Introduction

Since the earliest days of their widespread distribution, periodicals and other serial print forms have been sites where editors and authors expressed impassioned viewpoints intended to move readers to action. In the United States print technologies and the means for distribution expanded exponentially beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth. Concurrently, a large influx of immigrants joined the ranks of industrial labor and, together with their native-born coworkers, activated one of the most (if not *the* most) radical periods in American history as they addressed increasing economic inequity and unjust labor practices. Meanwhile, middle-class Progressives worked to improve society according to their own ideals. As the nation headed towards intervention in the Great War, heated debates arose about what the role of the US should be in policing the globe. Within this climate, activism took many forms, from wave upon wave of labor strikes, to Progressives' pleas for legislators to protect women and children, to anarchist violence in opposition to capitalism. One of those forms was print activism.

"Print activism" is a term I use here to refer to print media's role in social and political activism throughout the long twentieth century. Beginning in the late 1800s with the industrialization of print technologies and the prolific expansion of networks for distribution of printed materials to readers, activists relied on newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, calendars, and other print forms to amplify their voices. Print activism continued throughout the century as the central vehicle by which activists on all points of the political spectrum—left, right, and center—spread their opinions, elicited support, created networks among like-minded individuals, and attempted to establish cohesive group identities for the larger world.

In the early twenty-first century, the "Arab spring," notable for its use of social media, and a national Occupy movement, which similarly depended upon networked media to communicate central information, have made it clear that print is no longer the central medium for eliciting, enjoining, and imploring engagement with various activist causes. For these reasons, print activism can now be periodized as a twentieth-century phenomenon, one that is inherently modern not only in its contributions to modern culture but also for the ways that it enabled American moderns to connect with one another.

Each of the essays in this book investigates this phenomenon; together they explicate the varied ways that those working for social and political causes participated in the spread of information that a rapidly expanding and increasingly ubiquitous serial and ephemeral print culture enabled.

Gutenberg printed the first Bible using movable type in 1455, and from that moment on print and literacy became the most significant vehicles for the spread

of information. "For the past five hundred years, most of humankind has been informed by print," writes print culture historian Wayne Wiegand.[1] Until the nineteenth century, books—mostly read by elites—were the central format for the distribution of this knowledge in the West. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the rise of the newspaper, the periodical, published pamphlets, and other ephemeral non-codex forms. However, the function of the newspaper shifted dramatically in the 1830s; where previously newspapers had simply listed commercial news, they now began to operate as vehicles for editors' opinions. The new form primarily responsible for this shift was the penny press, which differed from previous subscription-based newspapers in a number of ways. The penny press was cheap, hawked on street corners for a penny in single issues, in contrast to the six-penny subscription services mailed solely to people's homes. And unlike earlier publications that were tied to specific parties, the penny press was politically independent.

Technical developments in printing and distribution also aided in the expansion of journalism and the penny press. In printing, the invention of the steam-powered press greatly increased the speed of the printing process. Where a printer circa 1600 using a hand-operated Gutenberg press could produce a maximum of 240 pages in one hour, by the early 1800s a steam-powered press could turn out 2,400 in that same hour.[2] In 1847 an American inventor named Richard March Hoe patented the rotary, or web press, which fed a continuous sheet of paper around a cylinder, far more efficient than its more time-consuming predecessors that took paper one sheet at a time. This method of printing, still in use today, increased the number of pages printed to as many as 1,000,000 per day.[3] In the United States, the mass industrialization of printing coincided with the dramatic expansion of the railroads, both their saturation into spaces that had already experienced European contact as well as their transcontinental reach. The expansion of the railroads enabled broader distribution of consumer goods, including not only newspapers but also the goods advertised in them.

These technical developments of production and distribution do not, however, themselves explain the ways in which the content of the press evolved. Rather, they were preconditions that enabled burgeoning industrial production to identify and attain new markets. Specifically, it was in this period of print media that the sponsorship of advertisers began to not only address individuals' wants and needs but to actually construct those desires. As Michael Schudson writes,

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[1]   W.A. Wiegand, "Introduction: Theoretical Foundations for Analyzing Print Culture as Agency and Practice in a Diverse Modern America," in *Print Culture in a Diverse America*, ed. J.P. Danky and W.A. Wiegand (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 1.

[2]   Philip B. Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Press, 1983), 163.

[3]   Ibid., 183.

> Until the 1830s, a newspaper provided a service to political parties and men of commerce; with the penny press a newspaper sold a product to a general readership and sold the readership to advertisers. The product sold to readers was "news …"[4]

This change altered forever the relationship between publishers of magazines and newspapers and their readers, in that publishers were now delivering an audience to advertisers. As a result, these media became expressions of capitalist culture via the creation of consumers. By the turn of the twentieth century print culture had become a mass culture, in consonance with the consumer revolution that expanded its markets, the technical developments that enabled its production, and the increased ease of transportation via rail that allowed for its mass distribution.

Alongside this growing mass print media and its uses to promote and spread capitalist culture, a tangent print culture emerged as well. As the costs associated with publication declined, print became a viable form of communication for a broad range of groups, and the radical press expanded as well. Motivated less by profit and more by the desire to spread a message, the radical press took advantage of the emerging possibilities for print and flourished in varied types of publications. Throughout the nineteenth century pamphlets had been used, often by religious groups, to distribute sermons and other ideological professions, but their print runs were small and their distribution limited. With the availability of industrialized printing methods, newspapers, magazines, broadsides, and other forms appeared, using text and image to give voice to a wide range of people and, equally important, connecting readers to these authors and to each other. Geographic diversity was no longer a limitation, and diverse ideological positions gained voice. As laborite culture and activity increased alongside industrial production, union publications—both official organs as well as others more generally aimed at socialist, communist, and other labor-related groups—served to increase membership and raise awareness among non-members. The large influx of immigrant populations created markets for both newspapers and literature, often in the native languages of these new Americans.[5] Literary culture itself was no longer limited to official culture; the so-called "little magazines" spread avant-garde literary culture far beyond what would have been possible through book publication alone, engendering its own cultural milieu.

In connecting these audiences, such publications contributed to the formation of alternate and counter public spheres whose members imagined themselves as part of larger collectives. Jürgen Habermas famously defined the public sphere as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed."[6] Although such opinions form any time private individuals assemble

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[4] M. Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 25.

[5] Susan L. Mizruchi, *The Rise of Multicultural America: Economy and Print Culture, 1865–1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 3.

[6] Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," *New German Critique*, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 49.

and converse, for Habermas the rise of the public sphere as the site and bearer of public opinion is only possible through the medium of print. Habermas specifically identifies the shift in newspaper usage outlined above as a critical element in the rise of the public sphere.[7] Similarly, Benedict Anderson identifies the central role of print in assembling groups of discreet individuals into what he terms "imagined communities," or groups of people who believe that they share common ideas. For Anderson, the move to mass print enabled the spread of these ideas; where "manuscript knowledge was scarce and arcane lore, print knowledge lived by reproducibility and dissemination."[8]

The coming together of capitalism and print led to a massive increase of public participation in the formation of public opinion and the identifications of individuals as members of collectivities, but in the long run the potent combination also turned into a limitation to a truly democratic milieu. Habermas writes idealistically of the bourgeois public sphere as a moment during which public opinion was cohesive and true freedom of expression was evident, but the commodification of news media ultimately led journalism to "abandon its polemical position and take advantage of the earning possibilities of a commercial undertaking."[9] Ultimately, the public sphere experienced a structural transformation, and, within late capitalism, we can no longer speak of a truly democratic public sphere. Whereas for Habermas the corporatization of the media has led to the inability of mass media to truly communicate public opinion, for Anderson the rise of print contributed to the death of linguistic diversity, and this fatality, alongside the interactions between print and capitalism, led to the rise of nationalisms. Both of these theoretical frameworks provide a temporal structure in which print activism can be clearly codified: it prospered within the proliferation of mass media and subsequently declined as mass media became, in the latter portion of the twentieth century, increasingly univocal due to the monopolization of public media by a limited number of multinational corporations. Once this shift had occurred, the Internet and other forms of social media overtook print as the most efficient and democratically promising form of communication for countercultural and antiestablishment individuals and collectives.

Habermas's theorization of the public sphere has been roundly criticized for its idealization of an arena dominated by the bourgeoisie—that is white, wealthy men—and its lack of attention to public expressions of other groups. It is perhaps heretical then, to invoke his ideas in relation to the efforts of activists who most often operated from the social margins in their efforts to communicate their ideas. While acknowledging this contradiction, the emphasis here and the important point to be drawn from both Habermas and Anderson is the centrality of *print* to their arguments. Moreover, it is Habermas's identification of print as a form of *activity* that has obvious

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[7]   Ibid., 53.

[8]   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 37.

[9]   Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," 53.

cogence for defining print activism. Habermas relies on American pragmatists including Charles Sanders Peirce and John Dewey, identifying in pragmatism the potential within liberal democracy for emancipation through communicative action.[10] Pragmatism is a branch of philosophy that asserts a tight link between theory and practice. Within pragmatism, "practice" can be thought of as "action," and an "activist" may be described as someone who favors action over theory.

In addition to the American pragmatists, the contemporaneous German philosopher Rudolf Eucken developed a theory of "activism"—in fact, the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites Eucken as the first person to coin the term, defining his philosophy as "the theory or belief that truth is arrived at through action or active striving after the spiritual life."[11] If there is a similarity between Eucken's use of the term and the definition within pragmatism, it is that both use the word "activity" to designate the need to apply ideas to the practical, social problems faced in real life. Both of these philosophical strains began to use the word "activism" in the first decades of the twentieth century, and this may be the basis of the word's introduction into popular usage as well.

The word "activist" first appears in American print in The *New York Times* in 1915.[12] Writing of pro-war agitators in Sweden who were attempting to push that nation to enter war on the side of Germany, the *Times* describes activists as those who spread propaganda in their efforts to agitate for war. Several articles appear in American papers in the next few years associating these Swedish activists with pro-German propagandizing, counterposing activists to a range of groups from the "indifferent masses" to conservatives.[13] Throughout World War I, the term increased in usage, most often describing individuals accused of subversive support of Germany and anti-American activities. A book review published in 1922 on Eucken's work, in fact, identifies his ideas of activism as "merely a cloak for the spirit of aggression and pushfulness which prevailed in Germany before the war."[14] The review's author identifies in Eucken's philosophy of activism roots of what turned out to be the philosopher's pro-German militancy during the war.

The first major Red Scare swept the United States in the years 1919–1920, spreading paranoia about anyone critical of US policies. The seeds were sown by the American government's anti-German publicity during the war, and following it, explains historian Todd Pfannestiel, many Americans mistakenly believed that Germans controlled the Russian revolution. Therefore, they "had little difficulty in transforming their government-inspired hatred of Huns into hatred

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[10] See M. Aboulafia, M. Bookman, and C. Kemp, *Habermas and Pragmatism* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[11] *The Oxford English Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 130.

[12] "Sweden's Leaders Fight War Agitation," *New York Times* (9 October 1915), 3.

[13] "German Peace Propaganda is on in Sweden," *San Francisco Chronicle* (21 April 1917), 1; "Oppose Socialist Aim," *The Washington Post* (5 March 1918), 4; "Huns False to Peace," *The Washington Post* (27 April 1919), 2; "Sweden's Leaders Fight War Agitation," 3.

[14] Austin Hay, "Idealist of Imperial Germany," *New York Times* (30 July 1922).

of Bolsheviks."[15] Further, this same thinking led many to look at the labor union activism that had surrounded them since the turn of the century and connect it to Bolshevism. Ironically, American Socialists vehemently opposed US intervention in World War I, but the term "activist" initially implied someone agitating *for* war. The link owes to the mistaken assumption that Socialist opposition to war was grounded in the desire to aid a German victory.

By the 1920s the term "activism" had come into regular usage in the press, and was most often associated with far left groups including socialists, communists, and anarchists. This association was also possible because these groups had often debated the appropriate form of "activity" to attain their ends. Such debates often centered on the idea of "direct action." While it is unclear when the term "direct action" first came into usage, one of the earliest appearances of the phrase in print is in American anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre's paper on the topic. De Cleyre cites the popular understanding of the term as designating "forcible attacks on life and property" fueled by the media in its reporting on anarchists. In distinction from this use, de Cleyre defines direct action as instances where any individual "who ever thought he had a right to assert, … went boldly and asserted it, himself or jointly with others that shared his convictions."[16] De Cleyre includes strikes and boycotts, and further identifies examples from American history, including the actions of John Brown, the secessionists, Quakers, and others. Direct action is typically counterposed to political action, whereby electoral means achieve representation that will lead to desired results. By contrast, direct action is based in people's agency to act on their own behalf. Definitions that emanate from the Left do not limit direct action to radical activity but rather identify direct action as any instance where people act directly towards a stated goal. "It is merely another name," wrote William Mellor in 1920, "when employed by the workers, for the strike; when used by the employers, for the lockout."[17]

In American print, the term "activism" has thus been used consistently to designate the actions of radicals, subversives, and other fringe groups. Its usage in the *New York Times*, for example, begins as we have seen in 1915 but peaks in the 1960s in reporting on the civil rights, anti-war, and other countercultural movements of that era.[18]

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[15]   T.J. Pfannestiel, *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's crusade against Radicalism, 1919–1923* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 7.

[16]   <http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/bright/cleyre/direct.html> (accessed 28 December 2011).

[17]   William Mellor, *Direct Action* (London: Leonard Parsons, 1920), 5.

[18]   The word "activism" appeared in *The New York Times* 37 times between 1915 and 1960. Between 1961 and 1969 this number rose to 260, and in the following decade went to 1,050. It is important to note, however, that around this time the phrase "judicial activism" comes into regular usage as well. "Judicial activism" refers to a judge's reliance not on the law, but on personal or political conviction.

"Activism" was thus a term that originated, and appeared most frequently in print, to designate radical, anti-establishment actions. In popular usage, however, the term has come to designate a far broader field of activity. Within this volume print activism is not limited to left wing causes, though clearly they predominate. Essays by Joanne Passet and Trevor Joy Sangrey demonstrate the ways that print culture announced and distributed political positions from individuals and groups considered radical in their time. These authors explore the exponents of free love and Communist responses to the Scottsboro trials—positions that would not have been represented in the mainstream press. Similarly, Craig Fox examines a cause that was outside the confines of mass culture and certainly clandestine, but Fox's essay, on the print culture of the Ku Klux Klan, steers us to a topic that was marginal because of its illegal status. In between, several authors, including Katharine Antolini and Diana Cucuz, advance the idea that magazines in the very center of the mainstream consumer society—*Good Housekeeping* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*—could advance a particular cause within the space of their pages. Print activism is found, it seems, on all points along the political spectrum.

In defining "print activism" this broadly, we might then ask, what counts as activism? Activism typically describes activities such as marching, demonstrating, protesting, and other events that involve a physical, bodily activity. Can "printing" or "publishing" truly be added to this list of activist practices? Returning to Habermas, indeed print played a determining role in the public sphere—its formation couldn't have happened without the dissemination of ideas that print enabled. The term "print culture" illuminates print as an arena of culture that might be understood in the sense of the medium found in a Petri dish: an environment in which something can grow and spread. When culture is understood as productive, rather than merely representational, it then becomes quite possible to think of print culture not merely as a site of record for movements that propose social or political change, but as a means that historical agents use, as they might other means, to bring about such change.

Print activism therefore indeed must be understood as one among other strategies employed by modern social and political movements as they strived to achieve their goals. The propagation of mass print as a feature of American society occurred concurrently with the proliferation of activism of all kinds. The above historicization of both of these features of American society squarely frames print activism as a Modernist phenomenon, a frame that also coalesces various aspects of modernity. Activism of all kinds appeared largely in response to features of modern life. Mass industrialization, accompanied by the tremendous growth of American cities, created working conditions that were met by mass movements of protest and organization. The growth of these cities owed in part to shifts from agrarian population centers to urbanities, but also to an influx of immigrants who brought with them radical modern ideas from Europe. Print culture was the central technology by which these ideas and movements spread among metropolitan populations, and from urban centers to the rest of the country. As such, print

culture in particular became a means by which Americans understood themselves as moderns, via their connections to others within the larger modern society.[19]

The reach of print culture, which as we have seen relied on modern technological preconditions, set the stage for print activism. As we have also seen, as the production of goods increased, producers sought new markets that were created largely through the advertisements that print brought directly into consumers' homes. Print culture is itself a commodity, one that is imbricated in the increasing commodification of life and culture at the turn of the twentieth century. Print activists therefore always negotiated their communicative strategies within this commodified medium. As the essays in this volume demonstrate, this happened in a variety of ways. In one case, a mainstream ladies' magazine, perhaps the quintessential site for commodification through print, was the site for an activist campaign. Other print activists discussed in this volume claimed a space distinctly outside of commodity culture. In the later part of the century, for example, several magazines performed feminist critiques of the intensive marketing aimed at women by creating alternate spaces within their serials.

Earlier in the century, literary figures wrote for the "little magazines," which manifestly claimed the journals to be distinct from commodity culture. But as literary theorist Lawrence Rainey and others have shown regarding these claims made by the little magazines, the Modernist mythologies posed by these writers that set literary culture apart from consumer culture must be questioned because the Modernist work of art, by its very claims of autonomy, "invite[d] and solicite[d] its commodification [whereby it was] integrated into a different economic circuit of patronage, collecting, speculation, and investment."[20] The commodification of culture was inescapable; regardless of one's positioning vis-à-vis such culture, one was still engaging with it and therefore connected with the production of modernity. Mark Morrisson, too, in his analysis of little magazines argues that "Modernists' engagements with the commercial mass market were rich and diverse."[21] Influenced by the suffragists, socialists, anarchists, and others who adapted themselves to the demands of the mainstream press, Modernist authors also responded to the commercial milieu, thereby "complicating the polarization of modernism and mass culture."[22]

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[19]   See, for example, Christine Stansell's book *American Moderns*. Stansell paints a picture of New York City in the early part of the century as a place where bohemian artists and writers were infatuated with immigrant political culture. Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000).

[20]   Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (1998), quoted in Peter D. McDonald, "Modernist Publishing," in *A Concise Companion to Modernism*, edited by D. Bradshaw (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, n.d.), 224.

[21]   Mark S. Morrisson, "Pluralism and Counterpublic Spheres: Race, Radicalism, and the *Masses*," in *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences, and Reception, 1905–1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 5.

[22]   Ibid., 6.

For all of these reasons, *Modern Print Activism in the United States* adds to a growing body of scholarship that re-examines previously held ideas about Modernism, particularly the fallacious distinctions between high and low culture, intellectuals and masses, and culture and politics. This last binary in particular merits special attention here, for the essays in this volume demonstrate the ways in which print culture was a vital political force. Not only did print culture document the struggles of modern life, but through it a wide range of individuals activated each other within contested domains. Far from being tangential to on-the-ground activism, or merely providing documentation of "real world" events, print culture was integral to activist efforts of all kinds.

The 12 essays in this book illuminate the range of these efforts. The authors examine the writing, visual culture, and particular forms of print used in print activism. Organized chronologically, the essays begin at the turn of the twentieth century by examining two very different women's movements that arose concurrently with the rise of mass print culture. In "Print Culture and the Construction of Radical Identity: Juliet H. Severance and the Reform Press in Late Nineteenth-Century America" Joanne E. Passet examines the print-based trajectory of radical reformer and free love advocate Juliet H. Severance and her campaign to promote women's mental independence, sexual health, and the abolition of marriage. Passet demonstrates not only the ways that Severance made use of the burgeoning alternate press to disseminate her ideas, but the ways that print culture helped Severance shape her ideas about reform and women's social roles. María Carla Sánchez, in "Changing Feelings: Fallen Women, Sentimentality, and the Activist Press" addresses how social reform media regularly employed sentimental narrative strategies at the turn of the century as a means to recast the place of the "fallen woman" within larger bodies politic.

Nikolaus Wasmoen's essay and my own entry bring us into the era of World War I. In "'She Will Spike War's Gun': The Anti-War Graphic Satire of the American Suffrage Press" I study the visual culture of the suffragist press to uncover the ways that suffragists fought against US intervention in World War I. Wasmoen, in "Publishing a 'Fighting Spirit': Marianne Moore in the Little Magazines During WWI," investigates Marianne Moore's early publications during the war as examples of a politically engaged Modernist art whose full political dimensions are disclosed only in light of the networks of artists, writers, editors, and readers constelled by little magazines in America and Britain.

Following World War I, the Depression and ensuing fears of Communism elicit activism from mainstream to right wing and anti-Communist causes. In "Holiday Activism: *Good Housekeeping* and the Meaning of Mother's Day," Katharine Antolini tracks the Maternity Center Association's efforts, through *Good Housekeeping*, to recast the meaning of Mother's Day to promote the health of pregnant women and infants. Craig Fox's essay "'Give this copy of the *Kourier* magazine to your friend. You will help him. You will also help society': 1920s KKK Print, Propaganda and Publicity" addresses the mainstream success enjoyed by the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, tracing the abundant print culture that promoted

the KKK in this era and the ways that KKK periodicals served as a cohesive source of solidarity for a group that operated undercover. Moving into the post-World War II era, Diana Cucuz demonstrates in her essay "Containment Culture: The Cold War in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1946–1959" how a mainstream magazine simultaneously promoted a discourse of domesticity that relegated women to the home while also locating women on the forefront of upholding American values and containing domestic communism and Soviet expansion. This efflorescence of activism in mainstream and right wing arenas did not come, however, at the expense of left wing activism, as Trevor Joy Sangrey shows in "Productive Fiction and Propaganda: The Development and Uses of Communist Party Pamphlet Literature." Sangrey focuses on pamphlets published by the Communist Party of the USA in the 1930s and 1940s in support of the Black Nation Thesis. In particular Sangrey looks at the CPUSA's response to the Scottsboro Nine trials and their support for the defendants.

As we head towards the 1960s and another wave of widespread, radical left activism, three essays explore aspects of rights movements based in minoritarian communities and their desire to establish their identities. Whitney Strub's essay "Challenging the Anti-Pleasure League: *Physique Pictorial* and the Cultivation of Gay Politics" explores the male physique magazines of the 1950s and '60s that scholars of queer studies have regularly dismissed as superficial and apolitical—in the author's words, they have been seen as "mere pictorial flesh-fest." Contrary to this supposition, Strub closely reads letters to the editor published in *Physique Pictorial* to show how these magazines were, in fact, often textual sites for an extremely rare, open expression of gay desire taking place at the very height of the homophobic "lavender scare." Lián Amaris focuses on the civil rights movement in "Calendar Art: How the 1968 SNCC Wall Calendar Brought Activism Indoors." The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee published a wall calendar in 1968 featuring photographs by Julius Lester with the intention of bringing positive images of African American life into the homes of Southern blacks. Amaris examines the calendar, finding in it the performance of a quotidian activism operating within domestic space. And Tirza True Latimer addresses lesbian separatism in "*Amazon Quarterly*: Pre-Zine Print Culture and the Politics of Separatism," studying the journal as a site of cultural connection among lesbians across the US and as a publication that strove to foster economic, social, and cultural self-sufficiency among women.

Finally, Elizabeth Groeneveld's essay "Crafting Public Cultures in Feminist Periodicals" concludes the volume by transitioning us into the twenty-first century and the full flowering of the Internet age. Her essay examines a cadre of independent feminist periodicals that began, in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, to discuss and promote the reclamation and repoliticization of crafting activities. Groeneveld historicizes these journals by situating them within the long history of feminist periodicals, as well as within their more immediate contexts of DIY punk and zine culture. In the 1980s and '90s, zines adopted inexpensive, low-tech, readily available means of reproduction—centrally, photocopying—to enable

a grassroots countercultural print culture. Where Latimer's essay examines the precursors to zines, the magazines at the center of Groeneveld's essay exemplify the publications that emerged from that same culture and their status as transitional objects that lead towards web-based publications.

There are, as is immediately evident, a number of themes that run as threads along this temporal trajectory, and the essays could have been grouped in sections to allow these themes closer proximity. The chronological organization is therefore not the definitive through-line, but its advantage is twofold. One, it allows us to consider print activism's appearance alongside the unfolding of other major events of the century, such as World War I or the Civil Rights movement. Two, although there are several distinct themes that pull forward in certain essays while receding in others, many of the essays highlight more than one, and therefore a thematic organization would have required choosing one over another. For example, clearly women's rights and feminism appear consistently throughout the volume, in the essays by Passet, Sánchez, Schreiber, Antolini, Latimer, and Groeneveld. However, my essay equally attends to activism around World War I, and Antolini's might have been grouped with other essays that look at activism in the mainstream press.

Another lens through which to focus on common themes among these essays would be the methods and strategies of the activism being performed. For example, both Sánchez and Wasmoen consider activism in literature, and Sangrey may be added to this category for this author's claim that the CPUSA pamphlets in support of the Black Nation Thesis featured "productive fictions." Several authors, including Sangrey and Amaris, look at forms other than the serial. Periodicals occupy a special place in print activism because of their subscription basis, their delivery directly into the homes of readers, and their dialogic nature wherein readers respond via letters to the editor to previous issues as in Strub's essay.[23] Non-periodical forms therefore function quite differently. As has been discussed, pamphlets, such as the CPUSA publications discussed by Sangrey, have a long history as vehicles for proliferating a cause. Amaris's focus is on another non-periodical printed form—the calendar—which posits an interesting hybrid between serial and non-serial. SNCC chose the calendar specifically because of its entry into domestic space, and its diachronic status might be understood to mimic that of a monthly subscription.

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[23]   Though not part of her contribution to this book, Joanne Passet has earlier published a fascinating study of sex radical culture between 1853 and 1910 that similarly explores the dialogic nature of readers' letters to editors. For this book, she mined 3,439 letters to the editors of sex radical journals in order to assess responses to the issues raised in these publications. See Joanne E. Passet, *Sex Radicals and the Quest for Women's Equality* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003). The other groundbreaking study to evaluate reader response in this way is Janice Radway's book *Reading the Romance*. The focus is not on an activist cause yet the book warrants mention for the ways that it illuminates print culture to be a two-way, rather than one-way, form of communication. See Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

If attentiveness to the form of the print culture is one important thematic, another might be the various ways that activists use print to mobilize readers. For example, while some of the essays, such as those by Fox and Sangrey, explore print activism that appeals to readers to join a cause outright and to participate in activities beyond the space of the publication, others, such as those by Passet, Sánchez, and Cucuz, use moral suasion to move readers to a particular stance. Still others, such as those by Strub, Latimer, and Groeneveld, serve to create networks of readers who identify as part of a collectivity, and this readerly identification is central to the very form of activism under consideration. Of course, there is overlap here again. The publications discussed by Passet and Groeneveld, for instance, offer instructions and advice regarding the movement in question. And certainly Fox's essay on the KKK served the function of networking, particularly important to a movement that perforce operated under cloak of anonymity. Clearly, print activism took many forms and employed myriad strategies in its effort to achieve its aims.

The diversity of strategies leads to a concluding question: is it possible to assess the efficacy of print activism? Even in cases where we can see the overall success of a movement, it would be difficult to evaluate the role that any one strategy versus another contributed to such success. The appearance of a topic in print form may signify its mainstream acceptance, such as in the case of the Mother's Day campaign or the Cold War, or it may indicate the need for a group to use print to locate its members under the radar, as with Klan members and gay men during the "Lavender Scare."

Though the question of efficacy is difficult, if not impossible, to answer with true certainty, the essays in this volume nevertheless expose the important contributions made by print activism to the broad array of social and political causes pursued by Americans throughout the twentieth century. Perhaps more importantly, close examinations of print activism illuminate details about these movements that would be obscured were this significant aspect of activism not considered. The picture that emerges is of a mutually reinforcing schema: activists relied on print to amplify their voices, but moreover, the technological apparatuses of twentieth-century print culture not only fostered, but set the stage for the modern culture of activism that we see spreading to all points on the political spectrum throughout the century in the United States. Of course, it is advisable at the same time to be wary of being overly optimistic about the possibilities that print activism made available. It is easy, for example, to utter pronouncements that are excessively utopian regarding access to print culture (both for producers as well as for readers), without due attention to class distinctions that keep some Americans from full participation in public print culture. Further, the complex relationship between print culture and commodity culture certainly must have limited the possibilities for print activism in certain ways.[24] Finally, as is clear

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[24]   An interesting example is found in *Ms.* magazine, which operated for 19 years before announcing that it would be run ad-free. The move was announced as an ideological positioning intended to free the magazine from constraints imposed by advertisers.

from the essays in this volume, democratized forms of communication and media are not solely employed by noble movements but by nefarious causes as well. All of these lessons also offer the opportunity to bring a more critical awareness to the Internet Age as the utopian promise once thought to inhere to widespread literacy and the availability of printed information shifts to claims of World Wide Web accessibility, and social media aid the efforts of those working for social justice as well as those working against it.[25] Nevertheless, though these lessons carry forward, clearly print activism was a vital force throughout the twentieth century for a wide range of Americans who sought to understand their roles within the modern society and find ways to perform as agents in advancing a variety of causes.

A rare publication in its ability to continue to operate as non-profit, *Ms*. is run by the Feminist Majority Foundation and where it was once a bi-monthly publication, it now appears quarterly.

[25] See, for example, Roberto Gomez's fine (yet disturbing) study of interrogation and execution videos on YouTube produced by Narco gangs in Mexico, intended to intimidate their opponents and the general Mexican population. Roberto Gomez, "A New Digital Media Regime: Narco Warfare Through Social Media," in *Sightlines* (San Francisco: Visual & Critical Studies, California College of the Arts, 2012).

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