, "Early Modern Print Culture: Assessing the Models," *Parergon* 20, no. 1 (January 2003), 46, doi:10.1353/pgn.2003.0071.
[84] Love, "Early Modern Print Culture," 56.
[85] Jason McElligott and Eve Patten, introduction to *The Perils of Print Culture: Book, Print and Publishing History in Theory and Practice*, eds. Jason McElligott and Eve Patten (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 3, doi: 10.1057/9781137415325.

children's printed matter, including books, magazines, and story papers. It also allows for consideration of amateurs as job printers.[86]

The central primary sources for this project are amateur publications — papers, directories, guides, and histories — produced between 1867 and 1890. I also examined children's periodicals with letters sections and ties to amateur journalism (for instance, periodicals that advertise presses; offer presses as premiums; include content, fictional and factual, about amateur journalism; or provide space for amateur networking). *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and *St. Nicholas* are of particular interest due to their specific interactions with participants in amateurdom, which are elaborated on in subsequent chapters. I also sought weekly story papers that had identifiable ties to amateurdom (among subscribers, correspondents, and authors) and that regularly responded to correspondence from readers, or that were referred to by amateurs as examples of "sensational literature" or the "New York boys' weeklies." However, runs of story papers are exceedingly difficult to come by, and that limited this aspect of the research.[87] By limiting the children's periodicals and weekly story papers to those that (a) publish

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[86] Until recently, scholars have ignored job printers and job printing despite the important roles they played in what Gitelman, drawing from Michel de Certeau, refers to as the "scriptural economy" in the United States in the late nineteenth century. For an explanation of "scriptural economy" and her use of the phrase, see Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, preface. For a discussion of job printing, see Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 21–52.

[87] A note on story papers: Michael Denning, in *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (London: Verso, 1987), uses the phrase "dime novels" as an umbrella term to discuss dime novels, story papers, and cheap libraries published in the United States from the 1840s through the 1890s. This makes sense for a number of reasons: many publishers produced all three forms; the forms shared distribution networks; and stories often first appeared serialized in story papers, then in dime novels, and finally in cheap libraries. All three were popular with readers and unpopular with literary critics and gatekeepers in their time. While this conflation of forms under the umbrella term "dime novels" can be useful, it presents challenges when attempting to study story papers, which contain a range of content, apart from dime novels and cheap libraries. As Denning and others have noted, dime novel literature in the broad sense is only available for study due to the interest and diligence of collectors, as libraries for the most part, until recent decades, showed little interest in these ephemeral, popular reading materials. In these conditions, dime novels fared better than story papers or cheap libraries in terms of preservation and availability. Even the American Antiquarian Society, which attempts to collect everything printed in the United States through 1876, lacks runs of many weekly story papers, though it has individual issues of dozens of titles. Other specialized collections also have a large number of dime novels, but lack substantial runs of many story papers. Other libraries might have substantial collections of dime novel literature, yet the cataloging (or lack thereof) makes it difficult to determine to what extent a collection consists of dime novels, story papers, and/or cheap libraries.

correspondence from readers (or at least respond systematically within the publication to readers' correspondence), (b) have ties to amateur journalism, and (c) are available and accessible, I hoped to find evidence of young people using print to create or extend peer networks through letters departments and to explore the relationship of those print networks to particular communities of reading[88] and to amateurdom as a community of practice.[89] Also, I wanted to explore how these relationships between amateur and professional publications and young people's interactions with those publications contributed to a culture of information among young people in late nineteenth-century America.

The critical role of amateur newspapers in my dissertation necessitated an extended visit to the American Antiquarian Society (AAS), which holds the largest collection of amateur newspapers in the country, containing more than 3,900 titles and more than 50,000 issues.[90] In December 2011, before writing my dissertation proposal, I spent a week at the AAS exploring the amateur newspaper collection, along with related materials that I felt would be critical to understanding how networks developed within amateurdom, how they were connected to children's periodicals and story papers, and how they fostered a youth information culture. I returned to the AAS in Fall 2012 as a Kate B. and Hall J. Peterson Fellow and resumed my research on amateur newspapers; amateur directories, histories, and guides; amateur press association documents and records; children's magazines; and the few weekly story papers from my period in their collection. To further my research on weekly story papers, I also visited the

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[88] For a discussion of the place of "communities of readers" within the history of reading, see Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[89] Amateurdom constitutes a community of practice, which is a group that shares "a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." To be a community of practice, the group must have a "shared domain of interest," "engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information," and develop "shared practice" over time through interaction. See Etienne Wenger and Beverly Wenger-Trayner, "Introduction to Communities of Practice: A Brief Overview of the Concept and Its Uses," 2015, accessed February 5, 2017, http://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/.

[90] "Amateur Newspapers," http://www.americanantiquarian.org/amateurnews.htm.

American Popular Literature Collection at the Northern Illinois University Libraries in Fall 2012. In the intervening years, Gale Cengage introduced to its database *Nineteenth Century Collections Online* the collection "Juvenile Journalists: Selected Amateur Newspapers," which includes more than 700 issues from the AAS collection representing more than 100 titles from 35 states (plus Canada and England). I have used the online collection to supplement my notes and provide additional support for my arguments.

In terms of amateur papers I examined from the AAS collection, I sought coverage for the entire period, with special emphasis on papers published while particular shifts in amateurdom seemed to be underway in order to better understand their significance. I also sought geographic coverage for the United States, with special emphasis on papers published in the underrepresented Southern or Western regions and in smaller towns and cities. In addition to these considerations, I sought papers that met one or more of the following criteria: they are mentioned in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*; they were edited or contributed to substantially by a woman or an African American;[91] they involved long-distance collaboration. Petrik's work helped me to identify two African American editors, Herbert A. Clarke and Benjamin Pelham, and Dennis Laurie's expertise regarding the contents of the amateur newspaper collection at the AAS led me to many papers edited by young women, as well as to papers that involved editorial collaboration between young women and young men. Beyond these emphases, I frequently followed a thread of interest, insofar as the collection allowed. For instance, if an issue of one amateur paper noted an editorial of interest published in another amateur paper, then I would examine that paper, as well, if it was part of the collection.[92] Exploring connections of various

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[91] I discovered no reference in amateur publications, archival materials, or existing scholarship to African American women involved in amateurdom during this period.

[92] For a complete list of amateur publications in the AAS collection consulted as part of this dissertation research, see Appendix.

kinds between amateur newspapers helped me to understand the ways in which amateurs exchanged not only material papers with other amateurs through the mail, but also information, ideas, praise, and criticism. Pursuing connections between and among papers also helped me to understand how issues gathered momentum in amateurdom, how amateur papers were (de)valued in exchange networks, and how long-distance friendships were established, indicated, and sustained through print.

Cunningham discusses the challenges of "seeking to recapture the emotional quality of the lives of children in the past." He uses the example of children's diaries, which often reveal more about the genre and "the desires and expectations of adult readers than about the experience of being a child."[93] I drew a similar conclusion regarding fan mail written in the 1970s by young readers to a popular young adult author: the project revealed a great deal about the conventions of writing fan mail and the expectations of adult readers (in this case, the author and, frequently, teachers who made writing a letter to one's favorite author an assignment), but little about young people's lives.[94] One type of source explored in this dissertation is reader correspondence in children's magazines. Though Weikle-Mills suggests that the element of performance makes such correspondence problematic as evidence, her analysis of the correspondence department in *Robert Merry's Museum* provides a model of the ways in which reader correspondence in children's periodicals might be understood.[95] Similarly, critical reading of amateur newspapers reveals not only a range of conventions regularly deployed, but also elements of performance, sometimes of multiple identities in print within a single issue,[96] so an analysis of those papers and of amateurdom as a community requires one to be mindful not only

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[93] Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society*, 2.
[94] Mikki Smith, "'It's Good to Know Someone Cares': Real Teens and the Novels of Jeannette Eyerly" (unpublished paper, May 6, 2006), Microsoft Word file.
[95] Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens*, 23–26.
[96] See the example in ch. 2 from *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), of which Samuel B. Milton is the editor and also (pseudonymous) author "Oliver Ormand"/"Oliver Ormond."

of these aspects (paper conventions, identity performance), but also of relationships involved in production and circulation, and external mediating factors and influences.

A study of amateur newspapers also requires particular attention to the periodical form and the relationship of periodicals and networks, which is of primary interest in this dissertation. Scholarship on periodicals and networks has increased in recent years, as evidenced by a special issue of *American Periodicals* on "Networks and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical."[97] In their introduction to that issue, the editors discuss two ways "in which periodicals themselves exemplify networks": first, the material object "provides an intertextual network of juxtaposed objects, while the network is extended through the linking of issues within a series"; second, "the institutional networks of periodicals (composed of their contributors, editors, publishers, and printers, as well as distributors and readers) also form important, though sometimes scarcely visible, factors in their production and dissemination." The authors argue,

> This second, institutional periodical network forms the basis for a more sociological approach to print culture. The personal and institutional connections that linked authors, editors, and readers become akin to beams of light illuminating the larger social structures upon which periodicals relied for production but which they also helped to create and stabilize.[98]

Discussions of material, (inter)textual, and institutional networks are also important when considering amateur newspapers as periodicals and amateurs as young printers, editors, authors, and readers — especially when the ways in which those amateur periodical networks extend into and depend upon professional newspaper and periodical networks are also explored. At the same

[97] John Fagg, Matthew Pethers, and Robin Vandome, eds., "Networks and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical," special issue, *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 23, no. 2 (2013).
[98] Fagg, Pethers, and Vandome, "Introduction: Networks and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical," special issue, *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 23, no. 2 (2013): 101.

time, one aspect of periodicals that is often underexplored is that of temporality. Anna Luker Gilding argues that while conceptualizing periodicals as circulating either in networks or circuits can be useful, "they do tend towards a consideration of print as either cause-and-effect (the circuit going full circle) or as spatial (a network model) which effaces the specific importance of temporality to texts and the peculiarities of periodicals." She concludes, "Paying attention to time, periodicity, and to the peculiar narratives of periodicals' growth and death can mitigate against print culture's conceptual push to the spatial against periodicals' pull to the temporal, as well as providing one way of navigating the relationship between the general model and the specific example." Given the definition of both "youth" and amateur newspapers as transient, combined with this dissertation's emphasis on print networks, addressing these aspects of the periodical is especially relevant to this undertaking.[99]

This dissertation is limited in scope to amateurdom between the years 1867 and 1890 as practiced among young people in the United States (though Canadian amateurs or Canadian amateur newspapers are occasionally referenced, since Canadians were admitted to the National Amateur Press Association and exchanged papers with amateurs in the United States throughout this period). The opening section of this introductory chapter provides two primary reasons for beginning the period covered by this dissertation in 1867: the launch of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the patenting of the Novelty Press. The period covered by this dissertation ends in 1890 for several reasons. In terms of young people's involvement in amateur journalism, by 1890, the "mania" had subsided, the number of papers produced had shrunk, and the overall age of amateurs had increased. One California "fossil" writes in 1890: "And then, all the 'old crowd' are fossils. Active amateurs in California are few — in fact, I do not know of any at the present

[99] Anna Luker Gilding, "'Fair Forms' and 'Withered Leaves': The *Rose Bud* and the Peculiarities of Periodical Print," in *The Perils of Print Culture*, 214–15, doi:10.1057/9781137415325.

time." He describes amateur reunions as "the only thing left to remind us of the happy days and lively times gone by."[100] Also, the first constitution of the Fossils, an organization founded in 1904 to organize annual reunions of past amateurs, restricted membership to those who had been active in amateur journalism prior to 1890, which suggests it is a valid end date.[101] Though amateur books and periodicals continued to be produced and exchanged through the mail well into the twentieth century, amateur journalism as a youth endeavor that began in the late 1860s had dwindled by 1890. The year 1890 is significant in scholarship as well. It is often used to mark the beginning of the era associated with the advent of mass culture in the United States. It is also often associated with the end of the Industrial Age and the start of the Progressive Era and a period of reforms affecting children in areas such as labor, education, and criminal justice.[102] Another reason to end this study in 1890 comes from Kett's characterization of the period 1890 to 1920 as one that witnessed the rise of the "architects of adolescence" — psychologists, most notably G. Stanley Hall, educators, reformers, and others, mostly people "with prudish morals and flat imaginations" — who helped to shift the orientation of adults toward youth from providers of "earnest advice" to "artful manipula[tors] of [young people's] environment."[103] Other scholars have situated the rise of a high-school youth culture in the 1890s.[104]

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[100] Fred St. Sure, "Disjointed Chat," *Bumble Bee,* March 1890, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/ztMN7.

[101] Mike Horvat, "The Fossils, Historians of Amateur Journalism," accessed April 12, 2017, from http://www.thefossils.org. According to Horvat, this was a means to ensure that Fossil members would be adult contemporaries. The rule was later changed to admit amateurs who had been active at least thirty years prior to admission to The Fossils, and later changed again to fifteen years.

[102] For instance, with respect to mass culture, see Charles Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace: The Role of Newspaper Syndicates, 1860–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), which situates the rise of the mass-market magazine in around 1890. With respect to periodization, for instance, see Priscilla Ferguson Clement, *Growing Pains: Children in the Industrial Age, 1850–1890* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997); Kristofer Allerfeldt, *The Progressive Era in the USA, 1890–1921* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007); and David I. Macleod, *The Age of the Child: Children in America, 1890–1920* (New York: Twayne, 1998).

[103] Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books), 5–6.

[104] See Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood*, 123–25, and Hunter, *How Young Ladies Became Girls*, 222–60.

This dissertation is organized both chronologically and thematically. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction and provides an overview of amateur journalism in the United States as a youth phenomenon and notes its relationship to professional newspapers, children's magazines, and weekly story papers popular among young readers. It also reviews scholarship to date of immediate relevance to amateur journalism. Finally, this chapter describes the dissertation: frameworks, sources, organizational structure, and contents. Chapter 2 provides relevant background on young people, information and communications, and print culture in the United States between 1867 and 1890. Chapter 3 introduces the concept of "networked readers," young people who used *Oliver Optic's Magazine* to establish peer connections that extended beyond the periodical context. Chapter 4 explores the factors that contributed to the transition of the local practice among young people of creating newspapers in the home during the antebellum period to the widespread networked practice of young people creating newspapers and exchanging them through the mail after 1867. Chapter 5 explores the amateur economy, shifting the frame from amateurdom's relationship to professionalization to consider the social (dis)embeddedness of amateur practices, drawing on the approach taken by Leon Jackson in his study of antebellum authorial economies.[105] Chapter 6 focuses on factors that contributed to the shift in amateurdom from expanding and diffuse print networks of youth publications toward more centralized, exclusive networks, and to the increasing overall cost and age of participation in amateur journalism in the 1880s. Chapter 7, the concluding chapter, discusses amateur print networks as social and information networks, and posits amateur journalism as an example of a youth information culture in the late nineteenth century in the context of the practices of amateur journalists and conventions of amateur publications.

[105] While Jackson acknowledges the significance of scholarship in the history of print culture to his study, he situates his work in the field of "new economic criticism," which "suggests that economics is as much shaped by culture and rhetoric as by the timeless and impersonal forces of a reified market." Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 24.

CHAPTER 2: AMATEUR JOURNALISM AND YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES, 1867–1890: CULTURE, CONNECTION, COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION

2.1 "They Have Aspired to Something Higher": The Character of Amateur Journalism

"Among the developments of Young America, in a direction which involves neither broken bones, dissipation, nor great waste of time, must be included the amateur journalism which has grown from small beginnings up to really important and respectable proportions." Despite its favorable beginning, this 1871 article from the *New York Times* continues in a less flattering vein, characterizing the writing in amateur newspapers as "partak[ing] of a mutual-admiration flavor which seems to say: 'Only think! this was written by boys, and there is plenty more where this came from, and lots of just such papers as this all over the country, and more coming! Prodigious, isn't it?'" Finally, the article provides a tongue-in-cheek assurance to adults that "Young America," despite its pretension, is also harmless: "we see no signs of revolutionary tendencies in the direction of women's rights or transcendental and other isms. Nor has radicalism so run riot in any of them as to make us tremble for the country."[106] An 1873 article in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* repeats this formula, beginning, "There is no telling what the precocity of Young America will do next." This declaration was prompted by the receipt of a copy of *The Amateur Journalists' Companion for 1873* from Frank Cropper, who identified himself in the accompanying note as "the editor and publisher, — a boy of 14."[107] The *Courier-Journal* article goes on to share, in a mocking and condescending tone, excerpts from the biographical sketches in the *Companion* of Cropper and another amateur, W. George Wilson. It refers to the amateurs as "Frank" and "George" rather than by their surnames, and in reference to all of the biographical sketches printed in the *Companion*, the article states: "[We] are glad to say

[106] "The Amateur Casuals in Journalism," *New York Times*, October 9, 1871, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
[107] See Frank Cropper, *The Amateur Journalists' Companion for 1873: An Interesting and Concise Guide for All Editors, Authors, and Printers* (Louisville, KY: Frank Cropper, 1873).

that they are, on the whole, a very interesting and promising-looking set of boys, and, in most instances, hardly needing to be assured of that fact."[108] In the same tone, the article notes that the conventions of the amateur press associations then in existence were held at "first-class hotels, have grand banquets, eloquent speeches, sharp discussions, plenty of spending-money, and everything needful to maintain the parliamentary dignity of Young America." Young amateur journalists in this example are not presented as imitators of men so much as caricatures of them.

Both of these accounts in the professional press frame amateur journalists as conceited and self-absorbed and dismiss the notion that these young men could produce anything of aesthetic or commercial value due to their age. At the same time, they affirm amateur journalism as a healthy leisure pursuit for this particular class of young men — and "now and then a girl of the coming period."[109] The *Courier-Journal* article concludes by wishing amateurs success, as "there is nothing else to be done": "They are at a growing age, when the internal consciousness of genius finds it difficult to contain itself, and will spill over somehow, and, if into 'amateurdom' and printer's ink, it won't hurt anybody, and may be a good safety-valve for them." Here again, youth is transient ("at a growing age") and amateur journalism is harmless ("a good safety-valve"). In this resigned acceptance of amateur journalism, even *print*, which is often in this period a source of anxiety for adults regarding children, "won't hurt anybody" when produced by young people. In this formulation, young people have no agency, so their words can have no power.

Discussions of the character of amateur journalism also took place in amateur papers, guides, and histories. In an 1872 address to amateurs gathered for a convention, B. C. Cuvellier declares, "They tell us, gentlemen, that [amateurs] wish to be men before the time which nature

[108] "Amateur Journalism," *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, KY), November 13, 1873, reprinted in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 28, 1873, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
[109] "Amateur Journalism," *Courier-Journal*, November 13, 1873.

has appointed. Not so. We wish to *become* men, and we aspire to become men of note."[110] Young (male) amateur journalists, in this view, through their creation of and participation in a public, did not claim the status "men," nor were they playing at manhood as children.[111] Unlike their peers in society generally, for whom the passage into manhood would be passive, Cuvellier argues that amateurs would actively *become* men — and exceptional ones at that. Cuvellier's emphasis on "becoming" suggests that amateur journalism fostered a sense of agency among those who participated in it. This sense of agency cannot be separated, however, from consideration of the various privileges, which in the 1870s arguably included boyhood itself, that improved the chances of these young men becoming notable adults in their respective fields.

Libbie Adams, "proprietress" of *The Youthful Enterprise* (Carbondale, Pennsylvania), also describes amateurs in a process of "becoming." However, in her formulation, they are becoming professionals rather than adults. Buried on a page containing "Items of Interest" is Adams's response to negative criticism of amateur journalism in America by British journal *The Amateur World*: "The amateur journals of America are as a rule, conducted by school-children as an exercise in composition, or by some sprig of impudence like ourselves, as purely a question of bread and butter in the present, and the initial step to regular professional journalism in the future." Here Adams separates American amateur journalists into two groups: school children motivated by limited, immediate aims (and therefore unworthy of notice, let alone critique, from those outside American amateurdom), and "sprigs of impudence," who intended to earn money in the present while preparing to launch future professional careers. The phrase "sprigs of impudence" implies that the act of amateur newspaper production by young people with open-

[110] Emphasis in original. For Cuvellier's full remarks, see Fred K. Morrill, author and comp., *The Amateur's Guide for 1872: A Complete Book of Reference, Relative to the Amateur Editors, Authors, Printers and Publishers of America* (Chicago: Amateur Printing Company, 1872), 14–16.

[111] For extended discussion of amateur journalism as a public, see Jessica Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises: Amateur Newspapers and the Pre-History of Adolescence, 1867–1883," *American Periodicals* 22, no. 2 (2012): 158–77, doi:10.1353/amp.2012.0015.

ended, longterm aims was inherently rebellious. *The Amateur World*, argues Adams, should not judge "the crude productions of children" by the same standards as professional periodicals produced by adults, but should instead understand amateur papers as equivalent to a "preparatory school of American journalism":

> [In the United States], a few pounds of type, an amateur press and a few quires of paper are the nucleoli from which many of our "professionals" start. The exact transition point is the time when the sheet is pronounced to be a weekly, is entered on the list of the advertising agent, and has managed to provoke a caustic article from some sore headed professional who believes that all the "job-work" in town is his inherited right.[112]

Adams imagines a trajectory from "amateur" to "professional" that is not inherently dependent on age, educational attainment, or apprenticeship (or *any* formal training, for that matter), but one that simply requires the ability to print a weekly sheet that can attract advertisers and also to secure job work.[113] Like Cuvellier, Adams rejects criticism leveled at young amateurs in the 1870s; rather, she expects praise for actively engaging in a process of *becoming*, unlike, it is implied, her docile, unambitious peers.

An essay entitled "Amateur Journalism" in the April 1877 issue of *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), frames the value of amateur journalism to its practitioners in a different way. Through amateur journalism,

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[112] *Youthful Enterprise* (Carbondale, PA), Items of Interest, December 8, 1875, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3ZZQz1.

[113] Ted Smythe, in his history of the press in this period, explains the relationship between weekly newspaper production and job printing: "Income from [newspaper] circulation and advertising often was insufficient to support the publisher; so he relied upon job printing, which was a critical source of income. Printers started newspapers as adjuncts to job printing. The two types of businesses were needed for success." Ted Curtis Smythe, *The Gilded Age Press, 1865–1900* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 32.

> youths have been suddenly transformed — from the former games, which tendered more for the amusement of the hour …, they have aspired to something higher, something that gains for them a name which shall stand forth as a monument showing the extent of their tact, talent, and literary abilities. Through the medium of these small papers, many a boy, aye, even the girls, have displayed their talents.

This essay is credited to "Oliver Ormand," a pseudonym of Samuel B. Milton, editor of *The Amateur Era*. Ormand argues that some young amateur writers, through sustained and repetitive effort (in contrast to play), published pieces in amateur papers comparable to those of professional authors.[114] Ormand describes a transition from play, which is marked by a sense of immediacy and transience, local and physical in nature, to a particular kind of work, which is intellectual and creative in nature, marked by a sense of remoteness and permanence, as well as by a concern for recognition by others (a "name"; a "monument"). The goal, as Ormand defines it here, was not for amateurs to seek publication in the professional press in their youth, though many did, particularly through the mid-1870s[115]; rather, the goal was for them to develop and display their talents *as youth* and *for youth* through amateur publications. For Ormand, amateur papers develop, demonstrate, and preserve young people's creative and intellectual work, which might otherwise remain unrealized and unrecognized by the adult literary establishment.

The same issue of *The Amateur Era* includes an editorial, presumably also written by Milton (in his editorial persona, not as "Oliver Ormand"), that references a different kind of

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[114] Oliver Ormand, "Amateur Journalism," *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), April 1877. The pseudonym "Oliver Ormand" appears elsewhere in *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC) as "Oliver Ormond," including in an advertisement in the *Era*'s final issue (June, July, and August 1877) for "'Oliver Ormond' (Samuel B. Milton), author and correspondent." Milton was the paper's editor, which means that Milton (as Milton or as "Ormand"/"Ormond") wrote the majority of content in the issues of the *Era*. Both pseudonyms, Oliver Ormand and Oliver Ormond, allude in their alliteration to Oliver Optic, a subtle example of William T. Adam's pervasive influence on amateurdom in the 1870s.

[115] See, for instance, the example of Edwin A. Farwell, discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

work. His publication of *The Era* is "actuated by a desire to give ourselves a *pleasant employment* for our idle hours from more serious duties of life; to improve ourselves, or minds, and at the same time give pleasure to our friends and readers."[116] Assuming "employment" here is used in the sense of a pursuit rather than a trade or profession, the editor's motivation for participating in amateur journalism is to seek respite from the work of youth (or, at least from its "more serious duties"). While self-improvement is one goal of amateur newspaper editing for Milton, so is pleasure, which aligns the project more with the kind of immediate and transient "play" rejected by his other persona, Oliver Ormand. In a single issue of *The Amateur Era*, Milton writing as Ormand differentiates amateur journalism from play because the former requires persistence and persists, while Milton's editorial persona emphasizes that amateur journalism is an escape from the work of youth — in other words, a kind of play, immediate and ephemeral. That an individual amateur articulates contradictory notions about the value of amateur journalism and nature of youth in the same issue of a periodical — a form that is itself miscellaneous and ephemeral, but also serial and open-ended[117] — highlights not only the challenges of writing about amateur journalism in this period, but also of working with the periodical form. That Milton/Ormand does not acknowledge this apparent contradiction in the characterizations of amateur journalism in this issue of the paper suggests a complexity in his interactions with and experiences of amateur journalism — despite the often cartoonish portrayals of amateur journalists in the professional press.

Both the professional press and the amateur press expressed a range of opinions about the purpose and character of amateur journalism in the 1870s. This and subsequent chapters explore the desire of young readers in this period to connect with one another, regardless of geographic

[116] "A Plain Talk with our Readers." *The Amateur Era*. (Washington, DC) April 1877. Emphasis in original.
[117] James Mussell, *The Nineteenth-Century Press in the Digital Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 30.

location, as well as various elements that both facilitated and hindered the establishment of those connections. The remainder of this chapter provides descriptive overviews of three areas important to the analysis of amateur journalism: the relationship between "Young America" and young people; the state of information and communications after the American Civil War; and the expansion of print culture in the same period. These overviews provide necessary context for the claims made in this dissertation regarding print networks and youth information culture among amateur journalists in the United States in the late nineteenth century.

2.2 "Young America" and Young People, 1867–1890

The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported in 1870 that a third of the prisoners in the Ohio Penitentiary were under the age of twenty-one. The article, entitled "Young America," suggests a cause for the prevalence of crime among young people: "Mere boys are permitted to run wild until the late hours of the night in the streets of San Francisco, as well as in all Eastern cities. They visit melodeons, billiard-saloons, theaters; they smoke, and chew, and drink ardent spirits; without the age of men, they acquire all their vices." Girls "are allowed a liberty at variance with European ideas of propriety. What we approve of would in France be viewed with holy horror."[118] The dissolution of Young America, this article implies, is the result of urbanization combined with lax parenting. It suggests that when young people are allowed to experience the same amount of personal liberty as adult citizens, not only are their individual characters compromised, but so, too, is the character of the nation. In an 1871 letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, a reader expresses concern over the future of American youth and of America as a nation: "The term 'Young America,' from a jest has become a sad truth, and in the understood sense of precocious conceit and insubordination, develops a fearful evil to the community, as

[118] "Young America," *San Francisco Chronicle,* May 27, 1870, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

each generation attains maturity." The letter writer continues: "Those who ten years ago were ridiculed and caricatured as 'Young America,' are now the *blasé*, shallow, selfish men so uninteresting at home or in society, so inefficient as citizens, so fruitless as Christians."[119] This letter writer, as in the previous example, calls for a curbing of the personal liberties of young people, who must not be allowed to view themselves as the intellectual or moral equals of adults if they are to grow into productive adult citizens. Subsequent decades witnessed the rise of a host of institutional responses to the problems perceived to be associated with young people in America, from the expansion of the public high school system to the establishment of a juvenile justice system, all of which helped to pave the way for the normative concept of "adolescence" that would come to inform social relations, cultural production, and popular thought regarding youth in the twentieth century.

In addition to editorializing about "Young America," the papers from this period sometimes reported on young people's (usually boys') efforts to enact change on "childish" issues in ways that belittled the idea that young people should have agency to act as adult citizens through appeals to the government or the press for action on any matter. For instance, the *Courier-Journal* reported on the outcome of a petition that claimed to be written by "respectable boys of the Tenth ward (not boys who loaf around the corners, but who work or go to school)," submitted to the mayor of St. Louis over the issue of sledding. The petition, according to the report, is indicative of "the spirit which actuates young America." It asks the mayor to keep police from preventing the boys from sledding on Howard Street: "We appeal to you, thinking you — unlike these policemen — have had a boyhood." The article claims that the

[119] "A Vigorous Onslaught on 'Young America,'" *New York Times*, March 26, 1871, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

mayor responded by directing the police "to allow the boys all reasonable privileges."[120] Two things about this example are significant. First, an implicit connection is made by these "respectable boys" between childhood and class. "Boyhood" here is not an indicator of biological age, but rather a state of being marked by leisure and freedom — one that the mayor is more likely to understand than police officers. Second, the mayor responded, according to the paper, using the language of "privileges" rather than "rights," reinforcing that these young people's use of the street remained contingent on the judgment of (adult) police.

An 1877 letter in *The Baltimore Sun*, signed "Young America," also takes up the issue of access to the streets for sledding. The letter reminds (adult) readers of the paper that "this is a free country" and "we are Americans": "[W]e ought to have some liberty, and not be tied down as slaves, in fact worse than slaves, because a great many had more freedom than we have…. What has the rising generation to do after school and work is over? Are they to sit still and fold their arms, instead of enjoying themselves?" Here, "Young America" asserts its citizenship and argues that young people should have the same rights to personal liberty and freedom of movement as the enfranchised adults of the country — making the absurd yet familiar argument that young people, implicitly white and economically comfortable, experienced more restrictions to their freedom than had enslaved people under the brutally racist system of slavery in the United States. In response, the paper condescendingly editorializes, in part, that "even the American freedom of boys has its limits": "We are in favor of 'Young America' whether it is at the top of the hill or the bottom, so long as it does not indulge in the license of Comanche Indians, nor, by way of vindicating its own independence, expect parents to obey children,

[120] "Young America Rampant," *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, KY), January 2, 1873, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Reprinted from *St. Louis Republican*, December 31, 1872.

instead of children obeying parents."[121] This example, both the letter and the response, marks "Young America" in this period as white and male, and enjoying a class status that includes leisure time and an articulated sense of entitlement to publicly air grievances without negative consequence and, moreover, with an expectation of redress. Both letter and response appeal to white supremacy: the boys imply that they should be granted the full rights of adult citizens on the basis of whiteness rather than age. The response affirms their right to "liberty enough," while at the same time articulating the limits on that freedom: subordination to parents and to the rule of law (which sets limits on their rights as children by definition). The reference to the Comanche in this context appeals to the white imagination, in which this "other" represents unconstrained wildness. In this example, as in others, boys claim the rights of the citizen and are instead reminded of their subordinate status to adults and granted the privileges considered appropriate for a particular class of youth.

These examples illustrate the dual sense in which the phrase "Young America" operated in this period: first, as a reference to young people (or at least to a subset of young people, whose inclusion in the category was based on class, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and/or region), often used in a mocking or patronizing manner in the press; second, as evocative of the relative youth of the nation. As many scholars have demonstrated, the state of the child and the state of the nation have been linked, in complex and contradictory ways, since the days of the early republic. As Caroline F. Levander and Carol J. Singley argue in the introduction to their edited volume on American children's culture, "[N]ational identity is implicated in shifting notions of childhood, from the first colonial separation from a punitive and authoritarian parent country and formal Declaration of Independence to the repeated figuring, in nineteenth-through-late-

[121] "Young America and His 'Coasting,'" *The Sun* (Baltimore, MD), January 15, 1877.

twentieth-century American culture, of the child as a symbol of lost innocence and youth."[122] Courtney Weikle-Mills, in her study of the child reader in America through 1868, explains, "The simultaneous emergence of a concept of citizenship based on free birth and a concept of childhood as a deficient state has meant that a defining feature of modern political identity has been a gap between the abstract right to political freedom and the specific right to exercise it." Weikle-Mills describes a category of "imaginary citizens," "individuals who could not exercise civic rights but who figured heavily in literary depictions of citizenship and were often invited to view themselves as citizens despite their limited political franchise."[123] The above examples from professional newspapers suggest that in the 1870s and 1880s, white, middle-class, teenaged boys, who were imagined as and imagined themselves to be representatives of "Young America," had accepted that invitation to view themselves as citizens to the dismay of many enfranchised (white, middle-class, male) adults who sought to recast them as children. Young people who engaged in "adult" behaviors or asserted claims to the rights afforded full citizens were at odds with a state that increasingly sought to regulate their lives and extend the period of childhood.

In the mid-nineteenth century, 52 percent of the population in the United States was under the age of 19; in 1890, this number had dropped slightly to 46 percent. Still, as Pricilla Ferguson Clement points out, "The history of children in this period is the history not of a minority, but of half of all Americans."[124] The experience of childhood, however, was vastly different depending on gender, race, nationality, religion, and geographic location. As James Marten writes, "It seemed to be a world rife with possibilities — but those possibilities did not

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[122] Caroline Field Levander and Carol J. Singley, introduction to *The American Child: A Cultural Studies Reader,* eds. Caroline Field Levander and Carol J. Singley (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 4.
[123] Courtney Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens Child Readers and the Limits of American Independence, 1640–1868* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 4.
[124] The percentages and the quotation are taken from Priscilla Ferguson Clement, *Growing Pains: Children in the Industrial Age, 1850–1890* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997), 1.

reveal themselves equally to all children, and were perceived differently by adults and children."[125] Class also powerfully shaped childhood experience in the 1870s and 1880s, so much so that Clements determines the "chief legacy of industrialization [to be] the hardening of class lines."[126] Karen Sánchez-Eppler notes that in the nineteenth century "childhood itself is increasingly recognized as a sign of class status."[127] Even in the last decades of the nineteenth-century, when biological age was becoming an increasingly important factor in cultural understandings of childhood and social expectations of children's abilities and behavior, Sánchez-Eppler's view that childhood in the nineteenth century "is better understood as a status or idea associated with innocence and dependency than as a specific developmental or biological period" remains apt.[128]

The developmental and biological models of childhood and adolescence that would influence a number of professions, the system of education, and the legal status of children in the twentieth century were only beginning to be articulated during this period and had not yet come to dominate popular thought. In the early 1880s, educators, doctors, and psychologists became increasingly involved in the study of children's health and development.[129] During this time, according to Howard Chudacoff, "a consciousness of normal — meaning desired — human development, coupled with a reliance on numbers and predictability stemming from the standardization and regulation of industrial production, had created a series of expectations about

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[125] James Marten, introduction to *Children and Youth During the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, ed. James Marten (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 3.
[126] Clement, *Growing Pains*, 7.
[127] Karen Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 152.
[128] Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States*, xxi.
[129] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 188.

experiences and achievements related to age."[130] This began to be reflected in practices during the 1880s such as the widespread organization of schools according to age and the development of age-based curricula.

Joseph E. Illick differentiates between the experiences of children and those of young people among the urban middle class, a demographic that would include many amateur journalists, characterizing youth by its "semidependence" and "casual and unstructured" environment for most of the nineteenth century, while children, by contrast, "were being regulated in the home and beyond" over the same period, particularly with regard to schooling.[131] Though young people's lives were less regulated than children's, the 1870s and 1880s did see significant changes to their status. Joseph F. Kett notes that over the course of the nineteenth century, schools that exclusively served students in their teens replaced academies that served young people between ages ten and twenty-five. This increasing age segregation occurred at the same time as a shift away from "voluntary associations for youth" and toward "adult-sponsored institutions for teenagers."[132] According to William J. Reese, after the 1870s, young people from wealthy families attended "ever more prestigious and exclusive academies," while young people who were the children of "merchants, small businessmen and manufacturers, clerks, and various professionals," along with the children of some skilled workers, made up the high school population.[133]

According to Clements, in 1890, which marks the end of the period covered by this dissertation, only 6.7 percent of young people aged 14 to 17 enrolled in public high school, and

[130] Howard P. Chudacoff, *Children at Play: An American History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 70.
[131] Joseph E. Illick, *American Childhoods* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 72.
[132] Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 5.
[133] William J. Reese, *The Origins of the American High School* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 175.

only 3.5 percent of these graduated.[134] Many amateur journalists, the focus of this study, attended academies or high schools at various points and some were college bound, though as these numbers make clear, the American public high school had not yet come to define the experience of American youth as it would in the twentieth century. Still, near the end of the nineteenth century, the lives of urban middle-class young people were becoming increasingly regulated, and schooling for young people was becoming increasingly age-graded. This is the context in which individual amateurs advertised their ages in amateur publications, which was at once an invitation to adults to admire young people's efforts toward adulthood and a repudiation of child status. In this context, too, the age of participants in amateur journalism was a continual point of contention within amateurdom.

The concept of adolescence, which Illick attributes to efforts to preserve childhood innocence beyond puberty and fears of "modern living" and the "dangerous classes," was not popularized until G. Stanley Hall published his seminal work in 1904.[135] Marten argues that adults, in the wake of Hall's *Adolescence*, came to view the teen years as "a period of sexual tension, high emotions, and striving for independence that had the potential to threaten relationships and social stability," and to support "specialized institutions like high schools and organized activities like sports."[136] Though Hall's *Adolescence* was published a decade and a half after the period covered by this dissertation, according to Kett, the redefinition of "young people" was already underway: "Attitudes and concepts which had appeared within the middle class in the 1880s and 1890s now pushed beyond the perimeters of that class in the shape of efforts to universalize and to democratize the concept of adolescence. A biological process of

[134] Clement, *Growing Pains*, 109.
[135] G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence; Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b4091807; Illick, *American Childhoods*, 72.
[136] Marten, introduction to *Children and Youth,* 5.

maturation became the basis of the social definition of an entire age group."[137] This shifting status is evident within amateur journalism over the 1870s and 1880s, as middle-class children increasingly remained dependent on their parents through their late teens and participated in formal education beyond the compulsory age to prepare themselves for new professional and managerial positions.[138] As Isaac and Lara Langer Cohen argue, amateur journalists themselves were active participants in this "redefinition" of young people through their newspapers and associations.[139]

2.3 Information and Communications, 1867–1890

Richard R. John argues that two "communications revolutions" occurred in the long nineteenth century in the United States, the first of which ended with the establishment of a national postal network in the 1820s. The second is bracketed on one end, according to John, by the expansion of the railroad and commercialization of the telegraph in the 1840s and on the other by the completion of a national telephone grid in 1910. John notes that both "communications revolutions" were driven by the need to "transmit information cheaply, reliably, and on a regular basis throughout the country and around the world."[140] Echoing John, Richard D. Brown argues that the lack of a metropolitan center in early America resulted in "a polycentric array of state capitals and commercial centers" that needed both printing presses and

[137] Kett, *Rites of Passage*, 215.
[138] Kett, *Rites of Passage*, 150–51.
[139] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 158–77; Lara Langer Cohen, "The Emancipation of Boyhood," *Common-Place* 14, no. 1 (2013), http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. A discussion of their work appears in ch. 1 of this dissertation.
[140] Richard R. John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure for the Industrial Age," in *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, eds. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and James W. Cortada, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 54–56.

"timely access to long-distance news."[141] The Post Office Act of 1792, among other things, according to John, "guaranteed that … the government would provide a far-flung citizenry with subsidized, time-specific information on business and public affairs."[142] Brown argues that by the middle of the nineteenth century, "key foundational principles of the information age were securely established," not only in terms of infrastructure, but also in terms of the "customs, habits, and expectations" of those living in the United States, including people who were disenfranchised.[143]

For most of the nineteenth century, in addition to low postal rates for newspapers, editors were permitted to exchange newspapers with one another, regardless of location, free of charge: "Newspaper editors came to depend on this privilege for much of the material they used to fill their columns."[144] These exchanges were eliminated in the Act of June 30, 1873, largely due to changes in professional practices for news gathering and dissemination driven by the telegraph.[145] News brokers such as the Associated Press were granted reduced rates and, most important, according to John, "preferential access to the telegraph wires," enabling them to "coordinate the distribution of time-sensitive information."[146] The long-standing practice of newspaper exchange among editors in the professional press laid the foundation for the practice among young amateur editors in the 1870s and 1880s, even after free postal exchange had ended.

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[141] Richard D. Brown, "Early American Origins of the Information Age," in *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, eds. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and James W. Cortada (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48.
[142] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 59.
[143] Brown, "Early American Origins of the Information Age," 52–53.
[144] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 61.
[145] "Postage Rates for Periodicals: A Narrative History," United Stated Postal Service, June 2010, n10, accessed February 16, 2017, from https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/periodicals-postage-history.htm. See also Richard B. Kilebowicz, "Postal Subsidies for the Press and the Business of Mass Culture, 1880–1920," *The Business History Review* 64, no. 3 (1990): 455, doi:10.2307/3115736.
[146] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 83.

David Hochfelder argues that the telegraph "revolutionized the way people communicated and obtained information," and that the electric telegraph "forever liberated communication from transportation."[147] However, while the telegraph affected the press in ways that registered with ordinary people during the period covered by this dissertation (1867–1890), it remained relatively unimportant in the everyday lives of most Americans during the 1870s and 1880s. Western Union President Norvin Green estimated in 1887 that only 2 percent of Americans had used the telegraph to send a message and that 87 percent of all messages were business-related.[148] Similarly, the telephone played a limited role in the lives of Americans in the 1870s and 1880s. By 1881, service had been established in most American cities with more than 10,000 residents, and financial incentives were offered for residential service. However, calls were limited to a distance of twenty miles into the 1880s.[149] By 1890, the final year covered by this dissertation, there were 3.7 telephones per 1,000 people in the United States.[150]

John argues that, in some ways, "the telegraph was less significant than the railroad, which emerged, during [the 1840s], as an important means of conveyance for the mail." The Railway-Mail Service, created in 1869, according to John, was "one of the first enterprises to coordinate the routing of information throughout the length and breadth of the United States," and became "a central information infrastructure of the industrial age."[151] In 1845 and again in 1851, Congress also enacted postal rate reductions on letters, which had been until then cost-prohibitive for most, allowing a much larger segment of the population to engage in regular personal correspondence through the mail. In this sense, access to an efficient national postal network affected not only government, commerce, and the press, but it also changed the

[147] David Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America, 1832–1920* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 2–3.
[148] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 77.
[149] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 92.
[150] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 94.
[151] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 71.

expectations of individuals regarding long-distance communication. David Henkin registers a "powerful rupture and a fundamental divide" as a result of postal network expansion and rate reductions on personal communications: "The best evidence suggests … that in 1820 most Americans did not engage directly in any form of interactive, long-distance communications network, while by 1870 most of them did."[152] Given this new level of regular and mass participation in long-distance communications, the mail was increasingly a source of anxiety during the period covered by this dissertation. This is, perhaps not surprisingly, the same period in which Anthony Comstock began his crusade to surveil and censor the mail, often with the stated goal of saving America's youth. For instance, Comstock's *Traps for the Young* (1883) — in addition to chapters on newspapers, half-dime novels, and story papers — includes a chapter entitled "Death-Traps by Mail."[153]

As the speed and reach of postal delivery improved, Henkin argues, "Americans came to take for granted a certain access to the people they did not see, but who were, in one way or another, part of the same [postal] network." This "postal culture," Henkin argues, was marked by "[p]opular interest in what was collective, connective, and mass about the mail system."[154] This spirit infused amateur journalism throughout much of the 1870s, as it relied on affordable access to an efficient postal network, and also a healthy culture of correspondence among young people, many of whom made connections in the pages of children's magazines. The potential of the mail, "[a]t once public and private, anonymous and personal," to facilitate new forms of social relationships[155] was explored by amateur journalists whose amateur newspapers represented a hybrid form, both public and private, anonymous and personal, in terms of audience and address.

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[152] David M. Henkin, *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006), Kindle edition, 2.
[153] Anthony Comstock, *Traps for the Young,* 4th ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t0qr4r447.
[154] Henkin, *The Postal Age*, 158.
[155] Henkin, *The Postal Age*, 170–71.

As networked readers in this period, amateur journalists produced papers that reflect both print and correspondence culture in interesting ways. The nature of amateur newspapers, amateur networks, and amateurdom are considered in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

John argues that the "second communications revolution," which began in the 1840s, "eased rural isolation and hastened the rise of the modern central office district and the professional middle class."[156] Chandler characterizes business into the 1870s as "small enterprises personally managed by their owners. They were usually partnerships that relied on personal correspondence, newspapers, and other printed commercial news for external information…. The significant exceptions were in fact the providers of information flows — the postal system, the railroads, the telegraph, and the telephone." In the 1880s, however, "big business" emerged, and with it developed "a new species of economic man, the salaried manager."[157] This dissertation spans both the 1870s and the 1880s, and amateurdom provides a window onto how these changes registered among hundreds of predominantly middle-class young men (and some young women), many of whom were about to enter college or embark on their careers. In his history of amateur journalism, Truman Spencer references a "census" taken of members of The Fossils, an organization of former amateur journalists whose membership at that time was limited to those active prior to 1890 (in other words, they had been amateurs during the time covered by this dissertation). William G. Snow took the census, so it most likely occurred in 1922 when Snow served his term as president of The Fossils. Unfortunately Spencer does not indicate how many Fossils responded or break down the results by gender or race. Keeping these caveats in mind, the top four categories of employment reported were as follows:

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[156] John, "Recasting the Information Infrastructure," 104.
[157] Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., "The Information Age in Historical Perspective: Introduction," in *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, eds. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and James W. Cortada (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 15–17.

Editors, authors, journalists, engravers, printers, etc.	34.0%
Manufacturers, merchants, and transportation	12.5%
Lawyers and Doctors	11.0%
Bankers, brokers, insurance, and real estate	8.0%[158]

The affinity between the publishing industry, broadly defined, and amateur journalism could account for the significantly higher percentage of Fossil members who fell into that category; in other words, those who entered into professional careers that were related to their involvement in amateur journalism as young people may have been more likely to be active adult members of The Fossils. Based on this "census," however, it seems that many amateur journalists went into business or professional careers. (Only 2 percent were categorized as "agricultural".)[159]

According to Hochfelder, the telegraph "changed how Americans consumed the news, instilling modern expectations about timeliness and newsworthiness."[160] Hochfelder describes one impact of "wire-service journalism": "[T]elegraphic reporting allowed Americans to participate in major events vicariously." He argues that "telegraphic reporting created a psychological demand for news that had not existed with the same intensity or urgency beforehand."[161] At the same time, David Copeland repurposes William Randolph Hearst's phrase "small publics," which Hearst used in reference to "specialized news" printed in his papers intended to increase circulation, to describe the continued existence of thousands of local weekly papers after the Civil War: "These papers and their editors often became the moral guideposts, the cultural calendar, and principal source of information within their sphere." Copeland suggests that the small-town newspaper editor was "perhaps the most powerful individual in rural

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158 Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc, 1957), 139.
159 Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 139. He also profiles twenty amateurs who rose to prominence in their fields as adults, including one woman, Edith Miniter (née Dowe), "One of New Englands's well-known newspaper women and authors" (p. 151). He then lists the names and occupations of dozens more former amateurs, including Rev. Charles R. Uncles, who was, according to Spencer, the first African American priest in the United States ordained by the Roman Catholic Church (pp. 156–58).
160 Hochfelder, *Telegraph in America*, 4.
161 Hochfelder, *Telegraph in America*, 4.

America."[162] While the large daily newspapers could be relied upon for the rapid dissemination of information considered to be of regional, national, or international importance, the smaller weeklies remained relevant by providing information of local interest. Similarly, amateur newspapers, regardless of their city or town of publication, provided information that young readers could not find elsewhere — written from the perspective of other young people who were demographically similar, but geographically dispersed — rather than from the often patronizing and trivializing viewpoint of adults.

Young amateur journalists active between 1867 and 1890, living in both large cities and small towns around the country, would have come of age in this environment, with its large-scale effects on temporal and spatial understanding of long-distance communications and the flow of information. After the Civil War, urbanization, particularly in the North, facilitated the development of youth peer culture in local geographic communities as it brought young people together in greater numbers. At the same time, other developments facilitated the growth of youth peer networks that were not dependent on proximity, paving the way for a youth peer culture that transcended geographic constraints and took on a mass character prior to the rise of mass media.

2.4 Young People and Print Culture, 1867–1890

There has been, in recent years, an increase in scholarship on print culture generally and on nineteenth-century print culture in America in particular.[163] For the purposes of this section, the working definition of "print culture" posited by Jason McElligott and Eve Patton is useful:

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[162] David Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation: The Active Voice* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 103.

[163] See, for instance, Jason McElligott and Eve Patten, eds., *The Perils of Print Culture: Book, Print and Publishing History in Theory and Practice* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), doi: 10.1057/9781137415325; Christine Bold, ed., *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 6, *US Popular*

> A print culture can be said to exist when men and women from a range of backgrounds are used to seeing, reading, buying and borrowing print in a variety of social contexts. It exists when print is both commonplace and unexceptional, and when print is traded as a commodity within a market economy.[164]

A print culture by this definition preexists the period 1867 to 1890 in the United States. As Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein argue in their introduction to *Early African American Print Culture*, in reference to the large quantities of literary and other printed materials (cards, schedules, tickets, etc.) produced by print shops in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "Printed matter became a part of everyday life, mediating and reshaping the already fluctuating social relations of the early United States."[165] However, the period covered by this dissertation is marked by what Charles Johanningsmeier has referred to as "an unprecedented explosion of print," in part due to improvements in distribution.[166] He describes the widespread presence of print in America between 1860 and 1900:

> Population more than doubled, from 31 million in 1860 to 76 million in 1900, but the number and variety of print forms — especially those containing fiction — available to American readers grew exponentially. Cloth-covered books, paperback books, story papers, magazines, and above all newspapers, seemed omnipresent. Many American readers began to feel inundated with print.[167]

Print Culture 1860–1920 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), Kindle edition; and Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein (eds.), *Early African American Print Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

[164] Jason McElligott and Eve Patten, introduction to *The Perils of Print Culture: Book, Print and Publishing History in Theory and Practice*, eds. Jason McElligott and Eve Patten (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 6–7, doi: 10.1057/9781137415325.

[165] Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein, introduction to *Early African American Print Culture,* eds. Lara Langer Cohen and Jordan Alexander Stein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 1.

[166] Charles Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace: The Role of Newspaper Syndicates, 1860–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11, 19.

[167] Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace,* 12.

Retail booksellers carried books by big publishers, while story papers, dime novels, and cheap libraries were available to a broader readership, in socioeconomic terms, on the street, in train stations, in general stores, and through the mail.[168] Another aspect of print from this period that is generally overlooked is job printing, despite the fact that it was said to account for 30 percent of the printing and publishing industry in 1904.[169] Lisa Gitelman describes job printing as "a porous category used to designate commercial printing on contract … standing in habitual distinction from the periodical press and 'book work,' in the nineteenth-century printers' argot."[170] She argues that documents printed by jobbers played a "basic, functional, even infrastructural role … within the postbellum social order."[171] With the explosion of print came also new ways of advertising goods and services through print. Ellen Gruber Garvey writes about the ways in which girls interacted with advertising trade cards in the 1880s, collecting the cards and assembling them in scrapbooks.[172] At the same time, small printing presses were marketed directly to businesses so that they could print their own flyers, cards, and labels. These same presses became a popular purchase among parents and children with means, and also a common premium offered by children's magazines in this period, as is discussed in chapter 4, offering young people new ways to participate in print culture. The marketing of these presses encouraged not only the consumption of print in the home but also its production, which adds a dimension to McElligott and Patton's definition of "print culture" ("seeing, reading, buying and

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[168] Christine Bold, introduction to *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 6, *US Popular Print Culture 1860–1920*, ed. Christine Bold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9; Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace*, 3.
[169] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Manufactures* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), cited in Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), Kindle edition, 25.
[170] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 24.
[171] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 48.
[172] Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 18.

borrowing") that speaks to the degree to which print was embedded in the everyday experiences and imagined futures of middle-class Americans.

The last half of the nineteenth century saw substantial growth in print manufacturing as part of the larger, ongoing process of industrialization in the United States. Scott Casper describes the emergence of what he refers to as the "industrial book" in decades from 1840 to 1880, or "the manufactured, bound product of a publisher, and the quintessential product of the industrialization of both the printing and papermaking trades."[173] This is also the period in which, according to Casper, American book publishers came to view themselves as part of a "system of communication, competition, cooperation, and distribution."[174] Printing and publishing enterprises increased from 673 in 1850 to 3,467 in 1880, and the number of people employed in printing and publishing trades increased from 8,268 to 58,478 over the same period.[175] In terms of periodicals, there were more than 4,000 dailies and weeklies in 1860; in 1880, there were more than 11,000.[176] This period also witnessed the rise of the newspaper syndicates, which supplied material to papers published in both urban centers and rural towns around the country. According to Johanningsmeier, "Through their operations, a single written work would appear simultaneously in from twenty to perhaps 1,000 newspapers across the United States."[177] The Northeast retained its position as the dominant producer of print, though other areas saw increased print-related manufacturing, production, and distribution as well; however, in 1880, only 7 percent of the nation's printing houses were located in the South,

[173] Scott E. Casper, introduction to *A History of the Book in America,* vol. 3, *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, eds. Scott E. Casper, Jeffrey D. Groves, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, and Michael Winship (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 7.
[174] Casper, introduction, 4.
[175] Casper, introduction, 7.
[176] Smythe, *Gilded Age Press,* x. By 1899, this number had risen to 18,793. Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace*, 2.
[177] Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace,* 1.

accounting for just 4 percent of the nation's output.[178] This generally expanding print horizon, particularly the proliferation of newspapers and magazines, combined with increased leisure time among middle-class young people, the availability of small presses, and access to a relatively affordable means of long-distance distribution — the postal network — encouraged many young people to spend time creating and exchanging amateur newspapers.

The industrialization and expansion of print in the last half of the nineteenth century extended to publications created specifically for children. The years from 1865 to 1910, which encompass the period covered by this study, have been referred to as "golden age of American children's fiction."[179] It is impossible to understand the expansion of the children's market without also noting the concurrent process of market segmentation. Sarah Wadsworth argues that through this process publishers and authors created "communities of readers," conferring on each group "collective identities that exerted their own force in the literary marketplace and beyond."[180] She suggests that there were multiple children's markets, defined by age, gender, and social class, and that these market segments were "organized and cultivated" by authors and publishers to appeal to child consumers.[181] The 1860s provide multiple examples of this line of thinking by publishers with respect to gender. Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* was published in 1868, after her publisher requested that she write a story for girls. During this period, William T. Adams, known to his thousands of readers as "Oliver Optic," was writing adventure stories, quite prolifically, that were generally characterized as being "for boys." Interestingly, in the early 1860s, Lee and Shepard asked Adams to begin work on what Kilgour describes as a "new series

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[178] Casper, introduction, 38.
[179] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 185.
[180] Sarah Wadsworth, *In the Company of Books: Literature and Its "Classes" in Nineteenth-Century America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 9–11.
[181] Wadsworth, *In the Company of Books*, 22–23.

for girls — which might also be read by boys!"[182] This process of market segmentation along age, gender, and class lines was uneven and incomplete throughout this period. For instance, Christine Pawley, in her study of reading in late nineteenth-century Osage, Iowa, notes that "clear lines separating adult's and children's reading had yet to form" in the 1880s and 1890s.[183] The general trend among publishers, however, is evident.

This is also the period in which publishers such as Lee and Shepard began repackaging individual titles as "series" and also encouraging authors to write books in series. Referring to series fiction, Kilgour writes, "Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], for better or for worse, was certainly the great initiator of this method of mass production of books for children."[184] The dominance of Adams's stories, according to Kilgour, "seemed to dictate a writing formula for [Lee and Shepard] authors — simple style, lively incidents and adventures, colloquial speech to enhance up-to-dateness."[185] While this formula seemed to satisfy his readers, Adams sometimes came under fire for sensationalism by groups of educators (though Adams had served previously as a schoolmaster); librarians, who had begun to assert professional authority over children's reading; and critics, who had begun to regularly review children's books during this period.[186] These groups of expert cultural gatekeepers increasingly sought a greater role in shaping children's literary taste, as well as in regulating children's access to print. Adams's books were suspect due in part to the rapidity with which he wrote them and their formulaic nature, which called to mind the dime novel, the writing of which, as Michael Denning observes, "was viewed

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[182] Raymond L. Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard: Publishers for the People*. ([Hamden, CT]: Shoe String Press, 1965), 35.
[183] Christine Pawley, *Reading on the Middle Border: The Culture of Print in Late Nineteenth-Century Osage, Iowa* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 107.
[184] Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard*, 270.
[185] Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard*, 61.
[186] See Richard L. Darling, *The Rise of Children's Book Reviewing in America, 1865–1881* (New York: Bowker, 1968), 10. Darling found, in his study of 36 periodicals from 1865 to 1881, "printed reviews and notices of more than 2,500 books, and editions of books, with more than 4,000 separate reviews."

by literary figures as an extraordinary kind of industrial production."[187] Unlike the dime novel, however, Adams's books sold for $1.25 or $1.50 each and were available in both bookstores and through the mail.

Just as increasing market segmentation is important to understanding young people and print culture in the late nineteenth century, so are serialization and the role of children's magazines. McElligott and Patton argue that where print culture exists, "there will always be a level of serial publication which will contribute to, and be dependent upon, the increasing ubiquity of print and its related commercialisation."[188] James Mussell calls attention to the "close relationship" between periodicals and the book trade, so that their contents must be understood to "participate within the wider market for print."[189] Kilgour describes the period between 1865, the inaugural year for *Our Young Folks*, and 1872, the inaugural year for *St. Nicholas*, as "a perfect garden of delight" for the readers of children's periodicals, because several new magazines were introduced during this period.[190] Many of these periodicals serialized the fiction of popular authors of the day, as well as introduced young people to new authors. S. N. D. North, in the *History and Present Condition of the Newspaper and Periodical Press of the United States* (part of the 1880 census report), declares, "A distinctive feature of American journalism, and one which has been carried further in this country than in any other, is the periodical adapted to juvenile reading." The report describes three general types of children's periodicals in existence in 1880: Sunday school periodicals, which enjoyed "enormous" circulations because many were sold in bulk to organizations to give to young people for free; literary magazines, such as *St. Nicholas*, which, according to North, "has laid the best brains and the best pencils of the United

[187] Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1998), 18.
[188] McElligott and Patten, introduction, 6–7.
[189] James Mussell, *Science, Time and Space in the Late Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press: Movable Types* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 1.
[190] Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard*, 65.

States under tribute for the edification, amusement, and interest of young people"; and "a number of prints of the cheaper order, modeled with dangerous closeness upon the flashy, cheap literature for more adult minds, which pours in such an undiminishing stream from the presses of the Anglo-Saxon nations."[191] References to children's periodicals, mostly of the second and third types described above, are plentiful in amateur newspapers throughout the period covered by this dissertation. These relationships between amateur papers created by young people and magazines created for young people suggest a rich field to examine the complexity of print culture that many young people were immersed in — as consumers, producers, and disseminators —during this period.

North reports the existence of around two hundred children's periodicals in 1880. Though most of these were connected to Sunday schools, literary magazines flourished for much of this period. Frank L. Mott, in the third volume of his history of American magazines, which covers the years 1865 to 1885, cites 1867, the year that marks the beginning of this dissertation's period of study, as "the boom year" for children's periodicals, noting the introduction of several children's magazines including *Oliver Optic's Magazine: Our Boys and Girls*, a vehicle for publisher Lee and Shepard, and the *Riverside Magazine for Young People*, published by Hurd and Houghton.[192] Mott describes children's magazines published before the Civil War as "consistently wooden and unnatural"; however, Mott claims that children's magazines in the postbellum period strove to align themselves with "children's actual interests."[193] A number of children's magazines of the second type described by North that were published between 1867 and 1890 adopted a mission similar to that stated in the "Salutatory" of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*:

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[191] S. N. D. North, *History and Present Condition of the Newspaper and Periodical Press of the United States: With a Catalogue of the Publications of the Census Year* (Washington, DC: G.P.O., 1884), 121, https://books.google.com/books?id=HlMOAAAAIAAJ.
[192] Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines,* vol. 3, *1865–1885* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1938), 176.
[193] Mott, *History of American Magazines,* 174.

to “interest and amuse Our Boys and Girls, while it makes them wiser and better.”[194] *Oliver Optic’s Magazine* appealed to readers with a variety of interests and tastes and provided space for them to interact with editor and author Adams as correspondents. *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, as chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation demonstrate, also established mechanisms for readers to connect directly with peers who shared their interests, facilitating the development of networks among young people. Ample evidence exists that many of the young people who participated in amateur newspaper production as editors, authors, printers, and puzzlers also actively read a range of magazines for young people, notably *Oliver Optic’s Magazine* (1867–1875), *St. Nicholas* (1873–1940), and *Youth’s Companion* (1827–1929), as well as some of the weekly story papers of the third type described by North. This opens the way for a study of what David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery refer to as the “missing link” of book history: readers.[195] Amateur newspapers, children’s magazines, and story papers in this period are rich sites of transaction precisely because readers are also correspondents, authors, editors, and sometimes printers — and the publications they consume and produce circulate through intersecting and sometimes overlapping networks.

The number of books and periodicals published explicitly for children in the last decades of the nineteenth century triggered anxiety among some adults (including some critics, librarians, and children’s authors) that there was “too much” reading available for them. For instance, the head of the Bronson Library in Waterbury, Connecticut, in one report, stressed the urgent need for librarians to limit children’s reading, since parents were unable to correctly diagnose the problem:

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[194] Oliver Optic, “Salutatory,” *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, January 5, 1867, 7.
[195] David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, *Introduction to Book History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 101. ProQuest ebrary.

> That [parents] fail to realize the effects of so much reading on their children's minds is evident when we hear them say, and with no little pride, too, "Our children are great readers; they read all the time." Such parents ought to know that instead of turning out to be prodigies of learning, these library gluttons are far more likely to become prodigious idiots, and that teachers find them, as a rule, the poorest scholars and the worst thinkers.[196]

These comments suggest a belief that children possess a finite capacity to take in information and an inability to distinguish good from bad, useful from useless, meaningful from frivolous, fact from fiction. Jennifer Phegley notes a similar anxiety regarding women's reading beginning in the mid-nineteenth century: "The primary critical response to the unprecedented abundance of literary material was to initiate a new discourse that called for the regulation of women's reading in order to ensure the morality of the primary literacy educators of the family, the literary taste of the middle class, and the preservation of the nation's culture."[197] Women's reading practices had a direct bearing on those of children, so their perceived incompetence would seem to justify the increased regulation of children's reading by outside experts as well.

During the period of this study, there was great anxiety among cultural gatekeepers over the prevalence and accessibility of cheap fiction in the form of story papers, dime novels, and cheap libraries, not only to working-class readers but to middle-class children as well. In support of his campaign to suppress sensational fiction, Comstock and others routinely deployed stories about boy murderers who committed violence after reading sensational fiction of the sort found

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[196] Caroline M. Hewins, "Boys' and Girls' Reading," in *Library Work with Children: Reprints of Papers and Addresses*, selected and annotated by Alice I. Hazeltine (White Plains, NY: H.W. Wilson Company, 1917), 31.
[197] Jennifer Phegley, *Educating the Proper Woman Reader: Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2004), 1.

in story papers.[198] As is discussed in chapter 6, debates about sensational literature were taken up within amateurdom, as well, with calls to censure those amateurs who wrote for story papers, as well as to suppress publications that included such stories. The relationships between anxieties about children's reading, on the one hand, and children's periodicals and story papers, on the other, are important to consider in this study, both in terms of adult efforts to directly mediate children's access to and experience of printed material and in terms of the complex ways in which these anxieties — for instance, around sensational reading and serialized fiction — were articulated by young people themselves in amateur papers.

The United States in the late nineteenth century experienced a significant expansion of the publishing and printing industries. The amateur and professional periodicals that form the basis of this dissertation are filled with references to new books, newspapers, and magazines, in addition to advertisements for visiting cards and envelopes. A range of periodicals, amateur and professional, also feature advertisements for printing presses and supplies. Due to the widespread availability of small printing presses after 1867, individuals — including young people — and small businesses produced a large amount of printed matter that circulated locally and across distance, in addition to what was produced by professional printers and made available through printshops, booksellers, and newsstands. Amateur journalists read and corresponded with children's periodicals; they sometimes exchanged issues with professional editors; many families of amateurs subscribed to a range of periodicals, including adult literary magazines, newspapers, and trade journals; many amateurs read, corresponded with, and wrote for weekly story papers; and many read stories, as well as nonfiction, in a variety of print formats. Many amateurs edited, wrote for, and/or printed newspapers and books. Many engaged in job printing for money. While

[198] For an extended discussion of story papers, dime novels, and cheap libraries in the nineteenth century, see Denning, *Mechanic Accents* (1987). Chapter 4 of Denning's book discusses anxiety about working-class reading and efforts to suppress sensational literature.

one-to-one written correspondence remained popular and commonplace among amateurs in the 1870s and 1880s, insofar as references to letters in amateur papers provide evidence, amateurs also used print to extend peer networks, addressing many individual amateurs in a single issue of an amateur paper, in addition to addressing the general community of amateurs and a broader anonymous audience of readers.

2.5 Conclusion

Truman Spencer, an active amateur journalist in his youth, writes in his 1957 history of amateur journalism, "Youth, unaided, undirected, is its essence."[199] Setting aside the romanticized, nostalgic nature of Spencer's description, throughout the 1870s and 1880s, young people established connections directly with other young people over time and across space. They used these networks to collaborate in the production and exchange of amateur books and periodicals, as well as to cultivate friendships, identify groups of young people who shared their particular interests, and sometimes to flirt and otherwise test the boundaries increasingly prescribed for middle-class youth. As Harvey Graff has argued, the middle-class childhood ideal of the "pampered, supposedly innocent, prolonged dependence of the young" did not always mesh easily with the "enlarging sphere of youth peer culture."[200] The increasing amount and accessibility of print, Christine Bold argues, was "accompanied by the contested values, shifting power dynamics, and socio-economic upheavals of industrializing America."[201] Rather than being passive consumers of print, young amateurs were actively engaged in making sense of these shifting dynamics and rehearsing arguments from their relatively privileged positions on

[199] Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 6.
[200] Harvey Graff, *Conflicting Paths: Growing Up in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 292.
[201] Bold, introduction, 4.

social, cultural, political, and economic issues. Amateur journalism is one expression of a youth peer culture after the Civil War. It not only relied on print networks of exchange, which were themselves dependent upon an infrastructure that supported relatively fast, efficient, and affordable communication and circulation of print, but also depended on and fostered long-distance correspondence and collaboration between geographically dispersed young people, supporting the development and expansion of nonlocal peer social networks.

CHAPTER 3: BEYOND INTERACTIVITY: *OLIVER OPTIC'S MAGAZINE* AND NETWORKED READERS

3.1 "A Very General Desire": Unanticipated Uses of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*

In the penultimate issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine: Our Boys and Girls* (1867–1875), editor William Taylor Adams ("Oliver Optic") explains the evolution of the magazine's popular "Wish Correspondents" column in response to a question from a reader:

> With the first number of this Magazine we commenced a kind of chat with our readers in the Head Work, mixing in the talk with the puzzles…. But the page of space, then devoted to the chat and the puzzles, was found to be entirely insufficient, and in April of our first year we introduced "Our Letter Bag," on the third page of the cover. Before the close of the year we observed a very general desire on the part of our puzzle contributors to correspond with each other, and we occasionally inserted a line, with the other matter, like this: "Sylvan Grove would like to hear from Jersey Blue, Box 6065, New York."

Adams explains that the number of requests for correspondence continued to increase, so in May 1868 he introduced the "Wish Correspondents" department to the magazine. This department often included more than a column of addresses over the next couple of years, until Adams systematically excluded non-subscribers, who were not members of "the family." Adams concludes, "Many boys have made valuable acquaintances by the aid of this department, though we doubt not it has sometimes been used for improper purposes."[202] Adams's response highlights

[202] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, November 1875. When conducting research for this dissertation, I viewed both physical bound volumes and digitized bound volumes of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, and in each instance, the first available Our Letter Bag was dated July 6, 1867. However, Adams claims here that Our Letter Bag launched in April 1867. This is supported by the table of contents included with bound vols. 1 and 2 (1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC), which indicates that Our Letter Bag appears in nos. 17–22 and 24–26 (April–June 1867 issues). Adams's description indicates that the earliest Our Letter Bag columns were placed on the inside back cover of each issue, which was apparently not generally included when volumes were

many of the issues considered in this chapter. For instance, Adams emphasizes in this response, as he does throughout the magazine's existence, the importance of paid subscribers to the enterprise and his unwillingness to expend editorial labor on readers who did not contribute financially to the magazine. Adams's goal as an editor in this period was tripartite: instruction, entertainment, and commercial success.

Adams's response also alludes to the relaxed and intimate tone that he used to address correspondents in his role as the magazine's editor ("a kind of chat"), particularly with the active group of subscribers who regularly submitted puzzles to the magazine's "Head Work" department. Editors of puzzle departments in children's magazines published prior to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* had engaged in "breezy chat" with puzzlers, so in that sense, Adams was following well-established editorial practices; however, the advent of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* was credited with providing a "great impetus" to puzzledom.[203] Puzzlers were the first of the magazine's readers with whom Adams corresponded in the pages of the magazine. They were often avid readers and repeat correspondents, allowing Adams to establish and maintain long-running relationships with individual readers, which in turn encouraged other readers to aspire to this level of familiarity with "Oliver Optic."

Incorporating readers into a metaphorical family, as Adams does frequently during the magazine's early years, reinforces Adams's authority and experience in an asymmetrical power relationship with the magazine's young readers. The word "family" here functions in two intersecting ways. First, "family" suggests the magazine's suitability for all ages; its inoffensive content to a white, middle-class, Protestant audience; and an investment on the part of the editor

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bound. This illustrates one of the challenges of working with nineteenth-century periodicals: covers, prospectuses, and wrappers that contain potentially significant content often are not readily available.

[203] Theodore G. Meyer [Arty Fishel, pseud.], "American Puzzledom," in *A Key to Puzzledom, or, Complete Handbook of the Enigmatic Art*, compiled and published under the auspices of Eastern Puzzlers' League (New York: William W. Delaney, 1906), 14, http://books.google.com/books?id=1VhNAAAAYAAJ.

in his young readers' wellbeing. Second, "family" reinforces that the magazine catered only to subscribers and encouraged those subscribers to demonstrate loyalty. Those outside the "family," in either sense, represented a threat, both to the commercial success of the magazine and to its readers, as these outsiders, it is implied, were people who were more likely to seek contact with readers for "improper purposes" at a time in which names and addresses, including those of young people, had value to advertisers and sales agents, as well as to those engaged in fraud or other criminal activities. Sometimes, also, Adams refers generically to readers of the magazine as "friends," implying a relationship based on voluntary association rather than familial obligation, perhaps as a way to appeal to older youth who no longer viewed themselves as children — or, more likely, to maintain distance from most readers, reserving the more intimate label "family" for those who had earned a degree of intimacy not only through their subscriptions, but also through the labor they expended in corresponding with the magazine and gathering subscriptions from others.

More important to this dissertation, Adams captures in his response to the reader query about "Wish Correspondents" the unanticipated yet widespread desire of readers to correspond not only with him, but also with one another. What began as the occasional insertion by Adams of a request for correspondence from one reader to one or two other specific readers, whose names or pseudonyms had become familiar in the "Head Work" and later "Our Letter Bag" departments of the magazine, developed into "Wish Correspondents," in which readers posted their addresses and a brief description of their interests (for instance, "baseball," "birds' eggs," or "amateur newspapers") in the hopes of establishing individual relationships with geographically

dispersed readers. Groups of readers became interconnected around these shared interests, creating both networks of correspondence and, in the case of amateurdom, print networks.[204]

Finally, in this example, Adams specifies that *boys* benefited from the relationships they established with one another, but left unstated that young women were denied access to this form of networking in the magazine. Adams refused to publish the addresses of young women, despite repeated requests from young women (and young men) that he do so. *Oliver Optic's Magazine* appealed to a large number of readers in their teens (based on Adams's responses to reader correspondence in the magazine and the magazine's content), and while any desire among those readers to correspond directly with one another was unanticipated, the desire of young men to correspond with young women, of young women to correspond with young men, and even of young women to use the magazine to establish connections with one another was vexing for Adams. Nothing prevented young women from writing to young men whose addresses appeared in the magazine and little prevented young women from posing as young men and young men from posing as young women in order to attract correspondents of other genders who shared their interests. This may account for some of the "improper purposes" referred to by Adams in his response to the reader query about "Wish Correspondents."

[204] While *Oliver Optic's Magazine* catered to a young, white audience, evidence exists in "Wish Correspondents" that the magazine may have had some young African American readers, as well; for instance, the January 1874 issue of the magazine includes an entry in "Wish Correspondents" from a Baltimore reader who describes himself as "colored; wishes to improve in letter-writing."

3.2 William T. Adams and *Oliver Optic's Magazine*: Instruction, Entertainment, and Commercial Success[205]

Oliver Optic's Magazine debuted on January 1, 1867. Boston publishing firm Lee and Shepard, which pursued an advertising strategy described by Raymond Kilgour as "almost modern in its abundance, its ceaseless reiteration, its frequent cleverness and equally frequent blatancy,"[206] launched the new venture under the editorial direction of already popular juvenile author William Taylor Adams ("Oliver Optic"). Adams, who spent two decades in the Boston schools as a teacher and headmaster and served for more than a decade on the school board in Dorchester, Massachusetts,[207] began to establish himself as a writer for children with the publication of *The Boat Club; or, The Bunkers of Rippleton* (1854), "a book to meet the wants and the tastes of 'Young America.'"[208] The titles that followed in rapid succession form The Boat Club series (1854–1860), succeeded by the Riverdale stories (1862), the Woodville stories (1863–1866), and the Army and Navy series (1863–1866).[209] These books had earned Adams, writing as Oliver Optic, a substantial readership by the time he assumed the editorship of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in 1867. Adams was also a seasoned juvenile magazine editor: he had become editor of *Student and Schoolmate* in 1858.[210]

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[205] Similar descriptive material and examples in this section also appear in Jennifer Burek Pierce and Mikki Smith, "Oliver Optic and Young America: Reading Library Selves and Publishing Records for Insights into the Past," *Annual Review of Cultural Heritage Informatics* 2015 (2016): 203–27. Pierce and Smith situate *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in the context of William T. Adams's (Oliver Optic's) career, perspectives, influence, and reception. This chapter situates the magazine in the context of editor/reader relationships and peer networking among readers.

[206] Raymond L. Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard: Publishers for the People* ([Hamden, CT]: Shoe String Press, 1965), 137.

[207] Carol Gay, "William Taylor Adams (Oliver Optic)," in *American Writers for Children before 1900*, Dictionary of Literary Biography 42, edited by Glenn E. Estes (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Co., 1985), 14.

[208] Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], preface to *The Boat Club: Or, the Bunkers of Rippleton. A Tale for Boys* (Boston: Phillips, Sampson, [185?]), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/miun.aba8006.0001.001.

[209] For a comprehensive list of works by "Oliver Optic," see Dolores Blythe Jones, *An "Oliver Optic" Checklist: An Annotated Catalog-Index to the Series, Nonseries Stories, and Magazine Publications of William Taylor Adams* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985). Dates here refer to copyright dates.

[210] Jacque Roethler, "Optic, Oliver," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature,* ed. Jack Zipes (Oxford University Press, 2006), Oxford Reference.

Oliver Optic's Magazine was initially published weekly in a 12-page, 2-column format, at a subscription rate of $2.25 a year.[211] Two things about the launch of the magazine are significant: first, it was launched as a weekly (as opposed to monthly) magazine, placing it in competition with both the "cheap" weekly story papers and literary monthly children's magazines such as *Our Young Folks* (1865–1873), also published in Boston by Ticknor and Fields, and *Riverside Magazine for Young People* (1867–1870), published in New York by Hurd & Houghton but edited by Bostonian Horace Scudder; second, its editor already had thousands of devoted readers. Adams did not merely lend Oliver Optic's name to the project: in addition to publishing four serial stories a year in the magazine and agreeing not to publish in other children's periodicals, Adams solicited and wrote content for and edited almost every issue, including the "Head-Work" (puzzle) department, as well as responding in the magazine to the hundreds of letters he received from readers.[212] This degree of involvement was not unusual in this period: according to Paul Ringel, nineteenth-century commercial children's magazine editors "managed all aspects of production."[213] Though several other editors of children's magazines in this period also wrote for young people — including John Townsend Trowbridge and Lucy Larcom, who co-edited the magazine *Our Young Folks*, and Mary Mapes Dodge, who edited *St. Nicholas Magazine* (1873–1940) until her death in 1905 — none was as prolific and popular as Oliver Optic. According to a profile of Adams that appeared in an amateur newspaper produced by young people in 1874, "there is no living author sought after by the young folks, as Mr.

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[211] This was true for vol. 1 (1867, January–June). From July 1867 through December 1870, the magazine expanded to 16 pages, and cost $2.50 per year (2 volumes), or $1.25 per volume. Through 1870, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* appeared weekly; however, in 1871, it became a monthly publication. From January 1871 through December 1875, the then-monthly magazine expanded to 64 pages. In 1871, the price was $.25 per issue or $2.50 per year.

[212] The business records of publisher Lee and Shepard held at the American Antiquarian Society contain numerous requests for remittance to authors published in the magazine from *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and signed by Adams, suggesting an active role in soliciting authors and securing payment for them from the publisher. Unfortunately, the letters from readers to which Adams responded in the magazine appear not to have survived.

[213] Paul B. Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood: Children's Magazines, Urban Gentility, and the Ideal of the American Child, 1823–1918* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015), 6.

Adams is, and he owes his popularity to a pleasant style, and to a ready sympathy with the dreams, hopes, aspirations, and fancies of those for whom he writes."[214]

The inaugural issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* features the first chapter of *The Starry Flag* by Oliver Optic, which is serialized in subsequent issues and was published as a book by Lee and Shepard in 1868. "A Quaker Christmas," a short story written by another of Lee and Shepard's popular authors, "Sophie May" (Rebecca Sophia Clarke), also appears in the first issue.[215] The *North American Review*'s "Children's Books of the Year," published in January 1866, provides evidence of the popularity of Adams and Clarke in this period. The top three entries on the list are

> 1. Oliver Optic's Army and Navy Stories. Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1865. 6 vols.
> 2. Oliver Optic's Boat-Club Series. Boston: Lee and Shepard. 1865. 6 vols.
> 3. The Little Prudy Stories. By Sophie May. Boston: Lee and Shepard. 1865. 6 vols.

The accompanying article in the *North American Review* criticizes Adams, especially his "fertility" and "rapidity" as a writer. At the same time, the article asserts that Adams's books "are certainly effective, and must be popular." Clarke's Little Prudy series, on the other hand, is declared "genius."[216] Despite criticisms of Adams's work (balanced by praise for Clarke's), the attention paid here to these authors suggests that a magazine featuring their work would find an

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[214] Geo. W. Willis, "Juvenile Authors," *Dew Drop* (South Boston, MA), June 1874, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cuPf5.

[215] Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], "The Starry Flag; Or, the Young Fisherman of Cape Ann," ch. 1, *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 1, 1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC; Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], *The Starry Flag; Or, the Young Fisherman of Cape Ann* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1868), https://books.google.com/books?id=v0UCAAAAYAAJ; Sophie May [Rebecca Sophia Clarke], "A Quaker Christmas," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 1, 1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC.

[216] "Children's Books of the Year," *North American Review*, January 1866, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25107895.

enthusiastic audience and, in turn, successfully promote new work by these and other Lee and Shepard authors, including Elijah Kellogg, a regular contributor to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*.[217]

Another already well-established writer who had a relationship with Lee and Shepard made an appearance in the first issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*: abolitionist and women's suffrage advocate Julia Ward Howe contributed a poem.[218] Well-known naturalist E. A. Samuels[219] contributed a sketch, and a brief story attributed to "Sandy M'Neil" entitled "My First New Year's Day in America" appears, too.[220] Several departments that endured through volumes, some until the magazine's final issue in December 1875, are also introduced in the first issue: "Original Dialogue" (inviting performance), "The Orator" (complete with accompanying gestures), "The Playground" (encouraging indoor and outdoor play for boys and girls), and "Head-Work" (puzzles). As mentioned in the previous section, "Our Letter Bag" is introduced in April 1867, though Adams regularly invites and references letters from readers in the pages of the magazine in the months prior to its introduction. "Pigeon Hole Papers," a second, more substantial letter department, is launched in 1871, when the magazine shifts to a monthly publication schedule and enlarges. ("Our Letter Bag" continues until the final issue, as well, focusing on responses to puzzlers and brief inquiries.)

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[217] See, for instance, Kellogg's "The Spark of Genius; Or, the College Life of James Trafton," serialized January–June 1871, and "Sophomores of Radcliffe; Or, the Bosom Friends of James Trafton," serialized July–December 1871, in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, https://books.google.com/books?id=fEYAAAAAYAAJ.
[218] Julia Ward Howe, "To Our Boys and Girls," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 1, 1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC.
[219] E. A. Samuels, "The Gray Squirrel," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 1, 1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC. American ornithologist Henry Wetherbee Henshaw wrote of E. A. Samuels, "I fancy there were few boys who collected birds' eggs round Boston in the sixties who did not know E. A. Samuels. He was then connected with the State Agricultural Department, and his office was in the Boston State House. At that period he was collecting data for a book on the 'Birds of New England and Adjacent States', the advent of which was eagerly looked for by us boys for several years." Henry Wetherbee Henshaw, *The Condor* 37, no. 4 (May–June 1919): 106, doi:10.2307/1362459.
[220] M'Neil, Sandy, "My First New Year's Day in America," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 1, 1867, https://books.google.com/books?id=JZE0o9EgWQcC.

The magazine's New England origins are apparent in this inaugural issue: Adams, Howe, Samuels, and publisher Lee and Shepard were associated with Boston in this period; Clarke was born in and resided in Maine. Much of the content of the magazine over the course of its existence reflects both its New England roots and Adams's class position, educational background, and leisure interests. For instance, the magazine's content generally presupposes that readers endure New England winters and live in warm homes with large rooms suitable for group parlor games. It also generally presupposes that readers have the means to enjoy activities such as yachting, swimming, and ice-skating. Adams's responses to reader correspondence generally expect readers to demonstrate a particular type and level of education, regardless of access to formal schooling. This is largely in keeping with other nineteenth-century commercially oriented children's magazines; Ringel notes that the formulas of these magazines "suggest that the editors believed their customers were predominantly white, Protestant, northern, urban, disproportionately educated, and relatively prosperous."[221]

The reach of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, however, extended beyond New England, though less clearly beyond its middle-class orientation, despite its initial status as a weekly rather than monthly publication. The magazine secured subscribers and established a readership throughout the United States, including in the West and South. Estimated circulation numbers for *Oliver Optic's Magazine* range from 11,000 to 22,000,[222] though circulation numbers do not account for readers who accessed shared family or institutional copies, or who borrowed the magazine from friends — a practice soundly denounced by Adams, who urged every reader to subscribe and

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[221] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood,* 6.
[222] Peter Stoneley, *Consumerism and American Girls' Literature, 1860–1940* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 38; *Geo. P. Rowell and Co.'s American Newspaper Directory* (New York: Geo. P. Rowell & Co., 1872), 288; *Geo. P. Rowell and Co.'s American Newspaper Directory* (New York: Geo. P. Rowell & Co., 1875), 248.

every subscriber to refuse to lend copies.[223] While these numbers pale in comparison with those for *Youth's Companion*, for instance, which was reported to have a circulation of 385,000 copies in 1885,[224] *Oliver Optic's Magazine* played a particular and unanticipated role in facilitating the development of a geographically dispersed youth peer culture that extended beyond its pages.

The "Salutatory" message of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* defines its mission: to "interest and amuse Our Boys and Girls, while it makes them wiser and better."[225] Adams continually expresses concern in the magazine about young people's moral, intellectual, and physical development, and provides magazine readers with guidance in all of these areas. He does this not only through editorials, regular departments, and informational pieces, but also through his responses to readers' letters. The fiction that Adams penned as Oliver Optic also reflects the position that literature for young people should be not only instructive and informative, but above all entertaining. The insistence that materials for children should be entertaining as well as morally and/or intellectually instructive is neither unique nor American in origin;[226] however, Adams and publisher Lee and Shepard were adept at marketing the work of Oliver Optic as the antidote to both "sensational" literature and the didactic literature for children that had been prevalent throughout much of the nineteenth century.

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[223] For instance, a correspondent to the magazine asked, "I want to know if you think it would be doing right for me to lend my Magazine to other boys, who spend their money for cigars, and then want to borrow books to read?" Adams responded, "We should think they would be ashamed to ask it, only such boys have no sense of shame." *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, August 22, 1868.

[224] Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1865–1885* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 6.

[225] Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], "Salutatory," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, January 5, 1867.

[226] English philosopher John Locke (1623–1704) has been credited with popularizing the idea, in the eighteenth century of "uniting amusement with instruction." Sam Pickering, "Children's Literature," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature*, eds. Jay Parini and Phillip W. Leininger (Oxford University Press, 2004), Oxford Reference. As F. J. Harvey Darton pointed out in his *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1932), the frontispiece of the first children's book published by John Newbery in 1744, *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book,* was inscribed "Delectando monemus," or "Instruction with Delight" (p. 2).

Despite Adams's and his publisher's claims, Oliver Optic's stories were often criticized for "sensationalism" — a criticism that Adams vehemently denied and Lee and Shepard deftly exploited. The 1869 prospectus for *Oliver Optic's Magazine* proclaims:

> This popular author [Oliver Optic], while he writes AN EXCITING STORY, which shall afford young readers no excuse for resorting to the dangerous trash so abundant at the present time, endows his heroes and heroines with pure and noble characters, worthy the imitation of youth, and depicts vice in its true colors, so that the young heart may loathe and shun it. The publishers confidently challenge friend or enemy to point to an impure thought or an immoral sentiment on the pages of any of his numerous works.[227]

Here is the dual strategy of Lee and Shepard at work: appeal to the children who enjoy reading the "dangerous trash" in the weekly story papers by promising an "exciting story" that "depicts vice in its true colors," while assuring parents that children's thirst for excitement will be thoroughly satisfied even as they learn the difference between good and evil, right and wrong. Adams's fiction could be said to fall into a category that Ringel refers to as "cautionary genteel sensational narratives," which were popular after the American Civil War.[228]

Though the stories of Oliver Optic had many supporters among reviewers, librarians, and other cultural gatekeepers, detractors argued that the stories were more likely to "lower" middle-class boys and girls than to uplift working-class children.[229] Louisa May Alcott gives voice to

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[227] "*Our Boys and Girls* Prospectus," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, June 5, 1869, cover 2.
[228] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood*, 112.
[229] To read more about libraries and Oliver Optic, see Pierce and Smith, "Oliver Optic and Young America," and Arthur P. Young, "Banish the Books: Horatio Alger, Jr., the Censors, the Libraries, and the Readers, 1870–1910," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (2013): 420–34, doi:10.1353/chq.2013.0058.

these criticisms in her novel *Eight Cousins*, first serialized in *St. Nicholas* magazine in 1875.[230] Character Mrs. Jessie launches an attack on the writers of popular books for boys "because their motto is, 'Be smart, and you will be rich,' instead of 'Be honest, and you will be happy.'" She refers to books that appear to be of a better class than sensational literature as "optical delusions," a clear reference to Oliver Optic.[231] The September 1875 issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* includes a blistering editorial response that concludes with a personal attack:

> Ah, Louise, you are very smart, and you have become rich. Your success mocks that of the juvenile heroes you despise. Even the author of "Dick Dauntless" and "Sam Soaker," whoever he may be, would not dare to write up a heroine who rose so rapidly from poverty and obscurity to riches and fame as you did; but in view of the wholesale perversion of the truth we have pointed out, we must ask you to adopt the motto you recommend for others — "Be honest and you will be happy," instead of the one you seem to have chosen: "Be smart and you will be rich."[232]

That Alcott's criticism of Adams's work appeared in rival magazine *St. Nicholas* likely added to the sting, as Alcott's not-so-subtle reference would have passed under the ever-watchful eye of *St. Nicholas* editor Mary Mapes Dodge, author of *Hans Brinker; Or, the Silver Skates*.[233] Dodge and her publishers, Scribner and Company, wanted *St. Nicholas* to be a venue for high-quality literature by adult literary standards that would be accessible to and enjoyed by children, and to

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[230] Louisa May Alcott, *Eight Cousins; Or, the Aunt-Hill* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1875), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.c052816073; Louisa May Alcott, "Eight Cousins," S*t. Nicholas*, January–October 1875.
[231] Louisa May Alcott, "Eight Cousins," chapter 17, *St. Nicholas*, August 1875.
[232] "Sensational Books for Boys," Editorial, *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, September 1875. This incident is recounted in full in multiple sources including Richard Darling, *The Rise of Children's Book Reviewing in America, 1865–1881* (New York: Bowker, 1968), 35–38, and Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard*, 164–67.
[233] Mary Mapes Dodge, *Hans Brinker; Or, the Silver Skates* (New York: James O'Kane, 1866).

this end Dodge persuaded writers such as Alcott to contribute.[234] Lee and Shepard, and Adams, on the other hand, pursued a more explicitly commercial strategy, promising quality, but emphasizing the affordability of their magazine relative to the amount of new content published in every issue and the popularity of the authors whose work was published there.

Editorials in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* led Richard Darling, in his study on the early history of American children's book reviewing, to declare the magazine "in some ways the strangest children's magazine published in America."[235] Leonard Marcus argues that the magazine offered Adams the opportunity to "air his views on juvenile literature and, on occasion, take aim at his enemies."[236] More relevant to this dissertation, the magazine also provided Adams a weekly, then monthly, communication channel with his readers. Were he not an editor, Adams, as a popular author, undoubtedly would have received fan mail from readers and invitations for public appearances; as an editor, he also received questions on a wide range of topics and indications of readers' broad interests and concerns, which provided him with greater insight into his reading audience and a greater opportunity to practice the paternalism common among children's magazine editors in this period.[237] In addition to opportunities to further develop and perform the persona of Oliver Optic in the pages of the magazine, Adams could also establish himself more intimately as "Uncle Oliver" to a select group of his readers: those subscribers who corresponded with the magazine.

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[234] To read more about the relationship between *St. Nicholas* under the editorship of Mary Mapes Dodge and Louisa May Alcott, see Daniel Shealy, "'Work Well Done': Louisa May Alcott and Mary Mapes Dodge," in *St. Nicholas and Mary Mapes Dodge,* eds. Susan R. Gannon, Suzanne Rahn, and Ruth Anne Thompson, 171–88 (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Company, 2004).
[235] Darling, *Rise of Children's Book Reviewing*, 213.
[236] Leonard S. Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe: Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2008), 38.
[237] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood*, 113.

3.3 "Uncle Oliver": Cultivating a Family of Consumers

In the June 11, 1870, issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Adams addresses readers on the eve of his six-month vacation in Europe:

> For three years and a half we have been in weekly communication with our young friends. We have opened and read thousands and thousands of letters from them; and we have covered thousands and thousands of pages of paper in their service….
>
> We have hundreds of little things to remember them by — whole volumes of pictures, drawings, photographs, and other things. Even the skeleton of our poor bear — whose collar hangs by the side of our desk — seems to shake his bones, to remind us of the good will of our Bangor friends. A continental seven-dollar bill tells us of another; and now on the lapel of our vest, we wear the insignia of the Order of the Pencil — a gold jewel, sent to us by the Oliver Optic Lodge of Chicago…. The big trout is in another room; and over the back of a valuable volume hangs a pretty book-mark, the gift of one of our fair southern girls….[238]

This passage signals to readers that they could not only correspond with Adams through the magazine, but also cultivate a real-world relationship with him through material gifts that would carry special shared significance. It suggests that intimacy between Adams and his readers was possible. Others note the intimacy readers felt when engaging with the magazine: Adams "spoke in a fatherly way to the boys and girls who were interested in Head-Work. His style of writing appealed strongly to the young folks and the readers of the magazine soon came to regard themselves as of one family."[239] One correspondent likens reading "Our Letter Bag" to "sitting

[238] Oliver Optic, Editorial Correspondence, *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, June 11, 1870.
[239] Meyer, "American Puzzledom," 14.

down and chatting with the family."[240] While each issue of the magazine contains a variety of content, the departments that feature readers' contributions — mainly puzzles and letters (or at least Adams's responses to those letters) — are primary ways in which Adams cultivated loyalty to the magazine, to his (and those of other Lee and Shepard authors') books, and to his worldview.

While regular readers were invited to *feel* like family in the magazine, some — but importantly not all — had "family" status conferred upon them by Adams as a result of their demonstrated financial commitment to the magazine's success. During the first few months of "Our Letter Bag," the most devoted members of this community of readers (as measured by the number of additional paid subscribers they recruited) are acknowledged as part of the "family." These readers receive the most attention and praise from "Uncle Oliver," as opposed to the attention Adams pays to the magazine's "friends," a general designation for subscribers. Adams encourages "friends" to furnish clubs (of five or more subscribers) so that they, too, might become "family": "Kind words are very pleasant, but clubs [of subscribers] are the refined gold of friendship. Send on your list [of subscribers]."[241] Adams also chastises those readers who claim membership in the family without earning it: "'Dear Uncle Oliver,' Blackhawk begins. Has he sent in his club? If so, all right; if not, not quite."[242] Adams playfully enforces the rules of membership in this most exclusive community of subscribers to motivate readers to "work" for the magazine by not only subscribing but also recruiting new subscribers.

This "family" rhetoric subsides somewhat by the third volume, but it continues to be deployed primarily to praise someone for promoting the magazine and increasing its subscriber base: "Our dearly beloved nephew Quiz makes up his list of subscribers to fourteen. The society

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[240] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 1871.
[241] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, May 30, 1968.
[242] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, July 6, 1967.

he mentioned before has been formed, and a clause incorporated into the constitution forbidding the members to lend their Magazines…. We recommend this sort of an organization as a mutual help to *Our Boys and Girls* and the editor."[243] As previously mentioned, Adams repeatedly admonishes subscribers against lending their magazines. This contrasts with the position of Mary Mapes Dodge, who "encouraged the circulation of *St. Nicholas* among children too poor to pay for their subscription."[244] Whereas Dodge encourages readers to send their back issues to those serving the poor, Adams recommends that children send money to Lee and Shepard for covers so that they might have their back issues bound. Here one can see how Adams links intimacy with consumerism: financial support for the magazine admits readers to Adams's inner circle; failure to pay for the magazine is portrayed as a moral failing.

Adams treated his subscribers as a resource: he drew on their enthusiasm for Oliver Optic's stories, invited them to interact with him through their letters, and put as many of them to work as he could to ensure the profitability and longevity of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. Even after the "family" metaphor fades from regular use in the magazine, Adams periodically reasserts his avuncular authority: "Those of our boys and girls who think Oliver Optic is in Europe are greatly mistaken; he will not go till summer time, and meanwhile he reads every letter that comes to him, and watches over his family as zealously as ever."[245] This could be read as an attempt to assure young readers that they had not been abandoned for more interesting pursuits; however, it could also be read as a ploy to keep readers working hard to secure subscribers to the magazine — and, with those subscriptions, to earn the approval of "Uncle Oliver."

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[243] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, August 1, 1868.
[244] Suzanne Rahn, "*St. Nicholas* and Its Friends: The Magazine-Child Relationship," in *"St. Nicholas" and Mary Mapes Dodge: The Legacy of a Children's Magazine Editor, 1873–1905*, eds. Susan R. Gannon, Suzanne Rahn and Ruth Anne Thompson (Jefferson, NC: 2004), 101.
[245] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 19, 1870.

In the relatively brief period of the existence of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* (compared to *Youth's Companion* or *St. Nicholas*), its editorial approach remains consistent: the magazine addresses young readers as flawed but intelligent and capable individuals who are active consumers in need of responsible adult guidance to make good choices. Adams, as editor, encourages young people's endeavors while admonishing their vanity and urging them to follow counsel from parents, teachers, and other adults in their lives (himself included). As long as young correspondents to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* practiced what Ringel refers to as "American gentility," "by constructing a public persona that balanced polite manners, Protestant morality, and tasteful display of consumer goods"[246] — and as long as they were subscribers — Adams responded to them as part of his community of family and friends. If, however, correspondents deviated from the script, they might find themselves publicly shamed and dismissed in "Our Letter Bag."

The acerbic editorial voice that Adams famously aimed at critics such as Alcott is also deployed in his responses to correspondents, though usually delivered with zest rather than anger. Examples abound in "Our Letter Bag" of brief, sometimes snarky responses to readers regarding their letters and their submissions of puzzles and other creative work. Here are a few selections from the July 20, 1867, "Our Letter Bag":

> — "Lulu wishes to know how Willie Wisp can send so many articles to the Magazine — wishes we would find out and let her know. He can send them by mail, and does. Are your puzzles original, Lulu?"
>
> — "G.M.S. sends us 'A Bachelor's Story,' about 'first love,' and such things, for which we have no use. Our girls don't believe in bachelors, and we cannot print their excuses."

[246] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood*, 7.

— "E.C.S.'s letter came to hand. The letter was so interesting we could not help printing the whole of it. The price of binding will be about one dollar."[247]

In response to "Bob's" request for a "letter department" in a later issue, Adams responds, "It wouldn't pay to put such crude literature into print, however gratifying to the vanity of Young America."[248]

While Adams continually reinforces an asymmetrical power dynamic based on his status as an adult, he also positions himself as a forward-thinking advocate for his young readers. For instance, in response to a critic's warning that "sensational" stories by Adams and others would harm boys, Adams writes: "We believe in and respect the boys. We believe that 'bright boys' have common sense."[249] In response to a letter about a subscriber's brother's success as an amateur job printer, Adams responds, "We are continually reproved for making boys too smart, and we like to hear all that can be truly said on our side." Adams claims to take pleasure in upsetting "all the theories of the 'old fogies.'"[250] On the one hand, Adams was deeply invested as an author in retaining and gaining new readers for his books and the magazine. He was savvy enough to defend his reputation as an author publicly in a way that was more likely to stir controversy than to quell it, which had the added benefit of generating more interest in his books. On the other hand, his assertion of confidence in "the boys" and their decision-making abilities is significant at a time when cultural gatekeepers were expressing concern that there was "too much" reading available for young people. Even Sophie May (pseudonym of Rebecca Sophia Clarke), Lee and Shepard's most popular author after Adams and a regular contributor to *Oliver*

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[247] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, July 20, 1867.
[248] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 8, 1868.
[249] Oliver Optic, "Books for Boys," Editorial Chit-Chat, *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, April 1874.
[250] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, May 1871.

Optic's Magazine, expressed unease over the emphasis on quantity over quality.[251] Still, it was in Adams's, Clarke's, and Lee and Shepard's financial interest to encourage a view of young people — among adults and young people themselves — as smart, capable readers rather than as easily influenced, passive consumers.

In "Our Letter Bag," Adams's voice sets the tone, with the words of young correspondents sparingly shared. On the other hand, the "Pigeon Hole Papers," launched in 1871, is described as a space to "give extracts from very clever letters, where our friends can feel that they have a department for themselves, in which they can communicate with each other and with the editor…."[252] In practice, however, Adams's voice dominates there, too, and few substantial excerpts of reader correspondence appear. Adams trivializes in advance young people's contributions to the new department as "many a little topic, not important enough for the dignity of 'an article.'"[253] This ambivalence toward young people as producers and participants runs throughout his interactions with readers. This is not to suggest that Adams was more ambivalent than his contemporary editorial peers. To the contrary, the ambivalence is more pronounced in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* precisely because Adams invited more reader participation and encouraged young people's productions more than editors of other literary children's magazines, challenging his ideological commitments as well as his editorial and adult authority in unexpected ways.

Ringel suggests that many American children's magazines in the postbellum period failed in part because of editors' "reluctance to accept readers as participatory consumers." He argues,

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[251] Clarke made the following complaint to Lee and Shepard in 1869: "Of the making of children's books there is literally no end. It is fairly discouraging to look at publishers' lists nowadays; and I continue to wonder if it is really useful or worth while to surfeit the little ones with so much reading. Still I suppose somebody will take my place if I step out, and perhaps I might as well banish my scruples." Quoted in Kilgour, *Lee and Shepard*, 88. Clarke's self-serving claim that she might as well continue despite her qualms suggests an awareness of greater market forces driving the production of books and periodicals for young readers in this period.

[252] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, January 1871.

[253] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, January 1871.

“Seeking to shape rather than meet the demands of their audiences, the magazines’ editorial policies kept their readership at unsustainable levels.”[254] Ringel characterizes this as the result of a tension between “ideology and commerce”: “The producers of *Our Young Folks* and the [*Riverside Magazine for Young People*] were elite in their sensibilities but not in their incomes or their ancestry, and their customers … were not the mass American audience of the [*Youth’s*] *Companion* or Beadle’s dime novels. Instead, they were from the more educated and prosperous segments of genteel American readers” who demanded “engagement with contemporary market cultures.”[255] Similar arguments could be made regarding *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, though while Adams expected readers to be familiar with elite culture, his sensibilities were more utilitarian and the magazine’s response to readers’ desire to participate in “contemporary market cultures” may have differed from those in Ringel’s example. On the one hand, *Oliver Optic’s Magazine* attempted to position itself as a literary children’s magazine, though it emphasized entertainment and popularity over quality, celebrated commercial culture (even when creative content was steeped in nostalgia for an idyllic past), and encouraged an entrepreneurial spirit among readers (but not at the expense of formal education). On the other hand, Lee and Shepard attempted to differentiate *Oliver Optic’s Magazine* and Adams’s stories from dime novel literature — though they shared with that literature an emphasis on entertainment and commercial success — instead orienting the magazine toward a Northern, urban, middle-class audience, thus limiting its reach.

In *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, the tension was not primarily between ideology and “participatory consumption”; after all, Adams stressed the role of readers as consumers through his relentless emphasis in the magazine on subscriptions, clubs, and premiums, not to mention the presence of advertisements (many of them for Lee and Shepard titles). For instance, Adams

[254] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood,* 113–14.
[255] Ringel, *Commercializing Childhood,* 115.

printed in “Our Letter Bag” what he describes as a “model letter” from a correspondent: “*Mr. Oliver Optic:* Enclosed you find $2.50 for one year’s subscription to OUR BOYS AND GIRLS — the best paper afloat.”[256] The letter is brief and without error, praises the magazine, and — significantly — was accompanied by money. Adams also made changes to content and policy based on reader interests. In response to one correspondent’s query regarding the identity of the magazine’s assistant editor, Adams responds:

> His name is “legion,” comprising every subscriber, every reader, every one who writes us a letter, or sends us a kind word. Our army of “assistants” is great, and continually greater; and the bright ideas, capital suggestions, and sharp thoughts that come pouring into our room, and cover our table [as] snow-flakes cover the ground, — all these are reckoned as co-workers.[257]

Adams here frames young people as co-producers of the magazine, praising their contributions to his editorial vision. Readers, in this formulation, are not passive consumers; their past and present activity shapes the magazine’s future content. Adams embraced “participatory consumption” far more than his contemporaries, as Ringel characterizes them; instead, the tension in Adams’s case would be more accurately described as existing between ideology and participatory production. Adams embraced commerce (though he could also be nostalgic) and sought to prepare young readers to participate in the marketplace fully as responsible consumers, yet his ambivalence toward repeated requests for more space for reader-generated content (expanded puzzles and letters departments, a young writers’ department to showcase creative work) suggests a lack of belief that young people’s work could have aesthetic or commercial value. Though couched in terms of young people’s vanity — a moral shortcoming — Adams’s

[256] *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, January 25, 1868.
[257] *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, January 15, 1870.

resistance to unchecked reader-generated content had an underlying commercial basis: content by readers would neither promote the Oliver Optic brand nor help Lee and Shepard to sell more books, both of which were primary functions of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*.[258]

3.4 *Oliver Optic's Magazine*: From Interactivity to Networked Activity

In his preface to *The Starry Flag*, Adams writes that since its publication in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, he has "found allusions to it in at least a hundred letters from young persons, who seem to be strongly impressed with the opinion that the whole story has not been told." To avoid "disappoint[ing] his young friends," Adams announces plans to write a sequel.[259] Here he credits young readers of the magazine with the creation of a new Oliver Optic story. Corresponding with the magazine becomes an act of collaboration with Adams as an author, helping to determine which stories he will tell for these same readers and their peers in the future. This illusory invitation for readers to imagine themselves as coproducers is one way in which nineteenth-century periodicals for youth such as *Oliver Optic's Magazine* function as interactive spaces. Though this specific claim of reader influence is likely disingenuous, as Adams's books were almost always conceived as part of a multivolume series from the outset, the value to Adams as an author of his access as an editor to a constant flow of reader opinions, interests, and ideas should not be discounted. In other words, while readers were invited to imagine themselves as producers as well as consumers of print culture, Adams and his publisher were better able to understand those readers as consumers and to write for and market to them

[258] This is an interesting contrast to many of the weekly story papers that both contained more reader-generated content (creative content, letters, puzzles, classified advertisements) than *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and also had higher circulations — and, one would assume, revenues.

[259] Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], preface to *The Starry Flag; or, The Young Fisherman of Cape Ann* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1868), 6, https://books.google.com/books?id=v0UCAAAAYAAJ.

accordingly. The power relationships were asymmetrical; however, influences were bidirectional.

Oliver Optic's Magazine specifically invites readers to interact with it as a periodical in other ways, as well. As mentioned previously, the magazine features several regular departments that encourage performance and play. Both "Original Dialogues" and "The Orator" invite practice and performance, which then indicates the need for an audience, presumably one consisting of existing or potential readers of the magazine in the performer's home or neighborhood. "The Playground" describes various types of indoor and outdoor play for boys and girls, and includes rules for parlor games and sports, promoting group activities that had the potential, among other things, to enlarge the sphere of the magazine's influence. "The Playground" is also a place in which young readers occasionally provided content for an entire "Playground," or for descriptions and rules of play for particular games, or baseball scores for local teams. In the area of play, Adams was willing to confer authority on young people, as many of his own contributions to "The Playground" were steeped in nostalgia for his own youth.[260]

"Head Work," the puzzle department, in which the vast majority of puzzles were submitted by readers, also offers multiple kinds of interactivity with the periodical: solving puzzles alone or in groups, comparing puzzle solutions with family and friends, submitting solutions to Adams for his approval, submitting puzzles for possible publication, or writing to Adams to comment on the puzzles submitted by other "Head Workers." Throughout the run of the magazine, many of the responses from Adams in "Our Letter Bag" are related to puzzles, including questioning their originality, critiquing their quality, sharing their humor, reiterating submission guidelines, indicating acceptance or rejection, or commenting on creative solutions to

[260] See Mikki Smith, "Learning to Play, Playing to Learn: *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, 1867–1875," paper presented at the 40th Annual Children's Literature Association Conference, Biloxi, Mississippi, June 13–15, 2013.

those puzzles submitted by other readers. Adams also routinely attempts in “Our Letter Bag” to quell the impatience of correspondents whose puzzles had been accepted and were awaiting publication, as the process could take years — and many accepted puzzles were never published at all.[261] This provides evidence of the popularity of “Head Work” and of the number of young men and women who not only interacted with physical copies of the magazine, but also participated in the cultures of puzzledom and correspondence fostered by the magazine. The practice of creative pseudonym use by correspondents evolved in the “Head Work” department: “The puzzles in the first few issues were printed anonymously, later the initials of the writers were published, and finally the nom de plume made its appearance. It is an admitted fact that the nom de plume has played no unimportant part in fostering in Puzzledom that spirit of mystic fraternity which is the delight of its devotees.”[262] Here, the encouragement of creative pseudonyms on the part of puzzlers — and other correspondents to *Oliver Optic’s Magazine* — helped to engage those readers and provide them with a sense of membership in a community.

The remainder of this section focuses primarily on two other departments that relied on reader interactions with the periodical: “Our Letter Bag,” which includes the “Wish Correspondents” department, and “Pigeon Hole Papers,” which regularly features sections headed “Amateurs” and “Conventions.” The one-column engraving that introduces “Our Letter Bag” in every issue until 1871 features a bearded man, representing the figure of Oliver Optic, sitting at a desk, pen in hand, presumably responding to a letter. The desk is surrounded by an untidy pile of letters from readers, with two naked, winged cherubic figures (which Adams refers to as “imps” or “the stupids”) emptying their letter bags onto it, and two more “imps”

[261] For instance, the following appears in response to one puzzler’s query: “Pittsburg, the ways of the engraver are slow. We have excellent manuscripts in our accepted drawer, waiting these two years for a chance to get into print. They will see the light some time. So will your rebuses.” *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 13, 1869.

[262] Meyer, “American Puzzledom,” 14.

approaching with full sacks of letters in the background. Adams routinely refers to the hundreds or even thousands of letters received by the magazine from its readers that are

> so commendatory of the Magazine, or of our own stories in it, or of independent books, that we cannot, of course, decently allude to them; at least not to those parts which affect our individual modesty…. [W]e only mention this subject to assure all our young friends that we are grateful to them for the many kind words they have spoken, though we fail to mention them in the Magazine. We treasure them up in our heart, and they help us wonderfully when we are at work.[263]

Adams's recurring commentary on the number of letters he received from readers — "Such a quantity of letters! they fill our table, our pigeon-holes, our basket, our shelves; they fall upon us, around us, over us, like the snow-flakes…"[264] — was not an unusual strategy among editors; Brazeau notes that the editor of antebellum periodical *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion* (1848–1857) employed a similar strategy, linking readers' letters to the success of the magazine, and attributing "the financial health of the magazine to the efforts of its young readers."[265] According to Brazeau, the editor "situates readers as valuable contributors, enacting a pedagogy of partial collaboration," in which he, as editor, continually reinforces his role as expert with respect to letter writing.[266] Adams, too, routinely comments on the quality or shortcomings of readers' letters, and in one issue devotes an entire page of the magazine to a piece entitled "Hints for Writers," in which he focuses on the "merely mechanical work" of writing, rather than writing as "literary composition." He admonishes writers for their carelessness and haste, resulting in misspellings and illegibility. While he assures correspondents

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[263] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, November 1872.
[264] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, January 1871.
[265] Alicia Brazeau, "'I Must Have My Gossip with the Young Folks': Letter Writing and Literacy in *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2013): 165.
[266] Brazeau, 164, 166.

that “we do not look for the accuracy that belongs to older people,” with effort, young people could develop into “model correspondents.”[267]

Adams’s expertise in the magazine extends beyond writing into the conduct of research, and he often responds to readers’ questions with indications of where they should look for answers. He also rewards their research initiatives. For instance, after recommending to a correspondent the two-volume *Natural History of Insects*, *Jaegers’s Insects*, and the forty-volume *Naturalists’ Library* — all of which, Adams notes, could be furnished by Lee and Shepard — he adds, “Perhaps Professor Agassiz, of Cambridge, or the Secretary of the Society of Natural History, Boston, would be pleased to clear up your perplexities on the subject. So much research as your letter exhibits would certainly be interesting to them.”[268] On certain subjects, Adams acknowledges the expertise of his readers. For instance, in response to a query about the Novelty printing press, a popular model among amateur journalists, Adams asks, “Can any of our friends tell whether it is good or not?”[269] This invites young readers to participate in the larger community as experts and to collaborate with Adams in addressing other readers’ questions.

Oliver Optic’s Magazine provides readers with a number of opportunities to interact with its content and its editor on a range of subjects, though Adams continually limits the scope of those interactions, eliminating or sparingly excerpting correspondents’ words in “Our Letter Bag” and using “Pigeon Hole Papers” as much as a platform to publish information that did not fit elsewhere as to provide space for longer excerpts of correspondents’ letters. And though young readers’ fiction, poetry, and sketches are very occasionally accepted for publication, Adams refuses, despite repeated requests, to create a department for young writers to share their

[267] “Hints to Writers,” *Oliver Optic’s Magazine,* February 1872.
[268] *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 13, 1869.
[269] *Oliver Optic’s Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, January 1871.

work. In his responses to letters in the magazine, Adams adopts the role of gatekeeper within this community of correspondents, frequently using the metaphor of a door that would either admit individuals to the community or their puzzles to the magazine or keep them out.[270] In this way, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* is given not only dimensionality but a fixed point of entry by Adams. Readers are encouraged to interact with the magazine as correspondents, but Adams continually reminds them of his editorial authority to determine the scope and extent of those interactions.

The widespread use of pseudonyms among correspondents (for instance, "B. Right," "Lun A. Tic," "M.A. Chine," "Perry Winkle," "N.O. Body," and "S.T. Upid"), playful in nature, helped to transform the "imagined community" of readers into a tangible community for some, in which individual correspondents to the magazine established and performed an identity in print and referenced and associated themselves with other correspondents' pseudonymous identities in and through the pages of the magazine over time.[271] Many of these correspondents were old enough to recall the experience of living through the American Civil War, yet shared a common sense of belonging to a "wide awake" Young America as represented in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. Pseudonyms encouraged playful participation in the community while providing a layer of anonymity that might encourage readers to submit questions or creative work with less fear of embarrassment. Interaction with the magazine and active participation in it as correspondents came to have an added dimension for some that extended beyond the magazine's pages. Correspondents submitted requests to communicate outside the magazine with others based on familiarity with their pseudonymous identities as represented in the magazine.

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[270] Examples from "Our Letter Bag" follow: "A Utica correspondent cannot come in until he changes his name" (March 28, 1868); "Johnnie Grub, keep a knocking at the door, and you will get in; do not give up, but persevere" (November 26, 1870); "Annie Gray Mattock can come in, but the puzzles cannot" (December 1872).

[271] The concept of "imagined communities" was developed by Benedict Anderson with respect to the nation, which was, he argued "an imagined political community": "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 6.

Adams formalizes this process in May 1868 by adding "Wish Correspondents" to "Our Letter Bag." Here (male) subscribers could include their addresses and request letters either from specific other (male) subscribers, or from readers generally who shared their interests, in which case their entry would contain a parenthetical note such as "specimens of boys' papers." As the number of these kinds of requests increased, Adams changed the magazine's policy: "[T]hose who express a wish for an interchange of letters must hereafter send their true name, and an assurance that they are regular buyers or subscribers."[272] Adams does not provide a reason for this change in that moment, though it was likely driven both by a desire to concentrate editorial labor on regular readers, in keeping with Adams's general commercial orientation, and a concern that pseudonymous requests for correspondence might expose young readers to unwanted or unsavory attention, either from adults or, in the case of young women, from young men. Evidence exists that some of these requests for correspondence were heartily received; for instance, "Frank, De L. Baxter says that he has received more than thirty letters asking for stamps, and that he has disposed of his whole collection."[273] "Wish Correspondents" became an important mechanism through which readers could establish not only one-to-one correspondence with other readers, but also networks of correspondence with many readers. It also facilitated the production, dissemination, and exchange of youth-created amateur papers during the height of amateur journalism in the 1870s, which are discussed in the next chapter.

In addition to requests from correspondents to exchange letters with other subscribers, the idea of a "badge" that readers could wear in their hometowns so they might recognize other subscribers began to catch on, and comments and questions about the badge appear in "Our Letter Bag" for a brief period in 1867 and 1868:

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[272] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, July 4, 1868.
[273] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 19, 1870.

> Rob sends this stirring appeal to his fellow-readers in St. Louis, of which they will take notice and govern themselves accordingly: 'St. Louisians, please wear the badge. I want to get acquainted with some readers of the Magazine.' He suggests a silver ten-cent piece, with the letters engraved upon it. That would do nicely, but where will you get the coin? What do you think of two awls, one worn over each eye?[274]

Adams prints some of these requests, and also some of the descriptions of the badges that correspondents designed for themselves: "Jerry Jingle has a badge—'a solid silver shield, nicely chased,' with the design of an awl above two eyes, and a club underneath, with his pseudonym, 'Jerry Jingle,' round the edge. The Badgers can't fail to recognize him."[275] Correspondents begin to refer to the "badge family," as opposed to the "family." However, Adams does not make the creation and distribution of a standardized badge a priority: "The Book will be out soon, we hope; but sickness and business have prevented us from finishing that or thinking of the badge. We hope to report soon on the latter."[276] In fact, at a later date, Adams describes the badge as "a private enterprise adopted by some of the Boys to identify themselves with the interests of the Magazine."[277] Adams distances *Oliver Optic's Magazine* from the badge idea, and also characterizes it as a boys' venture, though girls had expressed interest in the badge idea as well. Many interpretations are possible, regarding time, cost, etc., related to badge design, marketing, and distribution; however, one interpretation of Adams's lukewarm response to the badge is that he did not want to encourage young men and women to become acquainted with one another in real life under the auspices of the magazine. As interactivity between editor and readers gave

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[274] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, July 13, 1867.
[275] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, March 14, 1868.
[276] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 26, 1867.
[277] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, August 29, 1868.

way to networked activity among readers — through correspondence (letters), print (amateur newspapers), and meet-ups in real life — Adams was not able to "zealously watch over" his readers, despite the claims of his editorial persona.

In recent years, in the context of increased interest in both periodical studies and childhood studies, and also in the context of a turn in children's literature toward considering actual readers when theorizing the child reader, significant scholarship has been produced exploring the interactions between child readers and periodicals. For example, Suzanne Rahn has explored the relationships between Mary Mapes Dodge and the readers of *St. Nicholas*, arguing that while editors, authors, and readers of magazines enter into a kind of community, readers' contributions remain mediated by editors.[278] She argues that because of Dodge's encouragement of children to answer one another's questions and her praise of them when they did, "children [in the *St. Nicholas* community] saw themselves as mentally self-reliant and resourceful, capable of working with adults and each other toward common goals. And they were aware of being connected through *St. Nicholas*, however isolated they might be."[279] Part of this resourcefulness, according to Michelle Phillips in her study of *St. Nicholas*, is seen in an awareness among the child correspondents to the magazine that "they are representing themselves in print: or perhaps more accurately, they are aware that they are representing their abilities to represent" and that this awareness leads to "self-mediation and mitigation."[280] She explores the process through which Dodge created a space where "readers and contributors, regardless of age, [could] imagine themselves as members of a hybridized community, capable of inhabiting and communicating

[278] Suzanne Rahn, "*St. Nicholas* and Its Friends," in *"St. Nicholas" and Mary Mapes Dodge: The Legacy of a Children's Magazine Editor, 1873–1905,* eds. Susan R. Gannon, Suzanne Rahn, and Ruth Anne Thompson (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004), 93–94.
[279] Rahn, "*St. Nicholas* and Its Friends," 108.
[280] Michelle H. Phillips, "Along the 'Paragraphic Wires': Child-Adult Mediation in *St. Nicholas Magazine*," *Children's Literature* 37 (2009): 102.

across such vast sociological interiors."[281] In this space, Phillips argues, not only could Dodge practice and revise her editorial stance, but child readers, too, had "a means of mediating and revising their own social, familial, and literary roles."[282] Through their interactions with children's periodicals such as *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, young people could imagine themselves in a variety of roles through their reading; rehearse different personas as correspondents through their choices regarding pseudonyms, topics of discussion, and representations of themselves; and practice different roles as readers, correspondents, critics, and authors.

Phillips argues that if one views the community of *St. Nicholas* not in terms of age, but instead in terms of roles, then "adults are readers as well as writers, and children are writers as well as readers."[283] This appealing formulation, when applied to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, is useful when considering the bidirectional influence between readers and editors, authors, and publishers. However, in this space created by some nineteenth-century children's periodicals, adults' reading and writing is not mediated in the way that children's reading and writing is, which suggests that asymmetrical adult/child power dynamics remain intact and central to the enterprise. Like Adams (though perhaps not for the same reasons), Dodge was ambivalent toward encouraging young writers. According to Anna Redcay, Dodge eventually shifted her attitude, "presuming that as long as the juvenile compositions substantiated the notion that their authors were frolicking in natural spaces, observing wild animals, or otherwise enjoying the simple pleasures of youth, the child writers' innocence remained intact."[284] Dodge's ambivalence toward child authorship, however, complicates Phillips' notion of child-as-writer in *St. Nicholas*, as that was a status conferred firmly on Dodge's terms. While feelings of connection between

[281] Phillips, "Along the 'Paragraphic Wires,'" 85.
[282] Phillips, "Along the 'Paragraphic Wires,'" 91.
[283] Phillips, "Along the 'Paragraphic Wires,'" 108.
[284] Anne Redcay, "'Live to Learn and Learn to Live': The *St. Nicholas* League and the Vocation of Childhood," *Children's Literature* 39 (2011): 59, doi:10.1353/chl.2011.0014.

editor and reader are mediated by editors — and self-mediated by readers as they experiment with how to represent themselves in print — in the case of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, as this section has demonstrated, young people used interactive spaces in periodicals to develop actual connections with one another that were maintained beyond the periodical's pages, and therefore were no longer mediated in the same ways.

Brazeau notes with interest that a mid-nineteenth century emphasis on the practice of letter-writing, occasioned in part by changes in postal rates that made personal correspondence through the mail a viable option for people of more modest means, was extracurricular in nature and "founded upon the value of young writers interacting with one another and with their families."[285] In this way, a home-based local literacy practice in the 1850s helped to establish a culture of correspondence among young people, fostered by magazines such as *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion*, the focus of Brazeau's study. After the Civil War, this culture of correspondence coupled with access to readers in cities around the country through periodicals such as *Oliver Optic's Magazine* helped to establish correspondence networks among young people who had never met. The next chapter considers the factors that enabled these "networked readers" to function also as networked producers through participation in amateur journalism.

3.5 "Your Sisters Will Explain It to You": Gender and the Networked Reader[286]

Many readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* became regular correspondents not only with Adams, but also with other readers. These correspondents influenced the content of the magazine

[285] Brazeau, "'I Must Have My Gossip with the Young Folks,'" 169.
[286] An earlier version of this section formed the basis of Mikki Smith, "'For Minnie's Own Sake We Decline': Oliver Optic and the Young Women of *Our Boys and Girls*," paper presented at the 43rd Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association, Rochester, NY, March 2012.

through their shared desire to connect directly with other readers and to establish geographically dispersed peer networks that existed beyond the magazine. Adams responded to readers' repeated requests for connection by establishing a "Wish Correspondents" department. However, young women, many of whom expressed similar desires to those of young men with respect to correspondence, were barred from participating. Though he steadfastly refused to print young women's addresses in the magazine, in response to ongoing reader demand, Adams negotiated compromises with readers regarding correspondence with young women while trying not to compromise his morals or integrity — or the reputations of the young women who read his magazine.

Tracing the shifts in Adams's position with respect to young women seeking correspondents and desiring to establish networks through his magazine — and with respect to young men's desire to seek correspondence with young women — provides a sense of the extent to which young readers desired connection beyond the scope of the magazine, often in ways that challenged editorial authority. It also demonstrates the inability of Adams to control his readers once the mechanisms for connection between them had been established in his magazine. Adams continued to provide space for young men to connect through the magazine, though it opened the door for unsupervised correspondence between young men and young women, suggesting that the benefits of doing so outweighed the risks. Possible benefits include a steady stream of unpaid, reader-generated content that made Adams's schedule of writing, editing, public speaking, and traveling more sustainable; not alienating regular correspondents to the magazine, who were arguably the most engaged segment of his audience; encouraging increased participation and loyalty among his oldest readers, who were likely the most active consumers in

his audience; and attracting new young men to the magazine by offering access to geographically dispersed peer networks through its pages.

Discussions about the propriety of correspondence between young men and women who were not personally acquainted surface in the first volume of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. For instance, in response to a query in December 1867 from a young man about whether he could solicit young women as correspondents, Adams responds:

> The best of mothers would say, 'Too far, Thomas, where my daughters are concerned;' and the best of girls would not do such an injury to true maidenly modesty as to correspond with young men who are strangers to them. Female correspondents secured in this way would not be noble, pure, and good; and we are sure Thomas desires no other.[287]

Though addressed to "Thomas," Adams's response is a warning to young women about how they would be perceived should they engage in correspondence with young men whom they did not know. Some young women challenged Adams's position, and below is a typical response from Adams:

> Minnie Gay … with her parents' consent, is willing to answer any one who writes to her. Notwithstanding this, we are ready to repeat that we still think the wisest of maidens and the most judicious of parents will agree with us. Several letters from Our Boys have warmly commended our remarks on the subject, and they say, with true manliness, they would not like their sisters to hold such communication with strangers. *For Minnie's own sake we decline to give her address.*[288] [emphasis added]

[287] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, December 28, 1867.
[288] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 1, 1868.

The warning here is clear: Boys will not respect you if you write to them and your reputation will be ruined. While Adams maintains an avuncular relationship (the fictional "Uncle Oliver") with the boys of "Our Boys and Girls" (a phrase which appears on the magazine's masthead for several years), on this question he assumes the position of father and ultimate authority over the girls. In the same issue of the magazine, he explains: "We shall treat Silver Star, in regard to her request precisely as we would our own daughters, — and decline to publish her address. We have too much regard for all Our Girls to do them such a wrong."[289] In his response to "Ida," Adams explains the lifelong potential damage to her reputation:

> Ida, if we should print your address, some naughty boy (not one of *Our* Boys) might see it, and write to you, and sign a girl's name, and you could not know that it was not some good girl. You would write to him; and by and by, when he had become a bad man, and you had grown to be a good woman, how sadly you would regret that such a man had your letters in his possession! If you do not understand this, your sisters will explain it to you.[290]

This response registers cultural anxieties in late nineteenth-century America regarding criminal, or at least immoral, activity carried out through the mail (which by this period in the United States had become "a network in the most modern sense"[291]), due to the mail's potential for anonymity (and thus fraudulent activity) and exposure of private information to public scrutiny, to which women and children were viewed as particularly vulnerable. Even if Adams trusted everyone within his community of subscribers to behave in a manner that was beyond reproach

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[289] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 1, 1868.
[290] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, May 2, 1868.
[291] David M. Henkin, *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006), Kindle edition, 5.

— and it is implied that he did not — a larger community of readers existed that Adams did not control and could not influence.

Throughout the magazine's existence, Adams made persistent attempts to ensure that he knew which of the subscriber's pseudonyms belonged to "our boys" and which to "our girls," and to alert the rest of the community: "Our Bashful nephew, or Nephew Bashful, in a racy letter informs us that Maggie Zine is not a girl, after all"[292]; "Patience Pays is one of the boys, after all. Who ever knew a *boy* named Patience?"[293] Sometimes, Adams merely suspected deception: "*Mr.* Laura Sands don't write a feminine hand."[294] Perhaps Adams felt that publicly "catching" correspondents in their deception would be enough to keep the behavior to a minimum in the community as a whole. Adams occasionally made it known how he responded to such deception: "Once in a while we receive a letter that has this suspicious appearance [that a boy has written a letter and signed it with a girl's name], and it quickly drops into the waste-basket."[295] As discussed in the previous section, pseudonyms contributed to community participation in a number of ways; however, in the context of providing a department through which correspondents could connect, they posed a problem for Adams.

To Adams's credit, in the face of repeated requests from readers and despite increased editorial labor, he did attempt to be flexible. In June 1868, the following announcement appears in "Our Letter Bag": "Those of Our Girls who wish to correspond with each other can address the editor with stamp; and if their *real name* is found upon the subscription book, we will send them the addresses of those young ladies who have expressed a desire for such correspondence. This will prevent any imposition; and we are anxious to give them all the safe and harmless

[292] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, April 18, 1868.
[293] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, July 11, 1868.
[294] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, June 27, 1868.
[295] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 1871.

enjoyment in our power, even if it involves a little extra trouble to ourself."[296] Adams attempted to develop a solution that would provide young women with an opportunity to establish real-world, long-distance relationships with one another, though it denied them direct, public access to the mechanisms for connection already established in the magazine. Adams could not prevent young women from writing to the young men whose addresses he published in the magazine, though he could try to prevent young men from writing to young women (or at least to ensure that his magazine neither condoned nor facilitated such actions), even as he facilitated connections between young women behind the scenes. By 1871, however, Adams acknowledged in the magazine that his scheme had failed: "We attempted once to give the address of young ladies to other young ladies; but boys pretended to be girls; and as various tricks were played off upon us, we abandoned the plan."[297]

The July 1873 "Pigeon Hole Papers" provides evidence that young women continued to demand access to the magazine as a networking site even after Adams's failed experiment:

> Fannie S. S. desires us to insert her address in the Wish Correspondents department. She is seventeen, and suggests "fashion and other matters" as the topics; and we have no doubt she would be a very pleasant correspondent with other young ladies, whose acquaintance alone she desires to make. We have always declined to insert the addresses of young ladies, and have often given our reason for so doing. We repeat it once more. It would subject them to insulting and improper communications, not from "our boys," but from others. Since the postal cards have come into use, our objection is even stronger that [*sic*] before,

[296] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, June 6, 1868.
[297] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, April 1871.

> for young puppies would send them slanderous or degrading messages, which others might read.[298]

From the time that his attempt to facilitate behind-the-scenes networking for young women failed until the suspension of the magazine in December 1875, young women who read the magazine were essentially cut off from one another and forced, on the one hand, to rely on local and familial networks, or, on the other, to consider initiating correspondence with young men to satisfy their desire for long-distance connections with members of this community of readers.

At some point, Adams reversed his position regarding printing requests from readers, ostensibly young men, to correspond with young women, resulting in a short-sighted double standard that continued through most of 1873, highlighting a "boys will be boys" mentality and placing the onus on young women to protect their reputations by ignoring the requests that Adams printed soliciting correspondence from "young ladies." Finally, in October 1873, Adams announced that from that point forward, the magazine's policy would change again: "We have several times expressed our doubts in regard to the matter, and we are quite satisfied now that such correspondence may lead to mischief…. We do not consider it necessary to give our reasons for this conclusion."[299] Yet, the following month, Adams did — albeit apologetically — provide reasons in the face of a stack of two dozen letters requesting correspondence with young women:

> We are obliged to commit these letters to the waste-basket, but we are very sorry that we cannot oblige the applicants. We certainly should not permit a young lady, for whose conduct we were in any degree responsible, to carry on a correspondence with a stranger of the male persuasion, and we are not willing any

[298] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, July 1873.
[299] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, October 1873.

> longer to tempt others, for whom we are not responsible, to do so. Our correspondence department was commenced, and has been continued, for the instruction and amusement of our readers. We regret that our girls cannot be permitted to share in this amusement and instruction…. We are satisfied that many young men, and old ones, who send these requests for correspondence with young ladies, are neither subscribers nor purchasers, and only desire to use our Magazine as a medium for a flirtation, if not for something worse.[300]

Adams here implies that he is not "in any degree responsible" for the conduct of the young women who read his magazine, though he repeatedly denies young women the agency to solicit correspondence from other readers, intervening for their "own sake" — in other words, assuming responsibility for their conduct by overriding their wishes. At the same time, he makes clear that young male subscribers and purchasers of the magazine are not the problem; the problem is "strangers" who simply want to use the magazine for their own ends without contributing financially to its survival, making them morally suspect.

Adams acknowledged the value of long-distance connections and peer networks and wanted to support connections between the young women who read his magazine, but without compromising his own position and moral authority. He was unable, however, to do so, which left young women isolated from peers around the country who shared their interests. This context lends greater significance to some of the visual changes to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* beginning in January 1871 and lasting through the magazine's end. The original engraving at the head of "Our Letter Bag," which features Adams buried amid a pile of letters from readers as "imps" delivered more letters, changes to one that spans two columns, more appropriate to the new format of the magazine: on the left in the new engraving, a man, presumably Adams, sits busily writing at a

[300] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, November 1873.

desk that has letters piled on top of it; in the center, two girls stand close to one another eagerly reading a letter, presumably their response from Adams; on the right is a hearth with an empty chair before it. "Our Letter Bag" is redefined through this new image as a feminine space in which girls are depicted as passive recipients of letters from Oliver Optic rather than as active correspondents to the magazine. In this same issue, the "Pigeon Hole Papers" first appears, which Adams defines as a "department for our boys and girls." However, the contrast between the two-column engraving that heads the "Pigeon Hole Papers" and the new "Our Letter Bag" engraving is remarkable. The engraving for the "Pigeon Hole Papers" depicts a masculine space. As in the other engraving, the figure of Oliver Optic is writing, but here, he is seated at a table *with* two well-dressed boys. They all appear to be carrying on a conversation, and one boy holds what might be a letter in his hands and the other a book or notebook on his lap. In this space, the boys are active participants, engaged in reading, writing, and, one imagines, important talk. Adams writes in this first "Pigeon Hole Papers," "The little picture at the top of the page interprets itself."[301]

As expectations regarding long-distance communication changed due to increased access to and affordability and efficiency of postal networks, and as many young members of the aspiring middle class moved with their families to new cities and towns around the country, expanding their worldview and social networks, young women sought ways to participate in this new "networked" environment with their peers. As the case of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* demonstrates, however, the agency of young women relative to that of young men was restricted or denied, and paternalistic solutions left young women with few options. The remaining chapters of this dissertation revisit these issues involving gender, access, and participation in the

[301] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, January 1871.

case of amateur journalism, where young women sought, with mixed results, to establish themselves as active participants in print networks and a youth information culture.

CHAPTER 4: NETWORKED READERS AS NETWORKED PRODUCERS: THE CASE OF AMATEUR JOURNALISM

4.1 "An Ornament and an Influence": William T. Adams Mourns the Death of a Young Amateur

When readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine: Our Boys and Girls* (1867–1875) opened Oliver Optic's novel *Desk and Debit; or, The Catastrophes of a Clerk* when it was first published in 1871, they might have recognized the subject of the book's dedication: "To the memory of my good-natured and versatile young friend Edwin A. Farwell, who, since this book was written, has passed away from the scenes of earth, loved and respected by all who knew him, this book is affectionately dedicated."[302] If readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* did not recognize the name "Edwin A. Farwell," they almost certainly would have recognized his pseudonym, "Alert," which appears regularly in the "Our Letter Bag" and "Head Work" departments of the magazine from 1868 through 1870, to which Farwell was a regular correspondent. Oliver Optic, pseudonym of William T. Adams, not only dedicates *Desk and Debit* to Farwell, who died January 26, 1871, at the age of nineteen,[303] but also eulogizes him at length in the April 1871 issue of the eponymous magazine he edited for Boston publisher Lee and Shepard. There, Adams writes that Farwell's death

> left an aching void, not only in the hearts of those who were related to him by the ties of blood, but also of those in that wider circle of friends and acquaintances in which he was both an ornament and an influence. He was as diligent as he was

[302] Oliver Optic [William T. Adams], dedication to *Desk and Debit; Or, The Catastrophes of a Cler*k (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1871), HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433066603865. Paula Petrik mentions this dedication as well, but identifies Farwell as "Edwin Farlane Jr." Paula Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and Adolescence, 1870–1886," in *Small Worlds: Children & Adolescents in America, 1850–1950*, eds. Elliot West and Paula Petrik (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 129.
[303] "Died," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, January 27, 1871, 19th Century U.S. Newspapers. Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate," indicates that Farwell died in 1870 at aged twenty (p. 129).

> ambitious; and in his early departure the community has lost one who promised to be a noble and a useful man.[304]

Farwell's death is framed as a loss not only for Adams, one of the most popular and commercially successful authors of juvenile adventure novels at that time, but also for "the community," which could be interpreted in multiple, intersecting ways: it could refer to the Boston area, where both Adams and Farwell resided; to the community of readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, of which Farwell was a longtime and visible member; and/or to the community of amateur journalists, in which Farwell was an active participant and with which Adams had a longstanding relationship. Adams even met Farwell in person on at least one occasion, at a social gathering of young amateur journalists in the summer of 1870, as Adams reported in the magazine.[305]

Adams praises Farwell posthumously as a writer who "had distinguished himself far beyond his years" and suggests that Farwell's skills as an editor and critic "would have been creditable in one of more mature experience."[306] Farwell's contributions to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* consist of letters and puzzles (insofar as the magazine can serve as a record, since the correspondence itself does not appear to have survived); however, Farwell was, by 1870, an amateur editor and author among the first wave of post–Civil War young amateurs, and had garnered significant praise within amateurdom. The editors of *The Amateurs' Guide for 1870*, published before Farwell's death, place his biographical sketch before those of other "prominent amateurs" to reflect his position as "one of the head-lights in amateur authorship and journalism." The sketch (based on information provided by Farwell) credits him with 935 manuscript pages, many of those in "a serio-comic vein," including several stories that appear in

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[304] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, April 1871.
[305] Oliver Optic, "Editorial Correspondence," *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* July 2 1870.
[306] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Pigeon Hole Papers, April 1871.

the amateur press. *The Amateurs' Guide* interestingly claims that "Alert" had written for "local papers" before writing for the amateur press and also emphasizes that Farwell had subscribed to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* since its first issue, thus asserting in the context of an amateur publication Farwell's connections, however tenuous, to the worlds of the professional press and children's literature.[307] Also in 1870, Farwell was elected vice-president of the Amateur Press Association, and Truman J. Spencer notes that Farwell was "one of the brightest of early amateurs," referring to his death as "a great loss to the institution."[308]

Farwell's amateur paper, *The Young Sportsman*, is "devoted entirely to boys' sports," though it also includes fiction and poetry, puzzles, correspondence, and advertising.[309] *The Young Sportsman*'s prospectus promises contributions from writers whose names or pseudonyms also would have been familiar to readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* — "Monsieur," "Downsey," "Linwood," "Harry St. Clair," "Hautboy," "Skiff," and W. L. Terhune — as these are among the dozens of correspondents who regularly wrote to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* with witty letters, riddles, jokes, and puzzles for "Head Work" during the magazine's early years.[310] Several of these young men also contributed to and/or edited other amateur newspapers; for instance, William H. Downes (Downsey, pseud.) edited *The Boys' Advertiser* (Birmingham, CT), to which "Hautboy" was a contributor.[311] "Our Letter Bag" in the September 4, 1869, issue of *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* notices several amateur papers received, including *True Blue*

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[307] E. Howard Hutchinson [Jasper, pseud.] and Alfred S. Porter [Essex, pseud.], *The Amateurs' Guide, for 1870: A Complete Book of Reference Relative to the Amateur Printers, Publishers, Editors, Authors and Engravers of America; with Biographical Sketches of the Most Noticeable* (Buffalo, NY: Haas & Kelley, printers, 1870), 24–25.
[308] Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc, 1957), 19.
[309] *Young Sportsman* (Boston, MA), January 1870, AAS Historical Periodicals Collection, EBSCO. This is the only issue of Farwell's paper held in the AAS collection, so it is unclear how many issues were published before Farwell's death in January 1871.
[310] Prospectus. *Young Sportsman*, January 1870, AAS Historical Periodicals Collection, EBSCO.
[311] See, for instance, Hautboy [pseud.], "Straightening Nails," *The Boys' Advertiser* (Birmingham, CT), July 1870.

[Saugerties (Ulster County), NY] and "a patriotic sheet," *The Loyal Union* (Newark, NJ), edited by William L. Terhune. Both papers, Adams notes, contain "sensational stories" by Terhune.[312]

Amateur author and editor Terhune, who served as president of the Amateur Press Association during Farwell's tenure as vice-president, purchased *The Young Sportsman* from Farwell prior to the latter's death, then retired the paper after selling its subscription list to children's magazine *Merry's Museum* in September 1870, from which point forward, according to Spencer, Terhune's "amateur interests were merged almost imperceptibly with the professional."[313] Terhune revived *The Young Sportsman* in April 1872.[314] The inaugural issue features a letter from William T. Adams, dated August 17, 1870 — almost two years prior to its publication by Terhune. The letter from Adams, addressed to "Friend Terhune," reads in part: "I am very glad to hear from you…. The *Guide* is very neatly printed, and seems to be a full history of the operations of the amateurs…. I am glad to see that 'Monsieur' and 'Downsey' are honored

[312] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag September 4, 1869. The American Antiquarian Society holds neither *True Blue* nor *The Loyal Union* in its collection.

[313] Spencer explains that Terhune began his "real life work" in April 1882, when he issued "the first number of the *Boot and Shoe Recorder.*" Spencer also notes that when Terhune retired in 1909, "he owned the largest and best equipped printing plant of any trade journal in the world." Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 155.

[314] The inaugural issue of the re-launched *Young Sportsman* (Portsmouth, NH), published in April 1872, shares the following account of Terhune's participation in amateur journalism and of his relationship to Farwell and the original *Young Sportsman*: "In August, 1869, Terhune & Campbell published the first number of the *Loyal Union,* a small 6x9 sheet, which met with a wonderful success; and with its third number, it was enlarged to twice its former size, and the sixth number (Jan. 1870) was again doubled. From Jan. to April, the proprietors purchased the *Boys' Miscellany* and *Boys' Gazette,* which they consolidated with the *Loyal Union,* and with the May number of the same year, the *Loyal Union* was again enlarged to an 8 page, 24 column sheet, and called *The Young Sportsman,* having purchased 'Alert's' paper of that name, *The Excelsior,* and *Jersey Blue,* thus making it the largest, oldest, and most successful Amateur Journal ever published. It was published by Terhune & Campbell, and Edited by W. L. Terhune, one of the present Editors of this sheet, who is well known as a writer, and the first President of the Amateur Press Association. In Sept. 1870, *The Young Sportsman's* subscription list was sold to the publishers of *Merry's Museum,* Boston, (the oldest Juvenile Magazine in the United States) And then and there that Journal ceased to be, and to this day its name is well known by thousands of boys and girls in the United States, who will again welcome back their old friend of Amateur Journalism." "Our Greeting," *Young Sportsman* (Portsmouth, NH), April 1872. Terhune, like William T. Adams — and Farwell, as is demonstrated in this section — understood literary production as a commercial activity: purchasing, consolidating, and suspending amateur newspapers, as well as selling subscription lists to a "professional" children's publication. He was also part of Farwell's amateur network, and retained (and profited from) a relationship with Adams and *Oliver Optic's Magazine.*

by the dedication thereof, for I regard them as most excellent young men."[315] This issue of *The Young Sportsman* also announces, under the heading "The Late 'Alert,'" the forthcoming publication of several sketches written by Farwell for the paper before his death. The July 1872 issue of *The Young Sportsman,* which features an image of Adams on its front page, announces that its upcoming volume would include a serialized sketch entitled, "The Young Magician; or, Life on the Road, being a sketch in the life of the young Edwin A. Farwell (*Alert*)."[316] *The Young Sportsman* under Terhune not only recognizes but also capitalizes on the legacy of Farwell in amateurdom, memorializing him and promising to publish more of his work. Terhune also capitalizes on his own and Farwell's relationships with Adams, *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, and correspondents to that magazine who were also amateur authors, editors, and printers — some of whom, like Farwell prior to his death, were active in creating and maintaining amateur press associations (APAs).

Paula Petrik suggests that many of these early amateurs who were readers of Oliver Optic began "a conscious program of association and imitation," copying Adams's writing style as well as his plots.[317] She explores the extended example of "Roger Dale," a story by "Downsey" [William H. Downes] that was serialized in Downes's paper and, she argues, modeled after Oliver Optic's *Soldier Boy; or Tom Somers in the Army: A Story of the Great Rebellion* (Boston:

[315] I was unable to find evidence of an amateur guide compiled, edited, authored, and/or printed by Terhune, though amateur guides, directories, and histories were published regularly throughout the period covered by this dissertation, and not all survived. It is also possible that Adams was referring here to Hutchinson and Porter, *Amateurs' Guide, for 1870*, which includes an expression of gratitude to Terhune, Farwell, and "Monsieur," along with other amateurs, for providing information. Adams's letter provides evidence of his friendly correspondence with and encouragement of subscribers to his magazine, like Terhune, who participated in amateur journalism. It also provides evidence of networked readers — Terhune, Monsieur [pseud.], and Downsey [William H. Downs] — as networked producers.
[316] *Young Sportsman* (Portsmouth, NH), advertisement, July 1872.
[317] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 128–29.

Lee and Shepard, 1864).[318] Archival evidence not cited by Petrik supports her general claim. In a letter written by Farwell to Lee and Shepard, dated October 7, 1868, Farwell explains: "I have this day completed the manuscript of an interesting book of adventure entitled 'Hunting and Fishing; or, Life in the Woods of Maine.' This is a book for boys and I think it, — and others who have read a portion of the manuscript are of the same opinion — very interesting." The letter asks whether Lee and Shepard could publish the book as part of a "series of books for young folks." Even more tellingly, Farwell describes his book as "about the size of Mr. Adams' $1.25 books."[319] In addition to lending support to Petrik's claim, Farwell's letter to Lee and Shepard is interesting in another way: from July 4, 1868, through December 12, 1868, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* includes a series of sketches by "Millinocket" entitled "Hunting and Fishing in Maine," the first of which is subtitled "Moose Hunting."[320] This series title is remarkably similar to the title of the manuscript Farwell pitched to Lee and Shepard in October 1868, and the title of the first installment, "Moose Hunting," parallels Farwell's story from the inaugural issue of *The Young Sportsman*, entitled "A Battle with a Moose," which is a capably written, formulaic story about a young man who fells a moose after a dangerous struggle in the river with the wounded and ferocious animal. Millinocket's and Farwell's stories are similar in some respects; however, significant differences exist. In Millinocket's story there are three young college men and their guide, whereas Farwell's story features only the protagonist and his guide. In Millinocket's story, the young men fail to kill a moose due to their comedic blundering, while in Farwell's story, the protagonist is successful with the guide's help, but only after narrowly avoiding serious injury or

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[318] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 129–31, 135–37, 141–42; "Downsey" [William H. Downes], "Roger Dale," *The Boys' Advertiser* (Birmingham, CT), January 1871, March 1871, April 1871, August 1871, September 1871, November 1871, December 1871. Cited in Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 346n12.

[319] Edwin A. Farwell to Messrs. Lee & Shepard, 7 October 1868, Lee and Shepard Business Records, 1860s–1906, AAS. The manuscript is not with Farwell's letter — he offers to bring it to Lee and Shepard's offices if they are interested — and I found no indication that the publishers responded.

[320] Millinocket [pseud.], "Hunting and Fishing in Maine," *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* July 4, 1868.

death. Farwell's story, then, does not plagiarize Millinocket's, but the similarities between the two stories suggest a conscious and possibly strategic attempt at imitation on Farwell's part in order to situate his work in proximity to that of Adams and other authors published in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*.

That Adams publicly recognizes Farwell's potential as an author, editor, and critic might have signaled to others in Farwell's milieu that his approach — and by extension, their own — could lead to the eventual achievement of their literary aspirations, should they survive to adulthood. However, Oliver Optic and "Millinocket" were not the only writers whom Farwell was prepared to imitate. Farwell placed an ad under his pseudonym "Alert" in Downes's amateur newspaper, *The Boys' Advertiser*, that reads, "I am now prepared to furnish editors with original stories of every imaginable description. Being the most extensive boy writer in the country, I feel able to meet the wants of all classes of readers."[321] Farwell understood writing, regardless of its "amateur" or "professional" status, as a commercial activity based on production, and he was prepared to cater to the needs of different amateur and professional markets. While Adams always promoted himself as a writer on a mission to provide exciting, edifying literature for boys, he did so within an explicitly commercial framework — and in this, too, Farwell and others among the first wave of amateur journalists after the Civil War were prepared to follow their mentor's lead. The fact that Farwell, as a young man in his teens, submitted a manuscript to Adams's publisher, a publisher at the forefront of developing a distinct market for children's books in the late nineteenth century, also suggests that Farwell's reputation as an amateur writer rested at least in part on his unwillingness to wait for adulthood to pursue success in the professional literary marketplace.

[321] *Boys' Advertiser* (Birmingham, CT), advertisement, January 1871. This advertisement from "Alert" appeared the same month that Farwell died.

The extended example of Farwell illustrates how networked readers, as discussed in chapter 3, could also be networked producers. Adams, in his role as author and editor, provided not only inspiration and sometimes mentoring to many early young amateur journalists, but also a space in the professional magazine he edited in which these amateurs could build peer networks and establish readerships that existed independently of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. The example of Farwell documents the existence of an early network of amateurs who also maintained active and visible ties to a popular children's magazine even as their amateur print networks expanded and included young people who were not correspondents to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. This, in turn, invites an exploration, building on Petrik's earlier analysis, of the ways in which not only Adams's fiction, but also the commercial orientation of Adams, the magazine, and publisher Lee and Shepard served as models for amateurdom in the years after the Civil War. Farwell's letter to Lee and Shepard suggests that being an amateur in the early 1870s did not preclude seeking professional publication. Young amateur journalists in the 1870s did not necessarily view professional publication as something that had to wait until they were adults. In this sense, "amateur" and "professional" were not dichotomous (either/or) or chronological (first/then) categories, but rather coexisted and intersected.[322] Young people's aspirations and adult editorial responses often did not, however, align; the ways in which some popular children's magazines and story papers framed young people's writing are discussed later in this chapter.

This chapter considers three factors that, taken together, enabled the networked readers of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and others to function also as networked producers in the postbellum

[322] See section 5.2 for a discussion of the limitations of viewing amateur journalism through the lens of professionalization. That section instead views amateur journalism in terms of embeddedness, based on Leon Jackson's study of antebellum authorship, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2008).

period. First, amateur newspaper production in the postbellum period is considered in relation to manuscript and print production practices common among middle-class youth in the antebellum period, including but not limited to amateur newspaper production, which had a decidedly local character prior to 1867. Second, the introduction, marketing, and use of the Novelty and other small printing presses after 1867 are explored. Finally, the role of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* specifically and children's magazines and weekly story papers generally in transforming amateur newspaper production from a predominantly local to a networked practice in the postbellum period is considered. These factors, in conjunction with shifting dynamics described in chapter 2 — with respect to young people; to information and communication infrastructure, access, and use; and to print production, dissemination, and use — helped to shape and sustain amateur journalism among young people in the 1870s and 1880s.

4.2 Local Practices, Local Sociabilities: Antebellum Youth and Amateur Newspaper Production

The circulation of amateur newspapers in the 1870s and 1880s was based primarily on long-distance newspaper exchange between amateur editors through the mail. Some amateur newspaper production in this period involved long-distance collaboration as well. Given the collaborative, social nature of periodicals, this may not sound surprising. However, if one views youth amateur newspaper production and circulation in the 1870s and 1880s as a continuation of antebellum newspaper production and circulation by young people, then a contrast becomes evident between earlier local practices (often family based) and later practices that were bound less by geographic constraints, more public, and predominantly peer-oriented. This section explores antebellum amateur newspaper production as an antecedent for amateurdom in the 1870s and 1880s, with its elaborate, long-distance networks of exchange among peers.

Several well-known authors, including Nathaniel Hawthorne and Louisa May Alcott, produced newspapers while in their teens.[323] While these and many other papers were handwritten prior to 1867, young people sometimes used type scavenged from printshops on homemade presses, and occasionally young editors would pay a printer to do the job. Edward Everett Hale recalls in his autobiographical work, *A New England Boyhood*, that during his childhood, in the attic of his Boston home ("our workroom and playroom"), he and his siblings engaged in a number of activities from putting on plays, to portraiture, to conducting scientific experiments, to editing two newspapers.[324] At another point during his childhood, he created with siblings two magazines to be read at the breakfast table: "They were published when the editors pleased, as all journals should be, and months might go by without a number. And there was but one copy of each issue."[325] The Hale family, due to Edward Everett Hale's father's position as owner and editor of the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, eventually had "type as much as we wanted, and all the other facilities for home printing."[326] However, even in this antebellum household with unusual access to print, most of the Hale children's publications — newspapers, magazines, and the 183 books that comprised "The Franklin Circulating Library" — were handwritten.[327]

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[323] Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Spectator* (seven issues, handwritten, August–September 1820), began when Hawthorne was sixteen years old. See James Forrest, Carrie Ives Schluter, Christy Sorensen (producers), *Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Early Years*, interactive exhibit, from the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum, 2004, http://www.pem.org/sites/hawthorne/#. Louisa May Alcott produced a newspaper with her sisters from 1849 to 1853 under several titles. Daniel Shealy writes of surviving copies of the Alcotts' *Portfolio*: "Since no duplicate issues exist and since the various contributions are in different handwriting, one can surmise that each author penned her own story and that only one copy of the paper was produced and read at the club meeting [the Pickwick Club, formed by the Alcott sisters, inspired by Charles Dickens]." See Daniel Shealy, "Louisa May Alcott's Juvenilia: Blueprints for the Future," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 17, No. 4 (Winter 1992): 15.

[324] Edward Everett Hale, *A New England Boyhood and Other Bits of Autobiography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1910), 93, 95, https://books.google.com/books?id=Yt1DAAAAYAAJ.

[325] Hale, *A New England Boyhood*, 51.

[326] Hale, *A New England Boyhood*, 161.

[327] See Karen Sánchez–Eppler, "Practicing For Print: The Hale Children's Manuscript Libraries," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 189, doi: 10.1353/hcy.0.0009.

While the father's position as editor of a major metropolitan newspaper is exceptional, as is the scope of the Hale children's publishing activity (which continued with Edward Hale's children), the activities these children engaged in — producing newspapers, magazines, and books, handwritten or printed, for circulation among family and local friends — reflected relatively common home literacy practices among those with means and time in the antebellum period, and they occurred alongside games, sports, and other kinds of play. As Karen Sánchez-Eppler observes, "in more scattered form there is a great deal of evidence that many middle-class nineteenth-century children participated in similar literary pastimes."[328] Howard Chudacoff notes several examples of children's amateur newspapers, both longhand and typeset, dating from the first half of the nineteenth century. He describes them as created "by neighborhood kids or siblings" and featuring family and local news.[329] Ronald Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray also discuss amateur newspapers created by young people in the antebellum period, referring to them as a "more formalized" extension of common, long-standing literacy practices within families.[330] Many newspapers created by young people were handwritten school productions that were read aloud to an audience of peers.[331] Noting that people not affiliated with a particular school sometimes contributed, Zboray and Zboray suggest, "By reaching beyond students, these papers became neighborhood forums for sociabilities."[332] In the antebellum period, then, it was not uncommon for young people to participate in newspaper production as writers or editors, whether at home or at school, or for these papers to be shared locally — often read aloud in their homes, schools, and communities — among both young people and adults (some of whom

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[328] Sánchez-Eppler, "Practicing For Print," 189.
[329] Howard P. Chudacoff, *Children at Play: An American History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 56.
[330] Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, *Everyday Ideas: Socioliterary Experience Among Antebellum New Englanders* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 56.
[331] Zboray and Zboray, *Everyday Ideas*, 58.
[332] Zboray and Zboray, *Everyday Ideas*, 60.

attended the same schools, since age grading of schools had not yet become the norm). The printing presses that became popular after 1867, then, did not initiate amateur newspaper production. Prior to 1867, young people engaged in manuscript publishing of papers in the absence — and sometimes even in the presence — of local print technologies.

Common practices among adults during the antebellum period involved exchanges of newspapers over long distances, including the exchange of papers between newspaper editors and the mailing of "transient" local newspapers between friends and family in lieu of letters, which were cost-prohibitive for most people until postage rate reductions occurred between 1845 and 1851. Zboray and Zboray suggest that "transient papers mirrored letters in their social uses," and their content "often acquired deeper meaning as tokens of the sender and tributes to the social bond."[333] However, existing scholarship suggests that most young people's newspapers in the antebellum period were created and shared locally. Young people's amateur newspaper production prior to 1867 could be understood as part of a constellation of practices. For instance, the creation of newspaper scrapbooks became popular during the Civil War and remained popular through the period covered by this dissertation. Ellen Gruber Garvey argues, "Clipping and saving the contents of periodicals in scrapbooks is a form of active reading that shifts the line between reading and writing. Readers become the agents who make or remake the meaning and significance of their saved items."[334] Another popular practice throughout the antebellum period was the circulation of friendship albums. Sánchez-Eppler describes friendship albums as "[b]lank books in which many different hands inscribe single pages as a token of remembrance":

> Nineteenth-century friendship albums usually contain a mix of drawings, poems, and short prose compositions; these offerings could be original but were often

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[333] Zboray and Zboray, *Everyday Ideas*, 79.
[334] Ellen Gruber Garvey, *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance* (Oxford University Press, 2012), Kindle edition, 47.

> copied from printed sources. Despite this derivativeness, each page is clearly intended as a gift from the specific friend who made it, and the design and decoration of pages is often quite elaborate, a testimony to care.[335]

Friendship albums, though generally passed from hand to hand and marked by hand in the variety of ways outlined by Sánchez-Eppler, were also steeped in print culture, in that much of the content was rewritten from printed sources. At the same time, the entries were intended to be personal and to convey what Richard D. Brown has referred to in the context of women's reading, writing, and conversation in early America as "affective information."[336] Lara Langer Cohen's argument that amateurs of the 1870s and 1880s produced "less objects than feelings," and that the amateur papers produced in that period were meant to be collected (and, presumably, preserved) more than read suggests ways in which both friendship albums, circulated mostly locally, and amateur newspapers in the postbellum period, exchanged nationally, performed similar social functions.[337] Amateur newspaper production in the 1870s was bound both to the world of professional periodical publishing, especially that of children's magazines and story papers, and to long-standing local literacy practices of youth. There were, of course, exceptions to the local practice of amateur newspaper production by young people in the antebellum period. Petrik cites the March 1846 issue of Boston amateur paper, the *Germ,* which claims that there were eight amateur papers in Boston and a similar number in Worcester, suggesting at least awareness, if not exchange, among amateurs in the antebellum period.[338] The 1879 *History of*

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[335] Karen Sánchez-Eppler, "Copying and Conversion: An 1824 Friendship Album 'from a Chinese Youth,'" *American Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (2007), 301, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068465.

[336] See chapter 7, "Daughters, Wives, Mothers: Domestic Roles and the Mastery of Affective Information, 1765–1865," in Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 160–96.

[337] Lara Langer Cohen, "The Emancipation of Boyhood," *Common-Place* 14, no. 1 (Fall 2013), http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

[338] Paula Petrik, "Juvenile Publishing," in *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood: In History and Society,* vol. 2, ed. Paula S. Fass (Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 518, Gale Virtual Reference Library, GALE|CX3402800252.

Amateurdom in Worcester, itself an amateur publication, cites the case of the *Minute Gun*, an 1845 amateur paper that maintained exchanges with several Boston papers.[339] Worcester and Boston are less than sixty miles apart, and it is conceivable that these newspaper editors were personally acquainted with one another through family, friends, institutions, or community activities; if the exchanges took place between amateurs who had never met in person, however, they would suggest a more public, anonymous practice than was generally the case prior to 1867.[340]

The histories of amateur journalism published by amateurs in the 1870s and 1880s are also interesting in terms of the kinds of amateur production, circulation, and use discussed in this section. These histories often locate the origins of amateurdom with the weekly printed paper entitled *The Juvenile Port-Folio, and Literary Miscellany* (Philadelphia, PA), "devoted to the instruction and amusement of youth," launched on October 17, 1812, and edited by Thomas Gray Condie, Jr., then fourteen years old, with a subscription price of twelve and a half cents per month (or $1.50 per year). William T. Adams vies with Condie in accounts of the history of amateurdom for the title of "the father of amateur journalism."[341] The line between Condie's paper and amateur journalism as practiced in the 1870s and especially in the 1880s is partial and circuitous. In some ways, citing either Adams or Condie as the originator of amateurdom is more reflective of amateurdom's aspirations in the 1870s than it is of an actual resemblance between amateur journalists and either Adams or Condie as editors/authors. Adams was a commercially successful author, leaving his career as an educator to pursue writing full-time, situating him squarely in the literary marketplace as a professional author, one who earned a living through his

[339] G. S. Dickinson, *History of Amateurdom in Worcester* (Worcester, MA: E. P. Sumner, publisher, 1879).
[340] Though I did view a handful of amateur newspapers published in the antebellum period held in the AAS amateur newspaper collection, I did not research papers published prior to 1867 for this dissertation. I mention their existence solely to connect amateur journalism in my period to antebellum practices as described by others.
[341] See, for example, Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc., 1957), 6–7.

writing and his role as an editor of various children's magazines over the last half of the nineteenth century. He provided inspiration to amateurs in the 1870s, and through his magazine provided space and encouragement for amateurdom to grow (though not without ambivalence toward young people as writers and editors). However, agency for amateurdom's growth rests squarely with amateurs, though that growth was facilitated and mediated by a confluence of factors.

Condie's paper, on the other hand, though it was edited by a fourteen year old boy decades before *Oliver Optic's Magazine* became an important node in amateur print networks, is similarly aspirational for amateurs in the 1870s. Though Condie claims in an 1813 supplement printed to mark the end of the first volume of *The Juvenile Port-Folio* that his paper was initially "confined in its circulation to his schoolmates and Juvenile friends," he continues, "this Was found impracticable, being inadequate to defray the expense; the present plan was then adopted, -which placed it under the patronage of the public for its support." The first issue, he claims, had "only" three hundred subscribers, though by the end of the first year of its publication, the paper had more than six hundred subscribers. Condie declares that subscribers were "a brilliant assemblage of Polite Beauty, Literary Taste, Liberal Opulence, and an emulous Phalanx, of the Juvenile *Amateurs* of both sex."[342] The December 7, 1816, issue lists hundreds of subscribers, a handful of which are followed by a city and state designation, suggesting that those without a city and state listed were subscribers who resided in the greater Philadelphia area. In other words, while the paper was "local" in the sense that most of its subscribers lived in the Philadelphia area, and it was social in that multiple writers contributed content to its pages, its large subscription list lacked the sociability of the antebellum amateur practices described by

[342] Emphasis in original. "To Subscribers," *Juvenile Port-folio, and Literary Miscellany* (Philadelphia, PA), January 2, 1813, AAS Historical Periodicals Collection, EBSCO.

Zboray and Zboray. At the same time, the absence of networked exchange meant that it lacked the intimacy of postbellum amateurdom noted by Cohen.

Citing Condie's paper as amateurdom's originator over something like Hawthorne's *The Spectator* or the papers published by the Hale siblings in their attic — papers that primarily operated neither on subscription nor exchange, but relied on personal circulation and social reading — could be written off as the result of particular amateurs' chronological knowledge of newspaper production by young people: 1812 was the earliest publication date of a paper by a young person that amateur historians knew of; therefore, Condie was declared the "father" of amateur journalism — a declaration repeated across multiple amateur publications over decades. However, assuming there is more to the declaration than chronology, the association of amateur journalism in the 1870s with Condie's 1812 paper suggests something about the way that young amateurs in the 1870s viewed the prospects for themselves and their papers. Condie did not print his paper (he paid to have it printed), nor, after the first year, did he handle the business affairs (his father did); Condie was the paper's editor, and the paper survived for years on the basis of its subscription list (and likely on regular cash infusions from his father, who seemed invested in the project). Condie's paper, in other words, at the cost of $1.50 per year and with a weekly publication schedule, shared more in common with contemporary "professional" periodicals edited by adults than it did with other newspapers produced by children in the same period. In his history of amateur journalism, Spencer makes a similar observation: "It has been suggested that the *Port-Folio* was not a true amateur journal as it had a paid-up subscription list which brought in considerable revenue. It is true that in the early days amateur journalists tried, sometimes successfully, to pay their expenses with money derived from subscriptions and advertisements.

But financial gain was incidental, and not the actuating motive."[343] Many amateur editors, especially in the early 1870s, aspired to make money through a combination of subscriptions to their papers, sales of advertising space in their paper, income derived from serving as local agents for a range of products and publications, and (in cases where editors were also printers) job printing. The amateur economy and its relationship to the literary marketplace and existing authorial economies are discussed in chapter 5.

While not a local practice, it seems important to note in this section that after 1845, young people gained more access to the postal service and increasingly engaged in practices surrounding letter writing in ways that are relevant to understanding amateur journalism after 1867. For instance, *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion* (1848–57) launched "A Chat with Readers," which, Alicia Brazeau argues, was intended "to teach young writers the skills necessary for epistolary correspondence."[344] As noted in chapter 1, according to David Henkin, "the mail was a site of new and recognizably disruptive forms of social and commercial connection."[345] Henkin specifically notes that parents "were especially vigilant in monitoring the epistolary practices of their daughters."[346] William T. Adams's response to requests from readers to print the addresses of young women in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* after 1867, discussed in chapter 3 of this dissertation, reflects these concerns regarding the relatively new "postal culture," which Henkin describes as "a cluster of new practices, attitudes, norms, discussions, and, crucially, habits — of communication, inquiry, and expectation — that grew up around a modern postal system."[347] Through increased access to the postal network, young

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[343] Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 7
[344] Alicia Brazeau, "'I Must Have My Gossip with the Young Folks': Letter Writing and Literacy in *The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2013): 160.
[345] David M. Henkin, *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2006), Kindle edition, 171.
[346] Henkin, *The Postal Age*, 107.
[347] Henkin, *The Postal Age*, 5.

people could imagine — and in some cases experience — personal connections with people they had never met who lived in places they had never visited.

Petrik claims that newspapers created by children and teens flourished in the Northeast during the 1840s and 1850s, forming "a vast amateur recreation."[348] Two main things, however, were missing from the equation: the diffusion of small printing presses to allow for larger print runs of issues on a regular basis among a substantial number of geographically dispersed young people, and platforms to advertise amateur papers to a nonlocal public and to locate editors to collaborate and exchange with regardless of distance. Amateur journalism in the postbellum period shares aspects of several practices in the antebellum period, including local amateur newspaper production, the sending of "transient" papers, the circulation of friendship albums, and the creation of newspaper scrapbooks — aspects of print culture that are frequently overlooked in scholarship focused on the book and even on the periodical. Amateur journalism after 1867 also reflects the desire for anonymous but intimate connection promised by the postal network. Zboray and Zboray use the phrase "a social handshake at a distance"[349] to describe the function of "transient" papers sent to friends and family members in distant places in lieu of cost-prohibitive correspondence in the antebellum period. While amateur newspapers of the postbellum period, unlike transient papers, were mailed to an at least partially anonymous reading public, they also had private meaning for senders and some recipients with whom the papers were in direct conversation, retaining something of this function of a long-distance "social handshake." While transient papers were sent in the antebellum period in order to sustain personal relationships over distance, amateur newspapers after 1867 were sent, at least in part, to *establish* personal relationships with a geographically dispersed group of peers. Amateur

[348] Petrik, "Juvenile Publishing."
[349] Zboray and Zboray, *Everyday Ideas*, 79.

newspapers at once sustained local relationships — associations, collaborations, friendships — and extended nonlocal social networks through newspaper circulation and exchange. Amateur newspaper production and circulation in the postbellum period, while still socially embedded, could no longer be said to be local in scope or function.[350]

4.3 "Every Boy a Ben Franklin": Small Printing Presses

Chapter 10 of Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women*, first published in 1868, recounts the formation of the Pickwick Club, a "secret society" made up of the March sisters. The main activities of the club were producing a weekly handwritten newspaper, *The Pickwick Portfolio*, edited by Jo, and reading it aloud at the club's weekly meeting. The chapter in *Little Women* includes a sample typeset issue of the four-page, two-column *Portfolio*, complete with poetry, fiction, news items, and announcements of upcoming events.[351] The novel's narrator assures the readers of *Little Women* that the issue of the *Portfolio* presented in the chapter "is a *bona fide* copy of one written by *bona fide* girls once upon a time."[352] The fictional issue of *The Pickwick Portfolio* is, in fact, made up of selections from issues of the actual manuscript newspaper of the same title that had been produced years earlier by a teenaged Alcott and her sisters.[353] The chapter in *Little Women* describes a local, family practice of newspaper production that would have been familiar to Alcott's young readers after 1868 (as well as to their parents). However,

[350] The concept of "embeddedness" has a long and complex history. Its use here is influenced by Leon Jackson's usage, which draws heavily from the work of Karl Polanyi, to describe economic practices that "[function] to create and sustain powerful social bonds." Leon Jackson, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2008), 2, 39. Jackson's use of "embeddedness" is discussed further in chapter 5. For Polanyi on embeddedness, see Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1944). For discussion of the continuing influence and interpretations of Polanyi's concept of "embeddedness" in economic sociology, see Greta Krippner et al., "Polanyi Symposium: A Conversation on Embeddedness," *Socio-Economic Review* 2, no. 1 (January 2004): 109–35, EconLit with Full Text, EBSCOhost.
[351] Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women, Or, Meg, Jo, Beth And Amy* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1868), 147–57.
[352] Alcott, *Little Women*, 152.
[353] Shealy, "Louisa May Alcott's Juvenilia," 15.

many of those readers, unlike Alcott's contemporaries in the early 1850s, would have been subjected by 1868 and over the subsequent decade to advertisements in children's magazines for a range of small printing presses. Some readers of *Little Women* actually would have owned such presses, capable of producing hundreds of copies of newspapers such as *The Pickwick Portfolio* that could then be not only shared in the garret among siblings and friends, but also exchanged through the mail with peers around the country who produced similar papers. The widespread familiarity with and relative affordability of small presses helped to transform antebellum practices of newspaper production among siblings and classmates into the geographically dispersed, networked practices of young people involved in amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s. The March sisters might have helped to inspire a new generation of young readers, including many young women, to produce newspapers in the postbellum years; however, unlike the single copy produced of each issue of *The Pickwick Portfolio*, small printing presses made it possible for hundreds of issues of these new amateur newspapers to circulate widely through print networks.[354]

Small printing presses were marketed after the Civil War to small businesses with the idea that business owners would be able to print their own cards and fliers, bypassing the more expensive professional print shops for small jobs. However, printing press manufacturers after 1867 also realized that they could advertise their products for and to children in what turned out to be a highly effective marketing strategy. This strategy is evident in an image regularly deployed by B. O. Woods & Company in the 1870s to advertise the Novelty Press. Spanning the top half of the page is an engraving of "The 'Novelty' in the Printing Office," depicting a foot-powered Novelty Press in use alongside what appears to be a large steam-powered press,

[354] For a well-documented and particularly rich example of Alcott's *Little Women* inspiring young women to produce an amateur newspaper, see Daniel Shealy, "The Growth of *Little Things*: Louisa May Alcott and the Lukens Sisters' Family Newspaper," *Resources for American Literary Study* 30 (2005): 160–77.

asserting the place of the Novelty Press in the world of the busy professional printshop. The bottom half of the page features two smaller conjoined circular images. In the circle on the left, an engraving depicts men busily engaged in various kinds of office work — including, in the foreground, a man printing on a Novelty Job Printing Press, possibly for the behatted gentleman behind him, who leans slightly forward, indicating his interest in the process. The caption underneath reads, "The Counting-Room," establishing the place of the Novelty Press in the world of commerce. In the circle on the right, an engraving depicts a family in the parlor. The mother is seated in a chair and appears to be reading a periodical. Seated in a chair next to her is the father, whose reading from a large bound volume is interrupted by a young girl, presumably his daughter, handing him a card. The card has most likely been printed by the young boy hard at work across the room on a Novelty Press while two younger children sit on the floor with a type-case. The caption reads, "And in the Family."

The "family" circle in this promotional material reflects a continuation of the kind of local, family literacy practices typical of the antebellum period for those with means. As discussed in the last section, however, antebellum home productions were most often handwritten. In this image, all of the children are involved in some way in the activity of printing, and the parents — both actively engaged readers of print — serve as the primary audience for their productions. In this image, conjoined as it is with the counting-room, the printing press provides a means for the children of a literate middle-class family to equip themselves to thrive in contemporary society. That the "counting-room" and "family" circles are conjoined suggests, among other things, a pathway for the boy printer to move from childhood to adulthood, from play to work.[355] What is not represented on the cover of this promotional

[355] "A Descriptive and Illustrated Pamphlet of the Novelty Job Printing Presses" (Boston: published and printed by Benj. O. Woods, 1873). The 1875 version of the pamphlet, which features the same image on the cover, is available

pamphlet is the networked production and exchange among geographically dispersed young people that sustained amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s and gave shape to the community known as amateurdom. Young people used presses like the Novelty Press to transform local practices and sociabilities into networked ones in ways that were unanticipated among press manufacturers and marketers.

A similar advertising strategy to that of B. O. Woods & Company is at work in Golding & Co. promotional material for the Official Printing Press. This advertisement features two overlapping, but distinct images: in the top left quadrant of the image field is a large circle containing the image of a well-dressed man in an office operating an Official Printing Press, while another man is seated and working at a desk behind him; the bottom left quadrant features a smaller diamond that depicts the parallel image of a well-dressed boy in his parlor operating the “Junior” version of the “Official.” A woman, presumably his mother, sits in a rocking chair, possibly reading or engaged in handwork by the hearth behind him. The slogan “Every Man His Own Printer” runs across the top of the page, while the slogan “Every Boy A Ben Franklin” runs across the bottom. The image of the boy printer mirrors that of the man, though it is slightly smaller. Its positioning lower on the page suggests that the boy will ascend to useful manhood, as marked by self-reliance and a do-it-yourself, entrepreneurial spirit. Through the act of printing, the young boy will become not only a man, but also a successful entrepreneur and citizen, as suggested by the evocation of the figure of Franklin.[356] In this image, unlike the one in promotional material for the Novelty Job Printing Presses, printing is not depicted as a family activity, but rather an individual one and, more specifically, a masculine one. This image of the

online at https://archive.org/stream/Woods1875NoveltyJobPrintingPresses/woods-1875-novelty-press-saxe-0300dpijpg-q75#page/n0/mode/2up.

[356] “Every Man His Own Printer, Every Boy a Ben Franklin,” Golding & Co. Printing Press Manufacturers, 183 to 193 Fort-Hill Square (Boston: s.n., 1879).

boy printer does not reflect the social embeddedness of home literacy practices and literary productions among young people that were prevalent among middle-class white children in the antebellum period, as does the cover of the Novelty Job Printing Presses promotional pamphlet; rather it situates printing as part of the individual "work" of childhood, specifically of boyhood, an act of imitative practice in which one works toward success in manhood. Sánchez-Eppler has argued in reference to presses like the Novelty Press, "These costly toys epitomize a middle-class notion of play that would be productive rather than frivolous."[357] As in the Novelty Press advertisement, though, the use of printing to establish networked peer relationships is absent.

In both of these promotional images for small printing presses, the spheres of capital and domesticity, the realms of adulthood and childhood, coexist and overlap, with the printing press ensuring the passage of the young boy from the parlor, complete with mother and hearth, to the office, with its desks and papers. Amateur journalism as a phenomenon grounded in newspaper exchange among geographically dispersed peers in the 1870s and 1880s that generally occurred outside the direction of the school, the workplace, *and* the home (though production might have occurred at one of these sites) could be seen to reside in the space where these constitutive spheres overlap, representing complex relationships between private and public, domestic and commercial, consumption and production, play and work, even as the participants stood between adulthood and childhood in this space that they actively constructed, inhabited, and worked to maintain. While both promotional images described above feature only young men at the printing press, some advertisements addressed boys and girls, explicitly. For instance, the January 15, 1876, issue of Frank Leslie's weekly story paper *The Young American* includes an advertisement for Excelsior Printing Presses that declares, among other things, "The Girls or

[357] Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 169.

Boys have great fun and make money fast at printing." At least one simple advertisement for the Novelty Job Printing Press, observed in two different amateur newspapers in 1870, explicitly appeals to young women. The advertisement consists of an image of a Novelty press along with text that reads in part, "Incomparably the best present that could be made to a boy or girl." This is another way in which these presses resist easy dichotomization. The same advertisement includes a number of testimonials, including several from press owners in the South (Pensacola, Florida; Macon, Georgia; Glen Allen, Virginia; McMinnville, Tennessee).[358] This feels deliberate, given the relatively low level of print production in the South after the Civil War, despite an overall national increase in print production in the 1870s and 1880s.[359] Where larger-scale print production was lacking, perhaps small press manufacturers believed they could find an eager market among individual business owners and well-to-do or aspiring middle-class young people.

Advertisements for printing presses were common in the late 1860s through the 1870s in popular adult magazines, trade magazines, children's and family magazines, weekly story papers, and amateur newspapers. The proliferation of small press manufacturers in this period suggests that the presses were profitable and popular. An advertisement in the September 1877 issue of amateur newspaper *The Phoenix* (Brooklyn, NY) provides a sense of the number of small presses available to amateur printers in the 1870s: "I can furnish at any time any of the following presses: Model, Novelty, Official, Pearl, Caxton, Excelsior, Columbia, Young American, Alert, Empire, Star, Monumental, Maryland, Baltimore, Centenial [*sic*], and others. Second hand presses etc., bought, sold and exchanged. Send for catalogue at once." Grover

[358] This Novelty Job Printing Press advertisement appears in *Our Story Teller* (New York), July 1870, and in *The Bostonian*, July 15, 1870.
[359] For a discussion of print production in this period, see chapter 1 of this dissertation. See also Scott E. Casper, introduction to *A History of the Book in America,* vol. 3, *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, eds. Scott E. Casper, Jeffrey D. Groves, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, and Michael Winship (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina press, 2007), 38.

Snow, in his "History of Small Presses," describes the origin of the Model press: "In 1873, J. W. Daughaday, publishers of books and juvenile magazines, started selling Kelsey presses and found the demand exceedingly brisk. After about a year they decided to make their own, and thereupon was born the Model press, which remained on the market until the [First] World War."[360] Snow also acknowledges the role of print advertising campaigns in the widespread use of small presses in the 1870s: "[M]agazines like the *Youth's Companion* and *St. Nicholas* were beginning to reach a stage of growth which put them in the hands of thousands of boys, and general periodicals likewise multiplied in number and circulation."[361] Harris notes, "Presses were advertised heavily shortly before Christmas, with promises of delivery in time for the holidays: clearly fishing for the children's market."[362] Adams writes of one of the correspondents to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, "Reynard is a young man, and a little inclined to be bashful. He is a printer, but should not have been if he had not read this Magazine, and is not sorry that he is a printer."[363] Publishing advertisements from manufacturers and agents for small printing presses as well as advertisements from individuals for used presses for sale were important ways in which children's magazines and weekly story papers helped to facilitate the diffusion of small printing presses among young people and the growth of amateur journalism after 1867.

Additionally, both children's magazines and amateur newspapers included cheap printing presses on their premium lists. Former amateur Ernest Elmo Calkins claims, "If you measure the various sizes of home-print amateur publications, you will find they correspond with the sizes of

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[360] Grover Snow, "History of Small Presses," in Elizabeth M. Harris, *Personal Impressions: The Small Printing Press in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: David R. Godine, 2004), 46. Daughaday published *Schoolday Magazine*. Harris, *Personal Impressions*, 90.
[361] Snow, "History of Small Presses," 32.
[362] Harris, *Personal Impressions*, 20. The following appears in *The Advance*: "Quoth the *Printer's Register*: It is a remarkable coincidence that we sold eighty-two amateur printing offices the week before Christmas, and that within a week after we had eighty-two inquiries as to the best method of removing printing ink from parlor carpets." "Trifles," *The Advance*, February 25, 1875.
[363] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, September 1872.

presses then being distributed by the *Youth's Companion* and other children's magazines."[364] The November 15, 1876, issue of amateur newspaper *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT) lists dozens of premiums for anyone turning in a subscriber club, including, for twenty-five subscriptions, a Centennial Printing Press (approximate value: $2.50), and for ninety subscriptions, a Model Printing Press (approximate value: $10.00).[365] The premium system, as well as the used small-press market might have enabled some young people whose families could not afford to buy new presses and equipment to participate in amateur printing. However, the generally small dimensions and poor quality of the amateur papers printed on cheap presses meant that those papers had little value within amateur exchange networks, thus limiting the participation of their editors in amateurdom.

Many advertisements for small printing presses implied to both adult and juvenile audiences that money could be made through their use, though for children, amusement was an additional selling point. For instance, an advertisement for the Novelty Press in the *Boston Journal of Chemistry* in 1870 declares, "No more valuable convenience can be added to any business office, and no more useful, entertaining or instructive present can be made to any boy of ordinary abilities, than one of these presses, and a few dollars' worth of material. He would find it a never-failing source of instructive pleasure and profit."[366] While material benefit is not specified in this advertisement's use of the term "profit," neither is it specifically excluded. In 1872, a Kelsey & Co. advertisement for a five-dollar press reads, "Business men save expense and increase business by doing their own printing and advertising. For Boys delightful, *money-*

[364] Ernest Elmo Calkins, *Amateur Journalism* (New York: The New York Public Library, 1941), 4.
[365] "New Premium List," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), November 15, 1876.
[366] Novelty Job Printing Press, advertisement, *Boston Journal of Chemistry*, January 1, 1870, 84, https://books.google.com/books?id=ql_nAAAAMAAJ.

making amusement."[367] An advertisement for the Model Printing Press in the January 1876 issue of *St. Nicholas* magazine, aimed at an audience of children and young people, declares: "With one you can do printing for yourselves and other people as nicely as any printer; besides, it will be the means of your making a handsome little sum of money every month, even if you work at it during your odd moments only."[368] Harris cites an 1878 advertisement for the Model press from *Harper's Weekly* that reads, in part, "Any smart boy can manage it, and do hundreds of dollars worth of work a year."[369] These advertisements suggest that the process of printing on these presses is self-explanatory, though if the healthy used market for printing offices is any indication, many young people found that printing a paper, even a small one, was more expensive, difficult, and/or time consuming than they or their parents initially anticipated.[370] Though few young amateur printers actually realized a profit, these advertisements from the 1870s suggest that appealing to young people on the basis of money-making potential would be a more effective strategy than appealing solely to the presses' entertainment and educational value. These advertisements appealed to young people's, mostly young men's, desire to be productive, to participate in the commercial marketplace, and to earn enough money independently to be consumers in their own right.

[367] Emphasis in original. Quoted in Elizabeth M. Harris, *The Boy and His Press* ([Washington, DC]: Smithsonian Institution, 1992), 6. See Harris's section on "Amateurism" (pp. 19–23) and "A-jayers" (pp. 23–24) in *Personal Impressions* for excerpts of letters written by young printers in the 1870s to press manufacturer Kelsey.
[368] Model Printing Press, advertisement, *St. Nicholas*, January 1876.
[369] Model Printing Press, advertisement. *Harper's Weekly*, December 21, 1878, cited in Harris, *Personal Impressions*, 19.
[370] J. W. Daughaday & Co. advertised in amateur papers an 8-page paper entitled "Model Printer's Guide" and a 100-page book entitled *How to Print*. For examples of this advertisement, see *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), June–August 1877, and *The Phoenix* (Brooklyn, NY) September 20, 1877. Amateurs also published information for beginners about how to print. For instance, J. C. Miller wrote *The Printer's Devil* (Newark, NJ: Henry W. Clapp, amateur publisher, 1873) as "a simple guide to the industrious youth who wield the composing stick" (preface). *The Globe* (Philadelphia, PA) initiated a department, Young Typo's Guide, in its June 1, 1877, issue, which includes discussions of printing offices and composition. *The Egyptian Star* (Cairo, IL) published a "series of useful papers for the beginner," the fourth of which is entitled, "How to Set, Clean and Distribute Type" (November 1877).

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 contain self-reported information excerpted from the "Connecticut Amateur Directory," which appears in the April 1877 issue of *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT). Table 4.1 provides useful examples of the variation in the size and format of monthly amateur papers, while table 4.2 provides a useful snapshot of the ages of amateur printers, the types of presses they used, and the amount of money invested in their printing offices. The amateur papers included in the excerpt range in size from 4 x 5 inches to 21 x 28 inches. Reported ages of printers range from twelve to eighteen. Brands of presses reported include Alert, Caxton, Columbian, Enterprise, Excelsior, Novelty, Star, and Young America. Based on reported price information, various models of the Excelsior and Columbian presses seem to be represented (though price variation could be partially the result of second-hand purchases). Self-reported investments in printing offices range from $8.00 to $150.00, which also could include a mixture of purchases of new and used equipment and materials. Small presses allowed some young people to do much more than play at printing: these presses allowed young people to print hundreds of copies of amateur papers that could then be mailed to other young people around the country, putting young editors and authors in conversation with one another, as well as putting their papers in conversation with the children's magazines and weekly story papers that were popular among young readers.

Table 4.1: Amateur papers*

Title	City	No. of Pages	No. of Cols.	Page Size (inches)	Date Est.	Monthly Circ.
The Advertiser	New Haven	8	16	5 x 6	Apr. 1876	600
Amateur Chronicle	Norwalk	4	12	8 x 12	Mar. 1876	900
Eastern Star	Meriden	4	8	5 x 8	Aug. 1876	500
The Home Gem	Ansonia	4	8	4 x 5	Oct. 1875	500
Home Companion	Norwalk	4	16	17 x 24	Jan. 1876	1500
Hartford Amateur	Hartford	4	12	9 x 7	Sep. 1876	800
The Journal	Wallingford	4	8	6 x 9	Aug. 1876	200
New England Star	Ansonia	8	32	21 x 28	Jul. 1876	1500
Norwalk Amateur	South Norwalk	4	8	10 x 10	Sep. 1876	1000

***Note:** It is not possible to determine from the directory entries whether a paper was printed by an amateur on a small press or by a professional printer paid to do the job.

Table 4.2: Amateur printers**

Name	Age	Press	Office Value
Blenner, H.	16	Excelsior press ($6)	$15
Bradley, C.	14	Caxton press	$40
Beebe, F. B.	16	Excelsior press ($6)	$15
Bradley, F.	13	Caxton press	$20
Barnes, A.	18	Excelsior press ($11)	$150
Bradley, G. W.	17	Columbian press ($37)	$125
Butler, F.	16	Caxton press	$25
Buckingham, A.	17	Caxton press	$50
Cailock, C.	14	Caxton press	$25
Cahill, T.	15	Excelsior press ($11)	$20
Clark, J.	16	Excelsior press ($6)	$10
Dann, G.	15	Young America press ($15)	$50
Gorman, R. J.	17	Columbian press ($37)	$80
Law, L.	14	Star press ($37)	$125

Table 4.2 (continued): Amateur printers**

Name	Age	Press	Office Value
May, H.	14	Excelsior press ($6)	$12
Maher, F.	13	Young America Press ($25)	$54
Miller, D.	16	Excelsior press ($27)	$45
Parker, J.	13	Enterprise press ($3)	$8
Robinson, W.	12	Excelsior press ($6)	$10
Rice, E.	13	Caxton press	$50
Stevens, F.	13	Excelsior press ($6)	$20
Thomas, W.	16	Columbian press ($27)	$80
Ullman, J.	14	Excelsior press ($6)	$10
Case, F.	15	Excelsior press ($18)	$50
Lathrop, G.	15	Excelsior press ($12)	$75
Blodgett, W.	14	Novelty press ($32)	$150
Brigham, F.	18	Alert press ($45)	$150
Percival, M.	18	Excelsior press ($11)	$75
Smith, F.	15	Excelsior press ($15)	$50
Gardner, F.	14	Columbian press ($27)	$60

****Note:** Table 4.2 includes entries from New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut, except for those that contained incomplete information in the directory. It excludes entries from Meriden and Ansonia, Connecticut, as the information in the directory for those locations is incomplete.

The promotional materials and advertisements described in this section invited young people to engage in particular ways with small printing presses: some emphasized printing as a form of domestic, unproductive play carried out in the parlor as a family activity; others emphasized printing on "toy" presses as the work of boyhood, a means of preparation for a successful manhood defined by a professional, entrepreneurial, or managerial career; and others promised productive — and profitable — labor, presumably through job printing, promising boys who did not need to work for survival the opportunity to earn spending money, and with it,

a measure of independence as consumers. These promotional materials and advertisements, interestingly, make no specific reference to young people as authors and editors printing books or periodicals. However, this is how many young people involved with amateur journalism used their presses. Children's magazines in the 1870s would have been the first place that many young people, many of whom had literary career aspirations, learned about these small printing presses. One longtime amateur editor and printer describes his entry into amateurdom:

> During the year 1875, we were a constant reader of the boys and girls favorite paper, of that and the present day, "The Youth's Companion," of Boston. The many excellent stories which it contained, and lastly, but not leastly, (to us!) the many card and amateur printing press ads. We were "struck!"

He describes his savings for and investment in larger and higher quality printing presses from that point forward, as well as his subsequent involvement with a number of amateur papers.[371]

Robin Bernstein argues that the "history of children's literature exists not in opposition to, but in integration with, the histories of children's material culture and children's play."[372] Through the placement of advertisements for small presses in children's magazines, it is implied that young people could use the presses to act as authors, editors, and publishers; however, that this is generally not suggested explicitly in advertisements parallels a general ambivalence among children's magazine editors toward young people's authorship as a literary or commercial activity rather than a domestic, social, or academic one. Small printing presses suitable for individual, home use allowed hundreds of young people to produce hundreds of copies of books and issues of papers, but the availability of presses alone did not fuel the growth of amateur

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[371] Edward E. Stowell, "Our Short Career as an Amateur," *The Amateur Globe* (Mt. Carroll, IL), January 1880.
[372] Robin Bernstein, "Toys Are Good for Us: Why We Should Embrace the Historical Integration of Children's Literature, Material Culture, and Play," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (2013): 459, doi: 10.1353/chq.2013.0051.

journalism. Not all young people who owned presses participated in amateur journalism, and not all amateur journalists owned presses or did their own printing. However, these presses helped to create the conditions, along with other factors, for hundreds of young people to form long-distance connections and large peer networks through print, to participate in literary and commercial economies, and to engage in a form of public discourse. For these reasons, they resist characterization as diminutive or precious artifacts of children's material culture. If one accepts from Bernstein that "agency emerges through constant engagement with the stuff of our lives,"[373] then the agency of young amateur printers using presses to make connections with peers, earn money, and communicate information and ideas with others beyond channels typically open to them resists objectification or infantilization of those young people as well.

Bernstein refers to "enscription" as "the interpellation through a scriptive thing that combines narrative with materiality to structure behavior…. [B]y entering the scripted scenario, the individual is interpellated into ideology and thus into subjecthood."[374] With these presses, young people were invited to play as children, to practice for eventual successful middle-class adulthood, and to participate in the marketplace (on a scale considered appropriate for a young person) through job printing (which, as Lisa Gitelman points out, often produced documents "that didn't … have readers or create readerships, nor did they have authors or entail authorial rights"[375]). Both Karen Sánchez-Eppler and Lara Langer Cohen discuss the ways in which the presses allowed relatively affluent young men to "play" at press laborers, and in the case of amateur journalists, to frame their activities as work.[376] The presses themselves were marked

[373] Robin Bernstein, *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood from Slavery to Civil Rights* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 12.
[374] Bernstein, *Racial Innocence*, 77.
[375] Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Duke University Press, 2014), Kindle edition, 11.
[376] Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States*, 154; Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

sometimes as toys through materials and design (presses made of tin, cheap rail presses),[377] the limits imposed by the size of their output (2 x 3 inches, in many cases), and their model names (for instance, the "Official Junior" and the "Novelette"). Printing offices were also packaged to scale for children: for instance, the Novelty Job Printing Press catalog, the cover image of which is described above, includes "a guide for persons unaquainted [*sic*] with the requirements of the 'Art Preservative.'" This guide details four printing offices: the "Village Job Office" (estimated cost: $150.00; included a quarto press capable of 9 x 14 inch prints), two "Amateur Job Offices" (estimated cost: $75.00 or $50.00; each included an octavo press, capable of 6 x 10 inch prints), and one "Boy's Job Office" (estimated cost: $32.00; included a duodecimo press, capable of 4 1/2 x 6 1/2 inch prints). Of the latter, the guide states, "The press will not soon be laid aside with other toys, for its sameness…. [W]ith a Novelty Press, the very finest work may be done, and the boy is thereby enabled to vie with the best printer in doing man's work, which is a great stimulus to his ambition."[378] That many young people printed books and periodicals written and edited by young people on "toy" presses, and that many more rejected these presses in favor of models capable of printing papers with pages measuring 5 x 7 inches and larger suggests, drawing on Bernstein's work, some level of "resistance, interpretation, and improvisation" with regard to the "script."[379] Even the "Amateur Job Offices" are promoted as capable of producing "a very pleasing variety of Cards, Bill-heads, Envelopes, Letter-heads, Circulars, Labels, and all other printing required in an ordinary business house"[380] — but no mention of books or newspapers. This further highlights the ways in which many of the young people who acquired small printing

[377] Harris, *Personal Impressions*, 7, 27.
[378] "Descriptive and Illustrated Pamphlet of the Novelty Job Printing Presses," 8, https://archive.org/stream/Woods1875NoveltyJobPrintingPresses/woods-1875-novelty-press-saxe-0300dpijpg-q75#page/n0/mode/2up.
[379] Bernstein, *Racial Innocence*, 12.
[380] "Descriptive and Illustrated Pamphlet of the Novelty Job Printing Presses," 8, https://archive.org/stream/Woods1875NoveltyJobPrintingPresses/woods-1875-novelty-press-saxe-0300dpijpg-q75#page/n0/mode/2up.

presses used them in ways that were neither explicitly promoted nor approved. They resisted the limitations implied by engaging with the presses as toys and also resisted identification of themselves with children and of their printing activities as play.

This supports Cohen's characterization of amateurdom as a counterpublic. Literary production by young people with an at least partially anonymous reading public in mind — one that consisted primarily of other young people — could be read as a form of resistance, asserting young people's agency in shaping print culture and establishing a youth "world of letters" that was met with ambivalence and condescension by professional editors, authors, and critics in the 1870s. However, by the 1880s, the presses and the act of printing became less centrally important to amateurdom. By then, it was expected that amateur newspapers would have a neat, "professional" appearance; however, how that appearance was achieved — whether by the paper's editor on a small press, by a paid "amateur printer" who routinely printed a number of amateur papers, or by an established professional printer — affected neither the paper's exchange value nor the reputation within amateurdom of its editor. In other words, by the 1880s, the act of printing books and periodicals no longer reads as resistance. This parallels the diminished "oppositional stance toward the public sphere" central to Cohen's characterization of amateurdom as a counterpublic. The rhetoric in amateur papers that posits middle-class boys as "society's most victimized demographic" subsides in the 1880s, in tandem with a decline in the symbolic value assigned to operating a printing press.[381]

These small printing presses, marketed to both adults and children as "profitable" (in multiple senses of the word) toys for children, enabled young amateur printers to produce hundreds of papers, many of which were mailed long distances to young people often known

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[381] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. See also Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), especially pp. 56–63 on counterpublics.

only through their print personas, if at all. While printing on these presses sometimes occurred in the parlor, it also occurred in attics and outbuildings, largely unsupervised by adults. Howard Chudacoff explains,

> The growth of cities, the expansion of peer socialization in schools and neighborhoods, the rise of consumer society, and the broadened appearance of mass-produced toys mingled with heightened attitudes about the worth of childhood to create new opportunities for young people to pursue playful amusements, both in view of and beyond adult vigilance.[382]

Chudacoff cites the ambivalence among adults "about how much leeway to give kids in their unstructured time."[383] Active amateur journalists appeared to have a great deal of leeway, based on the general lack of complaints in amateur papers about parental interference in production and also on the apparently unsupervised travel of many amateurs to state, regional, and national amateur press association conventions. For some adults, however, this leeway was a matter of concern; for instance, in 1878, the *Messenger* published "A Warning to Parents" about the ways in which pornographers, posing as editors of amateur papers, allegedly were infiltrating amateur exchange networks and exposing children to pornographic material.[384] The editorial's publication suggests that amateur journalism was considered by many parents to be a safe, educational activity that required little to no supervision or intervention and provides evidence that amateurdom was not immune to the general pressure, discussed in chapter 2, to increase the supervision and regulation of the lives of young people. As is discussed in the next section, children's magazines attempted to influence amateur journalism in particular ways in the 1870s and 1880s. This pressure to infantilize young people involved in amateur journalism rather than

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[382] Chudacoff, *Children at Play*, 95.
[383] Chudacoff, *Children at Play*, 95.
[384] "A Warning to Parents," *Messenger*, April 24, 1878, American Periodicals Series Online.

to encourage their participation in the literary and commercial worlds of adults may have had some effect on the changing character of amateurdom in the 1880s.

4.4 Children's Magazines, Weekly Story Papers, and the Growth of Amateur Journalism

This chapter so far has discussed the roles of antebellum home literary and literacy practices among middle-class families and the introduction of small presses marketed as toys after the Civil War in the growth of amateur journalism among young people in the 1870s. This section discusses the important role played by children's magazines and story papers in amateur journalism's development, despite ambivalence on the part of adult editors toward young people as authors, editors, printers, and publishers. As has been noted, advertisements for new and used small printing presses were prevalent in several popular children's magazines, and low-end presses were often offered on the premium lists of popular children's magazines throughout the 1870s. In these ways, children's magazines invited many young readers to view themselves as printers and influenced the physical size of amateur papers being produced by their readers. Some amateur newspapers were also clearly influenced by the contents, layout, and design of popular children's magazines. For instance, the correspondence department, "Our Post Office," in *Our American Youth* (Baltimore, MD) is structured like the "Our Letter Bag" department in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. It begins with responses to correspondence received, followed by sections "Wish Correspondents," "Accepted," and "Respectfully Declined." Evidence of the amateur editor's familiarity and active engagement with *Oliver Optic's Magazine* exists in the form of references in *Our American Youth* to several of the most active correspondents to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, including "Hautboy" and "Harry St. Clair."[385] The May 1, 1878, issue of the *Amateur Iowan* (Washington, IA) includes the following notice: "The *Youth's Progress*; aye, that

[385] *Our American Youth* (Baltimore, MD), Our Post Office, July 1872.

is the paper we long to peruse. It is to be conducted by prominent amateurs on a plan similar to the late *Oliver Optic's Magazine*."[386] Other amateur papers include similar departments to *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and other popular children's magazines; for instance, though published after the December 1875 suspension of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, 1876 issues of the *Amateur Monthly* (Chicago, IL) include both a letter department, "Our Mail Box," and a puzzle department, "The Poser." In a history of puzzledom, Theodore G. Meyer writes, "[*Oliver Optic's Magazine*] gave a decided impetus to the publication of amateur papers, these miniature sheets being employed as media for the exploitation of crude puzzle columns, patterned after Head-Work."[387] While Meyer's perspective is skewed by his particular interest in puzzledom (most of the amateur newspapers from the American Antiquarian Society collection examined for this research, including many from the early 1870s when *Oliver Optic's Magazine* was popular, have no puzzle department), the influence of contemporary children's magazines on the contents and format of amateur newspapers is recognizable, whether or not individual amateur editors were aware of or acknowledged those influences.[388]

Children's magazines promoted — or at least capitalized on interest in — amateur journalism in other significant ways during this period. *Oliver Optic's Magazine* published a story entitled "Will's Printing-Press" in its April 1871 issue, and *Our Young Folks* published a story in its "Our Young Contributors" feature in 1873 by "H. Prince, age 15," called "How Harry Got His Printing-Press." In 1879, *St. Nicholas* published an autobiographical account of the creation of amateur paper *The Comet* in 1839, "the first boys' newspaper printed in the 'Far West'" (in Western Illinois), written by Edward C. Kemble, who was a prominent newspaper

[386] *Amateur Iowan* (Washington, IA), Amateur News, May 1, 1878.
[387] Theodore G. Meyer [Arty Fishel, pseud.], "American Puzzledom," in *A Key to Puzzledom, or, Complete Handbook of the Enigmatic Art*, compiled and published under the auspices of Eastern Puzzlers' League (New York: William W. Delaney, 1906), 14, http://books.google.com/books?id=1VhNAAAAYAAJ.
[388] For a discussion of the influence of William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic") on amateur authors, see Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 129–31, 135–37, 141–42.

editor in California in the 1840s and cofounder of *Alta California* in 1849.[389] *St. Nicholas* also published a serialized version of "Phaeton Rogers" beginning in December 1880, which was published as a novel in 1881.[390] In the story, "All 'the torments of typography' ... are set forth in fascinating detail and turned the minds of teen age boys to a new hobby."[391] *St. Nicholas* also printed a substantial article, "Amateur Newspapers," in July 1882, and reported on the convention of the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) that took place on July 14, 1882, in Detroit, Michigan, both written by Harlan H. Ballard.[392] Many amateurs in the 1880s attributed their entry into amateur journalism to Ballard's pieces in *St. Nicholas.* For instance, the editor of the *Amateur Decorian* (Decorah, IA) declared in response to a query in another amateur newspaper about how many amateurs became involved because of Ballard's work: "We … would not have known anything about Amateurdom had it not been for the article mentioned." It claims that Ballard's articles "excited our curiosity at once."[393] "The Story of Amateur Journalism," a pamphlet published in 1912 and intended for free distribution to people interested in amateurdom, also credits Ballard's work for reinvigorating amateur journalism in the early 1880s: "[Ballard's] article, which was attractively illustrated, gave the pastime of amateur editing a wide introduction to young America and as a result a large number of new papers sprang up, and many new amateur 'editorial sanctums' were established."[394] In these ways, children's magazines served to increase young peoples' awareness of amateur journalism, their desire for

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[389] L. A. B. C., "Will's Printing-Press," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, April 1871; H. Prince, "How Harry Got His Printing-Press," *Our Young Folks*, Our Young Contributors, June 1873; and Edward C. Kemble, "How a Comet Struck the Earth," *St. Nicholas,* June 1879. For biographical information on Edward C, Kemble, see James D. Hart, *A Companion to California*, rev. and exp. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 256.

[390] Rossiter Johnson, "Phaeton Rogers," *St. Nicholas*, December 1880–October 1881; Rossiter Johnson, *Phaeton Rogers; A Novel of Boy Life* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons), 1881. Chapter titles include "The Art Deservative" (a play on "art preservative") and "Torments of Typography."

[391] Calkins, *Amateur Journalism*, 4–5.

[392] Harlan H. Ballard, "Amateur Newspapers," *St. Nicholas*, July 1882; Harlan H. Ballard, "A Convention of Amateur Journalists," *St. Nicholas*, July 1883.

[393] *Amateur Decorian* (Decorah, IA), "We are curious to know ...," exchange ed., August 1884.

[394] "The Story of Amateur Journalism: What It Comprises; How to Join the Ranks," compliments of Walter F. Zahn, President, National Amateur Press Association, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, May 1912.

small printing presses, and their consideration of future literary or journalistic professional careers.

Despite the ways children's magazines fostered, influenced — and profited from — amateur journalism, children's magazine editors, particularly William T. Adams of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and Mary Mapes Dodge of *St. Nicholas*, were ambivalent in their support of young people's efforts at authorship. Adams often used "Our Letter Bag" or "Pigeon Hole Papers" to scold young people for their authorial aspirations:

> There are certain boys and girls in different parts of the United States who insist upon becoming authors, even before they have learned to write a legible hand, to spell correctly, or to construct a decent sentence. These aspirants for the honors of literature do not propose to write merely for the pleasure of doing so, or for the satisfaction of seeing their productions in print, but for profit. Jimmie, who does not know a foreplane from a handsaw, offers to build a house at the price for which carpenters do the job. Betty, who never made a dress even for her doll, wishes to cut an expensive silk on the terms paid to experienced dress-makers.[395]

Adams, in his role as editor, likely received as many unsolicited queries about rates of payment from young would-be authors as he did poorly written manuscripts, though his indignation in this passage is as much rooted in young correspondents' motivations as in the quality of their work; he is indignant, in part, because these young writers expected to be paid. At the same time, Adams was averse to publishing in his magazine (even for free) work from *any* young contributors, including those, like Edwin Farwell ("Alert"), he claimed to admire. Adams repeatedly refused to include a young writers' department in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, citing

[395] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, September 1872.

young people's vanity.[396] He finally claimed in July 1875, due to continued demand from readers, that he was disposed to create such a department; however, in this issue and the next, he stressed to readers that he would only publish high-quality work: "We … will insert any article from the boys which is worthy of an insertion; but we do not think it is fair to allow the boys to make themselves ridiculous."[397] (This raises a question about how girls would fare as authors in the new department.) However, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* suspended publication before the new department was created. Suzanne Rahn, in her chapter on the St. Nicholas League, the young contributors' department of *St. Nicholas* magazine that began in 1899, explains that Mary Mapes Dodge, like Adams, during the 1870s and 1880s "had strong feelings on the undesirability of exposing children to fame and publicity," and when she experimented with a short-lived "Young Contributor's Department" in the 1870s, it was small and published only children's initials with their work.[398]

When Adams did print submissions from young readers, it was often to highlight their shortcomings (though he sometimes withheld identifying information, to protect the identities of the correspondents whose poor writing he presented as a cautionary tale for other would-be authors). In one such case, examples of young readers' submissions are accompanied by the following admonition:

> If an article comes to us in which the spelling is bad, the proper use of capitals neglected, or with the sentences badly constructed, we conclude that the author has missed his calling, and we decline his production without even a reading. In

[396] For instance, as cited in chapter 2, in response to "Bob's" request for a "letter department," Adams wrote, "It wouldn't pay to put such crude literature into print, however gratifying to the vanity of Young America." *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, February 8, 1868.
[397] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, July 1875; *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, August 1875.
[398] Suzanne Rahn, "In the Century's First Springtime: Albert Bigelow Paine and the St. Nicholas League," in *"St. Nicholas" and Mary Mapes Dodge: The Legacy of a Children's Magazine Editor, 1873–1905*, eds. Susan R. Gannon, Suzanne Rahn and Ruth Anne Thompson (Jefferson, NC: 2004), 138.

> other words, we treat him precisely as we should any other unskilful workman.
>
> The fact that almost everybody seeks to be an author, without any knowledge of the business, does not alter the case.

In introducing one reader's poem, Adams claims that despite some good qualities, "it has the inevitable crudeness of juvenile efforts."[399] In other words, not only are these submissions from young readers poorly written, but *all* submissions from young people are "inevitably" so to varying degrees. The implication here for young authors is that they should not expect to see their work in print, and if any of their work is printed, young authors should recognize it as merely the best of the worst.

Despite this ambivalence toward young people's authorship and unrelenting criticism of young people's literary efforts, many amateur journalists recognized Adams as a major supporter of amateur journalism and a factor in amateur journalism's success. For instance, the *Hand Book of Amateur Journalism*, an early twentieth century recruitment pamphlet, claims: "The writers of juvenile books, and editors of young people's periodicals have always recognized the benefits of Amateur Journalism. W. T. Adams (Oliver Optic) in his famous old *Magazine* helped to build the institution, and Horatio Alger attended several of the early conventions."[400] Amateur and early contributor to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Henry E. Wheeler (Punch, the Printer, pseud.) of Evansville, Indiana, reportedly published an amateur book entitled *Life of Oliver Optic*.[401] Adams was elected to honorary membership in several amateur press associations over the years, including the Empire State A.P.A. in 1873, to which Adams responded, in part: "I am duly

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[399] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, September 1875.

[400] W. R. Murphy, "Hand Book of Amateur Journalism," published for recruiting purposes by the National Amateur Press Association, [1905?].

[401] Hutchinson and Porter, *Amateurs' Guide for 1870*, 20, and Thomas G. Harrison, *The Career and Reminiscences of an Amateur Journalist and a History of Amateur Journalism* (Indianapolis, IN: Thos. G. Harrison, publisher and printer, 1883), 25, https://books.google.com/books?id=dDNAAAAAYAAJ. I was unable to locate a copy of Wheeler's book for review.

sensible of the honor you have conferred upon me."[402] Amateur editors sometimes cited the favorable notice of their papers in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* as a way to improve their reputations within amateurdom and to increase the circulation of their papers.[403]

Adams's general support for amateurdom can be understood by revisiting the question of motivation with respect to young people's writing. As we have seen, Adams articulated in his magazine three motivations for writing: writing for pleasure, writing to see one's name in print (in which recognition serves as a reward), and writing to earn money. Within this framework, Adams could support amateur journalism as a pleasurable endeavor that provided satisfaction to young people through seeing their names in print. He could even celebrate their money-making endeavors as amateur job printers, as it was indicative of the enterprising spirit of "Young America." However, when one amateur writes to Adams, "Please notify the readers of your valuable Magazine that I am now prepared to furnish amateur editors with original sketches at all prices ranging from *twenty-five cents* to twenty-five dollars," Adams responds derisively in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*: "The writer's penmanship is easy, graceful, and elegant … though we mildly suggest that he has something on the side of his face. It only remains to be seen whether the amateur editors and publishers will bite at this tempting bait, and we bespeak a twenty-five cent sketch of the result."[404] When amateur authors sought payment for their work, even from amateur editors, Adams tended to be critical. As this dissertation has argued, though, these young writers in the 1870s, many of whom were readers of the stories of Oliver Optic and correspondents to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, were operating within the commercial model of authorship practiced by Adams.

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[402] H. H. Billany and C. A. Rudolph, *The Amateurs' Guide for 1875* (Wilmington, DE: Amateur Pub. Co., 1875), 18.
[403] See, for instance, *Our American Youth* (Louisville, KY), May 1873.
[404] Emphasis in original. *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Pigeon Hole Papers, May 1871.

Oliver Optic's Magazine was the primary vehicle for Adams's support of amateur journalism. Adams provided space in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* for young people to network with one another, primarily through "Wish Correspondents"; routinely noticed in the magazine the amateur newspapers he received; and regularly published questions from young people about amateur journalism, often soliciting responses to those questions from practicing amateurs, acknowledging their authority and expertise in those areas. For instance, the editors of the *Lake Forest Gem* (Illinois) sent *Oliver Optic's Magazine* issues of their paper, which were noticed by Adams the magazine. As a result, at least one reader of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* wrote to Adams requesting contact information for the *Lake Forest Gem,* evidence that young readers actively sought to establish connections with peers who shared their interests. While the request itself is not published in the magazine, Adams's dismissive response appears: "We don't remember where the Lake Forest Gem, and Punch, the printer's paper, are published."[405] So, while Adams was willing to promote amateur journalism insofar as it fulfilled his need for reader-generated content and supported his vision of enterprising youth, he was not — at least in this case — willing to expend time and effort to locate an address for a reader. These kinds of queries, which became a sort of nuisance in terms of Adams's editorial labor, were the reason "Wish Correspondents" was established, and issue after issue includes would-be correspondents who list amateur papers, printing, and presses among their interests.

Several amateurs credit the "Head Work" department in *Oliver Optic's Magazine* for their entrance into amateurdom: "Of course I began as a puzzler in *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, and of course I had a nom-de-plume: Humpty Dumpty. The owner of that cognomen is world-renowned as the author of more hair-raising creations than any other aspirant extant, fifty of his unparalleled serial productions having had their day of glaring capitals and repeated (to-be-

[405] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 5, 1867.

continued)s."[406] The fact that one of the editors of the *Lake Forest Gem* contributed a puzzle on at least one occasion to the "Head Work" department of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* suggests that he had more than a self-serving interest in the magazine (to promote his amateur paper, the *Gem*), instead positioning him as an active and engaged reader of that magazine who was simultaneously an active and engaged amateur editor.[407] These examples suggest ways that readers' interactions with *Oliver Optic's Magazine* were interrelated with their entry into and subsequent reputation within amateurdom.

Several weekly story papers also promoted and/or similarly exploited readers' interest in amateur journalism in the 1870s.[408] The October 10, 1874, issue of Frank Leslie's *The Young American*, for instance, includes what appears to be a regular department entitled "Amateur Review." Amateur newspapers received are noticed, and brief parenthetical evaluations are provided ("An unpretending specimen of journalism, rather neat appearance."). The same issue includes a news report, entitled "Antagonistic Amateurs," on the San Francisco case in which three teenaged amateurs were arrested and charged with libel against a fourth teenaged amateur based on content published in their amateur newspapers. The defense attorney, it was reported, told the judge "the proper thing would be to spank them" if they weren't so "large." The attorney also claimed that the boys were merely "imitating" the professional daily newspapers in publishing personal attacks. On the same page as this story appears a department for "Answered Letters" and "Wish Correspondents," in which several entries address some aspect of

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[406] Richard Gerner, "The Fraternity," *The Jersey Amateur Journal* (Hoboken, NJ), July–August, 1881, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/zswP5.

[407] *Oliver Optic's Magazine,* Our Letter Bag, November 9, 1867.

[408] It is difficult to locate runs of story papers, and story papers generally have not been digitized. I was able to examine individual issues of several story papers from both the American Antiquarian Society and the Northern Illinois University Libraries Special Collections, but large runs of a single story paper were rarely available. Therefore, the following observations are based only on the issues I was able to examine, and should not be understood as generally representative of story papers in general. It was impossible for me to determine as part of this dissertation research how long particular departments relevant to amateurdom appeared or what other relevant content particular story papers published over the course of their existence.

amateurdom. The issue also contains what appears to be a regular department entitled "Our Amateur Contributors." That it references "amateurs" rather than the more generic "young people" or "young contributors" or "youth" in its title, as many other publications did, suggests an appeal specifically to those young people affiliated with amateurdom in some way. Perhaps as interesting as the actual amateur writing that appears in the department is the notice of rejections. Reasons for rejection provided in this issue are "Does not contain sufficient incident"; "Poorly punctuated and spelt, and carelessly written"; "A poor imitation of another amateur's style"; "Worthless"; and "To secure a reading of this story, we should advise the author to regard our rule of *writing on one side of the paper only*" [emphasis in original]. Finally, the issue includes a department entitled "Our Market," which is devoted to "amateur advertisements," though in this sense, the term is being used in opposition to "professional advertisements," and while several of the advertisements include goods related to amateur journalism, others involve a variety of items including stamps, a velocipede, a rowboat, an accordion, used books and newspapers, a pistol, skates, and coins.[409]

The November 13, 1876, issue of Norman L. Munro & Co.'s *The Boys of New York* includes an "Amateur Publications" department similar to that in *The Young American*, which mentions papers received and provides brief reviews. For instance, the department notes that *The Sunbeam* (Danville, IL) "is also afflicted with the political *fever*. Its motto is, 'Congratulations no object: lucre, or we bust.' We would counsel the editor to 'bust' his paper, and not make a natural fool of himself." *Munro's Girls and Boys* (New York), published by Norman Munro's older brother George, in addition to hosting a regular department called "Girl and Boy Contributors," in its August 19, 1876, issue includes portraits of two boys, each identified by name and city and the caption "Amateur Writer and Puzzler to MUNRO'S GIRLS AND BOYS OF

[409] *The Young American*, October 10, 1874.

AMERICA." While this caption makes use of the word "amateur," and the portraits appear to of teenaged boys, there is nothing to suggest that the boys are affiliated with amateurdom as a community. However, an "amateur book" by one of the boys, Jesse Healy, is advertised in the "Amateur Advertisements" department of the same issue, and Harrison writes that Healy "was a popular writer at this time, and several of his sketches appeared in pamphlet form during the year…. Healy was a good writer and well thought of."[410] This inclusion of Healy by Harrison suggests that Healy was actively affiliated to some extent with amateurdom — not merely an amateur due to his age and lack of "professional" status.

In the November 11, 1876, issue of *Munro's Boys and Girls of America*, the "To Correspondents" department includes the following from reader Harry Batsford:

> Would you please inform me how much it costs to get amateur papers printed? When are any of my stories going to appear? Three have been accepted … but none have as yet appeared in print…. If I should start an amateur paper, should I have to pay the amateur authors for their stories? How much would I have to pay them? What is good for split lips? What is good for an ear-ache and a toothache?

The correspondence editor, who may or may not have been Munro, responds, in part: "We should like to have some of our correspondents write a full account of the way and cost of getting out an amateur paper, for the Girl and Boy Contributors' Department…. If you look at the back numbers of MUNRO'S GIRLS AND BOYS OF AMERICA, you will find the address of a good many amateurs, to whom you may write." This is another example in which a young person actively submitted work to a professional publication, in this case a weekly story paper, while at the same time explored involvement in amateur journalism. If Harry Batsford's stories had been accepted with the intention of publishing them in the "Girl and Boy Contributors" department,

[410] Harrison, *Career and Reminiscences of an Amateur Journalist*, 141.

however, which seems likely, then *Munro's Girls and Boys of America* was ensuring that the author would be doubly marked as an amateur and a child. There were two obvious benefits for a story paper such as *Munro's Girls and Boys of America* to actively solicit work from young people: (1) stories written by children could all be treated as "amateur" stories; therefore, they helped to fill columns without requiring payment to authors, and (2) readers whose work had been submitted or accepted would likely continue to support the story paper financially to learn the fate of those submissions or to see their stories in print. At the same time, by labeling this work as written by "girls" and "boys" and by featuring portraits of "amateurs" who were young people, *Munro's Girls and Boys of America* effectively cut off avenues for these young people to professional authorship in their youth, regardless of the quality or quantity of the work published in the story paper.

Boston story paper *Boys' Own* (1873–1876), published by Charles F. Richards, includes the following notice along with its publication information: "This paper being devoted entirely to boys and girls, they are invited to furnish stories of adventure, etc., for publication. If worthy, they will be published. They must in every case be ORIGINAL."[411] It appears that in 1874, the story paper launched a regular department entitled "Stories by Boy Contributors," cutting off avenues to professional authorship for young people in a similar manner to that of *Munro's Girls and Boys of America*. The February 14, 1874, issue of *Boys' Own*, features in this department a story by Jesse Healy, the "amateur" author whose likeness would appear in 1876 in *Munro's Girls and Boys of America*.[412] A stronger link than this can be made between *Boys' Own* and amateur journalism: W. L. Terhune, who was discussed earlier in this chapter due to his involvement with *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and his heavy participation in an early network of

[411] See, for instance, *Boys' Own*, November 15, 1873, AAS Historical Periodicals Collection.
[412] Jesse Healy, "Jack, the Waif Detective," *Boys' Own*, February 14, 1874, AAS Historical Periodicals Collection.

amateurs who were also affiliated with *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, edited the puzzle department of *Boys' Own* during 1874. Beginning in late 1874, Terhune also became editor of a new department, "The Young Journalist." This new department included articles on the history of amateur journalism, definitions of terminology relevant to amateur printing, instructions on how to print, biographical sketches of prominent amateurs, and notices of amateur papers received. The "Stories by Boy Contributors" department encouraged some young men (though not explicitly young women) to write for pleasure and publication; the puzzle department encouraged some young correspondents to interact with Terhune; and "The Young Journalist" department likely interested some young readers in amateur printing and amateur journalism. However, there is no obvious mechanism in *Boys' Own* for any of these young people to connect with one another beyond the pages of the story paper.

One question that has as yet been underexplored in scholarship on amateur journalism is *how* did the geographically dispersed young people who participated in amateur journalism establish networks of exchange for their papers, with monthly exchanges sometimes numbering more than a hundred? While the answer is multifaceted, children's magazines — particularly *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in the 1870s and *St. Nicholas* in the early 1880s — and weekly story papers, particularly in the early to mid-1870s, played an important role in transforming what had been a largely local, manuscript-based practice into a form of youth cultural expression driven and directed by young people, most of whom were white and middle class. Periodicals created *for* young people played a critical role in developing networks of young people bound together by periodicals created *by* them, despite the ambivalence of professional editors toward young people's authorship. Edwin A Farwell (Alert, pseud.), his friends, and their nascent formal organization as amateur journalists represented only a small, albeit vital, portion of the amateurs

active from 1867 to 1870, and an even smaller portion of those active through the suspension of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in December 1875, a period generally characterized by later amateurs as the "halcyon days" of amateur journalism.[413] In other words, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* played an important role in the expansion of amateurdom and significantly shaped its early character, but it was not the only periodical geared toward young people that supported the spread of amateur journalism after 1867 and helped sustain it as a pastime for young people for more than two decades. Other children's magazines, especially *Youth's Companion* and *St. Nicholas*, familiarized young people with printing presses, amateur newspapers, and amateurdom. Weekly story papers that appealed to young people additionally promoted amateur journalism though advertisements, amateur profiles, and regular departments devoted to amateur journalism. Most important, magazines such as *Oliver Optic's Magazine* that not only noticed amateur newspapers but provided contact information for amateur editors, authors, and printers provided young readers with connections that could initiate them into practices of amateur journalism, connect them with existing amateur exchange networks, and introduce them to amateurdom as a community, as well as to its formal organizations.[414]

The biographical sketch of amateur Carlton B. Case in an 1875 amateur directory is worth noting. According to the sketch, Case first became interested in amateurdom when he

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[413] See, for instance, *Our Sanctum* (Philadelphia, NY), June 1879, in which editor Will T. Scofield criticized the failure of amateur journalism at that moment to achieve "as high a grade of excellence as it was in the 'halcyon days.'"

[414] One amateur editor in Stanberry, Missouri, recounts his years-long quest to become involved with amateur journalism. He was aware of the existence of amateur newspapers through a subscription he once held to an amateur paper (though he claims he did not know when he subscribed that it was an amateur newspaper edited by a seventeen year old), and also through his acquaintance with a former amateur who showed him his collection of amateur papers (which were already several years old by that point). According to this amateur's account, he immediately wanted to publish an amateur newspaper and even made a couple of local attempts, but he did not know how to connect with current amateur editors: "The glad information came, to our delight, in April, 1881, through the medium of a flash-story paper that we accidentally found at the news stand. It contained a department headed, 'Amateurdom's Doings,' from which we obtained the addresses of a large number of papers." At that point, he claims, he started an amateur paper and established exchanges with other papers. See "How We Became an Amateur — Our Career," *The Amateur Exchange* (Stanberry, MO), March 1883.

subscribed to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*. Around the same time, he was "presented with copies of the [amateur newspaper] *Wolverine* by a grandmother of the editor … and through the agency of these two publications became aware of the existence of papers edited by youth, and at once opened correspondence with some of the leading puzzlers, and editors. The first puzzle he ever made appeared in *Optic's* for October, 1872, over the nom de plume 'Commodore Carlie.'"[415] While this example affirms the importance of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* in helping Case to both learn about amateurdom and connect with a network of amateurs who were also correspondents to that magazine, it also asserts the importance of amateurs' own activities in recruiting young people to amateur journalism, for it was not only *Oliver Optic's Magazine* but also an amateur newspaper that led to Case's involvement in amateurdom. As amateur Oliver Ormand (a pseudonym of Samuel B. Milton) argues:

> [T]he publication of these boy's [amateur] papers, in which they have been allowed to express their thoughts, … has done *more* towards the advancement of our American boys and girls than the majority of the professional boys' and girls' papers…. It is pretty evident that from the manner in which the boys and girls took to these small papers, was apparent of the character and style of literature they had hitherto been reading, and by contributing to these [amateur newspapers] they have discovered their literary talent, which would have otherwise remained undisturbed, and they would have been ignorant of the fact of their competence to even attempt such.[416]

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[415] Will A. Fiske and Will A. Innes, authors and compilers, *The Amateur Directory, for 1875; A Reliable Reference Book for All Interested in Amateur Journalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Will. A. Innes, publisher, 1875), 63.
[416] Samuel B. Milton [Oliver Ormand, pseud.], "Amateur Journalism," *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), April 1877.

Ormand here positions amateur authors first as readers, and it is their status as readers that shapes their engagement with amateur newspapers. The familiarity of these young people with the periodical form and genres of writing often found in those periodicals, according to Ormand, contributes to their success as amateur authors. One measure of "success" here is that these young people developed a sense of not only competence but also entitlement to participate in the production of young people's print culture — despite the ambivalence of adult professional editors of children's periodicals.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has described three important factors that allowed amateur journalism to grow in the 1870s: the prevalence of antebellum local and domestic literary traditions and literacy practices among middle-class children, the manufacture and marketing of small printing presses after 1867, and the popularity of children's magazines after 1867 that supported young readers in various kinds of production through their creative, informational, and editorial content; through advertising and premiums; and through notices of amateur newspapers and provision of amateur contact information to support networking. The breadth and depth of relationships supported by amateur journalism is remarkable. In both the antebellum and postbellum periods, amateur newspaper production was engaged in by siblings, and also by local friends and/or schoolmates. After 1867, amateur journalism transformed from a local practice shared among people who were known to each another personally into a networked practice grounded in long-distance newspaper exchange through the mail. While siblings continued to produce amateur newspapers together in the postbellum period, as did neighborhood friends and classmates, the increasingly common practice of long-distance exchange also opened the way for more long-

distance collaboration. So, not only were many networked readers also networked producers in the postbellum period, but production itself became networked to some extent. Amateur newspaper publishers, editors, associate editors, business managers, and printers, in many cases, were geographically dispersed, as were amateur authors. Not only that, but the content of amateur newspapers relied heavily on other amateur newspapers: articles and editorials were reprinted from amateur papers; several column inches in most amateur newspapers were devoted to notices and reviews of exchanges and amateur books; editorials appeared in response to ongoing debates within amateurdom; content covered the business, politics, and conventions of amateur press associations; and papers routinely printed gossip and news about individual amateurs, including marriages, deaths, moves, and school and career news. Without active knowledge of other amateur newspapers and amateur activities, amateur editors would have had a difficult time filling their papers and securing a place within amateurdom as a community. Amateur journalists were less geographically isolated and amateur newspaper production was no longer only a local practice in the 1870s and 1880s.

CHAPTER 5: THE AMATEUR ECONOMY

5.1 "Fun, Frolic and Flirtation"; Or, Collecting Personal Information for Profit

The front page of the first issue of the *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA) declares its purpose to be "Fun, Frolic and Flirtation, FOR BOTH SEXES" and features a call: "Send in your Subscription at once, and a nice little advertisement for a correspondent and enjoy the fun." Instructions explain that the advertisement (at a cost of five cents per line) should include "the Age, General Appearance and possition [*sic*] in Life of the sender, and also some description of the Lady or Gent with whom a correspondence is desired." The Salutatory message, too, highlights the potential of the paper to connect young men and women with one another, and promises to provide information on where to obtain the best materials with regard to flirtation and courtship: "To facilitate accquaintance [*sic*], and thus mutually and safely to grow up feelings of good-will among persons living far apart as well as those near — to spread information where can be found the best Books, Cards, Mottoes, &c , — these are among the worthy objects and purposes of this little Paper." The Salutatory makes an appeal explicitly to local young people: "We invite the students and members of the Public Schools [in Worcester, MA], especially, to make our columns the medium of communication for their thoughts and purposes."[417] Like most amateur papers from this period, the *Correspondent* attempts to cultivate a readership of young people within and outside of amateurdom; unlike most amateur papers, it explicitly appeals to young people's sexual and consumer desires.

[417] "The Call" and "Salutatory," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), July 1877. *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* is listed among Worcester amateur newspapers in Frank Colegrove, "Worcester and Its Newspapers," *Worcester Historical Society Publications*, new series, no. 1 (Worcester, MA: Worcester Historical Society, 1928), 13, https://archive.org/details/publications118worc. For a history of high school and amateur journalism in Worcester (though *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* is not referenced), see Charles Augustus Chase, "Worcester—The Newspaper Press," in *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts: With Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men,* vol. 2, comp. D. Hamilton Hurd (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1889), 1540–42, http://books.google.com/books?id=_EY4AQAAMAAJ.

Though the *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* initially pitches itself as a forum to facilitate one-to-one correspondence, a small notice on the front page of that same issue declares that the *Correspondent* wants the name and address "of every Boy and Girl in America." In return for submitting "a few" addresses, readers are promised occasional complimentary copies of the *Correspondent*.[418] The purpose of attempting to amass the contact information of young people around the country, with or without their consent, is not stated. Perhaps the editor, alone or in conjunction with local associates who advertised goods in the *Correspondent*, had plans to mail advertising circulars to as many young people as possible, or perhaps the editor intended to sell the list of contacts to others who wanted to target young people through the mail.[419] In any case, young people's contact information in this period had value — so much so that it could be exchanged for goods.[420] The first issue of the *Correspondent* does contain one personal advertisement seeking a "young lady correspondent between the age of 16 and 20; 'Just for Fun'"[421]; however, similar advertisements are absent from subsequent issues, which suggests either that readers declined to submit them or that the editor decided to focus on other types of content — in particular, advertisements for a range of printed matter sold by himself and other local young men. Given the *Correspondent*'s various requests for the names and addresses of young people throughout its issues, it is possible that this call for personal advertisements was a ruse to obtain detailed profiles of individuals that the editor could exploit for profit.

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[418] "Addresses Wanted," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), July 1877.

[419] Advertisements announcing addresses for sale appear in several amateur newspapers. For instance, an advertisement in *The Buckeye Boy* (Tiffin, OH) declares, "600 addresses of boys and girls for sale," at the cost of ten cents per hundred. *The Buckeye Boy* (Tiffin, OH), Multiple Classified Advertisements, March 1877, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4Rfym4.

[420] Calls for readers to send in names and addresses of other young people were not uncommon in amateur newspapers. For instance, *The Jolly Queer* (Witoka, MN) includes the following "special offer": "Send us the Names and addresses of twelve of your friends, between the age of 15 and 25 years; one from each family, and from as many different post offices as possible, with 10 cents for postage, and we will send you this paper one year free. Send only those you think would like our paper, or some of the goods we sell." *The Jolly Queer* (Witoka, MN), Multiple Classified Advertisements, April 10, 1876, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4Rg3S3.

[421] "Wanted," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), July 1877.

The *Correspondent* contains in each of its issues a number of advertisements for printed matter, some for sale from its office, for instance, Daniels Novelty Cards (presumably named for *Correspondent* editor H. C. Daniels) for "Handkerchief Flirtation, Model Love Letter, 7 Ink Receipts, One pack of puzzle Flirtation cards, One comic picture, and Outfit of visiting cards, for only 10 CENTS."[422] Davis & Co. of Worcester regularly advertised the book *The Marriage Companion*, along with an essay entitled "To Young Men in Love" and an "Arab Poem," billed as a "curiosity."[423] After the *Correspondent* adopted a magazine format in early 1878, an advertisement from Davis & Co. appeared, declaring the following: "WANTED. 100 Young Persons to enclose 3-cent stamp for Circular containing description of 4 of the best publications on Love, Courtship and Marriage ever printed. These 100 should Show the Circular to 1000 others — to all who will send us 10 names we will send copy of 'Beautiful Arab Poem.'"[424] Here, again, is an effort to collect the contact information of as many young people as possible.

Not all advertisements in the *Correspondent* are for local Worcester ventures: the September 1877 issue contains an advertisement from Woodward Bros. (Thompsonville, CT) for a free pack of "French transparent playing cards rich rare and racy goods," with the promise of "circulars for stamp."[425] In his 1883 book *Traps for the Young*, Anthony Comstock describes how purveyors of "obscene literature" "capture and pervert [young people] to [their] own hellish purposes":

> The obscenity dealer, the quacks, the lottery managers, and the frauds all adopt the same method of advertising, to wit, either [by securing names from school catalogues], or by buying old letters from other dealers for the sake of the names,

[422] "Look at This!," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), July 1877.
[423] "The Marriage Companion…," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), July 1877; August 1877.
[424] "Wanted!," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), [January or February] 1878.
[425] "FREE…," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), September 1877.

> or by sending circulars to postal clerks and others through the country, offering prizes for a list of the names of youth of both sexes under twenty-one years of age, or by purchasing addressed envelopes of those who make a business of collecting names, and then addressing envelopes to supply parties doing business through the mails.[426]

An excerpt of an article that ran in professional daily newspaper *The Ledger* (Philadelphia, PA) about "dangerous amateur newspapers" is reprinted in amateur paper *Echoes of the Board* (Chicago, IL). The excerpt claims that people "have published and are now publishing pretended amateur newspapers, to promote through them their other nefarious trade. They invariably try to get their publications on the 'exchange lists' of the legitimate amateur journals, and so reach a large number of the boy publishers and their young friends of both sexes."[427] While it is unclear whether the novelty cards and other printed matter advertised in the *Correspondent* would have qualified as obscene under the law, it is clear that some of the advertised materials were intended to satisfy the curiosity of young people about sex or to provide them with tools to engage in "fun, frolic and flirtation," while the editor and advertisers gained access to the contact information of as many young people as possible. That the *Correspondent* was at least flirting with boundaries of acceptable and even legal behavior is suggested by the "Warning" that appears on the front page of the March 1878 issue:

> It has now been fully decided by those in authority that the Transparent Cards known as Bath, Nothing to Wear and 10 others are OBSCENE and all Printers, Stationers or in fact any person found guilty of sending the same thorough the

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[426] Anthony Comstock, *Traps for the Young,* 4th ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1883), 134, HathiTrust, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t0qr4r447.
[427] "Dangerous Amateur Newspapers," *Echoes of the Board* (Chicago, IL), June 1878.

> U.S. MAIL, are liable to a very heavy FINE and several years confinement in the STATE PRISON.
>
> *The Youths Companion*, *Boys of N. Y., Our Boys*; &c., have strictly forbidden all Card Advertisements to be inserted in their papers on account of the sale of these Fancy Transparents.
>
> The Manufacturers will make no more, as the plates have been destroyed, and any person having them in their possession, with intent to sell, are liable to a heavy fine.[428]

This is the only notice of this nature I encountered among all the amateur newspapers I examined in the American Antiquarian Society collection (see Appendix). Nor could I locate any similar notices in the "Juvenile Journalists" collection of *Nineteenth Century Collections Online* (Gale Cengage).

Further evidence for the paper's ulterior motive of collecting the names and addresses of young people to create a mailing list for advertising circulars or to sell to advertisers (or both) is that the monthly paper initially charged the exceptionally low subscription rate of three cents a year.[429] The October 1877 issue and subsequent issues claim a circulation of 800, and the paper's sixth issue, the first in a magazine format, makes the following appeal to potential advertisers: "You will please notice our Rates of Advertising are very low, and those who have advertised in its columns heretofore claim it to be one of the best advertising mediums in the 'Dom.'" The "Editorial Notices" in the October issue include multiple variations of the following: "Read all of

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[428] "Warning," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), March 1878.

[429] When the *Correspondent* enlarged and switched to the magazine format that would become more common among amateur papers through the 1880s, the annual subscription price was increased to twenty-five cents. "To Our Readers," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), [January or February] 1878.

our advertisements on the last page there [*sic*] must be something there you want."[430] These practices — publishing circulation numbers, soliciting advertisers, and directing readers to advertisements — are common in amateur newspapers, particularly throughout the 1870s, though amateur newspaper editors generally claimed that profiting from their papers was not the primary goal. In response to a notice suggesting the low subscription price of the *Correspondent* meant the paper was a "one-horse affair," the editor declared, "The Correspondent is not published for Money, but for Fun," asserting the place of the paper within amateurdom.[431]

Though the *Correspondent* lists exchanges with other amateur papers,[432] indicating its ongoing participation in amateur print networks, other aspects of the paper (and perhaps a personal argument with another local amateur) led to the following declaration: "THE CORRESPONDENT IS NOT PROFESSIONAL!!! AND NEVER CLAIMED TO BE":

> For all the world Renowned J. H. Starkie Jr. the now vice President of the C. M. A. P. A. [Central Massachusetts Amateur Press Association] Editor (in a horn) and Publisher of the Amateur Press of Worcester Mass, and 10 cent member of the Amateur Detective Force said it was [a professional paper], and by his influence succeeded in giving the "Correspondent" the "Bounce" out of Amateurdom.[433]

It is important here to differentiate between the informal print networks through which amateur newspapers were disseminated and the formal institutions of amateur press associations (APAs). While the *Correspondent* presumably continued to circulate within the informal print networks

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[430] Circulation claims are made in the October and November 1877 issues of *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA); *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent*, Editorial Notices, October 1877; [January or February] 1878.
[431] *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), Editorial Notices, November 1877.
[432] For instance, the September 1877 issue lists papers from Albany, NY; York, PA; Greensburg, PA; Worcester, MA; Newark, NJ; Bridgeport, CT; Ayer, MA; St. Louis, MO; Tully, NY; Lowell, MA; Cleveland, OH; Mattoon, IL; and Boston, MA. *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), Our Exchanges, September 1877.
[433] *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), Editorial Notices, November 1877.

rooted in amateurdom, its editor suggests that he was excluded from membership in his local APA due to his paper's alleged professional status. An 1878 editorial declares:

> Bravo Boys ! We were not there [at the New England Amateur Press Association (NEAPA) meeting], (but wish we had been) but as the Correspondent was bounced out of Amateurdom on account of its being a *Professional Paper* (Ha ! Ha !) we had no interest there.
>
> It seems strange to us that the Amateur Press of N. E. [New England] does not look into this matter and decide whether or no it is right to bar out one or two papers and honor all the rest. in [*sic*] other words, we crave an answer from the Amateur Press of N. E. to this question, *Are the The Boys' and Girls' Correspondent, and the Welcome Budget, Professional or Amateur Publications*.[434]

The twin claims that (1) Daniels wishes he had been in attendance at the NEAPA's founding and (2) that he had no interest there because his paper was declared "professional" by another amateur editor, resulting in his exclusion from both local and regional APAs, help to clarify this distinction between amateur print networks formed through dissemination of amateur publications through the mail, which in turn facilitated informal social connections and information exchange, and APAs, which claimed to represent amateurdom formally and assessed individual applications to membership. While people could be excluded formally from APAs (for instance, the CMAPA required a three-fourths vote among members present at a given meeting in favor before a new person could be admitted to the association),[435] amateur

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[434] Emphasis in original. "New England Amateur Press Association, Grand Success!!!," *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* (Worcester, MA), [January or February] 1878.
[435] "Official Department of the Central Massachusetts Amateur Press Association," *Amateur Gazette* (Worcester, MA), [July?] 1878.

newspapers could circulate within amateur networks through subscriptions and exchanges regardless of an individual editor's formal relationships with APAs. In the absence of a mechanism to ban amateur newspapers from circulation within amateurdom completely, amateur editors instead exerted a kind of peer pressure by printing editorials and gossip, and suggesting which papers were not worthy of exchange or subscription and which threatened to discredit amateur journalism among young people and the professional press.[436]

While atypical in its explicit appeal to young readers' sexual and consumer desires (and with its "amateur" status called into question by local and regional APAs), the *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* illustrates some of the ways in which print networks operated within amateurdom among young people in the 1870s and 1880s. Though abandoned, the fact that editor Daniels launched the *Correspondent* within amateurdom as a forum for personal advertisements in which young men and young women could establish (flirtatious) relationships speaks to the social dimension of amateur print networks in this period. That the paper also promised to provide information related to sex — a topic absent from "reputable" professional publications, especially the children's magazines that large numbers of amateurs read — speaks to the information dimension of print networks. That this information was largely alluded to in advertisements that required either a purchase or the sharing of contact information for other young people speaks to the commercial dimension of these networks, which was often at odds with concepts of both "amateur" and "literary" production. Many amateurs, particularly in the 1870s, simultaneously aspired to participate fully in amateur print networks and in commercial print networks as more than consumers. It is unclear the extent to which this explicit

[436] For instance, "Spark" writes, "The editor of *Young Democrat* is [*sic*] given us more of his miserable trash. S. C. Morris has undoubtedly done more to retard the progress of amateurdom, than any human being on earth. That he who styles himself an amateur, should so disgrace the whole fraternity as he has done, deserves to be excluded entirely from the ranks." *Amateur Press* (Chicago, IL), Sundry Sparks, October 15, 1877.

commercialism factored into Daniels's exclusion from the local and regional APAs, or whether the type of novelties advertised in the paper was the primary cause.[437] Either way, Daniels continued to assert his paper's position within amateurdom, either because he genuinely viewed his paper as an amateur enterprise or, more likely, because he wanted access to amateur networks to acquire more contact information for young people who had disposable income, since this information had value in the marketplace.

This chapter begins with the extended example of the *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* because it invites explorations of the amateur economy and the battle within amateurdom over who could represent the community and how. It raises questions about how amateurs sought to make money, what made a paper "amateur," and the value of reputation for individual amateurs and for amateurdom as a whole. The *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* was published as a shift in amateur journalism was underway. Several battles followed amateur journalism's "halcyon days" of the early to mid-1870s. These include what has been referred to as the "civil rights controversy" regarding the status of African Americans in APAs and in amateurdom generally[438]; the fight against the story papers, though they had played an instrumental role in amateurdom's spread in the early 1870s, and against amateurs who associated with these "boys' weeklies"; and the fight with the Postmaster-General's office over pound rates for amateur

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[437] While the *Boys' and Girls' Correspondent* is atypical in its single-minded promotion of "racy" materials, other papers contained similar advertisements and their status as amateur papers was not challenged. The *Amateur Printing Press*, a publication of A.F. Wanner & Co., which billed itself an "Amateur Printers' Furnishing House," in 1876 ran an opinion piece on "The Model Paper," which claims that the typical contents of amateur newspapers from the 1870s include advertisements "of pictures and goods of the most debasing kind." Dark Blue [pseud.], "The Model Paper," *Amateur Printing Press* (Chicago, IL), November 1876. Section 6.3 of this dissertation discusses changes to the National Amateur Press Association constitution that were adopted in July 1878, a few months after the issues of the *Correspondent* discussed in this section were published. The new constitution contains sections that could have been used to exclude or expel amateurs like Daniels for the kinds of goods advertised and the potential for damage to amateurdom's reputation.

[438] See Paula Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and Adolescence, 1870–1886," in *Small Worlds: Children & Adolescents in America, 1850–1950,* eds. Elliot West and Paula Petrik (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 130–34, and Lara Langer Cohen, "The Emancipation of Boyhood." *Common-Place* 14, no. 1 (Fall 2013), http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

papers. Chapter 6 addresses efforts to disassociate amateurdom from the weekly story papers and the effects of the postal ruling of 1878. This chapter focuses on the amateur economy as a fundamental aspect of amateurdom's transformation from a self-directed, decentralized youth enterprise in the early 1870s into a more centralized associational activity involving both older youth and younger adults by the end of the 1880s.

5.2 The Business of Amateurdom[439]: Considering Social (Dis)embeddedness

In 1871, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* published a short story entitled "Will's Printing-Press." The story, narrated by one of Will's parents, recounts what happened after young Will purchased a friend's Novelty printing press and type for fifty dollars. Will paid thirty dollars, with the rest "on a mortgage," and quickly transformed his bedroom into a "first-class printing-office." Will printed and distributed circulars around town advertising job printing services, and printed and distributed to all of the neighbors a small newspaper, *The Rattletrap*. Will hoped to earn enough from these activities to pay his outstanding debt, but subscriptions to Will's paper "came in but slowly…; and a few advertisements did not furnish a golden harvest." An adult stranger from a neighboring town appeared at Will's door after seeing a copy of *The Rattletrap* and offered to "fill half the sheet with his advertisement, buy a thousand copies at a cent apiece, and engage [Will] to furnish him two or three thousand business cards." Though this would have allowed Will to not only pay his debt but also earn a profit, when Will realized that the stranger sold liquor, he declined. When people heard about Will's selfless refusal, enough small print jobs came in, many from strangers, to allow Will to repay his friend and replenish his savings. The story concludes, "Nobody laughs at Will's enterprise, now that it is a success, and we sometimes

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[439] The title of this section owes a debt to Leon Jackson, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), as does the approach taken in this chapter to questions regarding the economic practices that sustained amateur journalism in the late nineteenth century.

think that he will one day become a real live editor, with a full-grown paper of his own, that will be sure to stand up for the right, and bravely denounce the wrong."[440] The implication here is that the subscriptions, advertisements, and print jobs purchased by community members are not the result of a genuine need for goods or services — because if the need were real, no one would pay a boy to satisfy it. Rather, these are *gestures* intended to strengthen social relationships, to express support for particular values in the community, and to acknowledge the potential of young people like Will to *become* responsible citizens and successful entrepreneurs in adulthood. In this story, amateur journalism allows Will to establish an honorable reputation beyond his immediate social circle, establishing connections that could prove valuable when Will seeks employment as an adult.

The narrator in "Will's Printing Press" does not dismiss the transactions Will engages in because Will is an *amateur*, but because he is a *boy*. Though boys (and some girls) with the time and means to do so often engaged, through their involvement in amateur journalism, in the same kinds of transactions that professional editors, authors, and printers did, these young people, in "Will's Printing-Press" as in life, could not *be* professional editors, authors, and printers. Most of the adults that young amateur journalists interacted with (including the editors of children's magazines, weekly story papers, and professional newspapers) approached amateur journalism as play or, at most, as a sustained attempt at self-improvement that could be applauded so long as it did not interfere with other family or school responsibilities. These adults indulged amateur journalists — or refused to indulge them — on those terms.[441] One exception to this characterization of adult attitudes toward amateur journalism is the hostility expressed in printers' labor and trade publications to the "boy printers." As Lisa Gitelman notes, printing was

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[440] L. A. B. C., "Will's Printing-Press," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, April 1871.
[441] See section 4.4 of this dissertation for a more in-depth discussion of the dynamic between professional editors of children's periodicals and amateur journalists.

not a profession, but "a trade dressing itself as an art ('the art preservative'), and one that had for decades experienced wrenching structural changes … as the apprenticeship and journeyman system broke down" and as aspects of printing work were deskilled or soon to be so.[442] The *Printers' Circular*, for instance, in a front-page editorial in 1878, lashed out at amateur printers "— not apprentices in regular printing offices, but lads who have cases and presses at the homes of their parents, where they work most industriously." The editorial refers to amateur job printing as

> a great and a growing evil — one which takes from its legitimate channel hundreds of thousands of dollars every year, and squanders it in the frivolities of youthful indulgence; it has also been mainly instrumental in bringing prices to such low figures that, if this state of affairs continues, many of our [professional] printers will be compelled to sacrifice the fruits of long years of hard labor, and seek other pursuits in which to gain a competency.[443]

While the actual economic impact of amateur job printing in this period is unclear, particularly from jobs done by "boy printers," it is evident that amateurs represented a threat to printers. Not only were the amateur boys (and some girls) doing printers' work without any training, but they could be viewed as playing at work, and their play further destabilized the image of the printer as a skilled tradesman, even when it did not put amateurs in direct competition for jobs.[444]

The example of "Will's Printing-Press" provides a useful way to introduce a discussion of social embeddedness in the context of amateur journalism. Will buys his press from a friend

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[442] Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), Kindle edition, 140. In those instances when this dissertation refers to "professional printers," the phrase refers to those printers who were part of the apprenticeship and journeyman system who made their living as printers in order to distinguish them from amateur printers.

[443] "Boy Printers," *Printers' Circular*, April 1878.

[444] Harris, in her study of these small presses, argues, "The real damage done [to trade printers] by amateurs must have been negligible; it was the insult that caused pain." Elizabeth M. Harris, *Personal Impressions: The Small Printing Press in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: David R. Godine, 2004), 22.

who is willing to accept partial payment up front, attempts to drum up business and earn money around the neighborhood as a printer and editor to pay his debt, and ultimately succeeds in that objective; however, his success is due neither to skill nor demand. Whereas amateur newspaper production among young people in the antebellum period often involved handwritten papers and domestic, school, or neighborhood activities (see section 4.2), "Will's Printing-Press," in its depiction of early postbellum amateur newspaper production, reflects a higher cost of participation in amateur journalism, and the challenges faced by Will in earning enough money to pay off debt and sustain his "printing office." Will's success depends on preexisting and newly established social relationships rather than the market. Will chooses the wellbeing of the local community (not to mention his family's reputation within that community) over financial gain. The community, in turn, invests in Will's enterprise.

In his study of authorship in the antebellum period, Leon Jackson argues that antebellum authorial economies "served not simply to convey goods and money from one party to another, but also, and at the same time, functioned to create and sustain powerful social bonds."[445] He posits that in the antebellum period, "informal and embedded economies," rather than existing in opposition to business, "actually represented the ways in which business was done."[446] Unlike scholarship emphasizing professionalization, Jackson argues that the social disembedding of authorship was the "major transformation in authorial economies over the course of the nineteenth century."[447] Jackson's study rejects the "false dichotomy" between "amateur" and "professional," because it "occlude(s) the complex ways in which money and writing intersected."[448] He argues, "Amateurism … did not precede professionalism and the dominance

[445] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 2, 3.
[446] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 8.
[447] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 43.
[448] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 19.

of the marketplace; it was invented by them."[449] Gitelman, citing Jackson, argues that the terms "amateur" and "professional" together

> invite anachronism: any profession against which these amateurs might have been defined was still emerging. Professional journalism did not yet exist — there were no journalism schools, no professional associations for journalists, and no avowed ideal of objectivity — and we know that the roles of author, editor, and publishers were professionalized primarily insofar as individuals made and were known to make a living writing, editing, or publishing, or doing some combination of the same.[450]

Though young people embraced the term "amateur" to describe themselves, their activities, and their publications, this is not an indication that amateurs in the early 1870s, as amateur journalism developed, imagined an impenetrable border between amateurs and professionals, as no such border existed. It is in this context that amateurs such as Edwin A. Farwell submitted manuscripts to established publishers such as Lee and Shepard while also advertising themselves as writers in amateur newspapers and editing their own amateur newspapers. It is also the context in which amateurs such as William L. Terhune edited departments in story papers such as *Boys' Own* and sold their subscription lists for amateur papers to professional children's periodicals.[451] It is the context in which amateurs in the 1870s sent their papers for notice and/or exchange to both amateur and professional publications and wrote about amateur journalism for the professional press.[452] It is also the context in which editors of children's magazines and story papers, such as William T. Adams of *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, profited from amateurdom in

[449] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 234.
[450] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, 140, 184fn11.
[451] See section 4.1 for discussions of Farwell and Terhune.
[452] See, for instance, George M. Huss [George James, pseud.], "Amateur Journalism," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 12, 1876, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

several ways: by cultivating a loyal readership among amateurs through promotion of amateur publications and activities; by generating free publicity through notices and reviews in amateur newspapers, which were primarily read by their target audience of young people; and by receiving a steady supply of free reader-generated content to be used as needed for their publications.[453]

Whereas young men participating in amateur journalism had a range of career paths open to them, young women amateurs — many of whom participated as authors rather than editors or printers — had fewer career options. One of the career paths relatively open to young women in the late nineteenth century was journalism. For instance, a condescending 1870 column on women journalists in New York describes the steady stream of young women amateurs (used in a general sense, not specifically in reference to amateur journalism) — "a considerable proportion of these were girls, under twenty" — who turned up at a weekly journal's offices, which already employed a number of women journalists, seeking publication of their work and willing to argue its merits with the editor.[454] Also, a chapter on women in journalism from *Woman's Work in America* suggests that women in the profession had been met with a "warm welcome" and sometimes "even an enthusiastic one" from the public. The chapter mentions the existence of amateur press associations for these "youthful intending journalists" as a place where young women might find information and support.[455] The boundary between amateur and professional journalism for women in both of these writings is characterized as fluid, though youth is singled out as a specifically amateur trait.

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[453] See section 4.4 for a discussion of the relationships between amateurdom and children's magazines and story papers.

[454] Justin McCarthy, "Woman Journalists in New York," *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, August 13, 1870, American Periodicals Series Online.

[455] Susan E. Dickenson, "Woman in Journalism," in *Woman's Work in America*, ed. Annie Nathan Meyer (New York: H. Holt and Co, 1891), 138, 137, https://books.google.com/books?id=qsNiAAAAMAAJ.

Self-proclaimed amateur journalists in the 1870s and 1880s frequently described themselves in amateur publications as aspiring professionals due to their age or, increasingly in the 1880s, as "amateurs" due to their lack of desire to make money through their activities. (In the 1870s, amateurs were likely to claim that making money was not the *primary* objective.) Two of the central premises of Jackson's study, namely that "not only money, but other desirables such as knowledge, honor, prestige, and legitimacy can be interpreted to great advantage as forms of capital that are produced, circulated, and exchanged within their own economies," and that "these non-monetary forms of capital can, at certain times, and under certain conditions, be exchanged for other forms of capital, including the monetary,"[456] make it possible to move past the formulation that young people cannot be professionals or are not yet professionals, which invites conflation of the "business" of amateurdom with the "work" of childhood — that is, play. This conflation can render some aspects of amateur practices invisible and reduce others to imitative acts, in which amateurdom is a shadow without substance. (If Will is not a "real live editor," then what is he?)[457] Jackson explains that "embedded economic activity … tends to be relatively invisible" because the economic is only one of several social functions it serves.[458] He continues, "Because economics is never the point, or the only point, of an embedded transaction, the quantitative or monetary nature of the transaction is sometimes minimized or made invisible."[459] Amateur journalism in the 1870s demonstrates tension between the "relatively invisible" embedded economy inherited from antebellum practices of amateur newspaper production among young people and the disembedding that Jackson argues takes

[456] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 25.
[457] L. A. B. C., "Will's Printing-Press."
[458] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 40. In the associated footnote, Jackson notes that Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, in *Literary Dollars and Social Sense* (New York: Routledge, 2005), draw similar conclusions, but instead of "embeddedness," they refer to "social authorship" (Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 257fn91). "Embeddedness" is preferred in this discussion because it makes it easier to explore the multiple and interesting ways in which *dis*embedding is reflected in amateurdom in the 1870s.
[459] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 42.

place generally in authorial economies in the United States in the last half of the nineteenth century. These disembedded practices aggressively disappeared from amateurdom in the early 1880s as aggressively as they had developed in the early 1870s, raising interesting questions not only about the character and composition of amateur journalism, but also about the corporatization of publishing prior to the advent of mass culture in the 1890s and the increased infantilization and regulation of youth in the same period.[460]

The business of amateur journalism in the 1870s and 1880s remains largely unexplored in scholarship, though aspects of the amateur economy have received attention. Most scholarship about amateurdom mentions the centrality of exchange to amateur newspaper circulation and situates it in the context of long-standing editorial practices in the periodical press (though the volume of exchange between professional editors was lessening and its importance shifting by the 1870s, and free postal exchange between editors was done away with in 1873).[461] Little or no mention has been made, however, of the ways in which exchange, in many cases, did not represent a one-for-one trade of amateur papers or books or how value was determined in these exchanges. Subscription and advertising in amateur newspapers are also underexplored, and discussions of them occur primarily in two contexts: (1) accusations of fraud or poor character among amateurs often stemming from papers suspending without making provisions for subscribers, or from advertisements inserted on good faith but never paid for; and (2) discussions of papers with large subscriber lists, such as the triply anomalous *Little Things* (Brinton, PA), which had more than a thousand subscribers, published original work by Louisa May Alcott, and

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[460] The corporatization of publishing is discussed in section 1.3, and the increasing regulation of youth is discussed in section 2.2.

[461] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 140; Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Postal Subsidies for the Press and the Business of Mass Culture, 1880–1920," *The Business History Review* 64, no. 3 (1990): 455; "Postage Rates for Periodicals: A Narrative History," United Stated Postal Service, June 2010, accessed February 16, 2017, https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/periodicals-postage-history.htm.

was edited by young sisters.[462] The work of Elizabeth Harris on small presses is useful in understanding the investment made by printing press manufacturers in marketing specific models and printing offices for and to children in the years after the Civil War, as well as providing some sense of the cost of participation for young people involved in amateur newspaper production as editors and printers.[463] Gitelman, referencing Harris, notes the irritation that professional printers and trade journals expressed over amateur printers, including those active in amateur journalism, with respect to job printing.[464] Ann Fabian argues that because young amateur journalists sold their publications, they were not "outside the market."[465] Yet, at the same time, Cohen notes that amateurdom developed and sustained "largely autonomous networks of production and distribution."[466] Amateur production networks, however, included both amateur and non-amateur printers who were paid in many cases to produce amateur publications, and amateur distribution networks initially benefited from access to children's magazines and story papers and always relied on access to the postal network. Cohen also draws attention to amateurs' "noisy editorializing, mannered unruliness, and their appropriation (but ultimate refusal) of difference" as evidence that "their subculture … points us toward a revaluation of cultural capital in the late nineteenth century — specifically, to a moment in which

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[462] See Daniel Shealy, "The Growth of *Little Things*: Louisa May Alcott and the Lukens Sisters' Family Newspaper," *Resources for American Literary Study* 30 (2005): 160–77. *Little Things* is also discussed in Jessica Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises: Amateur Newspapers and the Pre-History of Adolescence, 1867–1883," *American Periodicals* 22, no. 2 (2012): 164, doi:10.1353/amp.2012.0015.

[463] See Elizabeth M. Harris, *The Boy and His Press* ([Washington: DC]: Smithsonian Institution, 1992), and Harris, P*ersonal Impressions*.

[464] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 52, 165–66fn97.

[465] Ann Fabian, "Amateur Authors," in *A History of the Book in America*, vol. 3, *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, eds. Scott E. Casper, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, and Michael Winship (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 415.

[466] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. Amateurs E. Howard Hutchinson and Alfred S. Porter boast of their autonomy in an 1870 amateur guide: "In this field the boys are independent of their elders. They have their own amateur editors, contributors, correspondents, agents, authors, publishers, printers and engravers." E. Howard Hutchinson [Jasper, pseud.] and Alfred S. Porter [Essex, pseud.], *The Amateurs' Guide, for 1870: A Complete Book of Reference Relative to the Amateur Printers, Publishers, Editors, Authors and Engravers of America; with Biographical Sketches of the Most Noticeable* (Buffalo, NY: Haas & Kelley, printers, 1870), 8.

it becomes possible to produce cultural capital out of a lack of cultural capital."[467] Isaac identifies a preoccupation with "reputation, honor, and self-presentation," which invites a discussion of how non-monetary forms of capital operated within amateurdom.[468]

This section introduces and foregrounds the concept of social embeddedness to explore the amateur economy as a whole. This approach allows for an exploration of the various kinds of transactions, including but not limited to monetary transactions — which have largely been dismissed or underexplored in existing scholarship on amateur journalism — that sustained and transformed amateurdom in the 1870s and 1880s. Jackson argues that in their disembedding, authorial economies became increasingly (but unevenly) "detached from the dense social worlds of which they were a part, and which they in fact helped to create."[469] Amateur journalism in the 1870s expanded its social world from the all-ages families and neighborhoods of the antebellum period to include a geographically dispersed community of youth (amateurdom, or "the Dom"), and young people became its primary audience. This enabled peer social networks to form through print made up of individuals who, in many cases, would never meet face to face. Local amateur collaborations and associations existed in cities around the country; however, the locus of the social world of amateurdom was for many amateurs only print-based, and transactions with strangers required a degree of trust that was not always rewarded or reciprocated. Several practices described by Jackson as reflective of the social disembedding of authorship generally in the last half of the nineteenth century mark amateur journalism in the 1870s, though amateurs' individual entrepreneurial ambitions are circumscribed by their status as young people. Section 5.3 considers the partial disembedding of the amateur economy, and section 5.4 examines the

[467] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.
[468] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 169.
[469] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 3.

rejection of disembedded practices and a general disdain for the market within amateurdom in the 1880s.

5.3 "'Tis Money that Makes the Paper Go": A Partial Disembedding of the Amateur Economy

Until the late 1870s, amateur newspapers commonly pursued many of the same practices as children's magazines and weekly story papers, whose objectives were, at least in part, to make a profit. Issues of amateur newspaper *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT) from 1876 and 1877 reflect many of these practices. For instance, the November 15, 1876, issue includes a lengthy premium list for agents sending money for two or more new subscriptions. Premiums ranged from a single sheet of music or a dozen visiting cards for delivering two new subscriptions (a ten-cent value), to a Model Printing Press (a ten-dollar value) for ninety new subscriptions.[470] *Youth's Companion* and other children's magazines regularly included printing presses on their premium lists in this period, as well.[471] The optimistic instructions for would-be *Advertiser* agents explain, "Large sums of money may be sent in a registered letter, or by a money order at our risk." However, the paper notes, "Stamps must be sent to pay postage on goods," where "goods" refers to premiums.[472]

The efforts of *The Advertiser*'s editors to recruit agents to increase the subscriber base for their paper did not stop with premiums. In the March 15, 1877, issue, under the headline, "Let All Work," the editors offer four prizes for the largest subscriber clubs: first prize is one-half of

[470] "New Premium List," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), November 15, 1876.
[471] See Ernest Elmo Calkins, *Amateur Journalism* (New York: The New York Public Library, 1941), 4. For a longer discussion of children's magazines and amateur printing, see section 4.3.
[472] "New Premium List," *The Advertiser*. *Youth's Companion* also required subscribers and agents to pay postage for premiums: "We cannot agree to forward the Premiums, unless the Postage is sent." To drive the point home, a running head appears on multiple pages of the same issue of *Youth's Companion*: "No Premiums sent unless Postage is paid." "Postage," *Youth's Companion,* October 31, 1872, Hathi Trust, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo.31924069224461.

all money received; second, one-third of money received; third, one-fourth; and fourth, a "handsome amateur book." For a three-cent stamp, would-be agents would receive "an outfit consisting of three specimen copies, two beautiful chromos, etc.," and even those agents who did not win a prize were promised a 20 percent commission.[473] The headline "Let All Work" is reminiscent of the approach of William T. Adams (Oliver Optic) toward his subscribers (see chapter 3). Other amateur newspapers also offered prizes and tried to recruit agents. For instance, the boy who sent in the largest number of new subscribers to *The Amateur News* (La Fayette, IN) was promised "a handsome double-barrel shot gun, besides *twenty* per cent commission," and the girl sending the most new subscriptions would receive a "*Fine Ladies' Silver Hunting Case Watch*," plus twenty percent commission. In addition, all agents were offered twenty percent commission on subscription and advertising sales.[474]

The Advertiser offered multiple enticements to individual subscribers, as well. The editors bundled their Connecticut paper with the *Illinois Amateur* (Jacksonville, IL) and offered a discounted annual subscription price for both.[475] This was a common practice among children's magazines, too. For instance, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* periodically offered "club rates" with magazines including *Harper's Weekly* and *Atlantic Monthly*.[476] *The Advertiser*'s editors also promised in an 1877 advertising insert (the existence of which is itself indicative of a commercial orientation) that individual subscribers would receive an amateur book and a chromo with their subscription. The insert concludes with the statement: "Your advertisement and

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[473] "Let All Work," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), March 15, 1877.
[474] The *Amateur News* (La Fayette, IN), "Prizes," June 1874. Emphasis in original. *The Young Sportsman* (Portsmouth, NH), of which W. L. Terhune was an editor, declares, "Smart Boys can easily make money by canvassing for subscribers," and promises either a cash commission or "elegant premiums," including a Novelty Printing Press, to its agents. *The Young Sportsman* (Portsmouth, NH), April 1872. Terhune is discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.4.
[475] "Editors!," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), November 15, 1876.
[476] See, for instance, "*Our Boys and Girls* — Prospectus," *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, June 5, 1869, covers 2 and 3, https://books.google.com/books?id=XGlIAAAAYAAJ.

subscription solicited."[477] The same issue that contained the insert announces a reduction in the annual subscription rate to a nominal ten cents, while promising subscribers "two beautiful chromos valued at 50 cents," given "merely to enlarge our already large list of subscribers."[478] Including the value of the chromos implies that the editors could afford to lose money by giving away fifty cents in merchandise for every ten-cent subscription, signaling to would-be subscribers that *The Advertiser* — unlike many of its amateur counterparts — was financially sound and unlikely to suspend publication after a few issues. It also creates a sense that *The Advertiser*'s editors were willing to invest in the paper's subscribers, in essence, to pay readers to subscribe to it. Subscribers might feel indebted to the paper's editors and recommend the paper to others, go to work as agents, purchase advertising space in the paper, or contract job work with the editors' printing office in response.

A large subscriber base for an amateur paper could benefit editors in several ways. The most obvious benefit would be the influx of cash that could offset the cost of production and postage. An enlarged subscriber base also could attract paying advertisers and place a paper like *The Advertiser* on the trajectory toward professional status or raise the value of the paper if the editors decided to sell. In the 1870s, when amateur authors were routinely paid for their work, a paper with a large subscriber base could attract the best and/or most established amateur authors and its editors could negotiate a lower rate of payment in return for greater exposure. A large subscriber base also could increase the prestige of the editors within amateurdom. This, in turn, would assure exchanges with the best, most interesting papers in amateurdom, supporting some of the social functions of amateur print networks. It could also increase the editors' influence in amateur press associations and amateur politics. A larger list of subscribers could improve

[477] *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), advertising insert, March 15, 1877.
[478] *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), Notes, March 15, 1877.

amateur book sales and increase the volume of job printing work, allowing editors to earn money from their subscriber base beyond the nominal subscription fee. In fact, the editors explain that a three-month suspension of *The Advertiser* was due to "an over rush of job printing."[479] Finally, contact information for young people had value in this period, and large subscription lists could be sold for profit (see section 5.1).

While *The Advertiser* offered premiums to its subscribers, other papers attempted to increase subscriptions by appealing to friendship and conjuring shame. For instance, *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC) published "A Plain Talk with Our Readers," in which the editors first affirmed that the goal of the paper was not to make money, but instead to make "friends" happy. They also assured readers that the paper "*is established on a sound basis*," suggesting that this "plain talk" was not about money, but the bonds of friendship. The editors initially asked readers to subscribe as a show of support: "[W]e desire of our friends their *good word* for our paper, and *generous encouragement* in the way of subscriptions, &c." They continued, slowly shifting to a more accusatory tone: "Many of you who are reading this article have received copies of this paper before and laid it aside, saying, "*It is neat and nice, and I wish them success*," but have overlooked *putting their hands in their pockets*, to help us meet the success they wish us. *If wishes were horses, beggars might ride*," and "*'tis money that makes the paper go.*" Finally the editors attempted to shame readers into paying, calling them out for selfishness and excuses:

> Many of you *waste* every day for foolish-ness, enough to pay for a year's subscription to our paper, and we feel assured that you *all can spare* the trifling sum asked for six months subscription. If, perchance, there be any of you who

[479] "After an Absence…," *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), March 15, 1877.

> does not have that amount *to spend in six months*, why send in your name and address, and we will *send the paper free*.[480]

These tactics — enticement, appeals to friendship, shaming readers — demonstrate the importance placed on obtaining subscriptions, for reasons that included but were not limited to a need or desire for income. For instance, as aggressively as the editors of *The Advertiser* sought subscriptions, they also offered three- and six-month subscriptions to readers in return for amateur newspapers from previous years.[481] The offer to trade subscriptions for old papers suggests that amateur newspapers retained value — monetary, literary, practical, sentimental — within amateurdom long after their contents lost currency.

While many amateur papers declared a circulation in the hundreds or even thousands, only a few could claim even half as many subscribers. The rest of the circulation could be accounted for by exchanges, free specimen copies, and inflation of numbers. High circulation numbers, especially through the 1870s, could attract advertisers as a source of income. The vast majority of the page or two of advertisements in each issue of *The Advertiser* are directly related to amateurdom, though many amateur papers published advertisements for local businesses that had no obvious connection to amateurdom.[482] *The Advertiser* also promoted individual amateur books for sale or trade from its office and devotes a column and a half to a list of thirty-one amateur books for sale by the paper's coeditors.[483] These young men were not only amateur editors, but also amateur publishers and booksellers. (One of them, at least, was also an amateur

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[480] Emphasis in original. "A Plain Talk with Our Readers," *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), April 1877. The editor of The Golding Press (New London, CT) employed a similar strategy: "The Press is printed principally for the amusement and instruction of its editor, yet we do not propose to send free copies to our friends, for if we did we would soon run through our immense fortune, therefore if you feel interested, subscribe at once." *The Golding Press* (New London, CT), Brief Bits, February 1882.

[481] *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT), Notes, March 15, 1877.

[482] For instance, *The Amateur Age* (Upper Alton, IL) includes a full page of local advertisements for grocers, doctors, manufacturers, wholesalers, insurance agents, and jewelers, among others. *The Amateur Age* (Upper Alton, IL), Advertisements, January 1873.

[483] "Amateur Books for Sale by Gorman & Guinan," *The Advertiser*, November 15, 1876.

job printer.) The editors' practice of using *The Advertiser* to promote their book inventory is similar to the practices of publishers outside amateurdom in the 1870s. For instance, Boston publisher Lee & Shepard aggressively used *Oliver Optic's Magazine* as a vehicle to promote its books, not only explicitly through advertisements, but also indirectly through the large number of reading recommendations made by editor William T. Adams in response to reader queries (see chapter 3). Along with advertisements in amateur newspapers, however, came risk: editors risked nonpayment or lowering amateurdom's opinion of their papers, either due to the content of advertisements printed or fraudulent behavior on the part of advertisers; advertisers risked accusations of fraud. A few months after *The Amateur Oracle* (Lawrence, KS) ran an advertisement from Spotswood & Stewart of Frankfort, KY, soliciting agents to sell "our fine Photographs of actresses etc.," and requesting interested parties to send twenty-five cents in return for five samples, *The Advertiser* (New Haven, CT) included Spotswood & Stewart on their list of frauds "in order that the public may not be further deceived by them."[484] Accusations could spread quickly within amateurdom through exchange networks, and continue to spread through these networks over a long period of time. When the accused party was an active amateur rather than a merchant or agent, that amateur's reputation and standing within amateurdom was threatened.[485]

[484] *The Amateur Oracle*, advertisement, April 1876; "A Few Frauds," *The Advertiser*, November 15, 1876.
[485] For instance, included on *The Advertiser's* list of frauds ("A Few Frauds," November 15, 1876) is "Rich M Truax," a prominent amateur editor. One of Truax's advertisements (he ran at least two simultaneously) appears directly above Spotswood & Stewart's in *The Amateur Oracle* (April 1876). Truax's advertisement promises that any editors inserting it *and* the promise (in order to entice more editors to print the ad in their papers) would in turn receive two dozen cards and ten cents. It appears that Truax was slow to deliver on payment. He was then widely accused of fraud and forced to defend his reputation within amateurdom. In a small notice at the bottom of a middle column, standing alone on two lines between the reviews and amateur news departments, *The Amateur Press* (Chicago, IL) notes the following: "Richard Truax has been pardoned." Interestingly, this "pardon" appears in *The Amateur Press* in its November 15, 1877, issue — exactly one year after *The Advertiser* labeled Truax a fraud (November 15, 1876). For a discussion of accusations of fraud against Truax among others and how these and the defenses against them functioned in amateurdom, see Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," 169–72.

Like most amateur editors, the editors of *The Advertiser* sought exchanges in addition to subscriptions; however, because they were coeditors, they requested two copies of every exchange rather than one and offered to "reciprocate when requested to." Exchange within amateurdom was not merely an act of trading one equivalent material object for another, and often the issue of fairness became a point of contention among editors. Sole editors who exchanged with *The Advertiser* had to decide whether to honor the request for two exchange copies in return for one, which might leave *The Advertiser*'s editors indebted and inclined to negotiate some other beneficial arrangement in the future, or to refuse the request and risk offending *The Advertiser*'s editors, who might be less inclined to exchange or to notice their papers favorably or at all. Coeditors of *The Amateur News* (Chicago, IL) explicitly used the language of favors in their paper, acknowledging an imposition and appealing to a social relationship: "Editors finding this marked will confer a great favor if they will send an extra copy."[486] In response to editors complaining about these kinds of requests, *Young Nova Scotia* first chastises amateur editors for complaining about sending two copies of papers, for "in refusing to grant the slight favor of an extra copy there may be lost to us a more worthy, though at first less enthusiastic, youth." The logic here is that associate editors might not have been as committed to "the cause," and denying them access to exchanges was not likely to win their loyalty. Then, *Young Nova Scotia* asks "an especial favor" that its exchanges send two copies to its office moving forward, "for not only are there two on our staff, but we consider it in the majority of cases but a fair exchange, our size being in comparison more than double." Here, the

[486] *The Amateur News* (Chicago, IL), Local, May 1878. The copy I examined at the AAS was marked in pencil.

paper insinuates that the same editors who complain about sending two copies to some of their exchanges *owe* two copies to others.[487]

According to Jackson, one indication of the disembedding of authorial economies in the late nineteenth century is that exchange (in the sense of a transaction generally) "became more characterized by the exclusive use of cash and contracts, and by various mediatory individuals and agencies who stood between an author and his or her readers."[488] This trend is evident within the amateur economy in the 1870s as well. For instance, the October 1872 issue of *The Acorn* (Woodstock, VT) includes the following notice: "The story which concludes in this number was furnished us by *George E. Tewksbury, Manchester, N. H.* Proprietor of Amateur Literary and Advertising Agency. Stories on hand written by all noted amateur authors."[489] An advertisement appears in the October 1874 issue of *Our Boys* (Toledo, OH) for the Amateur Advertising Agency in Pleasant Brook, NY, urging (amateur) publishers to send copies of their papers, their rates of advertising, and circulation numbers.[490] The July 1878 issue of *The Composing Stick* (Ripley, OH), includes the following announcement: "Finch & Kramer, of Dayton, Ohio, have established an 'Amateur Literature Bureau,' for the express purpose of furnishing amateur journals with first-class MSS, from the best authors. The firm is perfectly reliable, and deserves the support of the fraternity."[491] Charles Johanningsmeier dates the rise of the literary agent in the United States in the late 1880s. Assuming this is generally true, some amateurs were experimenting with literary agencies in the 1870s, a decade or more before they had established

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[487] "… A Terrible Cry Is Raised against the Custom of Asking Exchanges to Send Extra Copies to Assistant or Junior Editors," *Young Nova Scotia* (Nova Scotia, Canada), March 1882, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RjhG5.
[488] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 3.
[489] Emphasis in original. "The Story Which Concludes in This Number Was Furnished Us by George E. Tewisbury," *The Acorn* (Woodstock, VT), October 1872, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RuDw3.
[490] *Our Boys* (Toledo, OH), advertisement, October 1874, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3VKhq1.
[491] "Finch & Kramer …," *The Composing Stick* (Ripley, OH), July 1878.

their place in the world of publishing in the United States. These amateur literary agents must have sensed a need (and an opportunity for profit) in amateurdom to lessen the time and frustration that amateur editors spent to acquire quality content for their papers. Advertising agencies started to become more common generally in the United States in the 1870s, which means that amateurs were experimenting in that case, too, with new forms of mediation.[492]

Expectations of payment for amateur content presented a dilemma for amateur editors, who struggled to find reliable and affordable amateur authors capable of delivering the kinds of serialized stories, sketches, and poems that were staples of amateur papers through the mid-1870s.[493] A response to the second of a series of Richard Gerner's "Amateur Reminiscences" encapsulates the conflict between amateur authors and editors, as well as the business-minded amateur journalism of the 1870s versus the literary-minded amateur journalism of the 1880s. Gerner had been a longtime, prolific, but not universally liked amateur author who "retired" from amateurdom in 1877, until, in 1880, as Gerner explains, he "was possessed of the vague notion of doing an amateur piece of work at an amateur price: more than a thousand words for less than a dollar. In these dignified days where manuscript is not paid for by the pound, but for the number of flashes of genius it contains, such an idea is a trifle ludicrous…."[494] The idea of a story valued solely by the number of words it contains, regardless of content or quality is

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[492] Charles Johanningsmeier, *Fiction and the American Literary Marketplace: The Role of Newspaper Syndicates, 1860–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29; Patricia B. Rose, "Advertising Agencies," in *History of the Mass Media in the United States: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Margaret A. Blanchard (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[493] *Our Sanctum* (Philadelphia, NY) in June 1879 addresses at once two popular intersecting complaints of the late 1870s: payment to amateur authors for low quality work and the rise of the "all-editorial paper" in amateurdom: "We are aware that it has become a notorious fact that editors do nearly all of the work in amateurdom and authors get nearly all of the pay, and if authors would charge reasonably for their manuscript *and do their best* on every article they write, we vouch for a decrease of one half of the immense number of all editorial papers now in the ranks." Emphasis in original. *Our Sanctum* (Philadelphia, NY), editorial, June 1879.

[494] D'Artagnon (pseud.), "The Great Uncrushed," *The Ark* (Portland, OR), December 1880–January 1881, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4S2zr2. Gerner's series, according to D'Artagnon, appears in mid-1879 issues of the *Southern Star* (Washington, DC). I was unable to examine these issues, so I am assuming here that the quotations attributed to Gerner by D'Artagnon are accurate.

reminiscent of Jackson's argument that story papers revealed the "influence of a commodified marketplace" in the way they described winning entries to their competitions in terms of the prize awarded, rather than in terms of their content (for instance, "a $100 tale"). Jackson argues, "Here, surely, we see an example of Polanyi's wholly disembedded economy, in which social and cultural relations are subordinated to, and defined by, commercial values."[495] D'Artagnon challenges Gerner to reveal his pay for amateur versus professional writing, declaring it probable that "while [Gerner] receives a slight compensation for the former … the honor of publications is his only reward for the latter." D'Artagnon declares "ridiculous" Gerner's alleged belief that "classing the editor above the author" is amateur journalism's main problem, and responds that all-editorial amateur papers, which became common in the late 1870s, "go to prove that the author, though he is of great use, can be dispensed with."[496] The reign of the all-editorial paper did not last much beyond D'Artagnon's ominous declaration. In the early 1880s, amateur authors were once again in demand; however, as discussed in section 5.4, the payment for their work came in the form of recognition and literary honors — not cash prizes or payment.

5.4 "No More Subscribers Wanted!": From Cash to Cachet

In the early 1880s, Canadian amateur paper *Young Nova Scotia* had appealed for readers to collect five hundred new subscribers to support enlargement of the paper: "As it was, and to the lasting disgrace of the fraternity [which generally included the United States and Canada] should it be said, but *two active amateurs* had sufficient interest in our paper to solicit and

[495] Jackson, *Business of Letters*, 232–33, 316fn128.
[496] D'Artagnon (pseud.), "The Great Uncrushed," http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cvcA6.

forward a subscription to us, though many were very liberal in promises."[497] These kinds of aggressive appeals for subscribers had largely disappeared by the early 1880s, with some papers doing away with subscriptions all together. For instance, in 1883, *Our American Youth* declares, "During our entire career as an amateur editor we have had but two subscribers ! The last one expiring last month, we decided to withdraw our subscription price. Hereafter, it will be furnished to its late subscribers free. In fact, any one that wants a copy, can have it by sending a postal to that effect. No more subscribers wanted ! Savey ?"[498] When papers stopped aggressively seeking subscribers, the practice of offering premiums for subscriptions virtually disappeared as well, along with enthusiastic calls for agents in every city. Literary and advertising agents — as well as subscription agents — also disappeared from amateurdom by the 1880s. Enticements for would-be subscribers were fewer and farther between; however, for those papers that continued to operate on subscriptions, shaming readers continued. For instance, in 1884, *The Bumble Bee* used the language of gifts and favors bitingly: "With this issue we present our delinquent subscribers with a New Year's present in the shape of a subscription bill. By acknowledging its receipt and fulfiling [*sic*] its requirements at an early date, they will confer on us a never-to-be-forgotten favor."[499]

While cash transactions became less desirable within amateurdom in the 1880s, amateur papers continued to circulate through exchange. In 1880, amateur paper *The Ubiquitous* (San Francisco, CA) expressed exasperation over "a class of amateur papers known as the 'Exchange Fraud.'" What makes these papers fraudulent, according to the editor, is irregular publication, terrible printing, and awful writing:

[497] "… A Terrible Cry Is Raised against the Custom of Asking Exchanges to Send Extra Copies to Assistant or Junior Editors," *Young Nova Scotia* (Nova Scotia, Canada), March 1882, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RjhG5.

[498] *Our American Youth* (New York, NY), Pen Jottings, February 1883.

[499] "Our New Year's Gift," *Bumble Bee*, January 1884, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4Rjo71.

> A three dollar press, some common paper, axle grease (for ink!) and a few fonts of type constitute the publisher's outfit…. Respectable editors are getting tired of this trash, and the new postal law will surely crush them out of existance [*sic*] as the publishers cannot aford [*sic*] to adorn the wrappers of every paper they send away, with the countenance of Franklyn [*sic*].[500]

This quotation reflects a class-inflected elitism in which amateurs who attempted to make do with low-end materials were met with hostility for their efforts. While the quality of amateur papers varies widely and some are indeed very poorly done, *The Ubiquitous* accuses the editors of these poor-quality papers of malicious intent: editors of these papers both took from amateurdom as many papers as possible by establishing exchanges with them while offering "trash" in return, which amounted to a kind of theft; they also damaged amateur journalism's reputation (theft of a kind of cultural capital) by referring to their poorly executed papers as "amateur." *The Ubiquitous* hopes that many of these low-quality papers would not be able to continue operation because they would be denied pound rates (see section 6.2). It also emphasizes in a way that became more prevalent in the 1880s the quality of the papers and how they reflect as specimens to the outside (adult) world to the exclusion of the social aspects of amateur journalism that had enticed and continued to entice young people to become involved. This represents a narrow redefinition of amateur journalism and a desire to thin the amateur ranks (see section 6.1).

The conclusion of D'Artagnon's response to Gerner's "Amateur Reminiscences" bears quoting at length, as it provides an "insider" assessment of the differences between amateur journalism in the early 1870s and in 1880:

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[500] "The Exchange Fraud," *The Ubiquitous*, January 1880, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RYxn1.

> Seven years ago [in 1873] it cost four times as much to publish a paper as it does now, and as the journalistic field was then only used as a medium for making money, it necessitated a remarkable degree of energy on the part of the participants to meet the comparatively heavy expense involved in the issuing of an amateur journal. Now everything has undergone a great, and in my opinion a beneficial change. Our papers are now published for the intellectual improvement of their editors, who, by a brief career in amateurdom have their talents sufficiently developed to enable them to enter professional journalism. The old school of amateur journalists may have exhibited the most enterprise and business tac, but I doubt if they experienced as much genuine pleasure as those of to-day: still, if quantity be considered, I admit the superiority of the old *regime*; but, if quality be the desideratum, the press of the present day carries off the palm.[501]

The amateur journalism of the 1870s as D'Artagnon characterizes it here is socially disembedded, though most amateur editors ultimately failed to make money, often suspending papers after a few numbers due to some combination of time commitment and expense. Though not in these terms, D'Artagnon notes the abandonment of the those socially disembedded practices and their replacement by 1880 with practices in which transactions involved largely nonmonetary forms of capital. While some larger amateur papers continued to pay authors for content, the *expectation* of payment had become distasteful. For instance, *Youth's Pilot* (San Antonio, TX) in 1886 reprinted and affirmed a statement from amateur paper *The Philadelphian*:

> We take perhaps the bold position that our authors should not be paid for their work. When an amateur (i.e. one who practices an occupation for the love of it) demands pay, he puts himself in the position of a writer whose productions are

[501] D'Artagnon (pseud.), "The Great Uncrushed," http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cvcA6.

> not good enough for the professional publications of the day, and who therefore joins [the] 'dom simply because that is the only place where he can work out his schemes for his personal aggrandizement. An author that demands pay is not an amateur.[502]

Here, then, is a rejection of the disembedded amateur economy. According to this argument, demand for monetary compensation not only makes one's motivations and abilities suspect, but also disqualifies one, at least informally, from membership in the literary society that amateurdom had become.

It is interesting to note that the transformation D'Artagnon describes roughly coincides with changes in postal law and the efforts to fully disassociate amateurdom from the story papers, both of which are discussed in chapter 6, and with the introduction in 1879 of laureates in several categories awarded each year at the National Amateur Press Association convention, in which the judges were "persons of recognized note in the professional field," including Julian Hawthorne, Frank Converse, Edward Bok, and Horatio Alger.[503] This last change parallels a larger trend in the late nineteenth century regarding a reaction against the kinds of literary competitions, usually offering cash prizes, that had been prevalent in the antebellum period, according to Jackson. He argues that "when [literary] competitions became indistinguishable from the market itself, winning the prizes ceased to be a token of prestige and became … a form of selling out." The *Amateur Journalist* (Indianapolis, IN), in September 1889, at the end of the period covered by this dissertation, printed an article about amateur journalism aimed at new and would-be recruits. The article assures readers that amateur papers are neither filled with editorials nor with amateur-related news, "but contain essays, sketches, poems, and serial [*sic*]

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[502] "Comment and Opinions of the Amateur Press," *Youth's Pilot* (San Antonio, TX), July–August 1886, Nineteenth Century Collections, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cuLt1.
[503] Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc., 1957), 39.

from the pens of those who seek the laurel wreath of the author." It declares the need for young authors, and "when they show decided talent for any of the branches of authorship, amateur journalists ever accord the greatest praise and honor." The article also makes clear that time and money are "given freely" for the "intellectual good" of individual amateurs and readers generally: "All those young people who enter this institution with that understanding will be certain to win applause perhaps fame." In the 1880s, rewards within amateurdom such as laureates conferred prestige rather than cash.[504]

[504] It should be noted that a laureate for printing did not exist, though in the 1900s, a category for design was created. As amateurdom came to emphasize intellectual and educational aspects of amateur journalism, the close connection between amateur editor and amateur printer was broken. While amateurs continued to print their own papers in many cases, the act of printing itself became less central to amateurdom (see section 4.3). This is why Spencer could proclaim in 1886 that amateur journalists "are divided into two great classes, known as the editors and the authors." Truman J. Spencer, "Amateur Journalism: Its Aims and Methods," *Bric-A-Brac* (Montreal), April 1886, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cugN0.

CHAPTER 6: TELEGRAPHING CLASS IN THE ERA OF *ST. NICHOLAS*

6.1 "Dealing the Death Blow to These 'Mind Poisons'": Amateur Journalism Turns on the Story Papers

The Amaranth (Detroit, MI), reflecting upon why amateur journalism in the mid-1870s had more influence over young people than it did in 1881, concludes, "There is but little doubt but that the flourishing condition of things [in the mid-1870s] was almost wholly due to the New York so-called 'Boy's Papers.' The extensive circulation of this vile trash, notwithstanding the baneful influence upon the youthful mind, aided materially in acquainting Boys and Girls with the pleasures and benefits attained by a career in Amateurdom." As discussed in section 4.4, *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and several weekly story papers were instrumental in helping amateur editors publicize their papers to a wider audience of young people, and in helping would-be amateurs acquire used presses and equipment and find addresses of practicing amateurs to request specimen papers, submit manuscripts, and solicit advice. *Oliver Optic's Magazine* suspended in December 1875, and in 1876, editorials began to appear regularly in the amateur press about the dangers of so-called infamous, vile, or sensational literature with story papers singled out as targets — the same story papers that had, in many cases, provided and continued to provide space to amateur profiles, amateur news, amateur writing, amateur advertisements, and amateur departments.[505]

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[505] For instance, the *Welcome Visitor* (Lafayette, IN) features a lengthy editorial in December 1876, entitled "Infamous Literature." The editorial argues that one's "tastes for reading," are indicators of one's "knowledge," "ability," and "influence," and those "American Youth" who read "pernicious sheets" such as *Boys of New York* and *Boys of the World* are "cultivating a desire for reading which will forever destroy all refinement of thought or action, all principles of honor or integrity, and even every influence of chastness [*sic*] and purity." That the campaign against the "boys' weeklies" had not yet come to dominate amateurdom in 1876 is evidenced by the following comment, published in the official organ of the organizing body of what would soon become NAPA: "We feel grateful, that, at least, one professional paper, looks favorably upon the publication of amateur journals, the BOYS OF NEW YORK says of us: 'We have before us THE BOYS' GEM for March, a very creditable amateur publication, printed on excellent paper, with great care…. The publishers are certain of success, if the same care and taste is displayed, in their future issues.'" "Infamous Literature," *Welcome Visitor* (Lafayette, IN), December 1876, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4UCoe0; "National A. P. A." *Boys'*

The Amaranth vastly overestimates the nonexistent to negligible impact of amateurdom on story paper survival: "[T]he mimic press, observing the bad effect of these trashy sheets, severed the alliance and began a crusade against them, which resulted in the demise of the majority, and severely crippled the few that survived."[506] Evidence exists that many amateur journalists were avid readers of story papers; however, given the relatively small number of amateurs around the country, it is unlikely that they comprised a significant portion of the total readership of any story paper at a given time. Also, beyond the subscription or single-issue costs and payments for classified advertisements, amateurs were not contributing greatly to any one story paper's financial health. Frank Leslie, publisher of *Boys of New York*, went bankrupt in 1878, and though this had nothing to do with amateur journalism, it likely provided the illusion of progress to the amateurs' campaign against sensational literature.[507]

The Amaranth attributes the near-demise of amateur journalism in the late 1870s to the suspension of several story papers: "But in dealing the death blow to these 'mind poisons,' Amateurdom removed the prop by which, it had been so long sustained, and gradually sunk, almost into oblivion."[508] Though overstated in *The Amaranth*, it is true that the suspension of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the formal disassociation of amateurdom from the story papers with the adoption of a new constitution for the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) in 1878 left amateurs with no large platforms through which they could network, recruit, and

Gem (Philadelphia, PA), April 1876, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cugr6.

[506] "Mimic press" is another, less popular way to describe amateur journalism.

[507] Frank L. Mott, *A History of American Magazines,* vol. 3, *1865–1885* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1938), 36. Though Leslie was bankrupt, after his death in 1880, his widow Miriam changed her name to "Frank Leslie" and revived the business, eventually earning the nickname "Empress of Journalism." Virginia G. Drachman, *Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business* (Chapel Hill, NC: Published in association with the Schlesinger Library Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study Harvard University by the University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 65.

[508] "The Situation," *The Amaranth* (Detroit, MI), July 1881.

expand. However, the postal ruling regarding amateur papers and second-class mail in 1878 had a far more direct and significant impact on existing amateur journalism (see section 6.2).

A former amateur "reminiscing" in another amateur paper in 1879 about his time in amateurdom in the early 1870s writes: "The tendency of most of the writers was in the wrong direction — they chose improper subjects — something of the 'blood and thunder' nature appearing to their minds the model for all writing. This idea was at one time so prevalent that the majority of the publications were good representatives of the Dime Novel; The writer is glad to learn that this idea has vanished, and in all sincerity hopes that this more elevating spirit will prevail."[509] Ignoring the moral judgment in this former amateur's observation, he captures the reality that not only did young amateurs read and interact with story papers, but also many amateur authors modeled their stories after the serialized fiction they read in story papers. The story papers provided a steady stream of fast-paced serialized fiction, issued at the relatively fast pace of one installment per week. As the number of amateur papers grew after 1867, there was high demand for serialized fiction that could cultivate and satisfy a young amateur readership. As section 5.3 illustrates, amateur journalism's practices, like those of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the weekly story papers read by many amateurs, reflected the general disembedding of publishing in the United States in the 1870s. While amateur authors who published in the story papers could not expect monetary compensation for their contributions, which were always marked as "amateur" or "youth" contributions in print, they generally demanded to be paid by amateur editors — an economic practice that proved unsustainable.

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[509] F. H. C., "Reminiscences of Amateurdom," *Amateur Press* (Worcester, MA), January 1879. In a hyperbolic, somewhat tongue-in-cheek autobiographical sketch, "fossil" Richard Gerner wrote, "I fell from my high estate by the elevation of literary taste in the ranks, and began anew as a sketchist." Richard Gerner, "The Fraternity," *The Jersey Amateur Journal*, July–August 1881, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/zswP5.

The content of amateur papers began to change after 1876, as many editors consciously avoided "dime novel" stories and serialized fiction in general in their papers. In many cases editors opted for all-editorial papers — more due to the cost of sustaining a paper while paying for content than to a principled stand against "sensational literature"; however, more editorial column inches increased the amount of ink devoted to denunciations of the "boys' weeklies of New York" and to schemes to address the problem of "vile literature" both within and beyond amateurdom.[510] The effect of these various schemes beyond amateurdom was negligible — despite occasional editorial grandstanding to the contrary; however, the effects within amateurdom were significant. NAPA, which was formed in 1876, adopted a constitution in 1878 that includes articles intended to fully disassociate NAPA — and amateur journalism — from story papers by refusing new membership to amateurs "connected with or contributing to the 'Boys' Weekly' papers" and establishing a procedure for the expulsion of existing members who refused to sever ties with story papers.[511]

Richard Brodhead argues, "Writing always takes place within some completely concrete cultural situation, a situation that surrounds it with some particular landscape of institutional structures, affiliates it with some particular group from among the array of contemporary

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[510] The March 1, 1878, issue of the *Amateur Iowan* (Washington, IA) declares: "We have a suggestion to make, which is: let those standard juvenile journals, *St. Nicholas* and *Youths* [*sic*] *Companion* have an amateur department similar to the one that was formerly in Oliver Optic's magazine and we'll guarantee that the blood and thunder papers will soon be passed by with amateurs." It advocates bringing the suggestion to the publishers of those children's magazines. "The *Prairie Leaflet* has …," *Amateur Iowan* (Washington, IA), March 1, 1878.
[511] Article XVI. — Membership, Section 2, states, "No person connected with or contributing to the 'Boys' Weekly' papers — the 'New York Boys' Weekly,' 'Our Boys,' 'Boys of New York' and 'Frank Leslie's Boys' and Girls' Weekly' being samples — or no disreputable person shall be eligible to membership." Article XVII. — Suspension and Expulsion of Members, Section 1 states, "Any member connecting himself, in any manner with the professional papers, known as 'Boys' Weeklies,' — 'Our Boys' and the 'New York Boys' Weekly' being samples — or any member guilty of plagiarism or any other act or acts detrimental to the interests of this association, shall be expelled by the President of this association on complaint signed and filed by the President and Secretary of the State Association to which he — the accused — belongs; the President of said State Association having received an adverse report from a committee appointed to investigate the charge or charges." *National Amateur Press Association Constitution & By-Laws*, adopted July 17, 1878 (Tiffin, OH: Arthur J. Huss, printer, 1878), Article XVI — Membership, Section 2 and Section 3; Article XVII — Suspension and Expulsion of Members, Section 1.

groupings, and installs it [in] some group-based world of understandings, practices, and values." Brodhead argues that writing "orients itself in or against some understanding of what writing is, does, and is good for that is culturally composed and derived."[512] Cohen frames the campaign of amateurs against sensational fiction as the one "notable occasion" when amateurs attempted to "challenge the authority of their official counterparts." One can read this, as Cohen does, as a challenge to the professional press, if one views the weekly story papers as "official counterpart" to amateurdom. From this perspective, Cohen concludes, "It is at their most square that the amateurs present themselves as most oppositional." An alternative reading is that it is not so much a rebellion against the professional press as it is a realignment of amateur journalism's place within it. In an effort to consolidate its position within amateurdom, forces within the newly formed NAPA took up a charge against sensational literature, paving the way for a break from the more commercial orientation of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the weekly story papers. The drive to reconstitute amateurdom as a literary association that stood in opposition to "sensational literature" was given a boost by the postal ruling in 1878 that essentially delegitimized amateur newspapers as they had existed during the 1870s and prevented those with the least capital or those who were the most geographically isolated from participating as editors (see section 6.2).

Amateurs who rallied to the cause against the story papers devised plans to raise the profile of amateur journalism in long-running, high-circulation children's magazine *Youth's Companion* and highly regarded relative newcomer *St. Nicholas*. The schemes to combat sensational literature floated in amateur newspapers often included the self-serving promotion and publication of fiction written by young people in these "respectable" children's literary

[512] Richard Brodhead. *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 8.

monthlies — premised on the argument that young people would be more open to "pure literature" and "good reading" if it were written and reviewed by other young people in a shared popular forum.[513] From this perspective, the movement of amateurs against sensational literature is neither an attempt to appear oppositional nor to be oppositional, but rather one to consolidate institutional power at the national level around a campaign likely to attract visible support from professionals in the literary publishing world and the "respectable" press, while simultaneously attempting to create space in children's literary magazines where none existed, even if that meant culling the amateur ranks in order to present a more refined literary identity.[514]

This movement against so-called sensational literature also represents an assertion of class identity for amateurdom, in which mechanisms were put into place to cast out and cut off people or publications that could "lower" amateur journalism's reputation or amateurs' college and career prospects. In describing the popular print marketplace after 1860, Christine Bold writes, "From the get-go, the proliferation of cheap print materials was countered by a discourse of inferiority and disorder — applied to methods of production, circulation, and reception, as well as textual content — heavily coded in terms of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender."[515] The presentation of a militant distaste for story papers backed by a constitutional commitment in NAPA to formally disassociate from amateurs affiliated in any way with story papers formed the basis of a fight for legitimacy grounded in a particular class orientation rather

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[513] For instance, the June 1, 1878, issue of *The Amateur Iowan* (Washington, IA) discusses the possibility of having amateurs sign a petition at the NAPA convention in July 1878 calling on *St. Nicholas* and *Youth's Companion* to establish amateur departments in order to combat the weekly story papers.

[514] While amateurdom was not in a position to challenge the story papers, it was in a position to engage in an internal battle over which papers could formally represent amateurdom and which editors should be ostracized. In a sheet printed for free distribution to amateurs, Alfred B. Osgoodby compares amateur papers from 1876 with those from 1883 and finds a "marked improvement," not only in terms of the quality of printing and paper, but also in terms of content. He decries the dime novel "trash" found in the earlier papers and argues that if any such papers still exist, "WIPE THEM OUT." Emphasis in original. Alfred B. Osgoodby, "Some Hints to Amateurs" (Buffalo, NY: *National Star* PRINT, [1883?]).

[515] Christine Bold, introduction to *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 6, *US Popular Print Culture 1860–1920*, ed. Christine Bold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7.

than the age of participants. This realignment opened the door for amateurs to remain active beyond their teen years and to recruit their older peers to amateurdom. Insofar as amateur editors continued to address their publications to youth, which they did throughout the 1880s, amateur newspapers increasingly became an intermediary force between adult cultural gatekeepers and young readers rather than the kinds amateur newspapers produced by and for young people that dominated amateur journalism in the 1870s.

By the early 1880s, amateur journalism's aesthetic practices were brought largely in line with those of the dominant literary culture, and claims of oppression by a privileged group of young amateurs had been muted — except, among some amateurs, where the post office department was concerned (see section 6.2). By the 1890s, as the general age of those affiliated with amateurdom increased, the use of the term "amateur" in the context of amateur journalism connoted a nostalgic attachment to lost youth as much as it did youth itself.[516] This chapter considers factors that contributed to the disappearance of practices most reflective of social disembedding and the emergence in the 1880s of a subdued literary community committed to "pure literature," "good reading," fellowship — and, by the 1890s, nostalgia.

6.2 "Ruled Out: A Death Blow to Amateurdom!": The Postal Ruling of 1878

Throughout the nineteenth century in the United States, Congress generally allowed newspapers to travel through the mail cheaply or for free.[517] However, legislation was enacted to increase postage collection and also to define more clearly what kinds of newspapers and

[516] Dozens of former amateurs who had been active in their youth — including many professional editors, writers, and critics — held regular reunions and eventually formed The Fossils (http://www.thefossils.org/) in 1904, an organization that exists into the twenty-first century.

[517] Newspapers had received "substantial privileges" since the Post Office Act of 1792. Richard B. Kielbowicz, *Origins of the Second-Class Mail Category and the Business of Policymaking, 1863–1879* (Columbia, SC: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 1986), 2; "Postage Rates for Periodicals: A Narrative History," United Stated Postal Service, June 2010, accessed February 16, 2017, from https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/periodicals-postage-history.htm.

periodicals qualified for free or low rates of postage, particularly with the rise of advertising circulars and mail-order catalogs.[518] The Post Office Act of March 3, 1863, among other things, designated three classes of mail: the first, letters; the second, "regular printed matter"; and the third, miscellaneous.[519] In 1873, free editorial exchanges were eliminated.[520] The Act of June 23, 1874, introduced pound rates for newspapers and periodicals "mailed from a known office of publication or news agency, and addressed to regular subscribers or news agents." Dailies and weeklies paid 2 cents a pound; less frequently published periodicals paid 3 cents a pound.[521] According to Richard Kielbowicz, "In 1876, rulings emphasized that pound rates were to be accorded only to publications whose 'prevailing characteristic and purpose' was the dissemination of intelligence of passing events."[522] While these various Acts and rulings had minor effects on amateur journalism, depending on local postmasters, a ruling of the Postmaster-General in 1878 significantly changed the landscape of amateurdom. He ruled that amateur publications fell into the same category of publication as "transient newspapers and magazines, regular publications designed primarily for advertising purposes, or for free circulation, or for

[518] On advertising, see Kielbowicz, *Origins of the Second-Class Mail Category*, 13–14.
[519] Arthur H. Bissell and Thomas B. Kirby (comps. and eds.), *The Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 449, section 19, https://books.google.com/books?id=xso9AAAAYAAJ. The Act of 1863 specifically defined second-class mail as "all mailable matter exclusively in print and regularly issued at stated periods, without addition by writing, mark, or sign" (p. 449, section 20). The Post Office Act of March 3, 1879, added a fourth class of mail: merchandise (p. 72, section 176).
[520] "Postage Rates for Periodicals," https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/periodicals-postage-history.htm. See also Richard B. Kilebowicz, "Postal Subsidies for the Press," 455.
[521] Bissell and Kirby, *Postal Laws and Regulations*, p. 453, section 5.
[522] Kielbowicz, *Origins of the Second-Class Mail Category*, 14. The full definition of a newspaper, according to the Post Office Department in this period, is "any printed publication issued in numbers and published at short intervals of not more than a month, conveying intelligence of passing events; *and the dissemination of such intelligence must be the prevailing characteristic and purpose of the publication in order to entitle it to pass in the mail at the pound rates*" [emphasis in original]. See U.S. Post Office Department, *United States Official Postal Guide* (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Company, 1878), 13, https://books.google.com/books?id=lqhGAQAAMAAJ.

circulation at nominal rates."[523] In other words, most amateur newspapers as they existed in 1878 would be denied pound rates.

The *Boston Daily Globe,* on May 11, 1878, declares, "The announcement of this interpretation of the law seriously affected at once the business of young journalists, as nearly all their papers are sent through the mail, and the rates of subscription have been based on the former usage of the Post Office regarding postage." It ends by expressing hope "that Young America will ere long have his journalistic interests considered by the Post Office powers that be at Washington."[524] A headline in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* declares, "Twenty Thousand Journalists Against Postmaster-General Key." The story appears to have been reprinted from the "Youth's Column" of the *Delaware Valley Advance,* and it reads as if it were written by a young amateur journalist. It frames the denial of pound rates to amateur papers as an attack on youth: "Is not America the land of Freedom? Then why should not the rights of the rising generation be respected? But, alas! their rights are ignored, — nay, even trampled upon."[525] On one level, the Postmaster-General's ruling delegitimizes amateur journalism by relegating amateur papers to third-class matter; however, as Cohen persuasively argues, amateur journalists long before 1878 presented themselves as oppressed and "wore their 'subordinate status' like a badge of honor."[526] On that level, the ruling *legitimizes* amateur journalists' long-standing complaints, at least in

[523] S. N. D. North, *History and Present Condition of the Newspaper and Periodical Press of the United States with a Catalogue of the Publications of the Census Year* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1884), 54, https://books.google.com/books?id=HlMOAAAAIAAJ.
[524] "Amateur Journalists: How an Obnoxious Postal Law Affects Their Business — The Young Fraternity Seeking for Redress — The Feeling in Boston," *Boston Daily Globe*, May 11, 1878.
[525] "Twenty Thousand Journalists Against Postmaster-General Key," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 3, 1879. Though it is difficult to determine the number of amateur papers that were published in a given month, let alone the number of amateur editors, authors, and printers who were involved in the production of those papers, twenty thousand is almost certainly a gross exaggeration. And, as is discussed later in this section, not all amateurs were disappointed by the ruling, as some amateurs in the late 1870s and early 1880s were eager to thin the ranks.
[526] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.

terms of their position relative to the professional press, by codifying their exclusion from the public sphere.

Several amateur newspapers editorialized about the ruling and wrote about experiences with their local postmasters. An editorial in the May 15, 1878, issue of *The New Ipswich* (NH) *Times* rails against "zealous officials" in the Post Office Department: "We never have seen an amateur paper that was ABSOLUTELY free, and if ten cents would be called a nominal price for an amateur paper only worth that amount, why should not a dollar be called a nominal rate of subscription to a professional paper only worth that?"[527] In its valedictory in 1880, the same amateur paper attributes its suspension in part to "the unlawful and unjust ruling and decisions of the *contemptible* Post-office department at Washington, D. C."[528] The front page of the June 1878 issue of amateur newspaper *The Bostonian* screams, "Ruled Out: A Death Blow to Amateurdom!" The headline continues, "The School of American Journalism Closed by the Ruthless Hand of the Government; The Rights of Boys Ignored by the Post Office Department." After his paper was denied pound rates, the editor of *The Bostonian* appealed to Washington without success. The issue declares, "As we cannot afford to mail our papers at the rates demanded, we are forced to suspend publication with this issue."[529] The July/August 1878 issue of *The Amateur Baltimorean* asks why the "Boys' Papers," referring here to the "sensational" weekly story papers such as *Boys of New York*, "are allowed to go on unmolested in their course; while the small [sheet] which is published once a month is hurled down and trampled upon by the Post Masters of the U.S.?" The editor concludes, "Is this a way to enlighten the youths of

[527] John Quilldriver, "Amateurdom," *The New Ipswich* (NH) *Times*, May 15, 1878.
[528] Emphasis in original. John C. Emery, "Valedictory," *The New Ipswich Times*, November 1880.
[529] N. Netos, "Ruled Out: A Death Blow to Amateurdom!," *The Bostonian*, June 1878; "Our Last," *The Bostonian*, June 1878.

America?"[530] Even four years after the ruling, *Our American Youth* (New York City) complains that "the professional boys' papers, filled with the worst of poisonous literature, which yearly destroys hundreds of our most promising boys, enjoy all the privileges of second class rates, just because they are edited and published by men; while amateur papers, because they are controlled by boys, are deprived of these privileges."[531] General editorializing against the professional "boys' weeklies" predates the 1878 postal ruling by a couple of years; however, these examples demonstrate the ways in which amateurs began to position themselves as oppressed underdogs in their battle against sensational literature in an effort to legitimize their contribution to discourse in the public sphere, which had been delegitimized by the Postmaster-General's ruling.

The Post Office Act of March 3, 1879, exacerbated the problem. While it "extended the two-cent-per-pound rate to all periodicals, regardless of frequency of issue,"[532] it also added conditions for a periodical to qualify as second-class matter. Not only did a periodical need to be issued regularly at least four times a year from a "known office of publication," but also:

> It must be originated and published for the dissemination of information of a public character, or devoted to literature, the sciences, arts, or some special industry, and having a legitimate list of subscribers: *Provided, however*, That nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to admit to the second-class rate regular publications designed primarily for advertising purposes, or for free circulation, or for circulation at nominal rates.[533]

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[530] Chas. L. Miller, "Justice to All!!!," *The Amateur Baltimorean*, July/August 1878.
[531] *Our American Youth* (New York City), Editorial Ink Splashes, September 1882.
[532] "Postage Rates for Periodicals," https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/periodicals-postage-history.htm.
[533] Bissell and Kirby, *The Postal Laws and Regulations*, p. 73, section 185, https://books.google.com/books?id=xso9AAAAYAAJ.

The denial of pound rates to amateur papers caused many to suspend, likely dissuaded some would-be amateurs from starting papers, and led to changes in the contents and format of some amateur papers by editors in an effort to secure pound rates.

Will L. Wright edited *The Egyptian Star* (Cairo, IL), a monthly amateur paper that launched in October 1877 and claimed a circulation of 1,200. In the April 1878 issue, Wright describes learning from the postmaster that his paper was no longer eligible for pound rates, "a severe blow, as we could ill-well afford to increase our expense by the addition of ten or fifteen dollars for postage, and receive in return no pecuniary remuneration." Wright asked his congressional representative to take up the matter with the Post Office Department, and received a response from Acting First Assistant Postmaster-General Marr (reprinted in the editorial) affirming, in part, that *The Egyptian Star* is "not 'a newspaper or periodical publication' within the contemplation of the statute" and was not entitled to second-class mail status. Wright's editorial, like others, frames this as an attack on youth: "Did they not know that they were opposing a school of experience and industry, wherein boys are fitting themselves to fill the places of those who so cruelly try to destroy their ambition and energy?"[534] Wright characterizes a struggle in which "boys" want to push ahead toward adulthood, while adults, presumably men, force them to remain as children.

Since as many as six amateur newspapers could be sent to the same address with a single one-cent stamp, Wright urges amateur publishers to send all papers going to the same city to one address so the recipient could distribute the exchanges locally on a monthly basis. Amateurs in the same geographic location bundled their papers to mail to other locations, sometimes through their local, state, or regional amateur press associations. For instance, *The Golding Press* (New London, CT) informs exchanges: "With this number, the New London amateur editors propose

[534] "By Way of Explanation," *The Egyptian Star* (Cairo, IL), May 1878.

to send out their publications in one wrapper, and will have but one exchange-list. Editors who are not favored with pound rates can enclose three papers in one wrapper and mail to either New London editor, and there by save postage."[535] One editor notes in 1883: "It is very seldom, now, that we receive exchanges in a single wrapper. The majority of the packages contain from two to ten and twelve different papers; thus the cost of postage for each borders very near to that of pound rates. We suppose the Postoffice [*sic*] Department will, if possible, make a new law again depriving us of even this club-mailing privilege."[536] Bundling, while it allowed several amateur papers avoid suspension, promoted greater centralization and bureaucratization within amateurdom and also disadvantaged geographically isolated amateur editors who had no one with whom to share postage costs, raising their overall cost of participation in amateur journalism.

Wright eventually obtained second-class mail status for *The Egyptian Star* in late 1879. The American Antiquarian Society has a copy of the January 1880 issue with a handwritten note affixed to the front page: "We Have Come to Stay! Our postal troubles are all past and The Star will be published regularly hereafter. Place us on your exchange list at once" [emphasis in original]. If Wright's valedictory address is to be believed, he was fortunate to see his paper survive the postal ruling on amateur publications, as "ten of Cairo's papers and numerous others thro'-out [*sic*] the country suspended publication"[537] in that period. Due to the nature of amateurdom in the 1870s and 1880s, it had never been unusual for some number of papers to suspend every month; however, the postal ruling of 1878 affected whole geographic areas at once, depending on the local postmaster.

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[535] "Three for One," *The Golding Press* (New London, CT), February 1882.
[536] "The greatest evil…" *Amateur Exchange* (Stanberry, MO), April 1883.
[537] Will L. Wright, "Review of the Past," *The Egyptian Star* (Cairo, IL), January 1881.

Wright offers advice to other amateur editors in a letter printed in *The Amateur Globe* (Mt. Carroll, IL) in February 1880. He puts the onus on amateur editors to publish "BUSINESS LIKE" [emphasis in original] papers, rather than to engage in "coaxing or bulldozing" the postal service: "It is not to be supposed that we can stick a few types together, smear them with ink, take an impression, call it a newspaper and demand the privileges of a 'New York Herald,' and the sooner we reconcile ourselves to this fact the sooner will we have overcome the first obstacle toward securing pound rates." In this context, "business like" is synonymous with how "professional" might be used in the present day to refer to presentation. He argues that no paper smaller than his own (6 to 8 pages, 3 x 6 inches in size) would be able to secure pound rates, nor would any paper that includes the word "amateur" in "any significant place." Wright also argues for a shift in the content of amateur newspapers toward "substantial news articles" and away from "frivolous items."[538] In other words, in order to receive pound rates, amateur papers, to the extent possible, should resemble professional periodicals in format, content, and general appeal. Wright associates stories about amateurdom with "frivolity," devaluing young amateurs' experiences and interests. This promotes the idea of amateurdom as a "training ground" for professional journalism and discourages the social function of amateur print networks. It shifts the locus of "fraternity" from the papers themselves to formal amateur press associations. This, in turn, privileges a smaller "inner circle" of amateurs who had the time and means to organize and attend conventions or run for association offices.

At the 1880 NAPA convention, president John Edson Briggs claimed that most amateur papers by that point had secured pound rates.[539] In his 1900 amateur history of NAPA, John T. Nixon claims, "At times papers have been debarred merely because they were acknowledged as

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[538] Will L. Wright, "Here's Balm for Post-Office Wounds," letter to the editor, *The Amateur Globe* (Mt. Carroll, IL), February 1880.
[539] "The Boy Editors: The Juvenile Journalists in Convention Assembled," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 15, 1880.

'amateur,' but as a general rule it has never been hard for an amateur publisher to secure 'pound rates' if he chose to live up to the law."[540] Neither Briggs nor Nixon addresses the decline in the total number of amateur papers in circulation[541] or any changes in the kind and quality of papers compared with those that existed prior to 1878. Others did, however, acknowledge the change. For instance, Canadian amateur paper *Boy's Folio* in 1880 favorably argues, "This act though very dampening to the enthusiasm of the 'dom, has served to scour out all the small and worthless sheets, which previously abounded, and leaves us now with the stable, staunch ones solely."[542] A similar opinion is expressed in *The Ubiquitous* (San Francisco): "'Tis true, the postal law has caused many of our papers to suspend, but the fraternity need not trouble themselves about them, as in almost every case the papers that suspended were the miserable daubs."[543] Neither Briggs nor Nixon acknowledges efforts by amateurs to secure second-class rates for years after the ruling. In January 1885, the *Bumble Bee* (Alameda, CA) proposes a tongue-in-cheek a solution: "to renounce all alliance to the term ["amateur"], and turn into professional journals. Mind, everything is in a name!"[544] Given the close association of the terms "amateur" and "youth" in the context of amateur journalism through the 1870s, it is important to

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[540] John T. Nixon, *A History of the National Amateur Press Association* (Crowley, LA: J.T. Nixon, 1900), 56, https://books.google.com/books?id=UYVHAQAAMAAJ.

[541] For graphical evidence of the precipitous decline in the number of amateur newspaper published between 1878 and 1881, see Jessica Isaac, "Compliant Circulation: Children's Writing, American Periodicals, and Public Culture, 1839–1882" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2015), 130–42, http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/id/eprint/25636. Several graphs are also available online at "Graphing Amateurdom," http://www.jessicaisaac.net, accessed January 31, 2017. Her data come from the catalogs of several extant large collections, which may contain significant gaps; however, the decline is noticeable across collections, suggesting that the number of amateur papers published in that period dropped, supporting the claims of several amateurs active in the late 1870s.

[542] "A Suggestion," *Boys' Folio* (New Glasgow, NS), Christmas 1880, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cPJz4.

[543] "Is the 'Dom Degenerating?" *The Ubiquitous* (San Francisco, CA), February 1880, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cPLv8.

[544] "A Scheme of Ours," *Bumble Bee* (Alameda, CA), January 1885, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3NQhR5. The *Bumble Bee* did secure second-class postage rates beginning in September 1885, when the post office relaxed its stance toward amateur papers. See "The ruling of the postal authorities…," *Bumble Bee*, August 1885, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3R7nZ8.

note that the diminishing identification with the former in amateur papers parallels the diminishing predominance of the latter within amateurdom.

6.3 "The Youth Who Enters the Ranks for Fun Will not Find … Inducement to Stay": Amateur Journalism Comes of Age

In July 1882, amateur journalism received a much-needed boost. Though *St. Nicholas* had published sketches and stories that featured amateur newspaper production beginning in the late 1870s (see section 4.4), numerous amateurs cited a lengthy article by Harlan H. Ballard, entitled "Amateur Newspapers," as the catalyst to their involvement in amateur journalism.[545] Ballard's article presents a progress narrative of amateur journalism that not only helped to recruit a new crop of young amateurs, but also influenced their perspective on amateur journalism's character and purpose. The article chronicles amateur journalism's origins and development in the context of a sustained argument for its growing importance not only for young people but also for the future of the professional press in the United States. Ballard presents this argument despite the fact that, by his own admission, interest in amateur journalism had been declining among young people since the late 1870s. In this context, Ballard's article is as much a recuperative effort as an informational piece.

Ballard's article includes a history of amateur journalism. First, it provides a brief pre-1867 history of newspaper production by young people. Ballard suggests that Benjamin Franklin could be claimed as "the pioneer boy printer," not only establishing a long tradition of young people acting as printers but also connecting the practice of amateur printing among young

[545] Harlan H. Ballard, "Amateur Newspapers." *St. Nicholas*, July 1882. *The Drawer* (Detroit, MI) notes in August 1882, "If there are any persons who think the article on 'Amateur Journalism' which recently appeared in St. Nicholas has done no good, we can prove it has, as it is partly the cause for the appearance of this paper."

people to concepts of citizenship and nation-building through the figure of Franklin.[546] Next Ballard questions the existence of Thomas Condie, widely cited within amateurdom as the first "boy editor" (see section 4.2), instead suggesting that the honor belongs to Nathaniel Hawthorne for his publication of *The Spectator* in 1820. By drawing a direct line between Franklin, Hawthorne, and the young amateur journalists of 1882, Ballard suggests that amateur journalism has value in the present because it holds out the promise of future adult contributions to a distinctly American national culture.

Next, Ballard's article presents an account of amateur journalism between 1867, when Novelty presses were introduced, and 1876, when amateurs founded NAPA. He describes the first attempt of amateur journalists to create a formal national association, which occurred in 1869 at the home of publisher Charles Scribner on the initiative of his sons J. Blair and Charles, Jr., in New York.[547] The Scribner name would have been familiar to readers of *St. Nicholas*, since Scribner & Co. published the magazine. By the time Ballard's article was published, both J. Blair and Charles Scribner, Jr., had joined their father's publishing firm.[548] Ballard also refers to amateur journalism as "one of the truest schools of journalism" and highlights the career paths of several young men who moved from amateur journalism to positions in the professional press, including William H. Downes ("Downsey") of the *Boston Globe* (see section 4.1).[549] Finally,

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[546] For a discussion of Benjamin Franklin's "persona as printer-turned-statesman," see Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), Kindle edition, 14–20.
[547] The resulting group was initially called the "Amateur Printers' Association," but in 1870 it changed its name to the "Amateur Press Association." Though Ballard does not mention him, William Terhune, who is discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.4 of this dissertation, was present at this first amateur "convention." He was elected the organization's secretary in 1869, then its president in March 1870 at its second "convention," and again at its third in September 1870, with Edwin A. Farwell (also discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.4) as vice-president. Truman J. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc., 1957), 339–40.
[548] "Charles Scribner's Sons: An Illustrated Chronology," accessed February 17, 2017, http://library.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/aids/scribner/.
[549] Downes, an art critic, served as a reporter for the *Boston Globe* for several years after 1874, then worked for the *Daily Advertiser*, and later *The (Boston) Transcript*. *Who's Who in New England*, 2nd ed., ed. Albert Nelson

Ballard devotes a paragraph to several young women who were amateur editors and authors, some of whom also wrote for professional publications. Framing amateur journalism as a "school" legitimizes the practice for both child readers and their parents by emphasizing its immediate educational and potential future economic value. Including a discussion of young women as prominent participants suggests that amateur journalism could provide an avenue for women to enter the world of professional publishing. These moves, however, downplay the involvement in amateur journalism throughout the 1870s of young people who had no interest in pursuing careers as writers, editors, publishers, or printers, but who appreciated other aspects of amateur journalism, particularly its social aspects.

One glaring omission from Ballard's account of amateur journalism from 1867 to 1876 is any mention of William T. Adams or *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, despite the fact that Adams and his magazine were highly influential in this period of amateur journalism. In fact, in 1869, Adams announced in the magazine, "The editor of 'Merry Moments' [Charles Scribner, Jr.] is making an effort to form an Amateur Press Association. A good thing."[550] Adams later apologized in the magazine for missing a meeting of the "Printers' Union" — "a good time got up and amply provided for by Charles Scribner, Jr." — which implies that Adams's presence had been requested.[551] Also, Adams described *Merry Moments* as "a beautifully printed little sheet" in the magazine after Scribner, Jr., sent him a copy.[552] Ballard attempts to elevate amateur journalism by emphasizing its connections with the Scribners while erasing the prolific, commercially oriented "Oliver Optic," whose magazine was an important hub in early amateur networks. (*Oliver Optic's Magazine*, through its suspension in December 1875, was also a

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Marquis (Chicago: A. N. Marquis & Company, 1915), s.v. "Downes, William Howe," https://books.google.com/books?id=5jk1AAAAIAAJ.

[550] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 2, 1869.

[551] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, October 16, 1869.

[552] *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Our Letter Bag, May 8, 1869.

competitor of *St. Nicholas*, in which Ballard's article appears.) Neither does Ballard mention the important role played by weekly story papers in the growth and character of amateur journalism in his account of this period. Another omission from Ballard's account is reference to the many local, state, and regional associations that existed prior to NAPA's founding in 1876, with the exception of the Scribners' efforts.[553] These omissions and emphases assist Ballard's effort to claim a role for amateur journalism in a narrative of national literary and journalistic progress, highlighting certain well-known individuals and focusing on the eventually successful founding of the national association. He suggests that NAPA's founding in 1876 represents the progressive evolution of amateur journalism from the scattered early efforts of a few great men (Franklin, Hawthorne, and the Scribners) to a centralized, national institution of explicitly "American" youth.

Ballard does acknowledge "the great trouble with the Post-Office authorities" in 1878, and quotes an unnamed "ex-amateur editor" who explains the result: "[T]he papers went down like grass before the mower." However, Ballard sheds no tears over this, instead lecturing amateurs about the importance of running their papers "on a business basis" and becoming "self-supporting": "If the people at large consider any paper to be of advantage to them, they will support it with their subscriptions. Then, the Government is willing to help them by reducing the rate of postage. Uncle Sam has a great and a generous heart, boys. He loves fairness above all things." In this vision of amateur journalism, the goal is not peer-to-peer communication, a core component of amateur journalism throughout the 1870s, but rather literary or journalistic excellence and the cultivation of a broader, more general, more anonymous audience. In other

[553] For a discussion of local, state, and regional associations that existed prior to the founding of NAPA in 1876, see Frank Cropper, *The Amateur Journalists' Companion for 1873: An Interesting and Concise Guide for All Editors, Authors, and Printers* (Louisville, KY: Frank Cropper, 1873), 76–88, and Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 340.

words, amateur papers should be able to compete for subscriptions with professional papers to be admitted to second-class mail status; amateur editors who had other aims for engaging in amateur journalism — for instance, building and maintaining geographically dispersed peer social networks through print — should expect to pay for the privilege. In either case, the higher cost of participation in the 1880s led to a more exclusive amateurdom.

After his brief history of amateur journalism, Ballard turns his attention to NAPA politics, calling on NAPA to step up its fight against the weekly story papers and praising the revised NAPA constitution of 1878 (see section 6.1). Ballard urges NAPA to "take a step further, and promptly expel from their ranks every editor who published a single profane or indecent paragraph," as these "throw discredit on the institution." Ballard's strongly worded call to extend efforts to expel members of NAPA not only on the basis of actual affiliation with story papers, but also on the basis of a highly subjective assessment of the content of amateur papers serves to align NAPA with a parallel campaign among adult cultural gatekeepers to regulate children's reading. It also ensures that new recruits to amateur journalism from Ballard's article would share these values — unlike the first generation of amateur journalists in the 1870s, whose papers widely suggested not only familiarity with but also an appreciation of weekly story papers and dime novel literature.

Bold discusses efforts among "cultural commentators" to "shape particular readerships, for reasons of profit and social control," arguing that when they "inveighed against story-paper and dime-novel reading by the working classes and boys, for example, they endeavored to cement a match between print categories and social classes whose persuasiveness has been undermined by considerable scholarly evidence."[554] Ballard's emphases and omissions in his

[554] Christine Bold, introduction to *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 6, *US Popular Print Culture 1860–1920*, ed. Christine Bold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11.

description of amateur journalism reveal something about the perceived agency of young readers as cultural producers, and about adult efforts to mediate young people's cultural production, channeling those activities in ways that align with particular values, tastes, and agendas. NAPA functioned as a site of intervention for Ballard, a mechanism through which interested adults could attempt to make a difference in the direction of amateur journalism — and by extension, youth culture. Ballard sought to enlist the aid of young people in influencing their peers by disseminating youth-created publications.

Ballard's effort to recruit young people to amateur journalism was successful, partially because amateurdom as it existed by 1882 had already become smaller, more centralized, and more outwardly aligned with the values represented by *St. Nicholas*. Amateur editorials in the years immediately following 1882 reflected this. One amateur in 1883 argues that the aim of amateur journalism should be primarily educational, with an eye toward college or professional life, and suggests that if "the low senseless twaddle" can be eliminated from amateur newspapers, amateur journalism "will be the greatest educator of the age, and the youth who enters the ranks for fun will not find much of an inducement to stay."[555] In other words, only those young people who were committed to intellectual improvement and scholastic and professional achievement should become involved. Spencer, who wrote *The History of Amateur Journalism* (1957) as an adult, writes as a young amateur, "The object of the institution [of amateur journalism] is mutual culture, and as a means to this end it has earnestly and prominently devoted itself to the cause of pure literature and the elimination of the sensational and trashy reading matter of the day…. Sensational literature and amateur journalism are natural

[555] Edward Q. Daly, "The Aim of Amateur Journalism," *Boys' Courier* (St. Charles, MO), October 1883.

foes."[556] Both the campaign to "elevate" young people's reading and writing and the push to institutionalize amateur journalism as a "school" served to raise the profile of NAPA and to further legitimize it in the eyes of adults — to the point that NAPA was increasingly run by people in their twenties rather than in their teens.[557]

6.4 "Let Us Be Received on Equal Terms with Yourself": Amateur Women in the 1880s

Paula Petrik argues that Ballard's article in *St. Nicholas* led to another important development: "Various superficial resentments against female editors crystallized in the early 1880s when more girls entered amateur journalism…. The newcomers immediately understood that they were disenfranchised from the major business of youthful journalism because they could not participate in the electioneering, political reporting, and editorializing attached to NAPA's annual meeting."[558] After the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) convention of 1876, according to Petrik, when young women sought recognition for their papers as editors or attempted to participate meaningfully in NAPA, "the boys attempted to 'put them in their places' — and not always kindly."[559] This attitude is reflected in an unsigned editorial published in the September 1877 issue of *The Buckeye Boy* (Tiffin, OH). The editorial, entitled "How We

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[556] Truman J. Spencer, "Amateur Journalism: Its Aims and Methods," *Bric-A-Brac* (Montreal), April 1886, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cugN0.
[557] Drawing mainly from William C. Ahlhauser, *Ex-Presidents of the National Amateur Press Association: Sketche*s (Athol, MA: W. Paul Cook, 1919), http://books.google.com/books?id=wGYDAAAAYAAJ, and supplementing from other sources, I was able to determine that those elected to the office of president of the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) between 1876 and 1879 were aged 21 and under; between 1880 and 1885, they were aged 20–22; and between 1886 and 1890, all but one were aged 23–27. While the NAPA leadership was increasing in age, so too was the way amateurdom understood itself and presented itself to others: "Amateur Journalism is an institution composed of youths between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five, who edit or write for amateur papers. The object of amateurdom is the suppression of sensational literature, and this object is attained by the publication of miniature newspapers." While the low end of the age range remained stable in descriptions of amateurdom, the high end of the range increased in the mid-1880s. The purpose of amateurdom, too, was sharply refocused against the weekly story papers. "Amateur Journalism," *Youth* (Louisville, KY), January–February 1885.
[558] Paula Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and Adolescence, 1870–1886," in *Small Worlds: Children & Adolescents in America, 1850–1950,* eds. Elliot West and Paula Petrik (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 138.
[559] Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 137.

Think," is written in response to another amateur paper's criticism of several papers "for speaking in a disrespectful manner of a young lady amateur." The editorial, most likely written by *Buckeye Boy* editor Arthur Huss, who was active in both the Western Amateur Press Association and NAPA, argues:

> *Amateurdom is not for girls*, and if one determines to be an amateur editor, she must become one on [her] own responsibility, and take her chances with the rest of us…. Amateurdom is not designed to teach its pupils gallantry, and if these young ladies must become editors — must enter into *a sphere where they do not belong* — let them fight their own battles, and we will fight ours. [emphasis added][560]

A less hostile but more paternalistic version of the argument in *The Buckeye Boy* appears in *The New England Gazette* (Boston, MA) in 1882, a few months before Ballard's article appears in *St. Nicholas.* Though the article argues that amateurs "who dare to declaim against the entrance of young ladies to our noble cause, should be suppressed firmly and resolutely," it continues:

> Are you prejudiced against young ladies joining the ranks because of the capacity in which they act? If so, dispel all such prejudice from your mind for it is their natural tendency to assist and to be dependant [*sic*] and it is only natural that they should act in that capacity, for which there is a general call, viz.: associate editresses.[561]

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[560] "How We Think," *Buckeye Boy* (Tiffin, OH), September 1877, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/rjxf7.

[561] "Young Lady Amateurs," *The New England Gazette* (Boston, MA), May–June 1882.

There was, in fact, a concerted effort around this time among a significant portion of amateur papers edited by young men to recruit young women as *associate* editors with some success.[562] *The New England Gazette* is naturalizing a subordinate status for young women in amateurdom as in life.

The Annals of Amateur Journalism, for 1879 includes a section entitled "Lady Amateurs" that does not argue explicitly that young women should be encouraged to be editors, but does provide as examples several young women who were editors, rather than associate editors or authors. This section argues, however, that amateurdom should recruit more young women "to bring about a standard of purity": "Their influence over their brethren of the quill, could be exercised to a beneficial extent. Their existence among us, would act magically in completely revolutionizing Amateur Journalism, and transforming it into a practically refined literary college for both sexes, and one whose advantages, unequaled as they are, would induce others to join us."[563] Young women's role in amateurdom, then, should be to act as its moral compass, essentially keeping the boys in line. An 1884 recruitment pamphlet about amateur journalism notes positively the presence of young women in amateurdom, mainly as associate editors and contributors, and describes their treatment by young men: "Reference is seldom made to this portion of the membership of the fraternity except by the full title — originated in respectful pleasantry, retained through pleasant gallantry — 'Our Lady Amateurs, (bless 'em).'"[564]

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[562] For instance, an announcement appears in the February 1882 issue of *The Golding Press* (New London, CT) that the paper's male associate editor has left: "As … female associates are now the style, we have inserted an ad. to the effect that we would be pleased to receive asisstance [*sic*] from a 'daisy amateur.'" "Mr. Charles B. Pomeroy …," *The Golding Press* (New London, CT), February 1882.

[563] Frank Bassett, *The Annals of Amateur Journalism, for 1879: Amateur Journalism Is the Potent Agency — in Its Embryo — Which Is Decreed to Dictate the Progress of This Civil Government* (Flint, MI: Beardsley's Steam Job Print, 1879), 9.

[564] Finlay A. Grant, *Amateur Journalism: A Pamphlet Explaining Its Aims, Interest and Extent, with Instructions for Becoming Connected Therewith: For Gratuitous Circulation*. ([New Glasgow, N.S.]: Published by Finlay A. Grant, 1884), 3.

What was true for amateur politics was true for politics in general. In an editorial on girls' education in October 1885, *Youth* (Lowell, MA) argues:

> And while we trust in woman's sphere, let it not be understood that we believe in that sentimental disease called woman's suffrage. It cannot be that woman is fitted for or wants to mingle in political life, where virtue, kindness, tenderness, are lost, and selfish, coarse, brutish elements battle. Such is not woman's sphere. Far better will she be in her home, imparting true manliness, unprejudiced by contact with the ward meeting or the platform. Woman is more ideal than practical. She can point out a paradise but cannot make one. She can inculcate the wisest counsel, but has not the strength, the material, masculine arm to enforce her wisdom on rude multitudes.[565]

While this paper's title, *Youth*, suggests a gender-inclusive audience of young people, its content illuminates a preoccupation with the cultivation of "true manhood," which relies on "true womanhood" — a way of being that this article attempts to inscribe.[566]

While young men were arguing in the amateur papers they edited about young women's place, if any, in amateurdom, *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), edited by Zelda Arlington, began agitating for NAPA to accept women as full members. *The Violet* asks in 1884, "Why is it that the 'lords of creation' have never elected a female Napa official?"[567] The same issue declares, "[I]t is our intention to make the *Violet* the representative of the female portion of amateurdom," and encourages young women to send articles, even if they have never published before.[568] Within two months, *Our Attempt* (New Bedford, MA) asks, "Why is it that not one of the young

[565] "Girls' Education," *Youth* (Lowell, MA), October 1885.
[566] For more on "true womanhood" in this context see Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1966): 151–74, doi:10.2307/2711179, and Mary Louise Roberts, "True Womanhood Revisited," *Journal of Women's History* 14, no. 1 (2002): 150–55, doi:10.1353/jowh.2002.0025.
[567] "Why is it that…?," *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), May 1884.
[568] "We request all young lady amateurs…," *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), May 1884.

ladies in amateurdom have organized a Young Ladies Amateur Press Association? Why should not the ladies have an Association of their own?" It continues, "Come sister workers let us put our heads together and found this Association. Let us bind ourselves with bands of iron and never let our sisterhood die."[569] In February 1885, *The Violet* advocates for "an association of our own": "It would be more interesting, and the girls would soon like it, and then we could do better work among recruits, as a body, than we can singly."[570] The Ladies Amateur Press Association (LAPA) was formed, and in April 1885, Arlington claimed it had twenty-seven members, eleven of whom were from Massachusetts.[571]

Despite LAPA's organization and agitation, at its 1885 annual convention, NAPA voted to deny young women full membership by exempting them from dues and fees, "notwithstanding the fact that the ladies unanimously objected."[572] *The Violet* responded, "We thank the gentlemen of the convention for the kindness and gallantry that prompted them to the act, but we would ask a greater compliment — let us be received on equal terms with yourself; let us feel that we have a *right* to vote, a *right* to hold office, a RIGHT TO EVERY privilege that is given the young men of the association, by knowing we pay as much as they."[573] *The Duett* (Westfield, MA), edited by two young women, called NAPA's vote "a great mistake," arguing, "The young women who engage in amateur journalism are incited by the same desires for self improvement and healthful amusement which cause young men to become amateurs, and wish to be looked upon only as *amateurs among amateurs*, subject to all laws which govern other members of the association."[574] Petrik asserts that LAPA could claim victory in 1886, when NAPA voted to

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[569] "Why is it that …," *Our Attempt* (New Bedford, MA), June–July 1884.
[570] "We, the girls …," *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), February 1885.
[571] "The names of twenty-seven girls…" *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), April 1885.
[572] "The amendment to the constitution…," *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), October 1885.
[573] Emphasis in original. "The amendment to the constitution…," *The Violet*.
[574] Emphasis in original. "The amending of the constitution …," *The Duett* (Westfield, MA), November–December 1885.

admit women as full members, with all of the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities that came with membership. However, Petrik also notes, "by that point, the character of NAPA was changing; less of an independent organization for adolescents, it had become more of a hobby group for university-age men and women and older adults."[575] By the time Ballard's article appeared in *St. Nicholas*, amateur journalism had become more centralized, more formalized, more bureaucratized, more homogeneous in terms of class, and more unified in purpose. Though Ballard's article fueled a new influx of young people, amateur journalism's transformation from the 1870s paved the way, on one hand, for the erasure of youth as a central tenet of its identity — amateur papers continued to speak *to* young people, but increasingly they were not edited *by* young people, nor were their associations led *by* young people — and, on the other hand, for the full participation of women. Though women had always been participants in amateur journalism, not until amateur journalism rejected the market and embraced a reform agenda around the issue of "sensational literature" could women fully participate in *amateurdom*, the community, including its formal associations.

6.5 "The Blooming and the Fading": The Aging of Amateur Journalism

In the early 1870s, amateur journalism was undergoing rapid growth, amateur newspaper circulation was largely decentralized, and amateur press associations had not yet stabilized. Beginning in the mid-1870s, the first "generation" of amateurs began retiring, or "fossilizing," and debates about whether a role existed in amateurdom for adults (mostly young men in their twenties) intensified. The argument put forward by many older amateurs to justify their continuing presence in the ranks is well represented by Will K. Graff in an 1883 article subtitled "In Defence of the Fossil and the Man Amateur": "Transient spurts of seeming brightness are not

[575] Petrik, *Youngest Fourth Estate,* 139.

to be considered as permanent progress, and until stability is engrafted into [NAPA] there will be no great advancement, but rather the annual advance and degeneration, the blooming and the fading."[576] Arguments about the stability (and stagnation) of amateur journalism in the 1880s were premised often on breaking the synonymy between "amateur" and "youth," as well as embracing imagined legitimating narratives, such as promoting amateur journalism as a "school" for professional journalism, or as a reformist force capable of both influencing publishers to produce materials of perceived high literary quality for young readers and persuading young readers themselves to practice "good reading." However, the demise of amateurdom as an expression of youth culture by 1890 was not due solely to the presence of "man amateurs" who refused to "fossilize," nor to the failure of amateur journalism to become in any meaningful sense a "school" for professional journalism, nor to its failure to influence either publishers or young people's literary tastes to any large degree. As chapter 5 demonstrates, the amateur economy as it developed in the early 1870s was unsustainable. The current chapter demonstrates that the turn against story papers beginning in the mid-1870s, which is also when *Oliver Optic's Magazine* suspended, left amateurdom with fewer outlets for widespread promotion, resulted in the expulsion of a number of amateurs, and likely discouraged story paper readers from starting amateur papers, as those readers would be excluded from membership in amateurdom's formal associations. At the same time, the denial of second-class mail status and pound rates in the late 1870s caused a large number of papers to fold at once, raised the overall cost of entry into amateur journalism, and changed the character of many of the papers that remained. Finally, a new generation of young people recruited to amateurdom in the early 1880s ushered in an era of

[576] Will K. Graff, "Yesterday and Today," *Boys' Folio* (New Glasgow, NS), November 1883, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/zt6n4.

amateur journalism that mirrored to a large extent the literary and social values of that most celebrated children's literary magazine, *St. Nicholas.*

As the social aspect of amateurdom became less rooted in the papers themselves, which became more "literary" in character, and as exchange became more centralized through bundling, amateurdom became less expansive, generally older, and even more homogeneous, telegraphing class through its practices and publications. Gitelman, observing that amateurdom had become less closely associated with "a liminal stage in life," writes, "Along the way, one might speculate that amateurdom had also become less of a formative assertion of middle-class identity and more of a formative assertion within it."[577] The close and open connections between amateur journalism and the story papers in the 1870s, along with ample evidence that many amateurs read, enjoyed, and emulated story paper fiction in this period, while not calling amateurdom's class affiliations or aspirations into question, did suggest resistance to efforts by adults — from parents to teachers to cultural gatekeepers — to circumscribe these young people's reading and writing lives. What had been resistance, however, in the 1870s, was replaced in the 1880s by an embrace of the cultural values embodied in the crusade for "good literature" and "pure reading." The 1880s also witnessed the rejection of the disembedded economic practices of the 1870s, reconstituting amateurdom as a literary association that was actively disinterested in the market.

[577] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 144.

CHAPTER 7: PRINT NETWORKS AND YOUTH INFORMATION CULTURE: SOME CONCLUSIONS

7.1 "Once Experienced It Will Never Be Forgotten or Regretted": Questions Revisited

Near the end of the period covered by this dissertation, amateur Truman J. Spencer, who would continue to be active in amateur journalism and The Fossils[578] throughout his life, writes, "But the action of amateur journalism is not solely literary. The member gathers general information through the columns of his own and other journals, and through his visits to the leading cities where conventions are held; he gets something of a business training, and he gains considerable insight into the art of printing, especially if, as is often the case, he executes the mechanical portion of the work upon his journal himself." The amateur also gains "a thorough knowledge of parliamentary law and tactics." Finally, the amateur "gains the acquaintance of a vast number of the most intelligent youth of America, and forms many friendships that often last through life and are a source of much pleasure and profit."[579] Spencer's description speaks to the ways in which amateur print networks functioned as both social and information networks in amateurdom, in addition to the amateur press association conventions that a subset of amateurs were able to attend. The continued adult participation of Spencer and others in amateur journalism suggests the degree to which the social relationships formed among young amateurs became, in many cases, lifelong friendships — and, in some cases, marriages.[580]

[578] The Fossils website describes the organization's mission as "to stimulate interest in and preserve the history of independent publishing, either separate from or organized in the hobby known as 'Amateur Journalism,' and to foster the practices of amateur journalism." The site includes links to several resources on its "History" page from or about the period covered by this dissertation. The Fossils, http://www.thefossils.org, accessed March 4, 2017.

[579] Truman J. Spencer, "Amateur Journalism: Its Aims and Methods," *Bric-A-Brac* (Montreal), April 1886, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cugN0. The quotation in the title of this section comes from the same source.

[580] Truman J. Spencer recalls that at the annual National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) convention in 1885, "former [NAPA] President Finlay Grant and Bertha York, one of the most gifted of amateur poets and story writers, had been married that morning and had invited the delegates to a reception in the parlors of Young's Hotel…. *This union was one of numerous weddings resulting from the association of young people in the ranks of amateur journalism*." Emphasis added. Spencer, *The History of Amateur Journalism* (New York: The Fossils, Inc, 1957), 50.

Three main questions shaped this dissertation research, and the preceding chapters explore various aspects of those questions. The first question is what are the relationships between periodicals created by adults for young people, periodicals created by young people for young people, and wider print culture in the United States in the late nineteenth century? Chapter 1 introduces amateur journalism and includes an extended example that speaks directly to this question. Chapter 2 provides necessary cultural and social context regarding youth and young people, and also provides context regarding print culture in the late nineteenth century United States. Chapter 3 explores *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, specifically the manner in which its editor cultivated loyalty and encouraged interaction among his readers, and his aggressively commercial orientation, which served as a model for early amateur newspapers. Chapter 4 explores the introduction of small presses to the market after 1867 and the role of children's magazines and story papers in promoting and supporting amateur printing and amateur journalism. Chapter 5 explores the amateur economy, in particular the ways in which that economy in the 1870s reflects the general social disembedding of publishing and authorship in the same period. Finally, chapter 6 describes the realignment of amateur journalism from the more commercially oriented story papers in the 1870s to the literary children's magazines of the 1880s in the form of a campaign against weekly story papers and for "pure literature." Taken together, these chapters speak to the complex and shifting dynamics between amateur journalism, children's magazines and story papers, and print culture generally in the United States in the postbellum period.

The second question that guided research for this dissertation is how did young people use print, both the children's periodicals created for them and the newspapers created by them, in the late nineteenth century to develop and maintain peer networks across geographic space, and

what was the nature of those networks? Chapter 1, through an extended example, introduces *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and the way young people used the magazine to connect with peers. It also introduces amateur exchanges and directories. Chapter 2 provides necessary context regarding information and communications, especially the postal network and expectations for long-distance communication in the 1870s and 1880s. Chapter 3 captures the desire expressed by both young men and young women to form connections with geographically dispersed peers, and the ways in which *Oliver Optic's Magazine* facilitated — and refused to facilitate, in the case of young women — those connections. Chapter 4 makes visible the connections between *Oliver Optic's Magazine* and several young correspondents to that magazine who were themselves connected through the amateur newspapers they edited and wrote for. Chapter 4 demonstrates overlapping and intersecting print networks, which are suggestive of more complex connections and patterns that could enrich our understanding of young people as readers in the late nineteenth century, of readerships of various publications, and of the circulation and use of periodicals among young people. Chapter 4 also explores how young people used printing presses in unexpected ways to transform a local, often domestic, practice of newspaper production into amateur journalism, which involved regular exchange of papers between young people around the country. Chapter 5 explores subscription and exchange practices among amateurs, and chapter 6 explores how and why efforts were made to exclude amateurs from print networks, as well as the major disruption to amateur networks caused by the postal ruling of 1878. Section 7.2 explicitly considers the social and information aspects of amateur print networks and also addresses alternative ways that young women established intimate friendship networks with one another.

The third question that guided research for this dissertation is how did the uses of print by young people contribute to a youth information culture in the late nineteenth century and how might this culture of information be characterized? As section 1.4 explains, "information culture" as used in this dissertation comes from Toni Weller, referring to both "cultural mediums of information dissemination and exchange," and "influencing culture through a broader sense of information as an increasingly important and recognized part of society."[581] Chapter 1, through an extended example, introduces the local information function played by some amateur papers (publishing train schedules, for instance), and also introduces amateur directories, which amateurs depended on to find collaborators and correspondents, as well as papers to exchange with and submit work to. Chapter 2 provides context regarding young people's expectations for long-distance communication and the timeliness of news. Chapter 3 discusses ways in which the editor of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* attempted to meet the diverse information needs of his readers. Chapter 4 discusses the introduction of small presses after 1867, which allowed some young people to produce and disseminate information through print networks, as well as the models that children's magazines and story papers provided. Chapter 5 explores through extended example the commodification of information as evidenced, for instance, by the drive to collect and sell young people's contact information. Chapter 6 discusses, among other things, the delegitimization of amateur journalism through the postal ruling of 1878. Section 7.3 of this chapter argues that amateur practices and amateur networks make it possible to claim that a youth information culture existed in the late nineteenth century. Section 7.3 also explores what is gained by focusing on information culture rather than print culture in this context.

[581] Toni Weller, conclusion to *Information History in the Modern World: Histories of the Information Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 200.

7.2 "Think of It, Nearly Seven Communications Per Day": Print Networks / Social Networks / Information Networks

The introduction to the special issue of *American Periodicals* on "Networks and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical" notes the "trend toward the analysis of periodical culture … in terms of the network idea."[582] The editors argue, "It may even encourage us to … place the social and institutional contexts of periodical production in the foreground, thus, at times, displacing specific items of periodical content."[583] At the same time, what constitutes a "network" is contested. J. Stephen Murphy notes the prevalence of "the network metaphor" in Modernist literary studies, and argues,

> In many cases in which humanists refer to 'networks,' the words 'group,' 'market,' or 'circle' would serve just as well. It is the contemporary currency and misleading connotations of 'network' — flatness over hierarchy, multiplicity over singularity, society over individual — that matter to these accounts, *not* the study of actual networks themselves....[584]

Murphy defines a network as "a structure of linked entities, subject to systematic analysis and visualization using a range of computational methodologies." Networks, he asserts, "build on and shape relationships that exist between entities, affect the identities of individual nodes, and create effects made possible only as a result of the interrelated structure of the network."[585] Though this dissertation does not engage in network analysis, use of the term "network" throughout is not — or, at least, is never *only* — metaphorical. As discussed in section 7.4, network analysis could benefit the next phase of this research.

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[582] John Fagg, Matthew Pethers, and Robin Vandome, "Introduction: Networks and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical," special issue, *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 23, no. 2 (2013): 100.
[583] Fagg, Pethers, Vandome, "Introduction," 101–02.
[584] J. Stephen Murphy, "Introduction: Visualizing Periodical Networks," *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): v, Project MUSE, muse.jhu.edu/article/552214.
[585] Murphy, "Introduction: Visualizing Periodical Networks," vii.

Fagg, Pethers, and Vandome argue that the periodical "embodies the concept of the network" on two levels: one material and the other institutional. The former refers to connections between texts; the latter to connections between people and entities involved in production, dissemination, and reading.[586] Periodicals provide a useful context through which to explore "how social connections were forged and furthered in the pre-digital age."[587] The inaugural issue of *The Bostonian* provides a thorough and interesting account of how its editor moved from acquiring an amateur paper to issuing one:

> Before we had ever thought of publishing an amateur paper, our attention was called to an advertisement in the *Golden Argosy* of a paper entitled *Our American Boys*. We sent for a copy and received it by return mail. In it we saw an advertisement of the *Sentinel*, to which we sent a subscription. A few months ago [the editor of the *Sentinel*] sent us a letter asking us to issue an amateur paper, and after a large amount of encouragement, we decided to publish one.[588]

This soon-to-be amateur editor responded to an advertisement for a story paper he was unfamiliar with, *Our American Boys,*[589] that he discovered in a story paper he was already a reader of, *Golden Argosy*. Through an advertisement in *Our American Boys*, he subscribed to the *Sentinel*, an amateur paper,[590] whose editor corresponded with and encouraged him to start his own amateur paper. He then launched *The Bostonian* within the year. Advertisements link the *Golden Argosy* to *Our American Boys* to the *Sentinel*, and the *Sentinel*'s editor is linked to the

[586] Fagg, Pethers, Vandome, "Introduction," 93.
[587] Fagg, Pethers, Vandome, "Introduction," 94.
[588] *The Bostonian*, Editorials, September 1883.
[589] The advertisement for *Our American Boys* most likely refers to young Edward Stratemeyer's short-lived story paper. Stratemeyer published three issues in 1883.
[590] The American Antiquarian Society collection includes issues of an amateur paper entitled the *Sentinel* (Newburgh, NY) from 1882 and 1883.

editor of *The Bostonian* through correspondence — and, once the first issue of *The Bostonian* was issued, most likely print exchange.

Newspaper exchange was central to amateurdom, and exchange networks were constant and also constantly changing, as papers suspended temporarily or permanently or were dropped from exchange lists for other reasons. Table 7.1 breaks down the number amateur papers that the *Globe* (Frederick, MD) reported receiving during two months of 1883. Reciprocity in this case can be assumed, as the editors of the *Globe* would be unlikely to advertise to other editors how many exchanges they owed and to whom, as it might damage their reputation within amateurdom. The table provides a useful example of the extent and scope of one paper's exchanges in a network at two specific points in time. There is arguably an affective component to this accounting in print of exchanges received. Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray suggest that in the antebellum period, "Responses to literary objects emerged from beholding or envisioning them as part of the dense social networks they coursed through or as implicated in literary socialization." Similarly, in amateurdom in the 1870s and 1880s, the reception of amateur papers was based in no small part on the connection they represented to the people who produced them, as well as an appreciation of the space through which the papers traveled.[591]

[591] Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, *Everyday Ideas: Socioliterary Experience among Antebellum New Englanders* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 223.

Table 7.1: Number of papers received by the *Globe* (Frederick, MD) in January and February 1883, by state, district, or Canadian province, as reported in the *Globe*.

Publication State	**January 1883 Papers Received**	**February 1883 Papers Received**
Arkansas	5	3
California	6	8
Colorado	1	1
Connecticut	3	4
Illinois		2
Indiana	6	11
Kansas	1	
Kentucky	1	
Louisiana	2	1
Maryland	5	4
Massachusetts	2	8
Michigan	2	
Missouri	2	4
New Hampshire	5	2
New Jersey		2
New York	7	16*
Ohio	2	1
Oregon	1	1
Pennsylvania	3	4
Wisconsin	1	
District of Columbia	1	5
Nova Scotia	1	
TOTAL PAPERS RECEIVED	57	77

***Note:** Includes six back issues of a single amateur paper, *The Pedestal*.

This example from *The Youth* (Louisville, KY) is more explicit in comparing newspaper exchange to correspondence among friends:

> There are about 250 [amateur] papers published, so that in the course of a month, each editor receives nearly two hundred exchanges. Think of it, nearly seven communications per day…. Each editor sends out about 300 copies of his paper to his brother 'knights of the quill' every month, and in return is furnished with reading matter for at least thirty days. There are always live issues in the fraternity, which make these exchanges almost equal in point of interest, to letters.[592]

Here is expressed a sense of wonder, gratitude, and appreciation for the regular connections to young amateurs around the country as manifested in amateur newspapers. In its valedictory address, *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC) proclaims, "During the ten months of its existence it has brought us many kind friends, correspondents, and exchanges; also the many kind notices and congratulatory letters which we have from time to time been the happy recipient of."[593] It is the paper that enabled the editor access to the network, which in turn brought his paper exchanges and him social connections: occasional notes and letters; "correspondents" — a term that implies relationships over time conducted through the paper; and "friends" — a term that indicates intimate social bonds.

The flip side of these social relationships established and sustained through print is indicated in this admonishment from the *Amateur Exchange* (Stanberry, MO):

> Some member may make a slurring remark about a brother editor. Another, seeing it, will comment in a similar manner, when another, feeling justified by the actions of his other brothers, takes up the cord of sarcasm until a number of the boys have been caused to act likewise in the matter in imitation of examples set

[592] "Amateur Journalism," *The Youth* (Louisville, KY), February–March 1885.
[593] "Valedictory," *The Amateur Era* (Washington, DC), June–August 1877.

> them, until the more unself-reliant ones, thinking to be on the popular side, will fall into the same actions. Thus nearly the whole of amateurdom has jeered, slurred or abused some unfortunate one, who, in many cases, has no one to defend him but himself.[594]

Complaints against an amateur in one paper could be repeated, amplified, and distorted along the network, making it challenging for that amateur to respond effectively and recover their position and reputation within amateurdom. Many former amateurs also felt excluded and expressed longing for the connections that access to the print network made possible. For instance, one amateur, writing at the end of the period covered by this dissertation, laments: "A fellow is soon forgotten when he enters fossildom. I should be pleased to hear from all my old-time friends — if I have any — and to occasionally receive an amateur paper."[595] Since this amateur is no longer producing a paper to offer for exchange (and also since, by 1890, amateurdom had ceased to exist in many cities, at least to the extent that it once had), he prioritizes communication from amateurs, most likely in the form of correspondence, over receiving amateur papers, though he still desires the papers as well.

There were other reasons for exclusion from amateur networks than "retirement." For instance, in the late 1870s, the question of whether African Americans should be allowed to join "the fraternity" arose when Herbert A. Clarke, who had been active in amateur journalism for some time as a puzzle editor and as the editor of his own paper, *Le Bijou* (Cincinnati, OH), not only became a member of the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA), but was elected to

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[594] "There is a spirit …," *Amateur Exchange* (Stanberry, MO), April 1883.
[595] Fred St. Sure, "Disjointed Chat," *Bumble Bee,* March 1890, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/ztMN7.

national office.[596] "The fraternity" in this instance is a loose term that encompasses the social aspect of participation in both informal exchange networks and formal associations. *The Phoenix* (Brooklyn, NY) editorializes in September 1879, after Clarke's election:

> Amateur Journalism is an institution, whose members are bound together by a strong fraternal feeling, and on that account alone negroes should not be recognized for though it is only just that we should treat them with civility, yet it is coming just a little too much if we have to consider them our equals. The person who has created such a tumult in the amateur cause cannot have a very sensitive disposition or else he would not have intruded where he knew he was not wanted, and even tho' he was received with civility, he must have known that it was done more out of courtesy than good feeling.[597]

In this formulation, white amateurs generally have "good feeling," but Clarke, who is described as insensitive, caused "a tumult in the amateur cause" by insisting that not only should his paper be allowed to circulate through amateur exchange networks, but also that the fraternal feelings described by *The Phoenix* editor should be extended to him, a fellow amateur.[598]

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[596] For more detailed and in-depth analysis, see Paula Petrik, "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and Adolescence, 1870–1886," in *Small Worlds: Children & Adolescents in America, 1850–1950,* eds. Elliot West and Paula Petrik (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 130–34, and Lara Langer Cohen, "The Emancipation of Boyhood." *Common-Place* 14, no. 1 (Fall 2013), http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/. Digitized versions of the issues of *Le Bijou* (Cincinnati, OH) held in the American Antiquarian Society are available through *Nineteenth Century Collections Online* (Gale Cengage) in the collection "Juvenile Journalists: Selected Amateur Newspapers."

[597] "Civil Rights," *The Phoenix,* September 1879, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4UvWt8.

[598] Spencer notes, "The fight against negroes as members of the Association was begun before the Washington convention, and … shortly after the Washington meet, at a session of the North Carolina A. P. A. a 'Southern association of white amateurs' was proposed. The sectional associations of the South allowed no colored members, and about this time the famous 'Amateur Anti-Negro Admission Association,' better known as the 'A. A. A. A .,' was organized. While Amateur Journalism continued to exist in the South some time after this, it may be well said that the Washington convention sounded its death knell." Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, 55. See also Petrik, "Youngest Fourth Estate," 130–34.

Jessica Isaac considers the response of amateur editor Libbie Adams to the insinuation printed in another amateur paper that her paper, the *Youthful Enterprise* (Elmira, NY), was actually edited by a boy. Adams printed an affidavit and also a testimonial signed by adult men in the December 1876 issue of her paper attesting to the truthfulness of her claims regarding her ownership of the paper and performance of specific duties.[599] Assuming that the amateur who questioned Adams's claims with respect to her paper actually believed that some kind of misrepresentation was occurring (as opposed simply to wanting to tarnish the reputation of a successful girl editor), in printing that insinuation, the amateur was also calling for the actual editor to step forward and identify *him*self as such. In a related example, *Fact and Fancy* (San Francisco, CA), asks, "We would like to know if Mort Clark of the *Sun*, Fort Wayne, Ind., is a 'cullud gemmen'…. Will he kindly inform us if he is one of that sunburnt race? If so, he will greatly oblige us, as several of the boys out here believe him to be."[600] *Fact and Fancy* had received a copy of the *Sun*, presumably as an exchange, and, it is implied, conferred with other local amateurs after reading it before printing this request for "clarification."

Participation in amateur print networks demanded information transparency so that others could determine the level of connection and social interaction they wanted to engage in. While pseudonyms were commonly used among amateurs, this practice was related to identity presentation and performance, not subterfuge. Amateur newspapers, directories, and histories often printed amateur names with their pseudonyms, since accurate and thorough documentation of amateurdom, its publications, and its practices was a priority among amateurs (see section 7.3). However, when an amateur appeared to claim a role within amateurdom that a significant

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[599] Jessica Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises: Amateur Newspapers and the Pre-History of Adolescence, 1867–1883," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 22, no. 2 (2012): 166–69, doi: 10.1353/amp.2012.0015.

[600] *Fact and Fancy* (San Francisco, CA), Affairs in Amateurdom, January 1884. In its November 1883 issue, *Fact and Fancy* had printed the following "joke": "Texas boy-'Please, pa, may I go to the circus?' Texas father: 'No, my son; circuses are very, very wicked, but be a good boy, and I will take you to the next lynching.'"

number of existing amateurs, mostly white and male, were likely to disapprove of (women and African Americans as editors, for instance), insinuations, accusations, or challenges might appear in amateur papers. Amateur exchange networks established connections that were material, between papers, and institutional between editors. In the context of amateurdom, those connections also connoted a "fraternal" social relationship.

Young women sought these intimate social connections with other young women as well, though there were not many young women involved as editors. There were many more women authors in amateurdom, but while they might subscribe to papers edited by women, they had no papers of their own to exchange. Also beyond local associations, it was more difficult for young women to participate in the politics of amateurdom. As young women amateurs, many of whom had gotten involved in amateur journalism after Ballard's article was published in *St. Nicholas* in 1882, became more active, they not only sought full membership in NAPA, but also formed the Ladies Amateur Press Association (LAPA) (see sections 6.3 and 6.4). Through their membership in LAPA, these young women sought to extend their material, institutional, social (friendship), and information networks.

As these young women, most of whom had never met in person, attempted to establish and expand LAPA through new recruits to amateurdom, the editors of the *The Duett* suggested an alternative to conventions:

> As a partial substitute for these gatherings, and as a source of better acquaintance, we would suggest a circulating letter. If each member would promptly add her contribution, and send the letter on to her neighbor, it might easily reach every member in six months' time, even though many new names should be added to

> the roll. Should the plan meet the approval of the other lady members, we will unfold it more fully.[601]

In the next issue of *The Duett*, the editors inform readers that the letter had begun circulating: "In addition to the plan before mentioned, everyone is to add a likeness of herself. We hope no one will object to this part of the plan for the pleasure will more than compensate for the extra postage."[602] By initiating this letter and entrusting each LAPA member to contribute and send it to the next member, opportunities for social relationships were created for these women. They were able to share something of themselves, including what they looked like, and they were able to learn something of each woman who had contributed to the letter before them. *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH) includes the following: "We know from experience that the girls who have exchanged [likenesses] with us seem more like friends — like we know them; they are something more than invisible."[603] The print networks of these young women were limited by the fact that most of them did not edit their own papers, though the papers that did exist operated as organizing and recruitment tools and disseminators of information specific to young women as amateurs. Instead, these young women turned to correspondence, figuring out a way to connect and share personal information about themselves with everyone in the association, but not with amateurdom as a whole. The opportunities for these women to meet face to face were limited by the fact that most would not be able to travel to conventions, so they encouraged women to add likenesses of themselves to the letter. Through the act of participating in a correspondence circle and of providing visual information, these women made themselves visible and available to one another.

[601] "Some of the amateur wiseacres…" *The Duett* (Westfield, MA), November–December 1885.
[602] "The circulating letter …" *The Duett* (Westfield, MA), February–March 1886.
[603] "We know from experience…," *The Violet* (Cincinnati, OH), June 1885.

Bridging social and information networks are the "gossip" columns that were regular features of many amateur newspapers. These often provided useful information in the form of updates about amateur papers that had launched, consolidated, or suspended; about amateurs who had changed addresses or "retired" from amateurdom; or about amateurs who had married, died, or started school or new employment. These also occasionally included rumors, innuendo, and what in the present moment might be referred to as "fake news" about amateurs, which was generally intended to be humorous. Most amateur papers came out monthly or less frequently, and much happened between issues. Given the decentralized nature of amateur networks, particularly in the 1870s, amateur editors might have a partial grasp on events since the last round of exchanges arrived, some of which they could include in the next issue of their papers in order to inform other subscribers and exchanges. "Gossip" columns and "Amateur News" departments helped to keep amateurs informed about practical matters relevant to amateurdom, and they often engaged in spreading rumors or gossip, particularly regarding flirtation and courtship. Advertising in amateur newspapers provides another bridge between social and information networks. Advertisements mostly promoted visiting cards, acquaintance cards, flirtation cards, various novelties, and job printing services, and many also promoted items related to young people's fashion. Amateurs reading a dozen or more papers per month would sense that they should be out making connections with peers while wearing "Nobby Hats for Amateurs! At Amateur Prices."[604]

Richard D. Brown writes, "For if it is true that 'knowledge is power,' it is also true that there are as many kinds of power as there are of knowledge; and the possession of different kinds

[604] *The Phoenix* (Brooklyn, NY), advertisement, January 1879.

of information can serve different social functions."[605] Amateurdom fueled and was fueled by information, both social and practical. Cohen highlights the social rather than material aspects of print networks, and suggests that the papers were only important insofar as they allowed for exchange and collection.[606] While print networks did function as social networks, inviting intimate connections between amateurs, the content of amateur papers was central to the experience of participating in amateurdom. The content of amateur newspapers whether from the 1870s or 1880s makes clear that amateurs not only read them, but that they absorbed them, composing responses to each of them to be printed in their own papers. Each issue that traveled through its exchange network included what were essentially snippets of multiple conversations occurring simultaneously, multiplied by dozens of papers, all of them inviting further dissemination or additional contributions from each recipient/editor. The larger the exchange list of an amateur paper, the bigger the influence an amateur editor could have on the focus and tenor of ongoing conversations. Not only was current information in circulation through print networks, but older information remained accessible as well. According to Headrick, "Newspapers … are both a communications medium (for recent news) and a storage and information system (for old news)."[607] Old news might be useful to new recruits; officers in amateur press associations; and authors, editors, and compilers of amateur directories, amateur guides, amateur histories, and collected biographies of "prominent" amateurs. Section 7.3 will explore the relentless documentation of amateurdom by amateurs, along with the practice of collecting amateur newspapers in the context of a late nineteenth century information culture.

[605] Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3.
[606] Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/.
[607] Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 5.

7.3 "Will Not the People Come, See and Know What We Did?": Amateur Journalism and Youth Information Culture

The preceding chapters explicitly draw from and orient themselves toward print culture history more than information history, though this dissertation claims a connection to the latter as well as the former through its repeated reference to information networks (see section 7.2) and youth information culture. Before moving into a discussion of youth information culture in the late nineteenth century United States, this section explores current definitions of information history, and considers relationships between information history and print culture history. As with the term "print culture," both definitions and criticisms of "information history" proliferate. Alistair Black attempts to define and "set a tentative agenda" for information history as a field by considering its components. In his formulation, print culture history together with the history of written culture, is one of these components.[608] The point of this approach is not to suggest that all print culture history is or should be information history, but rather to consider the potential of a print culture history "under the umbrella of information history."[609]

In defining the field of information history, Toni Weller articulates what information history is not: "It is not the history of the information disciplines or the history of the library, or of the book; it is not the history of information technologies, nor is it, necessarily, the history of the information age." In its exclusion of library and book history from information history, Weller's definition appears to contradict Black's, which includes library and book history as part of the histories of print and written culture; however, since Black is suggesting the potential of viewing book and library history from the perspective of information history, rather than

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[608] Alistair Black, "Information History," *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology* 40, no. 1 (2006): 446. The print and written culture component encompasses the histories of libraries, librarianship, the book, publishing, and reading. The other components are "the history of information management, information systems, and information science"; "contiguous" histories, such as "history of the information society and information infrastructure, … and the history of information policy"; and the "history of information as social history, with emphasis on the importance of informal information networks" (445).
[609] Black, "Information History," 444.

equating the components he articulates with information history, these definitions are not inherently incompatible. According to Weller, information history "emphasizes the idea, the concept," and "attempts to contextualize the themes of information dissemination, censorship, preservation, access, privacy, and so on within a broader historical discourse."[610] She argues, based on her review of recent literature, that two things differentiate information history from other histories: "The first is an overt and explicit recognition that the historical study of information adds a new perspective to more traditional histories, that they complement each other, but that the information discourse is something new," while the second "is a sense, from the authors, that they are in some way contributing to a bigger picture, building up a new chronology and historiography of information, that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."[611]

This section explicitly foregrounds information history and reinterprets amateur publications and practices with the understanding that the 1870s and 1880s represent an information age in the United States. In that context, amateur papers, guides, directories, and histories functioned in two important ways: first, they were "cultural disseminators of practical information," written and edited for and by youth; second, they were vehicles for the preservation not only of information about the culture of amateurdom, but also of the affective information that could recall the urgency, vibrancy, and complexity of youth.[612] Like the

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[610] Toni Weller, "An Information History Decade: A Review of the Literature and Concepts, 2000–2009," *Library & Information History* 26, no. 1 (2010, March): 84, doi: 10.1179/175834909X12593374744122.
[611] Weller, "An Information History Decade," 85.
[612] The phrase "cultural disseminators of practical information" is repurposed from Weller's exploration of etiquette books in Victorian culture. Weller has also examined popular periodicals from the Victorian era, in particular the way in which they "embraced the idea of preserving knowledge by themselves becoming part of the process of preservation, in a conscious effort to become objects of reference and of the historical record." Toni Weller, "The Puffery and Practicality of Etiquette Books: A New Take on Victorian Information Culture," *Library Trends* 62, no. 3 (2014): 676, doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0011; Toni Weller, "Preserving Knowledge Through Popular Victorian Periodicals: An Examination of *The Penny Magazine* and the *Illustrated London News*, 1842–1843," *Library History* 24, no. 3 (2008): 200, doi: 10.1179/174581608X348087. The idea of preserving youth here is inspired by Anna Luker Gilding, "Preserving Sentiments: American Women's Magazines of the 1830s and the Networks of

etiquette books Weller uses as the basis of her exploration of Victorian information culture, which are frequently "dismissed as lightweight and insignificant pieces of the historical record," and the underexplored library staff magazines Black uses to "illuminate the internal culture of library work from below," youth-produced amateur newspapers and books have often been overlooked, ignored, or dismissed by scholars.[613] However, recent scholarship by Isaac, Cohen, and Lisa Gitelman demonstrates the richness and potential of these source materials across disciplines.[614]

As discussed in section 1.3, Isaac describes amateur journalism as an example of a strong public and Cohen describes it a counterpublic. Section 6.1 suggests that in the 1880s, after amateurdom's formal and aesthetic realignment from the story papers to *St. Nicholas*, and its rejection of the market, it no longer functions as a subculture or a counterpublic. Gitelman prefers the term "counterinstitution" to "counterpublic." She describes counterinstitutions as "loosely self-organizing assemblages — of members, mail, media, and lore — that defy institutionalization partly by reproducing it cacophonously in an adolescent key."[615] She suggests that amateur newspapers and zines "have always been imagined in contrast to commercially published periodicals," but that scholars should consider "the ways in which that contrast tends to obscure other things, including the forever expanding … dominion of the document."[616] In her consideration of the document, Gitelman explores the significance of job printers in the nineteenth century. The authorless, readerless documents they printed were not "produced in the

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Antebellum Print Culture," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 23, no. 2 (2013): 156–71.

[613] Weller, "Puffery and Practicality of Etiquette Books," 664; Alistair Black, "Organizational Learning and Home-Grown Writing: The Library Staff Magazine in Britain in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *Information & Culture: A Journal of History* 47, no. 4 (2012): 508, doi:10.1353/lac.2012.0021.

[614] Isaac, "Youthful Enterprises," doi: 10.1353/amp.2012.0015; Cohen, "Emancipation of Boyhood," http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-14/no-01/cohen/; Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), Kindle edition.

[615] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 149.

[616] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 149, 150.

interests of cultural memory or even meant to last for very long, despite the storied self-regard of nineteenth-century printers themselves for printing as 'the art preservative of all arts.'"[617] Advertisers for small presses after 1867 emphasized the potential of young people to make money through job printing. Though the novelty cards and other ephemera printed by amateurs may seem inconsequential, participation in job printing by young people is participation in information culture in the late nineteenth century. Gitelman argues that documents printed by job printers "inhabited the interstices of American life."[618] These kinds of documents stood between people and the things they wanted or needed to accomplish. Beyond amateurdom, the documents in question might be forms, tickets, menus, etc. While amateur printers may have been hired to print these kinds of documents, advertisements for their services in amateur papers focus on all manner of cards and envelopes. These were printed documents intended to facilitate communication between people, in keeping with young people's widespread interest in expanding peer networks in the 1870s and 1880s.

In addition to the publication of several new magazines and story papers intended for young people in this period, there was also an expansion of the public library system. So, while readers had better access to more materials, they also had to navigate an increasingly complex information landscape. The instructions at the top of the "To Correspondents" column in *Munro's Girls and Boys of America*, for instance, state: "Correspondents ... will please confine their questions to things which concern girls and boys. Questions upon general matters and all subjects interesting to grown folks, are answered in THE NEW YORK FIRESIDE COMPANION; and those questions which do not immediately concern young readers should be addressed to that

[617] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 11.
[618] Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*, Kindle edition, 24.

paper."[619] While this was likely intended as a time-saving measure for the publisher with more than one story paper, the result is that young people are informed that general knowledge is the province of adults and it is also implied that the domains of inquiry for children and adults do not overlap. In this context, newspapers created by and for young people could remove the constraints placed on young people's information seeking and encourage exploration of topics that would be considered too trivial or inappropriate to respond to by editors of children's magazines and story papers.

In the "Answered Letters" department of Frank Leslie's *The Young American*, a reader is admonished for imposing upon the editor: "We must tell you what we have told so many before you. Write to the librarian of some large concern, such as either the Astor or the Mercantile Library, New York. You cannot expect us to know of every book that has been published since the creation of the world."[620] While these responses indicate the existence of additional resources for young people, they also assume that young people who have access to one periodical will have access to another and that a young person who feels comfortable asking their question in a forum designed to address the questions of young readers will feel similarly comfortable writing to an institution and an expert not affiliated with that forum. Section 4.4 details instances in which the editor of *Oliver Optic's Magazine* deferred to his readers when their knowledge of a subject was clearly superior to his own; however, he needed to be able to call upon those knowledgeable readers to effectively respond to correspondents' questions.

Amateur journalists recognized the increasing importance and value of public libraries, with amateur papers occasionally including notices for library fundraisers or upcoming local library committee meetings. They also, in the 1880s, understood that libraries were a place that

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[619] See for instance, *Munro's Girls and Boys of America*, To Correspondents, August 19, 1876.
[620] *The Young American*, Answered Letters, October 10, 1874.

attracted young people, so urged amateurs to find ways to have their local libraries display copies of amateur newspapers:

> For a valuable way of bringing strangers in contact with amateur journalism, we would suggest — To ... select one or more boys in all cities and towns where there are libraries or reading rooms, and that each editor mail these persons every month a copy of his paper, to be placed in the library, or reading room or both. In this way there will be a new supply of the latest papers each month.[621]

Fact and Fancy (San Francisco, CA) suggests that they had been successful in getting amateur newspapers into some California libraries.[622] If public libraries were engaged in keeping community members informed, amateur journalists wanted their papers to be among the sources available to those community members, particularly other young people.

Daniel Headrick argues, "Information implies an assemblage of data, such as a telephone book, a map, a dictionary, or a database — not random data, however, but data organized in a systematic fashion."[623] Headrick's focus is not on the study of information, but on the study of information systems, which he defines as "the methods and techniques by which people organize and manage information, rather than the content of the information itself. Information systems were created to supplement the mental functions of thought, memory, and speech. They are, if you will, the technologies of knowledge."[624] In this sense, one could make the case that amateurdom's cohesiveness, particularly given its large geographic spread and rapid turnover of both active participants and papers, was due in large part to information. A regular feature of amateur newspapers is an exchange column, a record of papers received between issues — a

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[621] *Emblem* (Washington, OH), March 1884.
[622] "The Reading-Room Plan," *Fact and Fancy*, April 1884.
[623] Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress*, 4.
[624] Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress,* 4.

valuable source of information for those wishing to add to their own exchange lists. Amateurs compiled and printed amateur directories that had local, state, regional, national, or associational scopes.[625] These directories included the same basic information about amateur editors, authors, printers, and publications, while some included greater detail than others (for instance, information about printing presses and offices, biographical sketches of some amateurs, or histories of amateur journalism). While Cohen views the use of print to describe the physical attributes of amateurs as a kind of resistance to "print as a technology of disembodiment," this section argues that it also represents an awareness that information *qua* information was important. The emphasis within amateurdom on systematic and thorough documentation, the creation of information systems that enabled amateurs to find one another and amateur papers, and amateurs' collection and preservation practices combined meet Weller's definition of information culture: "influencing culture through a broader sense of information as an increasingly important and recognized part of society."[626]

Black argues that a characteristic of information societies is "a predilection for rules and regulations."[627] Amateur press associations (APAs) had extensive constitutions and by-laws with committees and processes established to enforce them. Accounts of conventions are filled with the minutiae of parliamentary process and points of order, and it was expected that every APA member understand how to formally conduct themselves in meetings.[628] Black also notes the presence in information societies of "sophisticated systems of information gathering, record

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[625] See Appendix for a list of directories consulted at the American Antiquarian Society.
[626] Toni Weller, conclusion to *Information History in the Modern World: Histories of the Information Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 200.
[627] Alistair Black, "Lost Worlds of Culture: Victorian Libraries, Library History and Prospects for a History of Information," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 2, no. 1 (1997): 106.
[628] See, for instance, Spencer, *History of Amateur Journalism*, and John T. Nixon, *A History of the National Amateur Press Association* (Crowley, LA: J.T. Nixon, 1900), https://books.google.com/books?id=UYVHAQAAMAAJ.

keeping, communication and bureaucracy" that emerged from the Victorian era."[629] Amateur newspapers are filled with calls for contact and biographical information to be included in directories and histories. They are also filled with calls for back issues of papers and runs of old papers to complete files and maintain collections. Not only do amateurs as job printers materially implicate amateurdom to some degree in bureaucracy, since the instruments of record keeping and the tools of bureaucracy were often the jobs printed, but also Libbie Adams's response to those who doubted her truthfulness was to print an affidavit and signed testimonial, drawing on the law and authoritative forms.

In the mid-1880s, the Hub Amateur Press Association (Boston) announced that it was forming a library that would be open to amateur authors, editors, and printers. They had a librarian in place to direct it and requested donations, "especially in the shape of files of amateur publications, either running, suspended or consolidated."[630] Amateurs' preoccupation with preservation was not limited to personal enjoyment or the needs of APA members. They were also concerned with ensuring that amateur journalism would be established as part of the cultural record. *Youth's Pilot* in 1886 printed an urgent plea that amateurdom raise funds to establish an amateur library, appoint a librarian, and fund ongoing collection of amateur publications and literature; otherwise, "the coming generation will look back upon the works of amateurs as a myth, no doubt, for if we do not save and care for the best amateur writings of the past, as well as those of to-day."

> You must very earnestly and carefully look to the productions, the best of the first years of the 'dom's existence. These must all be collected and saved, placed, where they can be seen and appreciated, as well as remaining as relics of the early

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[629] Black, "Lost Worlds," 107.

[630] "Hub Amateur Press Association," *Amateur Globe* (Boston, MA), December and January [1884–1885?] and May [1885?].

days, the halcyon days, the palmy days and all other days. We argue that it is right and advisible [*sic*], as well as honorable, that money, if need be, be expended in the collection of every available amateur production. A Librarian should be appointed and it should be his official duty to arrange each and every paper, phamphlet [*sic*], story, etc., according to its date and state. It should also be his duty to collect for the purpose of publication, buy sketches, poems, essays, serials, etc., entered for the laureate title as well as every one that received said title. More over it should be the librarian's duty to [compile] an official history of amateurdom, from its first day up to the time of publishing such history…. A site for the Library must also be decided upon, and this of course will take more money…. But with this outlay of money will not great good be performed? Will not the people come, see and know what we did?[631]

James Wald argues, "The normative status of the codex … leads many to view difference as hierarchy," so while books are considered, among other things, "venerable," "complete," "authoritative," and "permanent," periodicals are "suspect," "open-ended," "provisional," or "ephemeral."[632] The periodical, then, parallels young adulthood, which is often understood as a subordinate and liminal stage of life. However, amateurs resisted the ephemerality of both periodicals and youth, engaging in what Gilding refers to as "preserving sentiments" through "the practice of binding and keeping periodicals."[633] For instance, one amateur wrote of revisiting his collection of old papers:

[631] "Our National Library Scheme," *Youth's Pilot* (San Antonio, TX), June 1886, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3cvd82.
[632] James Wald, "Periodicals and Periodicity," in eds. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, *A Companion to the History of the Book* (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007), 421–22, doi: 10.1002/9780470690949.ch31.
[633] Anna Luker Gilding, "Preserving Sentiments: American Women's Magazines of the 1830s and the Networks of Antebellum Print Culture," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 23, no. 2 (2013): 166.

> There is a pleasure derived from scanning old journals, seeing familiar names and reading an article here and there that you have, perhaps, read before, or the theme of which recalls the time when you were active, and, like aged letters, yellow with time, brings back the scenes of the past. Dear remembrances; sweet and happy times. How like a summer day they passed, full of the bloom and blossom of a favored clime, shedding their perfume through our lives, brightening the spring-time of our existence into a locus of extreme delight. Now as a treasured flower, pressed between the leaves of some favored book, we look upon them.[634]

This impulse to collect and preserve amateur newspapers (a practice evidenced both by regular requests for old papers in amateur publications and in the large collections of these nineteenth-century papers available to twenty-first century researchers) should be considered in conjunction with amateurs' extensive and meticulous documentation in directories and histories, which were published whenever possible in book form, no matter how small in size the book or how few entries it contained, lending these publications an air of permanence. Through these practices, amateurs sought to preserve not only information, but also lasting evidence of youth itself.

7.4 Conclusion: Making Visible the Invisible

Christine Jenkins writes, "The early scholars of women's history knew that women were present throughout the past — the task was not so much that of ferreting out an obscure history but that of making the invisible visible. The same holds true for library scholars who would place children … in the mainstream rather than the margins. If they have been invisible, it is because

[634] Will K. Graff, "Yesterday and Today," *Boys' Folio* (New Glasgow, NS), November 1883, Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/zt6n4.

no one was looking for them…. But we know they were there."[635] This dissertation is the result of an effort to look for and center young people in the histories of print culture and information. The young people in this instance — amateur journalists in the late nineteenth century United States — were almost exclusively white, economically comfortable, overwhelmingly male, and aspired for the most part to professional or managerial careers. They were in general avid readers of multiple popular children's magazines and story papers. Though these relatively privileged young amateurs produced thousands of newspapers and hundreds of books that survive to the present day in large collections such as the amateur newspaper collection at the American Antiquarian Society, they and the papers they produced have, until recently, been largely invisible to scholars. That has begun to change over the last decade or so, as scholars working in areas including children's literature studies, media studies, American studies, childhood studies, and library and information science have begun to address the theoretical and methodological questions raised by these amateur publications and amateur practices. This dissertation is intended as a contribution to this ongoing cross-disciplinary scholarly conversation. These chapters demonstrate the complex relationships between children's magazines, weekly story papers, and amateur newspapers. They also elaborate on mechanisms through which young people were able to establish long-distance connections and geographically dispersed peer networks through print. As young amateurs were influenced by and influenced the print culture of which they were a part, so too did they influence and were they influenced by the information culture in the postbellum United States.[636] Toni Weller suggests that information history, as a

[635] Christine A. Jenkins, "The History of Youth Services Librarianship: A Review of the Research Literature," *Libraries & Culture* 35, no 1 (2000): 103–40, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25548802.
[636] Other scholars have argued that an information culture existed in the nineteenth-century United States. For instance, see Richard D. Brown, "Early American Origins of the Information Age," in *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and James W. Cortada (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 39–53. Toni Weller has written about information culture, as well, in relation to Victorian society. See Weller, "The Puffery and Practicality of

relatively new field of scholarship "has strived to find its feet between the related fields of history and of library and information science."[637] This dissertation, emerging from a library and information science program, is an effort to explore ways in which young people's practices, interactions, and experiences can be made visible in the field of information history as it continues to develop. To paraphrase Jenkins, everyone knows young people were there.

This dissertation provides at least partial answers to the questions that guided the research and informed the organization of its chapters; however, it also presents new questions and opportunities for further research. The questions addressed here were formulated at a point when very little scholarship about amateur journalism existed. Over the last few years, however, the contexts, connections, and conversations about and related to this topic have become much richer. This dissertation makes visible the networks connecting amateur journalists, children's magazines, and story papers in the 1870s and 1880s; network analysis could make it possible to *visualize* those networks. Doing so could fill in gaps, reveal new patterns, and raise different kinds of questions about print and information cultures in this period than were asked in the dissertation. Network analysis could also be used to visualize the flow of amateur newspapers over time by making use of amateur newspaper exchange columns. Such an analysis could indicate whether, at what points, and how amateur journalism spread from the major publication centers of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, to other parts of the country; or, alternatively, it could reveal unexpected patterns that challenge assumptions and require renewed attention and new methodological approaches. Network analysis could also raise interesting questions, for instance, about participation and exchange patterns in Southern states and between Southern and

Etiquette Books: A New Take on Victorian Information Culture," *Library Trends* 62 no. 3 (2014): 663–80, doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0011. This dissertation, however, is, to my knowledge, the only attempt to consider youth information culture in the same period.

[637] Toni Weller, "An Information History Decade: A Review of the Literature and Concepts, 2000–2009," *Library & Information History* 26, no. 1 (2010, March): 83, doi: 10.1179/175834909X12593374744122.

Northern states between 1867 and 1890. This dissertation affirms (for its author, at least) the rich potential of continued scholarship in these areas and gestures toward opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration. Scholars have only begun to consider the agency of children and young people in established as well as emerging fields. It is hoped that this dissertation contributes to that larger project and inspires further research.

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Published

<u>Amateur Newspapers — American Antiquarian Society (AAS)*</u>

* Only includes papers cited in the dissertation. For a list of all amateur papers cited or consulted from the AAS collection, see Appendix. Papers housed in the AAS amateur newspaper collection that were accessed through Nineteenth Century Collections Online (Gale Cengage) or the AAS Historical Periodicals Collection (EBSCO) are included here, along with physical papers consulted at the AAS, since all are housed in the AAS amateur newspaper collection. In cases where only the paper name and city are cited rather than a specific article, the year(s) provided refer to date(s) of issues held in the AAS collection. In cases where a specific article is cited, the name of the paper is listed first.

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APPENDIX: WORKS CONSULTED AT THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Amateur Newspapers, 1867–1890 — By Year

1869
Advertiser (Boston, MA)

1870
Bostonian (Boston, MA)
Boy of the Period Journal (Washington, DC), additional issues through 1871
Boys' Advertiser (Birmingham, CT), additional issues through 1871

1871
Philadelphia Monthly (Philadelphia, PA), additional issues through 1872

1872
Advertiser (Louisville, KY)
Amateur Exchange (Woburn, MA), additional issues through 1873
Amateur Gazette (Boston and Haverhill, MA)
Amateur Monthly (Louisville, KY)
Boy of the West (Frankfort, KY)
Boys' Companion (Houston, TX), additional issues through 1873
Go Ahead (Brooklyn, NY)
Golden Rule (Rosebloom, NY), additional issues through 1876
K.F.R. Journal (Washington, DC), additional issues through 1873
Our American Youth (Louisville, KY), additional issues through 1873
Our American Youth (Baltimore, MD)
Young Sport (Ironton, MO)
Young Sportsman (Portsmouth, NH)
Young Volunteer (New York, NY)
Youth's Gazette (Petroleum Centre, PA), additional issues through 1873
Youth's Herald (Forreston, IL)

1873
Amateur Age (Upper Alton, IL)
Amateur Eagle (Williamstown, KY)
Bomb (Brooklyn, NY)
Boy of the South (New Orleans, LA),
Globe (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1874
New Era (New Orleans, LA)

1874
Amateur Globe (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1875
Amateur News (Lafayette, IN)
New Boston Spy (New Boston, CT)
Young Trentonian (Trenton, NJ)
Youngster (Grayville, IL)

1875
Acme (Grand Rapids-Western Office, MI)
Amateur (Georgetown, DC)
Amateur Amusement Journal (Chicago, IL), additional issues through 1876
Amateur Globe (Dubuque, IA)
Amateur Journal (Mt. Sterling, KY)
Amateur Press (Athol, MA)
Bombahook Bugle (Hallowell, ME), additional issues through 1876
Boy of To-Day (Indianapolis, IN)
Boy Spy (Kittanning, PA)
Boy's Companion (Hermon, NY)
Eclipse (New York, NY)

1876
Advertiser (New Haven, CT), additional issues through 1877
Aid (South Abington, MA)
Amateur Alert (Chicago, IL)
Amateur Gazette (Dubuque, IA)
Amateur Gem (South Norwalk, CT)
Amateur Monthly (Chicago, IL)
Amateur News (Washington, D.C., DC)
Amateur Newspaper Reporers and Printers Gazette (Westborough, MA)
Amateur Oracle (Lawrence, KS)
Amateur Post (Boston, MA),
Boy News (South Oil City, PA)
Boy of To-Day (Whiteland, IN)
Boy of To-Day (Indianapolis, IN)
Boys' Amateur (Winchendon, MA), additional issues through 1877
Boys' and Girls' Favorite (Chicago, IL), additional issues through 1878
Boys' Clipper (Philadelphia, PA)
Egyptian Amateur (Carbondale, IL)
Globe (Fishkill on the Hudson, NY), additional issues through 1877
New Ipswitch Times (New Ipswich, NH), additional issues through 1880
Philippic (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1877
Philomath (Rawlinsville, PA), additional issues through 1877
Youthful Enterprise (Elmira, NY)
Youth's Gazette (Washington, DC)

1877
Acme (Baltimore, MD)
Advertiser (Murray, KY), additional issues through 1878
Amateur (Millersburg, IN)
Amateur Adelphi (Mattoon, IL), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Advance (Sycamore, IL), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Advertiser (Mattoon, IL), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Argus (Evansville, IN)
Amateur Argus (Mt. Vernon, IN), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Companion (Chicago, IL)
Amateur Deaf-Mute (Jacksonville, IL)
Amateur Era (Washington and Philadelphia, DC and PA)
Amateur Friend (Detroit, MI), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Gazette (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1879
Amateur Journal (Boston, MA)
Amateur Knight (Grinnell, IA)
Amateur Mercury (Hannibal, MO), additional issues through 1878
Amateur Newspaper Reporter (Warsaw, IN)
Amateur Press (Chicago, IL)
Amateur Press (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1879
Blue Class (Toledo, OH)
Blunderbuss (Yellow Springs, OH), additional issues through 1878
Bostonian (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1878
Boys' and Girls' Companion (Rochester, NY), additional issues through 1878
Boys' and Girls' Correspondent (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1878
Boys' Delight (Belvidere/Hackettstown, NY), additional issues through 1878
Echoes of the Board (Chicago, IL), additional issues through 1878
Eclipse (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1878
Eclipse (Brooklyn, NY)
Effort (Boston, MA)
Egleston News (Boston, MA)
Egyptian Star (Cairo, IL), additional issues through 1881
Elmira Enterprise (Elmira, NY)
Globe (Philadelphia, PA)
Golden Leaves (Philadelphia, PA)
Natrona Times (Natrona, PA)
Our Amateur Monthly (Millbury, MA), additional issues through 1878
Our American Youth (Washington, DC), additional issues through 1879
Pharos (Brooklyn, NY)
Phoenix (Brooklyn, NY), additional issues through 1889
Youth's Favorite (Cuba, NY)
Youth's Journal (Washington, DC)

1878
Acme (Lowell, MA)
Acorn (North Attleboro, MA)
Advertiser (Fall River, MA)
Amateur Baltimorean (Baltimore, MD)
Amateur Globe (Hannibal, MO)
Amateur Hoosier (Bellmore, IN), additional issues through 1879
Amateur Iowan (Washington, IA)
Amateur Journal (Uxbridge, MA)
Amateur Journalist (Washington, DC)
Amateur News (Chicago, IL)
Bob-o-Link (Lowell, MA)
Bohemian (Washington, DC), additional issues through 1879
Boy of To-Day (Corydon, IN), additional issues through 1879
Boys' Acme (Lowell, MA), additional issues through 1879
Boys and Girls Companion (Cleveland, OH)
Eastern Star (Medford, MA)
Golden Gate (San Francisco, CA), additional issues through 1879
Golden Hours (Cairo, IL)
Nevada Post (Carson, NV),
New Enterprise (Mifflintown, PA)
Philadelphia Banner (Philadelphia, PA)
Phoenix (Selins Grove, PA)
Youth's Herald (Baltimore, MD), additional issues through 1879

1879
Advance Supplement (Philadelphia, PA)
Advertiser (Washington, DC)
Amateur Advertiser (Savannah, GA), additional issues through 1881
Amateur Friend (East Pepperell, MA)
Amateur Globe (Mt. Carroll, IL), additional issues through 1880
Amateur Guide (Newburypot, MA)
Boys' Delight (Hawkinsville, FL)
Editor's Eye (Chicago, IL)
Effort (Marshall, WI)
Elf (Washington, DC)
Ellis' Effusions (Worcester, MA)
Elmwood Press (Hartford, CT)
Eludicator (Paris, KY)
New England Amateur (various, New England), additional issues through 1889
Youths' Advocate (Washington, DC)
Youth's Journal (Stout, NC)

1880
Amateur Enterpirse (Lynn, MA)
Bluenose Amateur (New Glasgow, NS)
Border Amateur (St. Stephen, NB)
Golden House (Ipswich, MA), additional issues through 1882
Golden Moments (Beverly, MA), additional issues through 1882
Our American Youth (Detroit, MI), additional issues through 1881
Youth’s Criterion (Matthews, NC)

1881
Amaranth (Detroit, MI)
Amateur Exchange (Stanberry, MO), additional issues through 1883
Young Recruit (Vineland, NJ)

1882
Age (Gardner, MA), additional issues through 1883
Amateur Phoenix (Nashua, NH)
Boston Globe, Jr. (Boston, MA)
Bowie (Buffalo, NY), additional issues through 1883
Elf (Oakland, CA)
Go-Ahead (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1885
Golding Press (New London, CT)
La Petite (North Attleboro, MA)
Net Worthington’s Bazoo (Evansville, IN)
New England Gazette (Boston, MA)
Our American Youth (New York, NY)
Phalanx (North Webster, IN), additional issues through 1883
Youth’s Enterprise (Pittsburgh, PA)

1883
Amateur Herald (New Bedford, MA)
Amateur Journal (Holliston, MA), additional issues through 1886
Amateur Naturalist’s Review (Augusta, ME), additional issues through 1884
Bostonian (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1884
Gleaner (Poplar Ridge, NY), additional issues through 1884
Globe (Frederick, MA)
Golden Crescent (San Francisco, CA)
Golden Gate (San Francisco, CA), additional issues through 1884
Golden Star (Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1884
New England Official (various, New England), additional issues through 1885
Our Amateur (Bloomfield, NJ), additional issues through 1885
Our Ambition (Columbus, OH)
Our American Boys (Elizabeth, NJ)
Youth’s Budget (Lawrence, KS), additional issues through 1885
Youth’s Favorite (Cuba, NY)

1884
Advance (New Bedford, MA)
Advertiser (Rosemond, IL)
Advertiser (Kossuth, IN), additional issues through 1886
Al-Ki (New Bedford-Worcester, MA), additional issues through 1885
Alpha (Media, KS)
Amateur Banner (Batesville, AR),
Amateur Decorian (Decorah, IA), additional issues through 1885
Amateur Eagle (Augusta, ME)
Amateur Press (East Wintrhop, ME)
Bon Ami (Milwaukee, WI)
Boys' Advertiser (Lancaster, PA)
Boys and Girls (Flushing, MI)
Electric Spark (Cedar Rapids, IA)
Emblem (Washington, OH)
Gleaner (Maywood, IL)
Golden Rule (Bridgeport, CT)
Gonden's Gnome (Des Moines, IA), additional issues through 1885
New Bedford Amateur (New Bedford, MA), additional issues through 1885
Our Amateur (Portland, ME)
Our American Youth (Middlebury, VT), additional issues through 1885
Our Attempt (New Bedford, MA)
Phoenix (Brooklyn, NY)
Youth (Louisville, KY), additional issues through 1885
Youth's Journal (Leominster, MA), additional issues through 1886

1885
Golden Gem (Norwalk, OH)
Naturalist's Monthly (Utica, NY)
Our Amateur (Official Organ of the ISAPA [Inter-State APA])
Youth (Lowell, MA), additional issues through 1886
Youth's Gazette (Cleveland, OH), additional issues through 1886

1886
Alert (Bay City, MI), additional issues through 1887
Amateur Collector (Salem, MA), additional issues through 1888
Amateur Gazette (Milton, FL)
Boomerang (Boom, NS)
Boy's and Girl's Monthly (Armourdale, KS)
Gleanings (Arlington, TX), additional issues through 1887
Globe (Abbott Village, ME), additional issues through 1887
Golden Item (Boston, MA)
La Petite Journal (Chicago, IL)
Neophyte (Peekskill, NY)
Philadelphian (Philadelphia, PA), additional issues through 1887
Young Temperance Advocate (Lowell, MA)

1887
Electric Light (Davenport, IA)
Electric Spark (Elyria, OH)
Golden Eagle (Binghamton, NY), additional issues through 1888
Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia, PA)

1889
Amateur Journalist (Indianapolis, IN)

Amateur Newspapers, 1867–1890 — By State

AR
Amateur Banner (Batesville) 1884

CA
Elf (Oakland) 1882
Golden Gate (San Francisco) 1878–1879
Golden Crescent (San Francisco) 1883
Golden Gate (San Francisco) 1883–1884

CT
Boys' Advertiser (Birmingham) 1870–1871
Golden Rule (Bridgeport) 1884
Elmwood Press (Hartford) 1879
New Boston Spy (New Boston) 1874
Advertiser (New Haven) 1876–1877
Golding Press (New London) 1882
Amateur Gem (South Norwalk) 1876

DC
Amateur (Georgetown) 1875
Boy of the Period Journal (Washington) 1870–1871
K.F.R. Journal (Washington) 1872–1873
Youth's Gazette (Washington) 1876
Our American Youth (Washington) 1877–1879
Youth's Journal (Washington) 1877
Bohemian (Washington) 1878–1879
Elf (Washington) 1879
Youths' Advocate (Washington) 1879
Amateur News (Washington) 1876
Amateur Journalist (Washington) 1878
Advertiser (Washington) 1879

FL

Boys' Delight (Hawkinsville) 1879
Amateur Gazette (Milton) 1886

GA
Amateur Advertiser (Savannah) 1879–1881

IA
Electric Spark (Cedar Rapids) 1884–
Electric Light (Davenport) 1887
Amateur Decorian (Decorah) 1884–1885
Gonden's Gnome (Des Moines) 1884–1885
Amateur Globe (Dubuque) 1875
Amateur Gazette (Dubuque) 1876
Amateur Knight (Grinnell) 1877
Amateur Iowan (Washington) 1878

IL
Egyptian Star (Cairo) 1877–1881
Golden Hours (Cairo) 1878
Egyptian Amateur (Carbondale) 1876
Amateur Amusement Journal (Chicago) 1875–1876
Amateur Alert (Chicago) 1876
Amateur Monthly (Chicago) 1876
Boys' and Girls' Favorite (Chicago) 1876–1878
Amateur Companion (Chicago) 1877
Amateur Press (Chicago) 1877
Echoes of the Board (Chicago) 1877–1878
Amateur News (Chicago) 1878
Editor's Eye (Chicago) 1879
La Petite Journal (Chicago) 1886
Youth's Herald (Forreston) 1872
Youngster (Grayville) 1874
Amateur Deaf-Mute (Jacksonville) 1877
Amateur Adelphi (Mattoon) 1877–1878
Amateur Advertiser (Mattoon) 1877–1878
Gleaner (Maywood) 1884
Amateur Globe (Mt. Carroll) 1879–1880
Advertiser (Rosemond) 1884
Amateur Advance (Sycamore) 1877–1878
Amateur Age (Upper Alton) 1873

IN
Amateur Hoosier (Bellmore) 1878–1879
Boy of To-Day (Corydon) 1878–1879
Amateur Argus (Evansville) 1877
Net Worthington's Bazoo (Evansville) 1882
Boy of To-Day (Indianapolis) 1875
Boy of To-Day (Indianapolis) 1876
Amateur Journalist (Indianapolis) 1889
Advertiser (Kossuth) 1884–1886
Amateur News (Lafayette) 1874
Amateur (Millersburg) 1877
Amateur Argus (Mt. Vernon) 1877
Phalanx (North Webster) 1882–1883
Amateur Newspaper Reporter (Warsaw) 1877
Boy of To-Day (Whiteland) 1876

KS
Boy's and Girl's Monthly (Armourdale) 1886
Amateur Oracle (Lawrence) 1876
Youth's Budget (Lawrence) 1883–1885
Alpha (Media) 1884

KY
Boy of the West (Frankfort) 1872
Advertiser (Louisville) 1872
Amateur Monthly (Louisville) 1872
Our American Youth (Louisville) 1872–1873
Youth (Louisville) 1884–1885
Amateur Journal (Mt. Sterling) 1875
Advertiser (Murray) 1877–1878
Eludicator (Paris) 1879
Amateur Eagle (Williamstown) 1873

LA
Boy of the South (New Orleans) 1873
New Era (New Orleans) 1873

MA
Amateur Press (Athol) 1875
Golden Moments (Beverly) 1880–1882
Advertiser (Boston) 1869
Bostonian (Boston) 1870
Globe (Boston) 1873–1874
Amateur Globe (Boston) 1874–1875
Amateur Post (Boston) 1876–
Amateur Journal (Boston) 1877

MA (continued)
Bostonian (Boston) 1877–1878
Eclipse (Boston) 1877–1878
Effort (Boston) 1877
Egleston News (Boston) 1877
Boston Globe, Jr. (Boston) 1882
New England Gazette (Boston) 1882
Bostonian (Boston) 1883–1884
Golden Item (Boston) 1886
Amateur Gazette (Boston and Haverhill) 1872
Amateur Friend (East Pepperell) 1879
Advertiser (Fall River) 1878
Globe (Frederick) 1883
Age (Gardner) 1882–1883
Amateur Journal (Holliston) 1883–1886
Golden House (Ipswich) 1880–1882
Youth's Journal (Leominster) 1884–1886
Acme (Lowell) 1878
Bob-o-Link (Lowell) 1878
Boys' Acme (Lowell) 1878–1879
Youth (Lowell) 1885–1886
Young Temperance Advocate (Lowell) 1886
Amateur Enterpirse (Lynn) 1880
Eastern Star (Medford) 1878
Our Amateur Monthly (Millbury) 1877–1878
Amateur Herald (New Bedford) 1883
Advance (New Bedford) 1884
New Bedford Amateur (New Bedford) 1884–1885
Our Attempt (New Bedford) 1884
Al-Ki (New Bedford-Worcester) 1884–1885
Amateur Guide (Newburypot) 1879
Acorn (North Attleboro) 1878
La Petite (North Attleboro) 1882
Amateur Collector (Salem) 1886–1888
Aid (South Abington) 1876
Amateur Journal (Uxbridge) 1878
Amateur Newspaper Reporters and Printers Gazette (Westborough) 1876
Boys' Amateur (Winchendon) 1876–1877
Amateur Exchange (Woburn) 1872–1873
Philippic (Worcester) 1876–1877
Amateur Gazette (Worcester) 1877–1879
Amateur Press (Worcester) 1877–1879
Boys' and Girls' Correspondent (Worcester) 1877–1878
Ellis' Effusions (Worcester) 1879
Go-Ahead (Worcester) 1882–1885
Golden Star (Worcester) 1883–1884

MD

Our American Youth (Baltimore) 1872
Acme (Baltimore) 1877
Amateur Baltimorean (Baltimore) 1878
Youth's Herald (Baltimore) 1878–1879

ME
Globe (Abbott Village) 1886–1887
Amateur Naturalist's Review (Augusta) 1883–1884
Amateur Eagle (Augusta) 1884
Amateur Press (East Wintrhop) 1884
Bombahook Bugle (Hallowell) 1875–1876
Our Amateur (Portland) 1884

MI
Alert (Bay City) 1886–1887
Amateur Friend (Detroit) 1877–1878
Our American Youth (Detroit) 1880–1881
Amaranth (Detroit) 1881
Boys and Girls (Flushing) 1884
Acme (Grand Rapids - Western Office) 1875

MO
Amateur Mercury (Hannibal) 1877–1878
Amateur Globe (Hannibal) 1878
Young Sport (Ironton) 1872
Amateur Exchange (Stanberry) 1881–1883

NC
Youth's Criterion (Matthews) 1880
Youth's Journal (Stout) 1879

NH
Amateur Phoenix (Nashua) 1882
New Ipswitch Times (New Ipswich) 1876–1880
Young Sportsman (Portsmouth) 1872

NJ
Our Amateur (Bloomfield) 1883–1885
Our American Boys (Elizabeth) 1883
Young Trentonian (Trenton) 1874
Young Recruit (Vineland) 1881

NV
Nevada Post (Carson) 1878

NY
Boys' Delight (Belvidere/Hackettstown) 1877–1878
Golden Eagle (Binghamton) 1887–1888
Go Ahead (Brooklyn) 1872
Bomb (Brooklyn) 1873
Eclipse (Brooklyn) 1877
Pharos (Brooklyn) 1877
Phoenix (Brooklyn) 1877–1889
Phoenix (Brooklyn) 1884
Bowie (Buffalo) 1882–1883
Youth's Favorite (Cuba) 1877
Youth's Favorite (Cuba) 1883
Youthful Enterprise (Elmira) 1876
Elmira Enterprise (Elmira) 1877
Globe (Fishkill on the Hudson) 1876–1877
Boy's Companion (Hermon) 1875
Young Volunteer (New York) 1872
Eclipse (New York) 1875
Our American Youth (New York) 1882
Neophyte (Peekskill) 1886
Gleaner (Poplar Ridge) 1883–1884
Boys' and Girls' Companion (Rochester) 1877–1878
Golden Rule (Rosebloom) 1872–1876
Naturalist's Monthly (Utica) 1885

OH
Boys and Girls Companion (Cleveland) 1878
Youth's Gazette (Cleveland) 1885–1886
Our Ambition (Columbus) 1883
Electric Spark (Elyria) 1887
Golden Gem (Norwalk) 1885
Blue Class (Toledo) 1877
Emblem (Washington) 1884
Blunderbuss (Yellow Springs) 1877–1878

PA
Boy Spy (Kittanning) 1875
Boys' Advertiser (Lancaster) 1884
New Enterprise (Mifflintown) 1878
Natrona Times (Natrona) 1877
Youth's Gazette (Petroleum Centre) 1872–1873
Philadelphia Monthly (Philadelphia) 1871–1872
Boys' Clipper (Philadelphia) 1876
Globe (Philadelphia) 1877
Golden Leaves (Philadelphia) 1877
Philadelphia Banner (Philadelphia) 1878

PA (continued)
Advance Supplement (Philadelphia) 1879
Philadelphian (Philadelphia) 1886–1887
Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia) 1887
Youth's Enterprise (Pittsburgh) 1882
Philomath (Rawlinsville) 1876–1877
Phoenix (Selins Grove) 1878
Boy News (South Oil City) 1876

TX
Gleanings (Arlington) 1886–1887
Boys' Companion (Houston) 1872–1873

VT
Our American Youth (Middlebury) 1884–1885

WI
Effort (Marshall) 1879
Bon Ami (Milwaukee) 1884

Multiple States
New England Amateur ("Official Organ of the New England Amateur Journalists' Association") (various) 1879–1889
New England Official ("Official Organ of the New England Amateur Press Association") (various) 1883–1885
Amateur Era (Washington, DC and Philadelphia, PA) 1877
Our Amateur (Official Organ of the ISAPA [Inter-State APA]) 1885

New Brunswick
Border Amateur (St. Stephen) 1880

Nova Scotia
Boomerang (Boom) 1886
Bluenose Amateur (New Glasgow) 1880

Amateur Newspapers, Antebellum — By Year

1845
Gleaner (Boston, MA), additional issues through 1847
Bostonian (Boston, MA)

1848
Boston Boy (Boston, MA)

1862
Penfield Extra (Penfield, NY)

Amateur Directories, Guides, Histories, and Other Reference

1870

Hutchinson, E. Howard [Jasper, pseud.], and Alfred S. Porter [Essex, pseud.]. *The Amateurs' Guide, for 1870: A Complete Book of Reference Relative to the Amateur Printers, Publishers, Editors, Authors and Engravers of America; with Biographical Sketches of the Most Noticeable*. Buffalo, NY: Haas & Kelley, printers, 1870.

1872

Ballard, Edwin, and Frank Atwood. *The Amateurs' Annual for 1872*. Boston: Annual Publishing Company, 1872.

Morrill, Fred K., author and comp. *The Amateur's Guide for 1872: A Complete Book of Reference, Relative to the Amateur Editors, Authors, Printers and Publishers of America*. Chicago: Amateur Printing Company, 1872.

1873

Cropper, Frank. *The Amateur Journalists' Companion for 1873: An Interesting and Concise Guide for All Editors, Authors, and Printers*. Louisville, KY: Frank Cropper, 1873.

Dore, Harry Ellsworth, Frank Thibault, and Thomas H. Kerr. *The California Amateur's Directory for 1873*. San Francisco: Dore & Thibault, 1873.

Miller, J. C. *The Printer's Devil*. Newark: Henry W. Clapp, amateur publisher, 1873.

The National Amateur Directory. —(Price Five Cents.)—. [East Saint Louis, Ill.]: Published by —The Future Great—, E. St. Louis, IL, 1879.

1874

Winslow. *Amateur Papers*. Glen's Falls, NY: Frank White, Book and job printer, 1874.

1875

Biehn, George W., and Almon E. Pitts. "Progress." *The Ohio Amateur Directory for 1875–'76*. Ripley, OH: G.W. Biehn, publisher, 1875.

Billany, H. H., and C. A. Rudolph. *The Amateurs' Guide for 1875*. Wilmington, DE: Amateur Pub. Co., publishers, 1875.

Etheridge, Judson P. *A Brief History of Amateur Journalism, from 1812 to the Present Time*. Ashtabula, OH: H. F. Harris, publisher, 1875.

Fiske, Will A., and Will A. Innes (au. and comp.). *The Amateur Directory, for 1875; A Reliable Reference Book for All Interested in Amateur Journalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Will. A. Innes, publisher, 1875.

Graves, George H., and Frank Kelley. *The Iowa Amateurs' Guide for 1875.* Dubuque, IA: G. H. Graves, 1875.

Luján, Néstor. *Dubuque Amateur Directory, for 1875*. Dubuque, IA: G. H. Graves, publisher, 1875.

Onderdonk, R. W., R. A. Wood, and Ruth E. Adomeit. *The New York State Amateur Directory for 1875: A Complete Book of Reference of the Amateur Editors, Publishers, Printers, Puzzlers, Engravers*. Camillus, NY: Onderdonk & Wood Pub. Co., 1875.

1876

Fox, S. L. Y., and K. K. Krow. *Bay State Amateur Directory, for 1876: A Reliable Reference Book for the Use of Massachusetts Amateurs*. Northborough, MA: W. H. Bartlett, printer and publisher, 1876.

Hardy, Edward Mino. *Indiana Amateur Guide for 1876: An Interesting and Concise Guide for All Amateur Editors, Authors, and Printers in Indiana*. Whiteland, IN: E. M. Hardy, printer & publisher, 1876.

Leathe, W. E. *Massachusetts Amateur Directory for 1876*. Royalston, MA: W. E. Leathe, 1876.

Radcliffe, F. C. *The Amateur Guide. And Jack the News Boy. ; Price 5 Cents*. Akron, OH: John S. Reese. Printer & Pub., 1876.

Kern, L. S. *The Keystone State Amateur Directory for 1876*. Philadelphia, PA: L.S. Kern, 1876.

1877

The Buckeye State Amateur Directory. For 1877. Queen City Library 1. Cincinnati, OH: Ren Mulford, Jr., publisher, 1877.

Clemens, Will, and Ruth E. Adomeit. *Ohio Amateur Directory. For 1877*. Sunny Side Series, no. 7. Akron, OH: Will Clemens, publisher, 1877.

Fynes, J. A., and Ruth E. Adomeit. *The Massachusetts Amateur Directory for 1877*. L. Medford, MA: S.W. Lawrence, publisher, 1877.

Gracey, E. William, and Stan Oliner. *California and Nevada Amateur Directory for 1877*: Price 10 Cents. [East Oakland, CA]: E. William Gracey, 1877.

Harrison, George, and Ruth E. Adomeit. *The Indiana Amateur Guide, for 1877: Being a Complete and Reliable Directory of All Amateur Printers, Editors, Authors, Puzzlers, and Papers, in Indiana.* LaFayette, IN: Geo. Harrison, printer & publisher, 1877.

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Snyder, Zander. *The New Jersey State Amateur Directory*. *First edition. Price 10 cents*. Vienna, N.J: Zander Snyder, publisher, compiler and printer, 1877.

Stow, Marvin Eames. *Universal History of Amateurdom*. Batavia, NY: American Boys' Publishing Company, publishers. R.W. Onderdonk & M.D. Mix, general managers, 1877.

Toledo Amateur Directory. For 1877.: Containing a List of All the Amateur Authors, Printers, Engravers and Publishers of Toledo. First edition. Toledo, OH: F. W. Kibbe & Bro., publishers, 1877.

Winder, Tom W., and Ruth E. Adomeit. *Warsaw Amateur Directory*. Warsaw IN: Aborn & Winder, 1877.

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