

role Indians living in the United States played in building support for the anticolonial movement, both through their own publications and by reaching out to policymakers, captures the transcontinental face of the Indian nationalist movement. Such coverage, as Mann rightly points out, drew upon the rapid dissemination of news and ideas; it was the outcome of the telegraph and news agencies such as Reuters. The globe had shrunk, indeed, and it made possible connections and imaginative alliances that would have been impossible or far more challenging in the days of steamship transmission.

Mann is an accomplished and widely published scholar of India in the twentieth century, and his knowledge is evident throughout. There is hardly a book or article he hasn't read, and the notes are a rich resource to works by Anglo-American, German, and Indian scholars. Sometimes these references are too prominent and Mann's own contributions eclipsed. At other moments, the four phenomena he takes up—the telegraph, novel forms of newspaper reporting, the emerging public sphere, and the rise of anticolonial nationalism—are treated as independent rather than interdependent or intertwined phenomena. Large portions of the final chapters, for instance, trace developments such as the Swadeshi movement, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and Gandhi's salt march as contributing to a growing pan-Indian public sphere. Mann writes, for example: "Together with the Russo-Japanese War, it was the [S]wadeshi movement that eventually helped to initiate and to constitute an all-Indian consciousness" (163). That such events created an Indian national imaginary is incontrovertible. What is less clear is how newspaper coverage of events, much less the telegraphic transmission of reports, birthed the public sphere Mann is interested in tracing. Notwithstanding the rich material Mann has drawn from newspapers, the claim that newspapers and telegraphic reports created—rather than, say, reflected—an emergent national consciousness feels overextended. That argument would stand on firmer ground perhaps if the book more closely analyzed the passages cited from newspapers to instantiate the causal claim of coverage and consciousness.

In the last two decades, the study of nineteenth-century newspapers and periodicals has blossomed. The bulk of that scholarship has focused on British newspapers, and only recently have monographs on Indian newspapers started to appear. *Wiring the Nation* is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Indian newspapers. Mann's work in this archive is most welcome and will, one hopes, encourage more young scholars to dig in these understudied trenches.

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Steampunk and Nineteenth-Century Digital Humanities: Literary Retrofuturisms, Media Archaeologies, Alternate Histories, by Roger Whitson; pp. xiv + 229. London and New York: Routledge, 2017, £115.00, \$150.00.

Roger Whitson's *Steampunk and Nineteenth-Century Digital Humanities: Literary Retrofuturisms, Media Archaeologies, Alternate Histories* takes up the ambitious task of uniting steampunk,

nineteenth-century studies, and digital humanities. It argues that steampunk is “a research methodology” and even a “public form of Victorian scholarship that ... spread[s] conversations about the period beyond academia” (4, 169). To Whitson, steampunk is not nostalgic, escapist, or uninformed; instead, its alternate histories help us see history itself as “a punk mashup of voices, both real and imagined, human and non-human,” and as “not linear, but layered, recursive, branching, conjectural, and algorithmic” (191). We can learn, Whitson argues, from alternate history’s “rejection of the linear temporality too-often associated with cultural historicism” and “embrace ... the non-human mechanisms whose operational and recursive temporalities impact the lives of human beings in increasingly visible ways” (11). This attention to steampunk “challenges literary studies to move beyond close, or even distant, readings of texts” and encourages us to “[be] sensitive to the way different materials, different technologies, and different temporalities change our relationship to the past” (5). *Steampunk and Nineteenth-Century Digital Humanities* also calls for a change in understanding digital humanities by portraying aspects of steampunk fandom as a form of DH that emphasizes tinkering and that reveals the nineteenth century itself as “a digital system whose discrete elements are decontextualized, remixed, remade, appropriated, and otherwise transformed to serve various political, cultural, and technological purposes and are not limited to archival or historical preservation” (7).

The book adheres to these principles even in its structure. Because Whitson believes that “presenting the anachronisms of non-human recursive history in a linear or sequential fashion is contrary to the theoretical possibilities embedded in the practice,” he divides each chapter into three sections: one on issues in nineteenth-century science or technology; one on specific steampunk novels; and one analyzing “either a public steampunk project, a hobbyist or fan-made creation, or an issue in the digital humanities” (23). The book’s multiple subjects and interdisciplinary focus invite several theoretical lenses—including historicism, postcolonialism, intersectionality, ecocriticism, the Anthropocene, Marxism, and queer theory—and it is these theories, rather than academic disciplines or a chronological approach to history, that structure the chapters, a project Whitson relates to “Rosi Braidotti’s call to reject the homogenizing and exclusionary tactics of humanism” as part of a “posthuman affirmative politics” (22). But despite this nonlinear and nonchronological structure, the monograph does not feel disjointed or aimless; rather, it furthers his argument that even the nineteenth century itself was invested in “counterfactual inquiry rooted in an awareness of technological processes and materialities” (21).

While much of *Steampunk and Nineteenth-Century Digital Humanities* addresses works of steampunk, covering such diverse topics as William Gibson and Bruce Sterling’s novel *The Difference Engine* (1990), *The Clock of the Long Now* (a clock designed to run for 10,000 years), cosplay (“a form of cultural expression where fans dress up in costumes of their favorite characters”), and the video game *Sunless Sea* (2015), Whitson also attends to more traditional aspects of nineteenth-century literature and culture (158). He considers William Blake and William Morris as practitioners of a sort of steampunk, since both “tinker with history by appealing to older forms of craftsmanship against the emergence of industrialized standardization” (18). He treats Isabella Bird’s 1896 photographic travel-book *Chinese Pictures: Notes on Photographs Made in China* as a Victorian manifestation of

counterfactual impulses, and James Hutton's *The Theory of the Earth* (1788) as an early example of anthropogenic thinking. Friedrich Engels's "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man" (1876) and *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) are here examples of a posthuman, steampunk-style attention to the "dialectical interplay of human and non-human" (130).

This book's most novel contribution to Victorian studies, however, lies in its ability to imagine a more inclusive future for the field and for nineteenth-century digital humanities. The epilogue claims that steampunk "contribute[s] to Victorian scholarship" by "hack[ing] normative Victorian scholarly spaces" and by "complicating human exceptionalism and historical homogeneity" (183, 198). To Whitson, Victorian studies and digital humanities should learn from steampunk and go beyond "transferring scholarly conversations into online environments" or envisioning the public as "a passive audience to consume traditionally peer-reviewed content" (178). To be truly accessible, these fields must recognize "the transformative potential of various publics who encounter literary periods that are often dominated in University curricula by white, heteronormative, Western figures" (181). By attending to "the machinic, always changing, non-human processing of humanity" in our digital humanities or nineteenth-century research, Whitson suggests, we have a shot at not "forget[ting] ... the others excluded, abandoned, or ignored—whose stories might have once been alternatives to the history we claim as our own" (198–99).

The arguments in this monograph are most immediately relevant and recognizable to scholars of media studies/archaeology, science, technology, and society, cultural studies, and digital humanities. In fact, Victorianists most interested in literary or historical analysis may initially scratch their heads at some of the chapters, wondering how Whitson's comparison of the fictional technique of golemetry—making living clay organisms—from China Miéville's *Iron Council* (2004) to the Arduino microprocessor could translate directly into new understandings of canonical works. Whitson's provocative call, however, for Victorianists to think critically about the definition of publics, the role of non-human agents in history and literature, and even the purpose and ethics of scholarship itself may open up "clear alternatives to the pasts we're taught to respect and the futures we've been told are inevitable," and could usher in a more ethical and inclusive scholarship (28).

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The Social Worlds of Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music: Composers, Consumers, Communities, by Marie Sumner Lott; pp. xvi + 307. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015, \$55.00, \$28.00 paper.

Rival Sisters, Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815–1915, edited by James H. Rubin with Olivia Mattis; pp. xiv + 389. Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014, £93.99, \$140.00.

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