

## William Dean Howells's Periodical Time

American novels were commonplace in nineteenth-century periodicals. Regularly serialized, extracted, reviewed, and advertised, they even appeared as whole works in *Brother Jonathan* in the 1840s and *Lippincott's Monthly* in the 1880s and 90s. The periodical's flexible form allowed novels to be literary content, objects of discussion, and products for sale. Novels proved less hospitable in return. Restricted to the stuff of content, periodicals had to compete with other subject matter for visibility. They appear as material objects, like *The Pickwick Portfolio* that the March sisters spend rainy days producing in *Little Women* (1868). They become markers of cultural distinction in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), when Holgrave tells Phoebe Pyncheon that he has written for *Graham's Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Book*, and provide financial security in the second half of *Ruth Hall* (1855) when the heroine becomes a successful weekly columnist. Periodicals employ minor characters in major novels—such as Henrietta Stackpole in *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) and Matthias Pardon in *The Bostonians* (1886); major characters in minor novels, such as Myles Manning in Kirk Munroe's *Under Orders* (1890); and occasionally, as in the case of Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors* (1903), major characters in major novels.<sup>1</sup> Novels did not ignore the periodical, then, but only rarely does a periodical itself become the major protagonist in a nineteenth-century novel. William Dean Howells's *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1889) is one such instance.<sup>2</sup> The result of the novel's uncommon preoccupation with the periodical is a study of seriality and temporality that brings into focus questions that have separately occupied nineteenth-century literary studies: What constitutes periodical time? And how does extraliterary time manifest itself in literary form and content? By offering a new answer to the first of these questions, this essay offers a new answer to the second.

My understanding of periodical time comprises two elements: the human time of

periodical labor and the paradoxical nature of periodical temporality. By 1914 periodicals accounted for 99 percent of the fourteen billion books, pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines American printers turned out each year; expanding markets and new advertising revenues rapidly increased the periodical share of publishing industry value (*Census of Manufactures*, 644, 648).<sup>3</sup> Tens of thousands of people turned raw materials into periodical objects through machine, paper, and ink making, type founding and typesetting, and dozens of other ancillary trades. Current understandings of periodical time ignore this activity and focus instead on how finished periodical objects embody and represent changing nineteenth-century timescapes.<sup>4</sup> But the scale, ubiquity, and significance of periodical production meant that the rhythms of periodical time were first established in the pre-publication and pre-consumption phases of a print world working “day and night, week in and week out” and “every hour of the twenty-four” (Bailey 153).<sup>5</sup> Most people who undertook work in the print trades left few traces of their experience; the exceptions were those workers who became editors and authors and who form a long tradition in American literary history. Notable figures in its nineteenth-century canon include Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, and Mark Twain.

Few, however, were as closely acquainted with the mechanics of periodical printing and publishing as Howells, whose father owned and printed the *Dayton Transcript* before it failed in 1849 and left the family indebted. Howells set type for the *Transcript*, moved to Columbus to work as a typesetter for other local papers, returned to work with his father again on the *Ashtabula Sentinel*, and later worked as a journalist at the *Cincinnati Gazette*. After stepping down as editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1881, Howells increasingly turned to the experiences of these years in the fiction and non-fiction he wrote during the 1880s and 1890s, not only in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* but in *A Modern Instance* (1882), whose central character is the journalist Bartley Hubbard and whose minor characters include several print trade workers, *My Year in a Log Cabin* (1893), “The Country Printer” (1896), and, some years

later, *Years of My Youth* (1916). Howells brought the experience of mechanical labor into literature. My definition of periodical time, therefore, moves away from the finished periodical object and its post-publication or downstream effects; I concentrate instead on the upstream processes that occur before periodicals take their completed form. These processes include two concurrent activities that bequeath the human time of labor to periodical time: the generation of content by writers, artists, and editors; and the industrial manufacture that turns raw materials into periodical objects. To ask how literature is made is always to ask what literature means; book history and the study of print culture have taught us this. For Howells, content and manufacture were intimately entwined.

Howells also wrote under the influence of the second distinctive element in my formulation of periodical time: the paradoxical nature of periodical temporality. Because periodicals are iterative forms, they constantly grapple with the conflicting demand that each issue should be continuous with past and future issues but also complete in itself. We misunderstand the periodical if we think it is only a vehicle for serial forms. As early as 1855, the author and magazine editor George William Curtis noted the periodical issue's self-contained pleasures. Seriality "lengthens the throat so that the feast lasts a year or two years," he wrote, but "each number is intended to end where it ends, and no longer, as in old times, to pause upon a moment ... 'to be continued.' Now, every number has a certain kind of completeness" ("Editor's Easy Chair" 128). Howells himself wrote in one of his "Editor's Study" columns for *Harper's* that "it is the short stories which please the readers of our best magazines. The serial novels they must have, of course; but rather more of course they must have short stories" (484). This requirement for both continuity and completeness was compounded by another paradox: that periodicals provide familiarity's comforts through repetition—of the periodical title itself, its layout, typeface, repeated sections, or distinctive tone—but provide enough new content in each issue to avoid the tedium of repetitiousness.<sup>6</sup>

Continuous but complete, familiar but new: such complex temporality is the basis of the periodical form.

These paradoxes manifested themselves in the content and consumption of periodical objects, when, for instance, a periodical failed in the middle of serialization or after a first issue. Howells himself recalled a particularly vivid moment when he confronted the breakdown of continuity and completeness in his own home. In 1850, age thirteen, and after the failure of the *Transcript*, Howells's parents moved from Dayton to a rundown log cabin on the banks of the nearby Little Miami River. They took with them leftover copies of the *Transcript*. After glazing the broken windows and laying a new floor, Howells's father set about refurbishing the walls of the ground-floor rooms. "Perhaps it was my father's love of literature," Howells wrote, "which inspired him to choose newspapers for this purpose; at any rate, he did so, and the effect, as I remember it, was not without its decorative qualities." But the young Howells also found reading the periodical press on his living-room walls a frustrating experience. On one newspaper "the whole first page was taken up by a story, which broke off in the middle of a sentence at the foot of the last column, and tantalized us forever with fruitless conjecture as to the fate of the hero and heroine" (*My Year in a Log Cabin* 3–4). In this instance, both the completeness and the continuity of the periodical fails; meaning is not deferred to a next issue but lost entirely.

Print workers like Howells, however, first acquired a material appreciation of periodical time as they labored.<sup>7</sup> The ability to connect elements in a manufacturing chain and deliver a product again and again, to time, and at scale, is a condition of industrial manufacture. Without the successful integration of each element in a continuous process there can be no completed object. This situation also applies to books, but integration—from paper making through to distribution—was more critical to periodicals than to books for three reasons: the greater significance of periodicals to the late nineteenth-century publishing industry; the quantity of

print material required by successful regional and national periodicals; and the pressures of the daily, weekly, or monthly publication cycle that shortened the amount of time between manufacture and point of sale.<sup>8</sup> The successful completion of each element in an integrated chain also required that print workers manage the demands of continuity and completeness, familiarity and repetitiousness, faced by the periodical. To operate with the necessary speed and effectiveness to meet the periodical deadline, a typesetter like Howells needed to be familiar with the location of letters and characters in their type case; with how to select them in the correct reverse order (since type was arranged in mirror image); and with how to assemble the moveable metal type upside down in a composing stick so that it could be successfully transferred to the galley for printing. Being familiar enough with these procedures to meet deadlines made typesetting a skilled trade. But like other trades, typesetting relied on the often-mundane repetition of physical actions: each typeset page resulted from returning to the type case and transferring type to the composing stick and the galley numerous times. The familiarity that conferred trade skills also fostered the repetitiousness that created alienated labor.

Typesetters working on book printing relied on a similar combination of skill and repetition, but periodicals more pervasively incubated this experience of print labor. In part this stemmed from the periodical's dominance in the publishing industry. And it is notable that the print workers I mentioned above who became editors and writers—Douglass, Whitman, and Twain—all worked in periodical printing. But the periodical form also metaphorized the temporality of print labor much more explicitly than the book form. Nineteenth-century books and periodicals were both increasingly the result of capitalist manufacturing practices; that common origin did not preclude different qualities and effects. Each issue of a periodical is like a book in the sense that it must have fresh content. But even though books do talk to one another and rely on familiarity and continuity effects—an author's name, sequels, or more

abstract genre effects, for instance—their form does not require them to balance novelty, repetition, and continuity in the same way as the periodical. The one-off periodical is a misnomer; the standalone book is a convention. Many periodicals lasted only a single issue in the nineteenth century, but this was not by design. Books have unique titles and appear in separate volumes; their boundedness, and the flexibility of the period in which they can be bought and sold, puts time and distance between the object and its manufacture in a way that better disguises the repetitive labor of production. Periodicals relish their own repetition and mirror the repetitive labor of their production; they have recurring titles, appear predictably, and have a narrow sales window before the next iteration appears. The words “to be continued” belong in the periodical not the book. With its foreseeable and continual deadlines, the periodical echoed the familiarity and repetition inherent to print labor. The temporal paradoxes often assigned to periodical objects and their content were actually the imprints of industrial practices that anteceded the periodical’s finished appearance.<sup>9</sup>

Periodical time for Howells, then, was an admixture of the human time of his own periodical labor and his acquaintance with periodical temporality. It was in the print shop rather than at the writer’s desk or in the demand for serial parts of his novels that periodical time elapsed for Howells. Critics too often treat literary time primarily as an aesthetic reflex to the changing nature of extraliterary time; they expect authors to be time’s philosophers whose literary forms capture an abstract cultural consciousness changed by new timescapes.<sup>10</sup> But as Cody Marrs argues, “construing literature’s temporalities primarily as evidence of discursive formations that have little to do with individual writers risks losing sight of the temporalities that hinge on the idea of authorship: the patterns that emerge across a writer’s work; the timescapes that an author actively—and sometimes quite self-reflexively—assembles out of culture’s materials” (6). For erstwhile print-trade workers like Howells, one thing worth considering is how the time that dominated the ways they physically made literature comes to

shape the time their own literature represents.<sup>11</sup> For Howells, time was something he created and propelled into the world through his own actions rather than something that primarily took place outside him and that he absorbed.

*Every Other Week*, the magazine that sits at the heart of *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, is less interesting as a periodical object than it is as a metonym for the upstream processes that created Howells's sense of periodical time. In his post-*Atlantic Monthly* books Howells turns his periodical labor into his literary preoccupations. In *A Hazard of New Fortunes* he translocates the rhythms of periodical time to the rhythms of narrative time, which structure the novel more conspicuously than did its serial publication in *Harper's Weekly*. When read alongside the non-fiction he wrote in the years immediately succeeding its publication, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* is a formal distillation and retooling of the periodical time Howells experienced in his typesetting work. Howells's experience of periodical time, that is, coincided with his formative experiences of extraliterary time and the two come together to shape the literary and narrative time of *A Hazard of New Fortunes*.

The literary aspirations that culminated in the creation of *Every Other Week* first flourished while Howells performed his labor at the typesetter's case helping to produce a less esteemed periodical. It was after he returned to the compositor's office in Jefferson, when his father re-entered the newspaper trade in 1851 by publishing the *Ashtabula Sentinel*, that Howells claimed he "came into living contact with literature again, and the day-dreams began once more over the familiar cases of type." It was beside the type cases, he wrote, that "a definite literary ambition grew up in me, and in the long reveries of the afternoon, when I was distributing my case, I fashioned a future of overpowering magnificence and undying celebrity" (*My Literary Passions* 44–45).<sup>12</sup> His day job complete, Howells spent his evenings working on his own manuscripts, but he remembered doing so in terms that make writing a form of manual labor like typesetting and printing: "at night I got out my manuscripts," he wrote, "which I kept

in great disorder, and written in several different hands on several different kinds of paper, and sawed, and filed, and hammered away at my blessed Popean heroics” (55). In later life Howells described the printer’s craft as “simply my joy and pride.” So engrained was printing in his growing up that it was omnipresent: while he remembered a time when he could not read, he admitted that “I do not know when I could not set type.” And there was an intimate connection for Howells between his early literary compositions and material publication. “My first attempt at literature,” he confessed, “was not written, but put up in type, and printed off by me” (*Years of My Youth* 17).

Howells began writing, then, by setting metal type rather than pushing and pulling a pen across paper. This mode of composition continued as Howells experienced the failure of trying to compose his own first serial novel. Howells describes how he “began to write a story in the Ik Marvel manner, or rather to compose it in type at the case, for that was what I did” (*My Literary Passions* 85). The pastiche—with added splashes of Dickens and Thackeray—was *The Independent Candidate*, a serial novel Howells published in his father’s newspaper. His first extended experiment with continuity quickly ran out of control as he faced periodical time head on: how should he continue his story while offering something different in each installment? His solution was to keep adding new characters, but without a clear and continuous plot to integrate them the novel lost coherence. Any novel, whether or not it is written for serial publication, can lose its way. Achieving the length and depth demanded by the novel form can daunt even experienced writers. But in book form, the flexible distance between time of composition and time of publication moderates these demands. Periodicals do not wait. It was impending deadlines that made demands on Howells. Typesetting a novel into existence rather than first writing it and then setting it in type potentially saved him time. In this instance, however, time became the pressure under which Howells faltered. The evidence that his novel lost its way under the pressure of the periodical cycle is its absence from the periodical itself:



Howells had to skip installments to give himself time to catch up.

Truman Capote famously described Jack Kerouac's composition method as typing not writing; Howells's composition method was literally *typesetting*. He composed like this because his typesetting skills were so good. He would grow to distrust the printing business as he witnessed its fragilities and the anxieties it created for his family following the failure of his father's first newspaper, but he was also proud of his own "swiftness and skill" and enjoyed his typesetting work above other literary pursuits. Writing of his time working at a printing office in Columbus, Ohio, Howells remembered that "once when the perplexed foreman could not think of any task to set me he offered me a holiday, but I would not take it, so I fancy that at this time I was not more interested in my art of poetry than in my trade of printing" (*My Literary Passions* 56). In 1865, the editor Alfred Guernsey estimated that a good compositor at *Harper's Monthly* could complete six thousand ems a day ("Making the Magazine" 10). After starting work at seven in the morning Howells reckoned he could set four or five thousand ems of type before midday. After lunch, he would return to the printing shop to correct the proofs of his morning's work and get his cases ready for the following day (*My Literary Passions* 151).<sup>13</sup>

The rhythm of his typesetting work and the weekly print cycle on the *Sentinel* regulated Howells's working and living routine. It was a challenging environment, though less onerous than the punishing cycle Howells experienced when his father turned the *Dayton Transcript* from a triweekly into a daily, and which Howells remembers as a mistake that "infected the whole enterprise" (*Years of My Youth* 36). Setting type drip-fed Howells's early reading and writing experiences to the extent that between the age of ten and age nineteen, when he first worked as a journalist on the *Cincinnati Gazette*, he claimed "the printing-office was mainly my school." And when he described his impressionability during those years, Howells imagines himself in language that suggests just as paper receives ink from the pressure of type

so he receives the imprint of the world around him: “the range of that young experience of mine transcends telling,” he wrote, “but the bizarre mixture was pure delight to the boy I was, already beginning to take the impress of events and characters” (18–19).

The distinction between typesetter and writer mattered little to the young Howells. They were often one and the same thing; both required that rather than being the impessee he become the impressor and return the impressions he felt or read by impressing paper with type and ink. In doing so, his appreciation of periodical time was sensitive to the material or media forms in which writing appeared or by which it was produced. When he found an old diary, for example, it was the diary itself, “a large, flat volume of foolscap paper, bound in marbled boards, somewhat worn with use and stained with age” that struck him as “much more palpable than the emotions of the diarist” (*Years of My Youth* 72). At the Jefferson print offices, the *Sentinel*'s owner replaced the hand press with a secondhand Adams power press, which in Howells's memory developed a personality of its own. The “superannuated veteran” had various “obscure functional disorders of various kinds” and “there was probably some organic trouble, too.” Howells would feed the machine with cornmeal and bran to caulk seams and fissures in the metal, which mainly occurred in the boiler-head and indicated “that it was therefore suffering from a kind of chronic fracture of the skull” (“The Country Printer” 11–13). Howells's later reflections on his early life suggest that the tactile relationship with sensate machinery he developed as he set type either stayed with him into the twentieth century or became the best way for him to reanimate his adolescent years as he looked back on them sixty years later.

What is clear is that Howells's typesetting and printing experiences coincided with his first attempts at writing. As well as the material form he first used to bring words to publication, typesetting and printing were the nursery in which his ambitions flourished and the medium in which he thought. These circumstances allowed no easy separation of work and non-work life.

Rodney Olsen points out that because printing was a precarious trade in small towns and cities it remained a household industry. In these circumstances, “children were valued laborers. They saved the board of apprentices and the wages of journeymen” (35). Even with Howells and his brother Sam working for their father, the Howells family was not large enough to provide all the labor required; journeyman printers and print boys all lived in the Howells home at one time or another (39). Work spaces inhabited domestic spaces even more tangibly for Howells when production of the *Sentinel* moved for several years into an office “domiciled in an old dwelling-house, which we bought, and which we used without much change” (“The Country Printer” 8). Inhabited by the family but also by the newspaper workforce, the domestic space was a forum in which Howells’s periodical labor continued.

These were the years in which Howells developed his sense of the human time of periodical labor and the routines of repetition, interruption, and deferral. Typesetting for Howells combined mechanical craft with literary endeavor while also being an inherently repetitive process. Interruption and deferral resulted from his father’s businesses failing, from the periods Howells spent between typesetting jobs, and from setting new words in type each day that were never final but only the placeholders in periodicals that he would supersede or update in the following days, weeks, and months. Setting and distributing type saw words and their meanings continually made and unmade. Composing in type meant he literally held words in his hands and placed them on the composing stick; more generally the haptic experience of working with print machinery meant Howells touched the materiality of periodical time. It was a way of life, or a set of learned behaviors, as much a part of himself as the way he thought or spoke. In Heideggerian terms, the print shop became Howells’s equipment. And Howells experienced it together with the temporalities of domestic and family life as he grew up, and as his father aged, in periodical time with each issue and each passing print year.

As his career developed, so print occupied domestic space differently. Work unlocked

house doors for Howells; the print that provided his economic capital increasingly provided him with social and cultural capital. The Governor of Ohio opened his house for a Thanksgiving dinner when Howells worked as a journalist at the Cincinnati *Gazette*. This was Howells's first society meal, at which the paper's "young editors were the only guests; and after dinner the family did not forbid itself the gaieties befitting its young people's years" (*Years of My Youth* 154). Domestic spaces became one of the locations where Howells now read and discussed print material coming out of Boston and New York City, cities where he imagined his literary future. "I held it far the highest happiness to call at some house," Howells recalled, "where there were young girls waiting and willing to be called upon and to join them in asking and saying whether we had read this or that late novel or current serial. ... [O]ther things might wait, but these things were pressing" (163–64). The priority of the press to Howells the young typesetter and printer here takes its language into the life of Howells the journalist, for whom establishing relationships and social networks are now more important. The "impress of characters and events" upon him, which in his juvenilia Howells returned by impressing paper with type, is here again making its mark in a domestic environment where print is now not made but circulated. Howells was moving on in the world. In "pressing" on him, the meanings of the book and magazine pressings he enjoyed with others were now the materials of exchange through which friendships developed; they were siblings to the stories he composed in type.

By the time Howells came to write *A Hazard of New Fortunes* he had developed many friendships through the exchange networks in which his editorial and literary work circulated. And in that novel the chance to edit *Every Other Week* is the trigger that leads Basil March to give up his career in the Boston insurance business and move to New York with his wife and family. There he becomes embroiled with the natural gas millionaire, Dryfoos, the magazine's financial backer; the literary syndicator Fulkerson who manages the magazine with Dryfoos's

son, Conrad; and other writers and illustrators whose collective endeavors see the magazine into print and through its first months of publication. Basil is too ironic a creation that he might be mistaken for Howells. But freed from the business of insurance March voices an affection for the periodical business that sounds like a projection of feelings from a life Howells might have lived had his career taken a different turn. In his magazine work, Howells writes, March “found not only escape, but reassurance.” More than this, “in giving rein to ambitions long forborne he seemed to get back to his youth when he had indulged them first; and after half a lifetime passed in pursuits alien to his nature, he was feeling the serene happiness of being mated through his work to his early love” (*Hazard* 101). These thoughts are of a piece with Howells’s poignant later reminiscences of his early periodical labor. Though now filtered through the events of the intervening thirty years—marriage, parenthood, and the work of editing and writing—the periodical time inaugurated in his early life was never far from Howells’s imagination in *A Hazard of New Fortunes*.

As well as catalyzing the novel’s drama, what makes *Every Other Week* immediately conspicuous is the transparency with which it temporalizes its own existence. Periodical titles often incorporated their cycle of publication—daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly—but most qualified that cycle with additional information indicating a location or a publisher. The weekly that serialized *A Hazard of New Fortunes* from March to November 1889 belonged to the Harpers; the title of the *Atlantic Monthly*, which Howells edited for ten years from 1871, reminded readers of its regional home each month. But Howells gave *Every Other Week* an identity defined neither by owners, location, nor by some more abstract quality enshrined in its title, like the miscellaneity of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, on which he worked briefly in 1892. By stripping away such qualifiers, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* turns *Every Other Week* into unadulterated periodicity. Amy Kaplan’s contention that Howells’s depiction of New York City in the novel acts as a “spatial metonymy for the elusive process of social change” has

influenced critical responses for more than thirty years (69). But at the heart of the novel is a magazine whose identity is its publication cycle. The trials of starting and continuing *Every Other Week*'s periodical, biweekly existence mean that time is as much the novel's subject as the space of New York City.

The vision for *Every Other Week* is one that tries to resolve the paradoxes of continuity and completeness, familiarity and originality. Basil accepts Fulkerson's idea that *Every Other Week* should concentrate on the short story and not rely on serialization. "We shall do the best in fiction," March tells the illustrator Angus Beaton, "to confine ourselves to short stories, and make each number complete in itself." Other material—"sketches of travel, and essays, and little dramatic studies, and bits of biography and history"—should all be very light and "always short enough to be completed in a single number" (Howells, *Hazard* 144). When the first dummy copy of *Every Other Week* is ready, Fulkerson explains to Beaton that they have "cut loose from the old traditional quarto literary newspaper size, and we've cut loose from the old two-column big-page magazine size" (139). He also proposes that *Every Other Week* has a different cover illustration for each issue, unlike most magazines of the time. Beaton observes that the dummy is "a book, not a magazine" (137) and Fulkerson tells him they intend to give the American public "twenty-four books like this a year—a complete library—for the absurd sum of six dollars" (138).

The ingenuity of *Every Other Week* is that it combines magazine and book, in the hope of achieving the qualities of both. The nature of its content suggests a desire for completeness, but it is equally unwilling to do without the regular cycle of publication and the recurring name that provide the continuity on which future sales rely. Fulkerson also wants *Every Other Week* to go back "to the good old anonymous system," to stop relying like other periodicals on "names! names! names!" (123). He doesn't want a familiarity reliant on the public recognition of individuals; nor does he want the magazine to provide those individuals with publicity like

a street hawker shouting their names. That kind of too-familiar approach has become the repetitiousness Fulkerson vocalizes. *Every Other Week* should instead rely on an anonymous retinue of authors that establishes familiarity in each issue's style and tone, by showing not telling—or shouting.

That Howells makes Basil and Isabel March the willing bearers of his own sense of periodical time becomes apparent early in the novel, when they head to New York by train in search of accommodation. Passing through space more rapidly than at any other time in the novel magnifies the couple's anxieties about leaving Boston, their home for many years. The Marches are no strangers to New York City. Their wedding journey began there and when they recuperate from harsh Boston winters by visiting New York's spring exhibitions they always return to the same hotel. But living in a city Isabel thinks "so *big*, and *so* hideous" is an altogether more disagreeable prospect. To support her husband's career as editor of *Every Other Week*, however, she suppresses her misgivings, even when Basil tried her "love and patience as a man must to whom the future is easy in the mass, but terrible as it translates itself piecemeal into the present" (*Hazard*, 22). From the train, Basil watches the autumn landscape whirl past outside the carriage window and shifts his engagement with the space he is traveling through onto the axis of temporality: "Do you see," he asks Isabel, "how the foreground next the train rushes from us and the background keeps ahead of us, while the middle distance seems stationary? I don't think I ever noticed that effect before. There ought to be something literary in it: retreating past and advancing future, and deceitfully permanent present" (40). Isabel brings this observation directly into the realm of periodical time just a couple of pages later when she comments on the title of *Every Other Week* and mirrors the temporal structure of Basil's phrasing: "I *wish* Mr. Fulkerson hadn't called it that! It always makes one think of 'jam yesterday and jam to-morrow, but never jam today,' in *Through the Looking-Glass*" (43).

Howells expresses here an evocative and refined sense of time passing. Getting to the

idea of a “permanent present” long before Fredric Jameson or Paul Virilio, his understanding of it is understandably very different. Rather than being trapped in an “unbounded, timeless intensity” (Virilio, 15), Basil March identifies a present that is never sufficiently established to remain in place. The permanent present deceives because its permanence is illusory. There never is any jam because today is always in a state of supersession. What Howells constructs here is a melancholy sense of time’s impermanence. It is also a conservative sense of time that wants things to stand still. In the abstract, the future time in which one has not yet lived is “a mass” of easiness. It is the time in which Basil’s white middle-class opportunities and ambitions may turn into success, for instance, or when his family may grow and thrive, or when they will use his wife’s private income for luxurious rather than essential family expenditure. But when the future turns into the present through which one lives, those “piecemeal” segments of time, one experiences the “terrible” lived details of life. The consolation of time’s impermanence is no consolation at all, since one soon has to endure the next piecemeal segment of time ... and the next.

It is tempting to focus on the train’s role in prompting Basil’s temporal reflection. From Wolfgang Schivelbusch onward, critics have treated the literary railroad as a trope for new forms of nineteenth-century time and space.<sup>14</sup> But while the train journey is the location for Basil’s contemplation of time, his conclusions are not reducible to the modernity railroad travel embodies. Isabel makes this clear in her analogy between time’s passing and *Every Other Week*. The object of focus is not railroad modernity but periodical time. The reason the Marches are heading to New York in the first place is to prepare for Basil’s new job as editor of *Every Other Week*. The periodical is the occasion for the train journey. More generally, the desire for “jam today” is one that periodicals, more so than other literary objects, cannot satisfy because of their future orientation. The piecemeal segments of time are like the predictable appearance of periodical issues. Any capitalist enterprise must achieve its next sale. But that sale need only



be a duplicate. Most books published in the late nineteenth-century did not make money for their publisher. Harper & Brothers, for instance, secured a profit on only one in four of the novels it published (Borus 41). It prospered by reprinting successful books quickly and relatively cheaply from existing printing plates. Book publishers could rely on their back catalogs, or on reprinting new editions of recent books and classics. Periodicals were voracious in their need to find new content; without it they faced oblivion. Without a next issue of *Every Other Week* in two weeks' time there is no work for Basil, and no income. The Marches long for jam today, and a present that is more permanent, but the periodical makes that present more precarious because it requires that the present is sacrificed on the altar of futurity. Basil and Isabel March take up residence in New York with the knowledge that the desire for equilibrium between past, present, and future is doomed to failure. Their security resides only in the successful appearance of *Every Other Week's* next issue ... and the next.

As a result, Howells's expression of periodical time's imperatives undercuts the idea that in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* he fixes the city in place and wishes to maintain control over it. Amy Kaplan argues that Howells draws boundaries to cordon off the Marches' domestic space from the threatening urban spaces of New York City. In doing so, he "distinguishes a colony of interrelated characters in the foreground against a background of fragmented objects and characterless masses." This is his "narrative solution to the ideological question of how to represent and control social difference and conflict" (Kaplan 74). So committed is Howells to controlling social space and its class demarcations, Kaplan argues, that he kills off the disruptive Lindau—the socialist German immigrant, Civil War veteran, and Basil's old friend—to "protect the unifying goal of realism from conflict and fragmentation" (77). This is a powerful critique, but one in which Kaplan imagines background and foreground in purely spatial terms even though Basil clearly shows on his train journey that he also understands them as temporal phenomena. Making city spaces and the people who occupy them

insusceptible to temporal alteration means effectively eliminating the time of social change that, Kaplan claims, informs Howells's realism. Flattening the novel into a series of spatial outcomes that only collapse into one another during the labor riot risks overlooking what Howells knew only too well: that time dislocated unifying projects, city spaces, and the people who occupied them.

The demarcation of foreground and background is less easy to sustain once one recognizes that time's passing informs the narrative motifs of *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. As Brian McGrath points out, Howells was more attuned to the failures of realism than to its capacity to control; his commitment to finding out the truth about ordinary life meant that "the more he discovered the more his novels tended toward disjunction" (231). It is important, then, that Basil and Isabel wander through New York City neighborhoods in what look like bouts of slum tourism not once but several times; Basil also walks on his own through these neighborhoods. The repetition of these excursions allows time to continually make its impact even if on each excursion Basil and Isabel encounter different content. Not only does Howells rewrite the Marches across different works of fiction and non-fiction, he rewrites them during the course of *A Hazard of New Fortunes* as they come into contact with the city over and over again. Such repetition serves less to fix in place evident social differences than to alter the Marches' relation to those social differences. Like the print shop in which Howells made and unmade words as a typesetter, city space is the arena in which iterative time makes and unmakes experience. Howells's narrator admits that in spatial terms the Marches' "point of view was singularly unchanged, and their impressions of New York remained the same that they had fifteen years before" (*Hazard* 305), but point of view and impression do not preclude time making an impact. Basil's point of view will always be that of an educated white middle-class liberal; to see New York as "huge, noisy, ugly, kindly" is an impression at the scale of totality or generalization and not at the level of the lived life he experiences.

The novel's evidence suggests the Marches are indeed changed by New York. Where Basil and Isabel once "only regarded it a spectacle," they come to see it "more now as a life." One consequence is that "March could not release himself from a sense of complicity" with the city. Irrespective of the "whimsical, or alien, or critical attitude he took," Howells writes, "a sense of the striving and the suffering deeply possessed him; and this grew the more intense as he gained some knowledge of the forces at work—forces of pity, of destruction, of perdition, of salvation." Basil comes to see the life he and Isabel leave behind in Boston as "not life" but a "death-in-life" (*Hazard* 306). What distinguishes these conditions, of course, is that in life time continues; in death time is finished, or complete. The development of such powerful thoughts marks a profound turnaround in Basil's character. Even Isabel, who is more anxious about leaving the comforts of Boston, recognizes how quickly she has changed after "less than a year of the heterogeneous gayety of New York." Returning to Boston the summer following her move, she stands in front of "their alienated home" and finds herself eager to return to Basil "in the immense, friendly homelessness of New York, and hold him answerable for the change in her heart, or her mind, which made its shapeless tumult a refuge and a consolation" (308–9). While it is possible to ironize the Marches into a state of naivety on the basis of their more effete characteristics, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* understands that even naive characters can be clear-sightedly self-analytical.

Their repeated walks through the city are the occasions that most profoundly hasten change in Basil and Isabel. The significance of periodical time to these excursions is that originally they are intended as occasions for Basil to gather material for the series of sketches of New York life Isabel thinks he should write for *Every Other Week* but which he conspicuously defers.<sup>15</sup> His first reaction to Isabel's suggestion is that he doesn't want to "leave the personal ground" (Howells, *Hazard* 66). Later, when Conrad Dryfoos makes a similar proposal, March shows a willingness to write something up but "couldn't at all say when I can

get at it” (147). When Fulkerson asks him for a sketch for *Every Other Week*’s first issue, Basil declines by saying “I want to philosophize the material, and I’m too new to it all yet. I don’t want to do merely superficial sketches” (180). Later, when recreating a walk to the Battery that Basil and Isabel took on their wedding journey, Basil makes notes of people and their surroundings. His intention is “to work them up into a dramatic effect in some sketch, but they remained mere material in his memorandum-book” (303–4).

Basil never does write the sketches. Neither does he write the anti-marriage novel he suggests will counteract the “popular demand for the matrimony of others” that comes from too much “novel-reading” (Howells, *Hazard* 479). March is as an inveterate non-writer. There are practical explanations for his continual deferral. “What really occupied and compassed his activities,” Howells writes, “in spite of his strenuous reveries of work beyond it, was his editorship” (306). “With this *Every Other Week* work on my hands,” March tells his wife, “of course I can’t attempt a novel” (479). One can also read in March’s prevarication Howells’s implicit criticism of an aestheticism that philosophizes but never delivers a material outcome. But at root Basil’s deferral is a temporal manifestation of the paradoxical pressures of periodical time that also has implications for the viability of Howells’s realist project.

The sketch was a common feature in magazines in the nineteenth century, with its origins in Washington Irving’s depictions of England, Mary Russell Mitford’s scenes of rural life, Dickens’s views of London in his Boz sketches, and the genre’s transatlantic adaptation and mutation in the hands of Eliza Leslie, Nathaniel Parker Willis, and George William Curtis. Sketches perfectly complemented the periodical form because each was complete. But they also met the requirement for periodical continuity by collectively, issue after issue, establishing the familiarity of a sketch narrator’s voice. The success of Irving’s and Dickens’s sketches relied on the figures of Geoffrey Crayon and Boz. And Howells established his own familiar non-fiction voice, in essay rather than sketch form, in the pages of the *Atlantic* and *Harper’s*.

But if the narrative voice offers the balm of continuity and familiarity, it cannot entirely compensate for a form that represents a series of fleeting glimpses rather than prolonged observations. The sketch perspective alights elsewhere in a narrator's next iteration. Its duration is brief, soon to be superseded by another moment. Basil notes on his Battery walk that his attention is taken by the old houses he sees on Sixth Avenue but that they "were superseded ... by some hip-roof structures on the Ninth Avenue" (Howells, *Hazard* 303–4). The notes in his memorandum-book supersede earlier notes and will be superseded by notes from his next walk. The sketch may have prepared the way for the realist novels of Dickens and Thackeray, but to a professed realist like Howells seeking to offer the kind of studied, durable, and truthful depiction of material, the sketch has all the qualities of the "deceitfully permanent present."<sup>16</sup>

In March's discussion with Conrad about writing sketches for *Every Other Week*, the connection of the sketch to Howells's larger realist aims is evident. "If you can make the comfortable people understand how the uncomfortable people live," Conrad says, "it will be a very good thing, Mr. March. Sometimes it seems to me that the only trouble is that we don't know one another well enough; and that the first thing to do is this." Although Basil agrees, he does not take up the realist impetus—knowing one another more fully—in Conrad's thought: "That's true ... . And then, those phases of low life are immensely picturesque. Of course we must try to get the contrasts of luxury for the sake of the full effect" (Howells, *Hazard* 147–48). Basil dilutes Conrad's idea in his use of the temporal "phases," which seems at odds with the visual and spatial "picturesque." "Low life" becomes a duration rather than an image that the grammar of the sentence suggests it should be: "those *images* of low life are immensely picturesque" would make much more sense. In effect, Basil temporalizes the representation of "low life" into a series of phases, or potential sketches; none accords with the desire to "know one another well enough" because in the next phase what one sees and knows will be different.

Basil's reluctance to write up the sketches, or his incapability of doing so, marks the point at which the realist Howells meets the Howells whose deeply embedded sense of periodical time mitigates against realist time and realist representation. If each sketch reconstitutes meaning, or representation, from a slightly different perspective, and if each observation and the notes one takes supersede earlier observations and notes, then it is difficult to maintain the "fidelity to experience and probability of motive" that Howells thought vital to realism (*Criticism and Fiction* 15). Here we are returned to the interaction of completeness and continuity Howells first met in the periodical print shop: a sketch is a temporary picture, even though it is a complete and discrete element in a periodical; a series of sketches may suggest continuity but this continuity means there can never be completeness, since there must always be a future iteration. Cumulatively the sketches come to resemble cubism rather than realism. The excuses Basil uses to justify his failure to write the sketches—he wants to "philosophize the material" and avoid "merely superficial sketches"—suggest an epistemological problem. Melville famously noted that there is "no earthly way of finding out precisely what the whale really looks like" because "the living Leviathan has never yet fairly floated himself for his portrait" (263). Basil faces a similar dilemma, though its source is time rather than perspective: New York will never stand still long enough for him to paint its portrait.

Howells's realist ambitions did not comfortably fit the rhythms of a specifically periodical time that mitigated against truthful durability in its dependence on iteration and newness. One reason Howells may have returned to his own laboring past in the literature he wrote during the 1880s and 1890s is that it offered an order the future could not.<sup>17</sup> And the brief conversation between Conrad and Basil makes legible at a local level what is also apparent on the novel's larger thematic level: that as the future "translates itself piecemeal into the present" the subjects of representation are themselves pushed out of rhythm with each other. The successful periodical is one that finds an equilibrium between continuity and completeness,

familiarity and originality. *Every Other Week* does this by being magazine and book. Howells's early print experiences and his father's periodical printing failures showed him it was a difficult balance to strike. And one way in which these dislocating experiences of extraliterary time leach into the time of *A Hazard of New Fortunes* is in the disequilibrium that haunts Basil's life.

At the level of friendship, disequilibrium is evident in Basil's failure to rekindle his relationship with Lindau, one of the retinue of authors who regularly supply *Every Other Week* with new content. The renewal and continuation of the friendship relies on Lindau's contributions. Once the contributions cease—when Lindau learns that Dryfoos is a union breaker—so does the friendship. The result, Basil notes, is that only “superficially” do the affairs of *Every Other Week* return to normal. He is left with “a feeling of impermanency from what had happened” (379). There are similarities between New York City's elusiveness and Basil's sense of “impermanency.” And even the continuity that *Every Other Week* seems to offer in its regular fortnightly cycle is undercut by a friction between disharmonious and metronomic cycles that Howells's novel prefigures early on. As Basil leaves the insurance building in Boston where he works as the novel begins, he looks back at the building and “the stone groups of an allegory of life-insurance foreshortened in the bas-relief overhead.” What he notices is that “it was suddenly strange after so many years' familiarity, and so was the well-known street in its Saturday-evening solitude. He asked himself, with prophetic homesickness, if it were an omen of what was to be.” Faced with the clash of past and future, of the familiar past and the ominous future, Basil's response is to turn to Fulkerson and say: “a fortnightly. You know that didn't work in England. *The Fortnightly* is published once a month now” (Howells, *Hazard* 13). In making the leap from the carved allegory, to strangeness and homesickness, and then to magazine frequency, Basil's train of thought attempts to balance the dissonance of strangeness with the consonance of regularity and continuity. And yet the

incongruity of a monthly magazine called *The Fortnightly* also indicates the difficulty of relying on periodical time for security. If what Basil feels is an omen of anything, it is the precarious tightrope on which security and continuity jostle for a foothold.

Just as Howells's father tried to walk that tightrope with his family, so Basil uproots his family to New York and puts them through the inconsistencies of periodical time. Domestic life and periodical life are never quite so integrated as they were in Howells's youth, but one requirement when the Marches look for accommodation is a workspace at home for Basil. The apartments they can afford make this impossible; instead, Basil spends his working time in an office that has been transformed from an old dwelling house in which Fulkerson and the bookkeeper occupy what had been "the reception-room and dining room of the little place" (Howells, *Hazard* 135). There are no jobs for Basil's children, teenagers Tom and Bella, as there was for Howells himself, but *Every Other Week* still galvanizes family life. The lukewarm reception of the New York press to the magazine's first issue annoys Basil and "his wife's indignation superheated his own." Indeed, *Every Other Week* "had become a very personal affair with the whole family; the children shared their parents' disgust; Bella was outspoken in her denunciations of a venal press" (200).

But Basil's underlying sense of "impermanency," his anxieties about his periodical future, and the consequences for his family, become evident after Conrad's death, when Dryfoos visits the offices more regularly and Fulkerson gets "a little anxious about the future of *Every Other Week*" (Howells, *Hazard* 435). As the easy mass of the future begins its transformation into the "deceitfully permanent present," the magazine's prospects become, as Isabel points out to Basil, "a very material point to *us*." Basil responds pessimistically. He thinks that because Dryfoos backed the magazine to keep his son occupied, he will quickly sell up and move on now his son is dead. The continuity on which Basil relies after leaving the insurance business will give way to another example of completeness: the beginning and end



of *Every Other Week*. Nineteenth-century periodical attrition rates were high and Howells knew the economic consequences of periodical failure from his family's experience. After twenty-five years of hard work, Basil says, he is "looking forward to the potential poorhouse as confidently as I did in youth" (436). There will be no jam tomorrow if Dryfoos sells and *Every Other Week* ends.

Basil is trapped in the paradoxes of continuity and completeness, familiarity without repetitiousness. Needing *Every Other Week* to continue, he is haunted by its ending. His pessimism translates into a broader attack on the repetitions vital to continuity. Continuity becomes not just a periodical but a social burden; it draws one into the tactical battles of social class and status that underpin family life. In that environment continuity is generational; it requires that parents induct their offspring by repeating truths whose ideological currency Basil identifies as deceit. He expresses his fears by castigating the craven repetitions parents rely on to help their own children prosper and continue their parents' success:

We don't moil and toil to ourselves alone; the palace or the poorhouse is not merely for ourselves, but for our children, whom we've brought up in the superstition that having and shining is the chief good. We dare not teach them otherwise, for fear they may falter in the fight, when it comes their turn and the children of others will crowd them out of the palace into the poorhouse. If we felt sure that honest work shared by all would bring them honest food shared by all, some heroic few of us, who did not wish our children to rise above their fellows though we could not bear to have them fall below might trust them with the truth. But we have no such assurance; and so we go on trembling before Dryfooses, and living in gimcrackeries. (Howells, *Hazard* 437–38)

Basil seamlessly metaphorizes *Every Other Week*'s iterative quality to describe his family's

prospects. In his pessimism, continuity becomes deceitful repetitiousness. The imbrication of periodical production and domestic life that marked Howells's upbringing here becomes the periodical time that is the undertow of Basil's imagination as he thinks about the early life of his own children.

This is Basil's bleakest moment in the novel. A man fearful that he will no longer be able to produce a magazine once a fortnight trembles at the thought of not producing children with whom he can trust the truth. When replicated in parental behavior, the kind of repetitiousness that makes a periodical predictable and dull results in a social system that is predictably self-serving. Change whose results are unknown—for we cannot be “sure that honest work shared by all would bring honest food shared by all”—threatens the comforts of familiarity that periodicals and social systems risk at their peril. Basil's fear has become existential. The structuring and damaging effect of repetitiousness puts his own family at risk, just as Howells's father's periodical failures affected the family life Howells endured. The “joy and pride” Howells felt as a young printer, when he acclimatized to periodical time with fascination and frustration, has given way to Basil's sense of beleaguerment. Basil's familiarity with periodical time itself becomes a repetitiousness he wearily resents.

What rescues Basil from his parlous condition is continuity. Dryfoos sells *Every Other Week* to Fulkerson and Basil. With some slight modification to the magazine's operation—fewer illustrated articles, Fulkerson's absorption of Conrad's work, the loss of Basil's assistant, the support of the loyal and capable Beaton—*Every Other Week* continues; the right balance of change and continuity saves Basil's family from the poorhouse. *Every Other Week* also continued in Howells's imagination. Basil is still the magazine's editor and part owner in *An Open-Eyed Conspiracy* (1898), whose events take place chronologically after *A Hazard of New Fortunes*.<sup>18</sup> There is no sign, however, that Basil ever does write his sketches of New York for the magazine. And Howells's own realist enthusiasm, expressed so clearly in 1891's *Criticism*

*and Fiction*, never again achieves the fictional high-water mark of *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. His attempt to paint a portrait of city that never stands still creates its own self-critique in the figure of Basil March, whose battles with the paradoxes of periodical time thwart the realist impulse.

I have argued that upstream periodical processes were constitutive of Howells's periodical time. That he recognized their importance to his formative literary experiences is evident when he reflected on the labor of his early life and his labor as a writer in "The Man of Letters as a Man of Business" (1893). Extolling the craft qualities of writing, the man of letters, Howells concluded, "is allied to the great mass of wage-workers who are paid for the labor they have put into the thing done or the thing made; who live by doing or making a thing, and not by marketing a thing after some other man has done it or made it" (445). He modified this claim three years later in "The Country Printer," which begins with Howells claiming that his earliest memories were of the printing office producing his father's newspaper, by writing that "the office was in my childish consciousness some years before the paper was." While he "could not grasp the notion of any effect from their labors," he did vividly remember "the compositors rhythmically swaying before their cases of type; the pressman flinging himself back on the bar that made the impression, with a swirl of his long hair; the apprentice rolling the forms, and the foreman bending over the imposing-stone" (1). The distinction Howells makes between the acts of printing and their "effect"—the printed periodical—is striking. The image he conjures up of men who are swaying, flinging, rolling, and bending in choreographed collaboration as they work evokes the primacy of the human time of periodical labor over the periodical object.

Such an image should caution against the assumption that periodical time is first and foremost the matter of completed periodical objects. Periodical time for Howells was human time; the men he saw in the printing office moved to its demands; his own experiences

supplemented his observations once he grew old enough to participate in printing office rituals. Periodical time also became more complex as Howells experienced its different, and sometimes alienating, manifestations: the contradictions of continuity and completeness; familiarity and repetitiousness; and the angular entanglement of repetition, deferral, and interruption. While these powerful, though increasingly distant, experiences may not have overpowered or replaced the immediate environment that impinges on *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, the evidence of the novel is that neither do they disappear. Instead, they deposit themselves like slow-moving sediment pushed to the edges of a river, waiting to be stirred up by a quickening or deepening current like the one Howells summoned up in *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, the “most vital” of his fictions and written with the printer at his heels. In the 1911 edition of *A Hazard of New Fortunes* Howells retrospectively admitted that it “compelled into its course incidents, interests, individualities, which I had not known lay near, and it specialized and amplified at points which I had not always meant to touch” (vi). If Howells was keen to stress the Haymarket riot in Chicago, the novel’s uncommon preoccupation with the periodical and its foregrounding of temporal structures and motifs suggests those “interests” and “individualities” also included what I have called periodical time. The apogee of Howells’s realist ambition, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* was also the novel in which periodical time returned to epitomize Howells’s realist doubts.

Periodical time as I have defined it in this essay was much more than the cacophony Mark Turner identifies (186–91). In the spirit of pluralizing and localizing time, understanding the “actual archive”—to borrow Trish Loughran’s term (14)—of Howells’s periodical time takes us back upstream, to his early experience of manufacturing periodicals where he first confronted the human time of periodical labor and the temporal paradoxes of periodical time that later come to underpin *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. My understanding of periodical time opens to reinterpretation the work of writers with similar experiences. How does periodical

time make its presence felt in the cadence of Whitman's poetry, for instance, or in *Leaves of Grass*, the nineteenth-century work that best exemplifies the tension between continuity and completeness? Or in Douglass's oratory, his newspaper writing, and his continual but never complete attempts to write his autobiography? Mark Twain may not have said "history never repeats itself but it rhymes." He did write: "History never repeats itself, but the Kaleidoscopic combinations of the pictured present often seem to be constructed out of the broken fragments of antique legends" (343). Both conjure up the key elements of periodical time: a continuity in which each iteration is slightly different and complete in itself; a familiarity that avoids repetitiousness. And Twain's misjudged investments in the Paige automated type compositor show that his upstream past in the print shop never left him. This essay has shown how Howells translated his experience of periodical labor into the literary time of *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. There are more stories to tell about other authors whose experiences of print labor shaped their literature.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For other examples of journalists appearing in nineteenth-century American novels, see Harrison and Lutes.

<sup>2</sup> Other novels to which periodicals are central include Henry James's *The Reverberator* (1888), Jeanette Gilder's *Taken by Siege* (1887), and Lillie Devereux Blake's *Fettered for Life, or, Lord and Master: A Story of To-Day* (1874). Unlike *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, none of these deal with the establishment of a new periodical or the practical difficulties of the periodical's continuation. Instead, the periodical is primarily a social nexus through which characters interact.

<sup>3</sup> Before the Civil War books made up 30 percent of the publishing industry's value. By 1914, books and pamphlets contributed less than 5 percent. See *Preliminary Report of the Eighth*

*Census, 1860* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1862), 174 and *Census of Manufactures, 1914*, 645.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Turner argues that periodical time is the matter of “*media and history and media in history*” (195) but the fact that media must first be manufactured plays no part in his conceptualization. Margaret Beetham suggests that “the production of periodicals at every stage ... is tightly structured by time,” but her understanding of production begins with “the writer’s deadline” and finishes with “the timetables of distribution and reception” (324).

<sup>5</sup> For more on the significance of periodical manufacturing processes to literature and literary culture see Thompson.

<sup>6</sup> For more on these periodical paradoxes, see Mussell.

<sup>7</sup> For two other examples that link authorial labor to the representation of time, see Downes and Stevenson.

<sup>8</sup> It is no coincidence that periodicals, with their requirements for speed and volume, and not books prompted the major technological advances in nineteenth-century printing. See Thompson 8-13.

<sup>9</sup> If this sounds deterministic then it is worth remembering Lisa Gitelman’s argument that “taking a reductively antideterministic position” is not always the most appropriate method, because “material properties do (literally and figuratively) matter, determining some of the local conditions of communication amid the broader circulations that at once express and constitute social relations” (10).

<sup>10</sup> The consensus is that official attempts to standardize and synchronize time failed in the nineteenth century. Stephen Kern argues that artists, scientists, and philosophers responded with a new emphasis on individual and heterogenous time (15–35). Lloyd Pratt claims that “superlocal experiences” won out over “supralocal identity categories” (6). And Thomas Allen suggests that “once we begin to ask what people did with technologies of time ... the

homogeneity of modern national time begins to shatter into myriad fragments of heterogeneous, local, and transient temporal cultures” (10). I take issue not with the conclusions of these arguments but their method, which assumes time is something that happens to us rather than something we do.

<sup>11</sup> As several contributors concluded in a recent discussion forum for the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, it is easier to identify nineteenth-century American authors who were not in some way associated with the printing trades (Finkelstein).

<sup>12</sup> “Distributing” means returning metal type to the type case after it has been used for printing.

<sup>13</sup> The late nineteenth century was the last great age of manual typesetting. Before Ottmar Mergenthaler’s linotype machine finally produced a viable mechanized alternative, typesetting remained a manual job in a machine age. The emergence of typesetting competitions as popular entertainment in the 1880s and 1890s testified to the fascination with human feats that would soon be obsolete. See Walker.

<sup>14</sup> The railroad has particularly fascinated critics of time and technology in Victorian Britain. See Daly, Despotopoulou, Mathieson, Martin, and Milne-Smith. It is noticeable that these critics have barely conceived of any kind of railroad time, or its temporal impact, other than that registered in the sensations and reactions of rail passengers. Just as current understandings of periodical time ignore the time of human labor, so there is no sense of what alternative forms of railroad time existed for those who laid railroad tracks or built and worked the countless locomotives and carriages enabling the rest of the population to undertake rail travel, nor how that experience found its way into literary time.

<sup>15</sup> For more on the relationship between these excursions and the novel’s form, see Raczkowski.

<sup>16</sup> The realist novel does not entirely dispense with the sketch form. Amanpal Garcha argues that the sketch inhabits and affects the realist novel’s form.

<sup>17</sup> There may be good scientific reasons for this. Carlo Rovelli argues that because entropy is

lower in the past, the present and future contain more possibilities that increase entropy and one's sense of disorder (207).

<sup>18</sup> The Marches also appear in *The Shadow of a Dream* (1889) and the short stories "A Circle in the Water" (1895) and "A Pair of Patient Lovers" (1897).

#### Works Cited

- Allen, Thomas. *A Republic in Time: Temporality and Social Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2008.
- Bailey, Henry Turner. "An Analysis of Modern Printing." *The Printing Art* 9.3 (1907): 153–58.
- Beetham, Margaret. "Time: Periodicals and the Time of the Now." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 48.3 (2015): 323–42.
- Borus, Daniel H. *Writing Realism: Howells, James, and Norris in the Mass Market*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1989.
- Cady, Edwin H. 1958. *The Realist at War: The Mature Years, 1885-1920, of William Dean Howells*. Syracuse: Syracuse UP.
- Census of Manufactures, 1914, Volume II: Reports for Selected Industries and Detail Statistics for Industries, by States*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919.
- Daly, Nicholas. "Railway Novels: Sensation Fiction and the Modernization of the Senses." *ELH* 66.2 (1999): 461-87.
- Despotopoulou, Anna. *Women and the Railway, 1850–1915*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2015.
- Downes, Daragh. "The Best of Time, The Worst of Time: Temporal Consciousness in Dickens." *Victorian Time: Technologies, Standardizations, Catastrophes*. Ed. Trish Ferguson. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 16–37.



- “Editor’s Easy Chair.” 1855. *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1855: 123–34.
- “Editor’s Study,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Feb. 1887: 482–86.
- Finkelstein, David. “Victorian printer/compositors turned literary editors/journalists.” 22 Jan. 2018. < <https://list.indiana.edu/sympa/arc/sharp-l/2018-01/msg00042.html>>.
- Garcha, Amanpal. *From Sketch to Novel: The Development of Victorian Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.
- Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.
- Harrison, James G. “Nineteenth-Century American Novels on American Journalism: I.” *Journalism Quarterly* 22.3 (1945): 215–224.
- . “Nineteenth-Century American Novels on American Journalism: II.” *Journalism Quarterly* 22.4 (1945): 335–345.
- Howells, William Dean. *Criticism and Fiction*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1891.
- . “The Country Printer.” *Impressions and Experiences*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1896.
- . *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. New York: Modern Library, 2002.
- . “The Man of Letters as a Man of Business.” *Scribner’s Magazine* Oct. 1893: 429–46.
- . *My Literary Passions*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1895.
- . *My Year in a Log Cabin*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893.
- . *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911.
- . *Years of My Youth*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1916.
- Kaplan, Amy. “‘The Knowledge of the Line’: Realism and the City in Howells’s *A Hazard of New Fortunes*.” *PMLA* 101.1 (1986): 69–81.
- Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space 1880–1918*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983.

- Kohler, Michelle. "Some Glittering Nondescript Vertebrate: The Provocative Style of Realism in Howells' *A Hazard of New Fortunes*." *American Literary Realism* 46.3 (2014): 189–209.
- Loughran, Trish. *The Republic of Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007.
- Lutes, Jean Marie. *Front-Page Girls: Women Journalists in American Culture and Fiction, 1880–1930*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007.
- Martin, Daniel. "'Affirmative Signalling': Dickens's Railway Journalism and Victorian Risk Society." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 22.4 (2017): 427–449.
- "Making the Magazine." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1865: 2–31.
- Marrs, Cody. *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*. New York: Oxford UP, 2015.
- Mathieson, Charlotte. *Mobility in the Victorian Novel: Placing the Nation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- McGrath, Brian S. "W. D. Howells and the Perplexity of Henry James." *American Literary Realism* 44.3 (2012): 230–48.
- Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern UP and the Newberry Library, 1988.
- Milne-Smith, Amy. "Shattered Minds: Madmen on the Railways, 1860–80." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 21.1 (2016): 21–39.
- Mussell, James. "Repetition: Or, 'In Our Last.'" *Victorian Periodicals Review* 48.3 (2015): 343–58.
- Olsen, Rodney D. 1991. *Dancing in Chains: The Youth of William Dean Howells*. New York: New York UP, 1991.
- Pratt, Lloyd. *Archives of American Time: Literature and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2010.

*Preliminary Report of the Eighth Census, 1860*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1862.

Raczkowski, Christopher. "The Sublime Train of Sight in a Hazard of New Fortunes." *Studies in the Novel* 40.3 (2008): 285–307.

Rovelli, Carlo. *The Order of Time*. London: Allen Lane, 2018.

Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. *The Railway Journey*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1986.

Stevenson, Randall. *Reading the Times: Temporality and History in Twentieth-Century Fiction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2018.

Thompson, Graham. "The Seriality Dividend of American Magazines." *American Periodicals* 28.1 (2018): 1–20.

Turner, Mark W. "Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century." *Media History* 8.2 (2002): 183–196.

Twain, Mark. *The Gilded Age and Later Novels*. New York: Library of America, 2002.

Virilio, Paul. *The Lost Dimension*. Trans. Daniel Moshenberg. New York: Semiotext(e), 1991.

Walker, Rumble. *The Swifts: Printers in the Age of Typesetting Races*. Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 2003.