of Lacanian theory might seem limiting. But she also investigates historical developments, such as the growing limits on female rights and the increasing power of the middle class. She does not, however, address specific eighteenth-century commentary on orphans or children, or work closely with historians’ reconstructions of eighteenth-century families. Ms. König also might have used the eighteenth-century orphan figure to critique or offer amendments to Lacanian theory. How, for example, do the changes taking place in eighteenth-century novelistic structures call into question the three Lacanian stages of the first years of life? I would have liked more historical work to inform Ms. König’s psychoanalytic readings. Still, her book is filled with exciting discussions about important eighteenth-century novels and their orphan characters.

Cheryl L. Nixon
University of Massachusetts, Boston


Print culture. How often we use this catch-all catchphrase to name that which transforms an author’s thoughts into a reader’s experience. In eighteenth-century studies, “print culture” refers to the materials of bookmaking and the mechanical processes that made manuscript foul papers into typeset commodities, simultaneously evoking the human networks of printers, publishers, and sellers who labored to package and distribute the written word. The term lends conceptual stability to a vibrant but bewildering world of patronage, marketing, deal-cutting, and quarrel, encompassing the story of a literary work that resides “apart from that recounted by its text,” in D. F. McKenzie’s phrase. Grasping print culture, therefore, entails combing through a fragmentary archive of letters, ledgers, wills, and catalogues to reconstruct as fully as possible the early modern business of literature.

From this view, Mr. Bernard renders crucial service to the study of book history and eighteenth-century society by locating, transcribing, and annotating the professional correspondences of Jacob Tonson (1656–1736) and his nephew, Jacob Tonson the Younger (1682–1735). For almost six decades, these two men ran the most important publishing house in Britain. The Tonsons brought to press the works of their luminous contemporaries, Dryden, Behn, Congreve, Gay, Addison, Steele, Prior, and Pope. They secured the posthumous reputations of Shakespeare and Milton through editions that not only sold widely but inaugurated traditions of textual scholarship that persist in the present. Jacob the Elder pioneered the practice of anthologizing poets within miscellanies as a strategy to stimulate reader interest in authors new and old. Jacob the Younger exploited the copyrights accumulated by his uncle to republish earlier works in editions ranging from lavish folios to cheap duodecimos, making him “the shepherd of the English literary canon, tending Tonson [the Elder’s] flock.” Together, the Tonsons shaped not only the literary markets of their time, but our present-day estimation of what writing from this period mattered.

Despite their central role in the London book trade, we know relatively little about the Tonsons’ day-to-day working lives beyond what Kathleen Lynch detailed in her 1971 biography of Jacob the Elder. The Literary Correspondences helps remedy this deficit by collating 158 of the Tonsons’ letters—those related to their business operations and authorial relationships—which today lie scattered among manuscript archives across Britain and the
United States. Mr. Bernard’s transcriptions are clear and forthright, regularly flagging passages where the original manuscript is too damaged to render an accurate reproduction, or where marginal writing clarifies (or confounds) body text. The notes that accompany each letter are concise yet thorough, themselves the product of wide-ranging historical fluency and obvious toil. The quantity of sweat and erudition that went into this edition is so great that readers could easily overlook the critical program driving its diligence. Mr. Bernard’s self-aware enterprise is nothing less than to present “evidence of the personal relationships fundamental to the creation of literature.” By highlighting and explaining these interactions, he pushes readers away from abstractions like print culture, and toward the challenge of rekindling the “white heat” of literary invention from the book trade’s extant remains. His overarching goal is to show through epistolary glimpses into the Tonsons’ business how “booksellers actually work to get from the idea for a book to the material text.”

What can we learn from the letters themselves? Even the most casual browser will enjoy the correspondences’ many ill-timed speculations, gossipy asides, and humanizing anecdotes. Tonson vouches risibly for the “undeniable truth” of William Bedloe and Titus Oates’s allegations of a Popish Plot conspiracy to assassinate Charles II in a letter to Narcissus Luttrell. Similarly gratifying is a 1719 note from John Vanbrugh to Tonson that marvels at the fortunes of the South Sea Company, then “rising so vastly.” In another letter from the late seventeenth century, Aphra Behn asks Tonson to conceal from Thomas Creech that she disliked his commendatory verse published at the front of her *Voyage to the Island of Love* (1684). John Oldmixon pleads wincingly for Tonson to help him become poet laureate in a 1718 letter dated a week after the death of the reigning laureate, Nicholas Rowe. Dryden looms large throughout the correspondences not only as a venerable Stuart laureate and periodically aggrieved business partner, but also as an eater of melons, swiller of sherry, and capable angler, who in one letter boasts of taking a “lusty pike.” Dryden lives on in the letters long after his 1700 death. In 1715, for instance, John Dennis complains that the upstart Alexander Pope, “that Diminutive of Parnassus & of Humanity,” was designing to surpass Dryden’s poetic reputation.

Harder to discern and process are the more substantive narratives pertaining to the Tonsons’ role in the London book trade and their contributions to the rise of an English literary canon. These stories unfold only partly, in fits and starts, across multiple exchanges. This turbulent reading experience stems from the fact that the surviving letters constitute only a sampling of the Tonsons’ total epistolary output, an incomplete archive that frequently references missing works. Full of irony and shorthand, the letters themselves can frustrate interpretation, even with the assistance of Mr. Bernard’s attentive notes.

Despite these challenges, a few basic findings become evident. First, the Tonsons spent much of their time acquiring and correcting manuscripts, negotiating payments, setting prices, mediating conflicts between authors and printers, and keeping up relations with patrons, subscribers, and politicians. The work of producing classical translations proves especially burdensome, attesting to both the Augustan era’s appetite for vernacular editions of Homer, Ovid, Virgil, and others, and the challenge of creating suitable versions of Greek and Roman texts.

Second, the letters reveal how the Ton-
sons established business relationships with authors that intermingled professional with personal affairs. For instance, Dryden lashes out at Tonson following a disagreement over the terms of payment for *The Works of Virgil*, but eleven months later requests of him the favor of receiving the rents from his Northamptonshire estate. The personal and professional converge most compellingly in Tonson the Elder’s involvement with the Kit-Cat Club, of which he was the host and possibly originator. With an architect’s eye for interior detail, John Vanbrugh consults with Tonson in one letter over the design and construction of the Kit-Cat’s new clubhouse on Tonson’s estate at Barns Elms, Surrey. He later implores Tonson to return from his travels in France to reconvene the club. By foregrounding Tonson’s role in organizing the Kit-Cats, Vanbrugh’s letters help cement Jacob the Elder’s stature as a catalyst and recorder of Whig literary culture prior to the Hanoverian succession.

But *The Literary Correspondences of the Tonsons* is ultimately a reference work, less suited to front-to-back reading than to answering the specialized inquiries of researchers. Mr. Bernard’s achievement is to render accessible and citable a wealth of information that would have previously required travel, archival access, and considerable paleographic skill. In this spirit, readers subscribing to the Oxford Scholarly Editions Online will benefit from its searchable, electronic version, which renders Mr. Bernard’s efforts more convenient and user-friendly to those seeking to analyze the personal relationships that made eighteenth-century literature public and facilitates the fine-grained analysis that *Literary Correspondences* invites and enables.

David Alff

SUNY-Buffalo


Contributing to the growing body of scholarship on English leisure and pastimes, this timely book fills a lacuna in studies on card play and gambling that have focused largely on the aristocracy. Ms. Mullin argues that the risk-averse middle class enjoyed fashionable card games with moderation, which distinguished them from aristocratic debauchees and created a separate, new association of card play and gambling with middle-class values: “restraint, gentility, good sense, and hard work.” Multiple factors accounted for this distinction, the foremost of which is that middle class leisure activity was governed by the same kind of prudent rules that shaped professional business practices. For instance, Ms. Mullin demonstrates that record keeping of gambling wins and losses as well as of sociable card play was widespread and indicated almost uniformly modest bets. Flush with new wealth and leisure time, the middle class used gambling at cards as a means to broaden their social circles and business connections. Public display of one’s strategic command of risk—the ability to use reason and skill to make order from chance—brought credit to one’s reputation at a time when the performance of identity had deep personal and commercial consequences. In addition, middle-class adults saw in gambling an ideal game that combined instruction and entertainment: card play could teach their children practical accounting values and polite sociability, skills crucial to the creditworthiness of the trading class. *A Sixpence at Whist* depicts middle-class people who styled card play to suit their public and private lives, thus extending ex-