

we also meet many side characters and explore several subplots that add to this rich portrait of life in eighteenth-century England and North America.

Though balanced and straightforward, Anishanslin's organization of her material nevertheless inadvertently privileges production and the metropole over consumption and the colonies, leads to repetition, and introduces key ideas and people rather late in the text. The narrative is also focused on comfortable people and not on less fortunate "hidden" figures that built this world. There is some mention of the slaves, but not much investigation of those who actually worked in American sericulture. We learn about the designer and weaver, but not the sempstress or tailor who worked very long hours for low wages in miserable conditions. We also learn almost nothing about the Chinese workers who produced the goods and the merchants and artists who cultivated global tastes for silk and other luxury goods. While no book can do everything, these and other oversights and the book's organization leave us with a relatively conflict-free, comfortable, white, and elite Atlantic world. Anne Shippen Willing might have experienced the world this way, but to what degree did luxurious silk and beautiful portraits hide as much as they reveal about the class, gender, and racial inequities that were developing on a global scale in the eighteenth-century Atlantic?

Erika Rappaport  
*University of California, Santa Barbara*  
[rappaport@history.ucsb.edu](mailto:rappaport@history.ucsb.edu)

TOBY BARNARD. *Brought to Book: Print in Ireland, 1689–1784*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017. Pp. 395. \$70.00 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2017.185

Ireland, Toby Barnard tells us in *Brought to Book: Print in Ireland, 1689–1784*, his new, stunningly comprehensive, and encyclopedic account of its printing, publishing, reading, and writing history over the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is part of Europe and has been since the spread of print. Far from being a backwater of ill-educated provincials, Ireland here emerges as vitally engaged with the practices and products of a developing book trade, informed and shaped by England but defiantly not Anglicized. Irish print culture emerges as its own entity.

The book contains twelve hefty chapters, some organized chronologically, some geographically, and some thematically. Although Dublin takes center stage, chapters address separately the South and the North, focusing on particular cities, as well as genres like history, poetry, sermons, drama, music, periodicals, political pamphlets, parliamentary publications, visionary schemes for the improvement of Ireland, and religious tracts. Verse and witty squibs constituted Ireland's most characteristic and prolific genre, Barnard maintains, but in other forms it tended to imitate English models. Newspapers proved immensely popular, but for their information, not their entertainment, and the more the merrier, since, as Barnard repeatedly observes, what is printed is not necessarily true. The penultimate chapter comprises an account of the reception history of Irish publications by examining subscription lists, as well as authors' and readers' responses.

These chapters play well off each other to produce a richly textured fabric of eighteenth-century life in Ireland. Each is studded with detailed accounts of individuals who illustrate the themes of the chapter. We find well-known figures like William King, Jonathan Swift, and John Murray, but many are obscure characters whose idiosyncratic histories supply vivid portraits of daily life over a hundred years of Irish development. We read of the

ubiquitous O'Conors, for example, especially Charles who defied his destiny as a priest to write washbuckling romances, and the bricklayer poet Henry Nelson, taken up by the late-century Romantic poets as "an Irish counterpart to Burns, Clare and Robert Bloomfield" (243). Themes unique to the Irish print trade, including the perennial debate over whether to publish in Irish, rather than English, or in Dublin rather than London, and the hostility of the print trade to Irish speakers, are clarified by the details of audience, distribution, and authorship.

Barnard's extensive research includes forays into literature, history, the personal journals and letters of eighteenth-century readers and writers, newspapers, library lists, broadsides, pamphlets, and more. Although Irish print culture lagged behind that of England in the late seventeenth century, Barnard argues that it burgeoned in the 1720s, followed by a plateau until the century's end. He includes useful charts documenting changes in publication rates and an especially informative table, "Percentages of titles in classified genres, 1699–1789" (47), as well as chunks of highly entertaining excerpts from the rants and regrets of colorful characters. One of the most compelling points Barnard repeatedly makes is that print constitutes only one, and not always the most important, element in culture: manuscript and oral practices and traditions persisted throughout the period, and these formed an essential part of the transmission of ideas. Indeed, Barnard ends virtually every chapter with a reminder of the value of nonprint forms in Ireland. He also stresses the multivalent and ambiguous nature of print, its ability not only to spread new ideas but also to shore up conservative and traditional ones. The growth of print culture, he argues, does not necessarily entail the spread of revolutionary ideas.

Despite—or perhaps because of—his remarkable range, Barnard occasionally reaches a step too far in tracing connections between well-known figures and the more obscure whom he uses to underpin his argument. For example, during his engaging account of Sir William Petty's pamphleteering, he remarks that Petty feared the "uninhibited printing of his ideas" just as had "his friend, Robert Boyle, although for different reasons," yet the thrust of the point lies in exactly why Petty limited his publications (31). Occasionally, in his effort to contextualize his details within larger narratives of cultural development, Barnard states the obvious "Learning ... was assisted by print," for example (76)—and sometimes his relentlessly passive prose style leads to turgidity and obfuscation. More seriously, the scrupulous inclusion of numerous exceptions to every cautious generality makes it difficult for the reader to draw conclusions about the evidence.

Some fine accounts of women appear—notably the moralistic novelist Charlotte McCarthy, Charlotte Brooke, daughter of Henry Brooke and compiler of *The Reliques of Irish* poetry (1789), and Mary Anne Knox, murdered, probably accidentally, by her bankrupt, upper-class, gambling-addict suitor (who, when the noose broke as he was being hanged, requested the hangman to try again), thereby becoming the stimulus for a manufactured pamphlet war. The chapter "Education" also addresses women, as well as children. Nonetheless, Barnard tells largely the story of elite men, writers, and publishers, and although Frances Sheridan, for example, is mentioned very briefly, neither she nor Maria Edgeworth appear in the index.

As a defense—or redefinition—of Ireland as the site of a cosmopolitan culture that, despite Anglicized influences, retained its integrity and sophistication, Barnard paints a fresh and authoritative picture of a unique nation. Entertaining, meticulous, and yet synthetic, he offers a massive amount of information that scholars will plumb for years. It will remain essential reading for all students of the early modern European world.

Barbara M. Benedict  
*Trinity College*  
[barbara.benedict@trincoll.edu](mailto:barbara.benedict@trincoll.edu)