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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

“On or about 1910,” Virginia Woolf famously wrote, “human character changed”—a resonant rhetorical flourish that nevertheless helps capture the turbulent sense of change we now associate with the loosely defined concept of modernism. A prolific reader and reviewer as well as the owner of one of Britain’s most successful small publishing firms, Woolf understood that this revolution she described was carried out first in print. Indeed, looking back from the vantage of our own digital age, we can see that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were the golden age of print culture. New technologies (such as the rotary press and the Linotype machine), the explosion of literacy, and the cheap cost of paper and ink meant that mass culture first dawned not in film or on the radio, but on the newspaper stands and in the bookstalls of London, New York, Delhi, Paris, Buenos Aires, and Los Angeles. Paper-wrapped novels and books were certainly available in abundance, but what really sold were the magazines. In their pages the elite productions of modernism first appeared, from Eliot’s *The Waste Land* to Joyce’s *Ulysses*. It was also in the magazines that new genres like science fiction, the detective story, and the Western took shape. And they grew up alongside the new technology of advertising, an industry that pumped vast amounts of capital into the publishing business so that literary production became tightly entwined with a burgeoning consumer culture. The magazines, in effect, shaped modernity in deep yet still largely unexplored ways—and it is the mission of this journal to facilitate the scholarly exploration of this long-neglected history of the modern.

The *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* is devoted to the study of modern periodicals, by which we mean periodicals published roughly in the period from 1880 to 1950, whether they were aggressively modernist or anti-modernist, popular or elite, mass circulation or specialized, long-lasting or brief. Daily newspapers, weeklies, monthlies, quarterlies, and irregularly published little magazines will all be part of the field covered by this journal. We will not limit ourselves solely to “literary” magazines, but will instead cultivate and publish interdisciplinary work on all aspects

of periodical culture and expect to draw on the work of historians, literary critics, sociologists, and others. The journal intends to publish full-length articles, shorter notes and comments, bibliographies, biographical essays, reviews of books, digital projects, research archives, and other such significant scholarly resources.

This is a propitious moment for launching the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*. The last decade and a half have seen a flourishing of research on modern periodicals. Sean Latham and Robert Scholes's "The Changing Profession: The Rise of Periodical Studies" (*PMLA* 121 [March 2006]: 517–31) marked the broad recognition of a rising distinct research field. The success of the Modernist Journals Project in publishing online editions of modern journals, along with accompanying critical essays and introductions, has helped spark increasing amounts of high-quality scholarship. Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker's new three-volume *Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (Oxford University Press, with volume 1 published in 2009) will lay the groundwork for new work on modern magazines in the way that Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich's *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* did for "little magazine" research beginning in the 1940s. Several recent conferences on both sides of the Atlantic have helped foster work broadening out from the old focus on modernist little magazines to accomplish interdisciplinary work on a broad range of modern periodicals. We believe the time is right for such a journal for the burgeoning field of modern periodicals research.

JMPS will appear twice each year in a digital format designed to provide its readers and contributors with a rich array of tools for exploring the complexities of modernist print cultures. Major digital thematic resource collections like the Modernist Journals Project as well as mass digitization projects like Google Books are making available vast archives of magazines and newspapers that generally retain the look and feel of the original documents. This process of digital "remediation" not only makes these materials widely available to scholars but also serves to defamiliarize print culture itself, opening new critical and scholarly vantages on its material and historical specificity. Interpreting and analyzing these objects often requires extensive use of images and illustrations, which can be accessed more readily and produced much more inexpensively in an electronic environment. Similarly, the digital structure of *JMPS* will enable readers to move productively between the journal and the various digital archives that now house primary material. It is our hope, in short, that *JMPS* will be a dynamic

rather than simply static journal: a central organizing node in a larger (and quickly developing) network of scholarship on magazine culture in the modernist era.

All articles and notes that appear in *JMPS* will be subjected to vigorous peer review overseen, in part, by the fifteen experts who constitute our advisory board. We welcome submissions and inquiries about all aspects of periodical culture that fall under the broadly construed rubric of the modern. Articles must be submitted in English, but they may be about magazines published in any country or language. They may range in length from a few pages for brief scholarly notes to thirty pages for longer essays. We plan to publish not simply works of criticism but also biographies, histories, teaching documents, review essays, and other such materials that take as their central aim the exploration of modern print culture as it flowered in the magazines. We will soon have a centralized editorial management system in place, but for now please feel free to send all submissions and inquiries either to Sean Latham at sean-latham@utulsa.edu or Mark Morrisson at mxm61@psu.edu.