

Gelder, Ken, ed. *New Directions in Popular Fiction: Genre, Distribution, Reproduction*. Pp. 474. London, UK: Springer Nature, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. EUR\$114.99 (Hardcover) ISBN: 9781137523464.

Review by Claire Parnell

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New Directions in Popular Fiction is an omnifocal deep dive into specific histories, genres, locations, and formats within the scope of popular fiction publishing. The collection is divided into two sections. ‘Histories of Popular Genres’ includes case studies of particular genres that, as a whole, comprise an interesting yet fragmented history of popular fiction writers, readers, and publishing from the nineteenth century to the present. The chapters in ‘Authors, Distribution, (Re)Production’ focus on writing, publishing and reading in the broader context of the global entertainment industry. The contributing authors explore new directions in genres, formats, adaptations and transmedia technology and production, and scholarship. Chapters focusing on crime fiction explore colonial Australian detective stories (Gelder & Weaver), textual legacies of the Whitechapel murders (Moore), the British spy thriller (Burrow), and feminist crime fiction (Vanacker). North American genres are explored through re-Indigenizing Western dime novels (Bold) and national identity in Québec (Ransom). Science fiction and fantasy are explored in chapters on medievalism and paratextuality (Wilkins), the new weird (Weinstock), the context of prewar Japan (Jacobwitz), the speculative girl hero (Driscoll & Heatwole), and novelizing *Assassin’s Creed*. The only extensive chapter on romance explores the history of British imperialism and the romance novel (Teo) but romance is also explored to a lesser extent in relation to fan fiction (Schwabach). Other chapters explore form (Hughes), popular fiction and prestige (MacLeod), adaptation (Groth; Whelehan), transnational industries (Carter), and online reader communities (Driscoll). This collection provides authoritative and important contributions for publishing studies, book history and literary studies.

In its assemblage, Gelder discloses his attempts to move beyond scholarship that focuses on popular genres in Britain and the USA given the ‘spectacular rise of ‘Nordic noir’ crime fiction...global award-winning regional African SF [science fiction] and fantasy...and a marked increase in the visibility of Chinese SF’ (15). A small number of chapters have an explicit focus on popular fiction in countries other than Britain and the USA – Gelder & Weaver’s ‘Colonial Australian Detectives, Character Type and the Colonial Economy’, Seth

Jacobowitz's 'Unno Jūza and the Uses of Science in Prewar Japanese Popular Fiction', Amy J. Ransom's 'Popular Fiction in Québec: National Identity and 'American' Genres', and David Carter's 'Beyond the Antipodes: Australian Popular Fiction in Transnational Networks' – and one addresses culturally marginalised groups: Christine Bold's 'Did Indians Read Dime Novels?: Re-Indigenising the Western at the Turn of the Twentieth Century'. This 'gesture towards the global range and recognition of popular fiction' (15) is itself a signal of another new direction in popular fiction scholarship that requires greater emphasis and attention in the academy; that is, authors, readers, and publishers of culturally marginalised and non-Western texts as well as discourses surrounding their creation, production and reception.

Delineating a select few chapters here will provide a snapshot into the historical, scholarly and generic scope of this book. The first chapter by Joe Hughes investigates the work of Eliza Haywood, an 'amatory' novelist working in the eighteenth century who was 'widely considered to be one of the first bestsellers in the history of the English novel' (24) in part due to being 'the first to exploit the full potential of the scenic form' (25). The repetition of the scene, Hughes points out, 'is not only the mark of a technical discovery that maximises the productive capacity of the writer, it also governs the process of consumption' (25) – the former is a characteristic of contemporary popular fiction production and the latter a characteristic of its market. It is with this first chapter that we are thus introduced to the rise of popular fiction as a mass-market product and the structural form that enabled its consistent and rapid production.

Hsu-Ming Teo's chapter 'Imperial Affairs: The British Empire and the Romantic Novel, 1890–1939' investigates women's imperial romantic fiction, a genre produced between the 1890s and the Second World War and 'created from the fusion of the masculine imperial adventure romance and the more feminine form of the domestic romantic novel' (88). The genre worked to disseminate imperial fantasies for women finding a place in the empire. Here Teo provides insight into how new genres and hybrid genres develop, and the ways in which the production of popular fiction texts are responsive to the sociohistorical contexts in which they are published. From a similar socio-literary approach, Ken Gelder and Rachael Weaver chronicle crime and detective fiction in colonial Australia in 'Colonial Australian Detectives, Character Type and the Colonial Economy', arguing that the first locally published Australian novel was crime fiction and that the genre's early start in Australia emerged out of the 'experiences of transportation and the convict system' (43).

The influence of the internet on popular fiction is explored to varying degrees in the two final chapters: Aaron Schwabach's 'Fan Works and the Law', and Beth Driscoll's 'Readers of Popular Fiction and Emotion Online'. [1] Driscoll's work is one of the most groundbreaking of the collection in its focus and approach. The chapter employs a relatively new method of distant reading to explore one of the biggest changes in the publishing field since the era of the Gutenberg: the digital sphere. Investigating reader responses online is increasingly important as digital technologies and connective media systems evolve alongside their users' behaviours to allow them greater influence over the field, and is especially relevant for popular fiction as it is 'more susceptible to the influence of the market' (427). Gelder describes Driscoll's contribution as 'an important early step to take, if we want to examine this field more closely and...productively' (17); I agree that the incredible value of Driscoll's work derives from combining seminal theoretical models, applying a sociological approach to fan studies, and testing the use of sentiment analysis to reception studies.

The collection offers a broad historical overview of popular fiction rather than exploring contemporary genres in depth. Nevertheless, several chapters touch on romance. Teo's chapter on the relationship between romance novels and the British imperial romantic fiction is the only chapter entirely dedicated to exploring the genre of romance, yet other chapters briefly touch on romance or romantic elements: Schwabach explores fan fiction in relation to the law, drawing on examples of romantic slash fan fiction, and *Twilight* is used as one of the case studies in Driscoll and Heatwole's analysis of the girl action hero. Ultimately, *New Directions in Popular Fiction* is an important contribution to the continued development of popular fiction studies as a significant field of commercial cultural production and area of inquiry in the academy.

[1] Disclosure: Beth Driscoll is the reviewer's PhD supervisor.