

surrounding literary originality. In other chapters, the reverse is the case, with Bailes emphasizing controversies around literary originality without sufficiently exploring how these controversies are related to scientific practices. Bailes explains in her introduction that a central aim of the book is to trace the “renovating possibilities natural history held for female authors” (17). While natural history serves as a theme in each of the chapters, it is not consistently apparent precisely what type of “renovation” it afforded women nor is it consistently apparent what its “renovating possibilities” have to do with conceptions of literary originality. In each of the chapters Bailes effectively presents an illuminating body of research and work individually, but it can be difficult to glean how they combine to form an overarching argument.

Indeed, it is not until its conclusion that the book’s through line becomes fully apparent, and then it is challenging to weave all of the fascinating details that the chapters present into the larger project. For instance, by the end of chapter 2, readers are left to wonder what Maria Riddell’s intriguing use of biological hybridity to shore up British nationalism says about her relationship to literary originality. One also wonders in what ways Riddell “shaped the literary canon,” particularly given how distinctive her literary techniques seem, according to Bailes’s portrayal, to have been (1). In most of the other chapters Bailes presents similarly lingering questions, and only some of them are answered by the book’s conclusion. It is a testament to the strength of Bailes’s inquiry that it prompts a lively curiosity in the reader, but *Questioning Nature* would have been a more successful book had it left fewer questions unanswered.

Bailes makes a convincing case that, in the second half of the eighteenth century, some British women believed in their capacity to make unique contributions to natural history while others believed that natural history afforded them unique opportunities for expressing complex forms of literary creativity (including the paradoxical variety of “collective originality”) (94). By the 1830s, however, natural history no longer promised the same “social and literary authority” (9). Indeed, with the flourishing of romanticism, serious scientific practice largely lost its literary appeal. Authors became more likely to “spiritualize” or domesticate nature than to subject it to empirical inquiry (195). In pursuing complex dynamics between literature and science in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, *Questioning Nature* helps establish useful analytical frameworks for understanding such dramatic shifts. Future scholarship would do well to build on Bailes’s exploration to illuminate more fully the literary and cultural interchanges that inform these shifts and their consequences.

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HANNAH BARKER. *Family and Business during the Industrial Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. 262. \$90.00 (cloth).  
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There is a reason that the word “family” comes before “business” in the title of this book. While she has written previously on businesswomen, in this book Hannah Barker explores the social and affective relations behind family businesses. Barker concentrates on tradespeople who lived in Liverpool and Manchester in the industrial decades of the 1780s–1820s, showing us the experiences of small retailers and manufacturers, or the “lower middle class,” during the Industrial Revolution.

Six well-researched chapters break down into three larger topics: how trading families invested and managed their wealth as well as strategized about bequeathing it; the familial relationships of those in trade and the place of love and duty in those relations; and the physical spaces of tradespeople’s households. Barker (and her co-author for chapter 1, Mina Ishizu, a

postdoctoral research associate), approach the management of wealth by examining tradesmen's wills. These sources show that they held wealth primarily in their businesses, as well as in cash and real estate. Tradesmen invested in property close to home rather than investing in the stock market, which Barker and Ishizu note may indicate an aversion to risk. (Although Liverpool tradespeople did regularly invest in privateering and slaving ships.) Barker posits that tradesmen may have invested in real estate more than the middle classes and that income from rentals may have been higher than investment returns. One wonders whether if more women had been included in this study these findings would have varied, as my own work shows that women were more inclined to invest in stocks than were men, who favored land.

Barker's findings on inheritance show that tradesmen differed little from other men who made wills. Men in trades showed a sense of duty toward their primary dependents: wives and children. Barker usefully shows how trade directories are a better source than are wills for tracing the inheritance of family businesses. Overall, she finds this social group acted like many other men in making their widows their main heirs (at least until remarriage), practicing equitable inheritance among their children, and leaving most of their estates to their nuclear families rather than extended kin or non-kin. Barker makes an intriguing aside about "familial credit" (51) (as different from an individual's credit or reputation) that historians of credit might want to take up and explore further. And she helpfully reminds us that in addition to the legal context there was an equally powerful ethical context that governed the making of wills and designating to whom property should be bequeathed.

In the second section of the book, the topic of business drops out almost entirely, and the focus is on the family relations of those who were in trade. These findings are important, since the majority of scholarship on feelings and emotion is usually from the elite's perspective. In one chapter, Barker examines the internal fractures and power relations within families, in other words the messier side of family life. Using equity and ecclesiastical court records, Barker examines inheritance disputes among tradespeople. Both sides in these cases appealed to concepts such as fairness and equity in the settling of family resources. The cases also show that tradespeople believed that a distribution of property indicated affective ties. Some of Barker's most interesting evidence centers on partnership agreements between siblings. The old saw about not mixing business and family could have arisen out of these cases.

The second chapter in this section turns from family disputes to familial cooperation, and from court records to personal accounts such as diaries, memoirs, and letters. This chapter is a fine addition to the history of emotions, especially from the lens of the workingman, and it will appeal to historians of masculinity. Barker examines intergenerational support (both material and emotional), as well as the importance of horizontal/sibling ties. What stands out the most is the emotive words used by male grocers and cheese mongers. These tradesmen wield the language of romantic love, domesticity, and sensibility just as well as do their social betters. The example of John Coleman, who looked for poems in the *London Magazine* to describe the love he felt for his wife when he married her and the grief he felt at her death, is stunning. Although, it is perhaps less of a surprise that the men Barker cites all seem to be members of Methodist or other emotive religious sects.

In the final section of the book Barker details the physical spaces inhabited by tradespeople and provides an excellent start to an overdue area of research. One chapter examines the "lived experience of those in trade" (157). Barker (and her co-author for this chapter, postdoctoral research associate Jane Hamlett) skillfully show how physical space affected familial relations and vice versa. They argue that the household spaces of modest tradesmen contained both domestic and commercial spaces and the fluid boundaries between the two put to the test the notion of any strict public-private divide. In many trading households privacy was more of an ideal than a reality. This chapter includes sound evidence on the size of tradesmen's households, the location of their households on the streets of Liverpool and Manchester (derived from trade directories), and the size and layout of these structures (creatively mined from newspaper advertisements and inventories). Barker ends her book on a strong note with a chapter

analyzing the politics of space in the families and households of tradespeople. She argues that control of and access to space were important indicators of household status and one's relationship to the household head was the most important indicator of control and access. Diaries reveal that access to the parlor or the dining room table were the most coveted spaces.

This book has much to offer family, social, economic, cultural, and urban historians. It is written in an accessible manner, although for a scholarly audience. Graduate students will find the digressions into historiography very useful. The only thing missing from this woman's historian's perspective was more evidence about tradeswomen, but historians of masculinity will find much here to mull over.

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MICHAEL BROWN. *The Irish Enlightenment*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. Pp. 640. \$39.95 (cloth).  
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This work is an outstanding contribution to an ongoing debate over the nature and extent of the Enlightenment in Ireland. Michael Brown provides a synthesis and overview of the major currents in Irish intellectual life, including rare analyses of Catholic, Presbyterian, and Irish-language debates and including a striking range of literary sources. This wealth of material is marshaled to make the case for the presence not only of Enlightenment in Ireland, but of a distinctively *Irish* Enlightenment. This was shaped above all by the competing claims articulated by rival confessional communities to common standards of civility and rational inquiry.

A brief introduction announces the book as building on the "national" paradigm in the historiography of Enlightenment, established by Roy Porter and J. G. A. Pocock in the 1980s. Brown combines this perspective with the recent elaboration within Irish, British and American studies of a concept of "peripheral" Enlightenment located within an "Atlantic World."

Two sets of organizing categories structure the work. The first is chronological: Brown identifies "religious," "social," and "political" Enlightenments, covering the early, middle and later parts of the eighteenth century respectively. The second is more contentious: it is in Brown's terms, "methodological." Intellectual life in Ireland, he claims, was defined by conflicts between "scholastic," "empirical," and "rationalist" approaches to knowledge and the human subject. The presence of "empiricism" and "rationalism" in a given text is taken as proof of its "Enlightenment" sympathies. The "scholastic" alternative, by contrast, is defined as purely conservative: "scholasticism in all its varieties ... presumed the potency of preexisting authority" (9).

The first section of the book addresses the "religious" Enlightenment, reconstructing predominantly intra-confessional debates among Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Catholics. In the first chapter Brown argues that the early eighteenth-century Presbyterian subscription controversy was produced by the encroachment of "rational" and "empirical" approaches to the interpretation of scripture and the moral capacity of man. In the second he switches focus to the Anglicans, who sought to purify the communion of rationalist "freethinking" tendencies and develop historical justifications for its political hegemony. In the third he considers the embattled Catholic community. This was the least susceptible to heterodoxy, but anticlericalism and freethinking tendencies were perceptible at the margins. Its political stance became increasingly "empirical," however, as Irish Catholics sought to make a case for their utility to the Anglican ruling class.

In the second section of the book Brown explores more well-trodden territory: the "social" Enlightenment of political economy and associational life. Irish discourses of improvement,