

periods of feminist history within the archive elucidates the often-hidden proximity of generational feminisms. Zines, she concludes, have links to earlier grassroots feminist media practices, including the mimeographed manifestos that were widely produced and distributed by second-wave feminists. As such, Eichhorn points to the limitations of segregating generational feminisms into a series of successive ‘waves’ that celebrate ‘newness’ rather than feminism’s enduring practice of historical cross-pollination. While Eichhorn is certainly not the first to critique the reifying tendencies implicated by the ‘wave’ metaphor, this example demonstrates how zines may be seen as an extension of the rich media practices of feminist communities across history. Such insights convincingly illustrate how feminist archives enact their own disorderly encounters and uncanny moments of proximity which, far from preserving the archive’s fixed relation to the past, allow the past and the present to be imagined differently. Thus for Eichhorn the subversive potential of the feminist archive lies in the way it continues to legitimise forms of cultural production and political alliances at risk by a neoliberal investment in entrepreneurial individualism.

While Eichhorn’s compelling investigations of the archive’s complex field of cultural production (donating, collecting, cataloguing) give us a rare insight into the important intellectual and logistical work carried out by archivists and librarians, the book also tackles the trickier question of what is at stake, politically and culturally, for the future of feminism. In other words it brings into view some of the tensions that continue to define feminism – as a site of activism and politics as well as a site of scholarly and intellectual engagement. Refreshingly, the book never attempts to resolve this tension but convincingly argues that feminism’s emotional investment in outrage lives on in the archive, strengthening contemporary feminism as a form of genealogical politics. This is an original and perceptive book that provides an exemplary interdisciplinary model for future work on archives, all the while demonstrating the archive’s central importance to the kinds of stories we tell about feminism’s past, present and future.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01576895.2014.959537>

Jerome McGann, *A New Republic of Letters: Memory and Scholarship in the Age of Digital Reproduction*, Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press, 2014. 256 pp. ISBN 978 0 674728 69 1. USD\$39.95.

Fearsomely erudite and fearlessly ambitious, *A New Republic of Letters* unites the various strands of McGann’s career – as textual scholar, digital humanist, literary critic and poet – to produce a manifesto for the future of the humanities. In articulating an approach focused on archival, curatorial and editorial work, McGann provides a framework for solving some of the major challenges facing the humanities today: how to remediate our cultural inheritance in digital form; how to stabilise and integrate that record with the existing archive; and how to work, communicate and collaborate in this mixed depository. However, the humanities McGann describes barely resembles the one we have, and while he provides impressive theoretical justifications for and practical

demonstrations of his method, he provides no framework for enacting this new paradigm.

Early chapters revisit and extend an argument McGann has often made: that the splitting of Higher and Lower Criticism at the turn of the twentieth century left the former – literary criticism and theory – without a philological ‘conscience’: an awareness that all works ‘carry the evidence of “the history of their own making”’ (p. 4) and a dedication to preserving, organising, monitoring and augmenting that history. In its place, interpretation became the activity of individual readers in relation to abstract ‘texts’. The digital age exposes the limitations of this approach, which provides no basis for conceptualising an historical record comprised of ‘a vast set of specific material objects that have been created and passed along through an even more vast’, and continually changing, ‘network of agents and agencies’ (p. 22).

In outlining a model of cultural interpretation adequate to understanding and remediating this historical record, McGann proposes a double helix encoded in every cultural work. Comprised of the co-dependent relationship between the histories of production and reception, each strand of this double helix is produced by multiple agents. Every person, discursive field and system that a work (even a document) comes into contact with – including those relating to the immediate interpreting agent – becomes part of the history of, and changes, that work. Not only is there no possibility of discovering *the* meaning of a work, but the interpreting agent can only be partially aware of the complex system of influences he or she is exploring, contributing to and altering. Scholarship – rendered both performative and indeterminate – involves accumulating as much information as possible about the object of study, while acknowledging this process can never be complete.

Far from viewing digital humanities as a ‘set of replacement protocols’ (p. 4) for humanities, McGann is critical not only of traditional hermeneutics, which abstracts the object of study – as ‘text’ – and places it outside the act of critical reflection, but of digital projects and techniques – including his own *Rossetti Archive* – that inherit and perpetuate this approach by failing to engage adequately with the sociology of the textual condition. Characterising the problem with much existing digital scholarship as institutional rather than algorithmic, McGann insightfully analyses the lack of correspondence between Internet sociologies and those that underpin print culture. Despite past failings, McGann identifies online ecologies as having greater potential than paper-based instruments to encode the way all cultural objects ‘evolve and mutate in their use’ (p. 123).

McGann rounds out his argument for philology in a ‘new key’ with practical examples: digital projects, such as NINES, that manifest the sociologies of the Internet; and two ‘philological investigations’ – of Edgar Allen Poe and *The Pioneers* – that impressively demonstrate the potential of McGann’s method, particularly by challenging prevailing author-centred approaches to literary interpretation. Less impressive is McGann’s application of a philological approach to textual analysis. His six readings – or sequential deformations – of the poem ‘The Innocence’ suggest an unpacked close reading rather than a new interpretive model. In concluding with a critique of Pascale Casanova’s *The World Republic of Letters*, McGann foregrounds the important political dimension of his book. Where the lack of material and sociohistorical grounding in Casanova’s work marginalises non-western cultures, philology holds all languages, works and documents equally worthy of attention.

While I endorse this philological approach and its political underpinnings, McGann provides no indication of how to embed it institutionally. With the current emphasis in

higher education on progressive achievement and definitive research findings, it is barely possible to assert the value of a humanities that promises *the* meaning of texts, let alone one grounded in the impossibility of ever telling the truth about a document. In this respect, missing from McGann's analysis of the demise of philology is acknowledgement of how the ascendancy of Higher Criticism was necessitated – as well as enabled – by a mandated research culture that continues today. While this inattention to institutional socialities is jarring in a book so attuned to those of works, and of print and Internet cultures, McGann clearly demonstrates how, far from diminishing their importance, the digital age emphasises the particular and material, and the value of rigor and scholarly method.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01576895.2014.955119>

Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2014. 224 pp. ISBN 978 0 822356 57 8. US\$22.95 (paperback).

I was asked to review Paper Knowledge by a colleague whom I'd met through the symposium ARCHIVE + FEMINISM at McGill University (winter 2012), and with whom I also participated (virtually) in 'Archive Futures: Manuscripts, Materiality, Method', an invitational research workshop that led to the formation of the Archive Futures research network (summer 2013). It is from this place, at the intersection of media studies and archives, that I review Gitelman's most recent book.

Lisa Gitelman's most recent book, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, addresses precise moments in what the author identifies as the scriptural economy. In four stand-alone chapters, she manages to convey the importance of the document as both object of inquiry and epistemic practice.

In her introduction, Gitelman argues that the document is important in no small part owing to its potential to be referenced, activated and recovered in an undetermined archival future. But just *what* constitutes a document is a more complex question here than *why* it may be deemed important archivally. Gitelman, riffing off the work of early documentalists, proposes that the act of 'framing' and 'entering into evidence' renders an object a document proper, most typically in paper form. Documents are ubiquitous, and as they reappear and are reinforced as metaphors in the digital realm, they further complicate the concept of 'print cultures' that underpins much of the argument of *Paper Knowledge*. Gitelman's book becomes both a plea and a quest for meanings over logics. It emerges from media uses specifically attributed to exploring the multiplicity of the document genre through a selective 150-year history. The book veers away from technological determinism, and instead adopts a carefully crafted, dense and detailed, anecdotal and archival retelling style that foregrounds the humanism in and of technological inquiry.

Each chapter benefits immensely from an iterative process and the careful edits of many of Gitelman's peers across the globe (whom she fully credits for their support,