

of their supposed authors because it was not technologically possible to do so. Nox wishes to be read as a memorial to a dead brother, not a novel, to appear to be the original from which we are always one step removed. The novel can strain against that gap but can never bridge it (nor, I suggest, can the eBook). The one-off artist's book can. There's the rub.

In the Afterword, Garrett Stewart points out both the diversity and convergence of the foregoing chapters and emphasizes a disciplinary focus on the "long-form story" as the primary avatar of the "bookish" event whether digital or physical. He does a good job of containing the range of booklets in the bag (to refer back to Morchiladze's *Santa Esperanza*) though the e-publication of the collection means these chapters never have to be encountered either physically or as a group. I've been reading the eBook with "Review Copy — / For personal use only" diagonally in grey across every page, but I won't be satisfied until I possess a physical copy of this useful and thought-provoking collection.

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VECHINSKI, Matthew James. 2020. *Twentieth-Century American Fiction in Circulation: Short Stories Written for Magazines and Republished in Linked Story Collections*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 208. ISBN 9780367424466, Hardback \$160.00. ISBN 9780367824174, eBook \$48.95.

Drawing on reception studies, periodical studies, and genetic criticism, Matthew James Vechinski examines the relationships between short stories originally published in magazines and then collected as sequences in book form. This (sub)genre, often referred to as a "composite novel" or, in Vechinski's preferred term, a "linked story collection", operates distinctly from a simple assortment of stories published within a particular span or comprising an author's lifetime, generating tighter links among recurrent characters, common settings, and/or thematic threads. While several studies have considered this form of fiction, Vechinski's is the first monograph to read such collections with and against their original periodical versions, thinking of the earlier magazine publications not as implicit drafts to be repurposed in books, but as texts that have been "finished twice", standing as independent entities in each print medium (2). As Vechinski explains, the original published forms of these stories "were considered complete and able to be appreciated singly by a magazine audience prior to having

been collected alongside other fictions written to complement them — not merge with them entirely — when republished in a book” (25). This conceptual starting point leads Vechinski to consider both the bibliographical and reception contexts of various magazines and the republished and (usually) revised versions that would migrate from periodical to book.

Beginning with William Faulkner’s *The Unvanquished* (1938) and earlier appearances in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Vechinski then proceeds across the twentieth century in American fiction, from Sherwood Anderson’s *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) in *The Masses* and *The Seven Arts*; to Mary McCarthy’s *The Company She Keeps* (1942) in *Southern Review* and *Partisan Review*; to John Barth’s *Lost in the Funhouse* (1967) in *The Atlantic* and *Esquire*; to Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* (1989) in *Seventeen* and *Ladies Home Journal*. This range of examples enables Vechinski to consider niche literary journals (the short-lived *Seven Arts*), more established but commercially limited periodicals (*Partisan Review*) and mainstream publications, especially those not often considered in academic contexts (*Seventeen*, *Ladies Home Journal*). Vechinski posits Tan’s collection as the “end of an era” (176) of magazine-book interactions, contending in a coda that magazine fiction no longer functions in the same ways in twenty-first-century American culture, with the transition of most magazine content away from the ephemerality of the weekly or monthly print issue to the digital space of a periodical’s internet presence, even when websites and apps coexist within a larger media umbrella that still contains a printed periodical. Here the possible counterexample of a book like Jennifer Egan’s *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2011), with several chapters having appeared previously in *Granta*, *Harper’s*, *The New Yorker*, and *Tin House*, would have been a welcome addition to this discussion. While Egan has certainly capitalized on the possibilities for online publication, for instance in her story “Black Box”, first “published” as a series of tweets and then reassembled as a *New Yorker* contribution, the kinds of continuities and variations Vechinski traces elsewhere are equally in place in *Goon Squad*.²

Vechinski’s careful attention to the reception contexts of magazine fiction sets this study apart from other scholarship on linked story collections. This strength is especially evident in the Anderson chapter, where Vechinski demonstrates that the “spiritual isolation of Anderson’s characters conforms to and conflicts with other notions of modern alienation articulated

2. For example, the moments of prolepsis in the book version of the “Safari” chapter do not appear in the story’s earlier version in *The New Yorker*. See my “The Editorial Ontology of the Periodical Text” (89–90).

by and in" *The Masses* and *Seven Arts* (75), and in his documenting of the kinds of audiences constructed by *Seventeen* and *Ladies Home Journal* in the 1980s. As he notes, "*Seventeen* and *Ladies' Home Journal* give readers the impression that Tan's stories describe a culture unfamiliar to them, while carefully preserving their audiences' usual frames of reference" (148). Vechinski assembles an array of archival evidence along the way, including the paratexts of first editions, author's drafts and letters, and the original issues of the magazines in question, often extending beyond a specific issue to offer an overview of other issues from the same year. This depth of material evidence leads to several illuminating comparisons of magazine and book versions, such as the removal of several paragraphs about the protagonist's childhood in the *Seventeen* version of "The Rules of the Game", which makes the story conform to the magazine's implicit sense that "mothers and daughters may have intense disagreements, but they are likely to be fleeting", whereas book readers know that it takes the daughter in this story "years to mend the bond with her mother" (158). Similarly, Vechinski demonstrates that in McCarthy's "The Man in the Brooks Brothers Shirt", which found a home in *Partisan Review* "after its frank depictions of sex and adultery" led to a rejection by *Southern Review* (93), the protagonist's marital history changes from magazine to book, so that the titular character "no longer appears as divorced and remarried; his ex-wife in the *Partisan Review* version is mentioned only as an early lover" (96). Through these kinds of cases, Vechinski demonstrates the specific ways in which authors' understandings of their work shifts from isolated magazine stories to a more cohesive collection, the "points during the genesis of a text when there are openings for the author to direct her efforts toward a volume of interconnected stories" (26).

While Vechinski provides a clear and rich sense of the kinds of fiction and non-fiction appearing in this range of magazines, establishing the parameters within which these stories' original readers would have encountered them, his inquiry is surprisingly light on its looks at actual pages from those issues. Nowhere do we find, for instance, readings of the specific advertisements, illustrations, or other elements that make periodicals so importantly distinct from books, and which might have made for illuminating juxtapositions to the texts of the stories themselves. Illustrations from these magazine texts, or from the dust jackets of first editions (possible permissions obstacles notwithstanding), would be a helpful way for to Vechinski's readers to see how these stories and the other texts and images surrounding them looked when first published, and would be very much in keeping with his broader interest in periodical studies' emphasis on the

magazine as a “cultural object, one that brings together many different kinds of content” (19). Vechinski notes, for instance, that Barth’s “Petition” (1968), about male conjoined twins and their female lover, “would doubtless appeal to *Esquire*’s target demographic” (131), but what might we make of the contents of that issue more generally, from James Baldwin’s cover article, “How Can We Get the Black People to Cool It?”, to a John Updike story (“The Slump”), articles about Susan Sontag, Dorothy Parker, and Ted Kennedy, archival pieces from Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsberg, reports of a skin-lightening ointment for Black citizens hoping to pass, and the cultural impact of highway ads for fast food. Surely positioning Barth’s story in this context, not to mention the broader background of additional *Esquire* issues in the late ’60s, would require thinking beyond the sexual politics of “Petition” itself.

I offer this kind of objection not to detract from the many lessons to be learned from Vechinski’s approach, which will be illuminating to scholars interested in these authors, twentieth-century American fiction, and the intersections of periodical studies and book history generally. Rather, I would hope that additional studies in Vechinski’s vein might extend this way of thinking through the (often quite complicated) relationship between periodical and book versions. Beyond the authors Vechinski surveys here, there would be much to say about the magazine roots of many other examples of this book genre — such as, in the U.S., Jean Toomer’s *Cane* (1923), Flannery O’Connor’s *Wise Blood* (1952), Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine* (1984, with subsequent editions in 1993 and 2009), Tim O’Brien’s *The Things They Carried* (1990), Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), Don Lee’s *Yellow* (2001), or Egan’s *Goon Squad*, among many other possibilities in other national contexts. But surely one of the marks of truly rewarding scholarship is to begin thinking about where else it might lead.

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Work Cited

- YOUNG, John K. 2018. “The Editorial Ontology of the Periodical Text”. *Ecdotica* 15: 88–128.