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Members only: the Victorian gentlemen's club as a space for doing business 1843-1900

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Members Only:

The Victorian Gentlemen's Club as a Space for Doing Business 1843-1900

Abstract

This paper examines how the gentlemen's club was a space for facilitating business activities in the Victorian publishing industry. They blurred the boundaries between the social and professional sphere, to the point that many used the club as hub for networking and for providing opportunities. The gentlemen's clubs of London have been examined within gender studies and in studies on social culture, where emphasis has been placed on its role in elite and middle-class society and its influence on gender and class inequality. However, little attention has been dedicated in academic business research to the club's influence on shaping the activities of businesses in the publishing industry. By exploring how individuals engaged with so called "club life," it is possible to analyze the dynamics of how and why gentlemen's clubs were important to literary businesses. Through an exploration of narrative and documentary archival sources, this paper explores the perspective and choices of individuals working in the publishing industry, and the extent to which their choices in business were governed by the cultural influences of the gentlemen's club.

Keywords: Clubs, Professions, Culture, Nineteenth Century, Britain, Publishing

Word Count: 13,069

Members Only:

The Victorian Gentlemen's Club as a Space for Doing Business 1843-1900

Introduction

Organizations are shaped by the world that they inhabit, and there has been an increased amount of research dedicated to exploring the role of culture in business (Hansen 2007; Lipartito 2008; Rowlinson and Hassard 2014). More specifically debates have emerged which discuss how exploring culture in business history can be insightful, as analyzing cultural meanings and values can provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between individuals, organizations and the wider society (Godley and Westall 1996; Hansen 2012; Lee 2011; Lippmann and Aldrich 2014; Mordhorst 2014). Drawing on these debates, this paper explores the gentlemen's clubs of nineteenth century London, arguing that they were important facilitators for doing business in the British publishing industry. Men working in publishing, also referred to as men of letters (Gross 1969), used gentlemen's clubs to gain valuable contacts for business, seek out new opportunities and negotiate contracts.

Initially, gentlemen's clubs were convenient spaces that fostered socializing, conversation and dining (Black 2012, 2; Milne-Smith 2011, 2). Yet their purpose evolved, also becoming spaces for doing business, blurring the boundary between the social and professional sphere despite many clubs discouraging in some cases outright forbidding business to be conducted within their walls (Black 2012, 45). This puts forward the question: why were gentlemen's clubs of London important to those working in the publishing industry, and how did these clubs facilitate individuals doing business? Furthermore, for those working in the publishing industry, did the role of the club change over the nineteenth century? These questions probe into an area rarely discussed in business by focusing on the professional behaviours of those working in the publishing industry, furthering understanding of the

practices of professional authors, publishers and literary agents in the context of literary and wider Victorian culture. The paper argues that men of letters wanted to be perceived as professional therefore they aligned their practices with the established professions, which included socializing at gentlemen's clubs.

The research examines how gentlemen's clubs influenced the business activities of publishers; professional authors (defined as those who used their publications as their source of income); editors and literary agents, which can collectively be called literary businesses. By exploring the processes of how and why these spaces were favored, provides a greater understanding into the culture that influenced how business was conducted. This paper furthers research that explores how culture and shared values between individuals in organizations shape decision making processes (Godley and Westall 1996; Hansen 2007).

The gentlemen's clubs of London – which I shall refer to in short as the club – have been examined as cultural institutions within gender studies and in studies on social culture. The emphasis has been placed on their role in elite and middle-class society, in addition to their influence on gender and class inequality (Black 2012; Milne-Smith 2006, 2011; Tosh 2015). However, little attention has been dedicated to the club's influence on organizations, a gap in research where this paper contributes. Discussing how literary businesses used the club as ways to impress potential business partners or as staged publicity opportunities makes for an interesting study into the relationship between different types of businesses, in different sectors and how culture from one can permeate culture in the other; providing a deeper exploration of the connection between businesses and wider society. To provide a theoretical underpinning, the paper begins with a discussion of new institutionalism in relation to the professions, followed by an explanation of the sources used. The historical context of the Victorian publishing industry and London clubs provides a lead to the empirical research, which

exemplifies how the club was used for business. The paper concludes with an exploration of club culture and why it shaped the activities of literary businesses.

Literature Review

By the early nineteenth century, the club was recognized as a formal structure in society (Milne-Smith 2011). Subsequently gentlemen's clubs as cultural institutions became 'creatures of their relational networks' as the cultural values embedded within the club reflected the understandings of social reality (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 343). Literary historian Barbara Black discusses that the clubs of London were social forces, in addition to being significant cultural influencers (Black 2012). They played a central role in constructing an elite class, fostering a community that defined what it meant to be a man in nineteenth century England (Black 2012; Milne-Smith 2011; Tosh 2007). Most historians agree that the club was a masculine escape for the middle-class gentleman of the nineteenth century, a way for them to flee from the domesticity of the Victorian home (Milne-Smith 2006; Sinha 2001; Tosh 2007). Steinbach (2017, 133) discusses that Victorian culture associated the home as domestic, therefore the physical space of the home was considered as feminine, referred to as the 'domestic ideology.'

In conjunction, Tosh (2007, xxi) highlights that within the sphere of masculinity 'peer group activity' gave 'further flourish to club life;' making the masculine space of the club a sought after environment, as the aspirations of middle-class men increasingly moved towards professional or entrepreneurial success. Milne-Smith (2011, 6) argues that men forged their identities at the club as they became avenues to affirm status, and membership to an elite club was a highly prized 'equivocal sign of social status.' In addition, Black (2012) argues that the club helped to shape professional life through a set of shared cultural practices. These studies demonstrate how the club as a cultural institution was a significant part of Victorian society

and culture. They were homosocial spaces that fostered social ties and created an environment which allowed men to display their status and social capital, prompting questions as to why this culture then permeated organizational life in the nineteenth century; an aspect that will be explored later in this paper.

Clubs were key in mediating and distributing social power (Thévoz 2018). They helped those who could gain entry to these exclusive spaces to exercise influence, and as argued by Thévoz (2018) an unprecedented amount of power – especially in the political sphere – was exercised in clubs. Tosh (2007, 128) discusses that clubs are often discussed as a mechanism for individuals to gain access into professional and political spheres, providing upwards social mobility which he describes as 'social springboard[s].' By the mid nineteenth century 'professional occupations trebled in number…and came to constitute a substantial element in the middle class' (Perkin 2002a, 354). During this time professionals were gaining political and social importance, and one of the key characteristics of the profession in the Victorian era was the aspiration of the professional class to raise their social status (Perkin 2002b; Ruth 2006). In conjunction with this shift of attitude towards the professions, being paid for intellectual work was gaining increased social acceptance as authors, publishers and editors also began to think of themselves as professional (Feather 2006). Therefore, using the new institutionalist approach to the theory of professions, provides an underpinning for exploring this underexamined aspect of the history of the British publishing industry.

Recent research on the area of professions and organizations has stemmed from the sociology of the professions and organization theory that explores the managerial aspects of professional work (Brock and Saks 2016; Saks and Brock 2018). Professions are often categorized as non-manual occupations, providing a service from individuals who have advanced training, education or knowledge (Millerson 1964). Furthering this definition Leicht (2016) highlights that professions can be defined as occupational groups which determine those

who are deemed worthy for societal rewards by performing complex tasks. However, this paper uses on a broad definition which views professions as 'occupations that are organized around a formal corpus of specialist knowledge…occupations are centered on the provision of expertise' (Corfield 1995, 25). In particular, the paper draws on the approach that high social prestige and status could be viewed as a type of currency, 'negotiated in the wider societal market,' which supports the view that membership to exclusive clubs were mechanisms for raising an individual's status in society (Perkin 2002b, 16).

Larson (1977) and Abel (1979) in their respective works argue that the professions, mainly through the application of specialist knowledge, are a display of power from one individual to another. Furthermore, Jackson (1970, 10) discusses that the process of professionalization is an attempt to act as a barrier to entry for newcomers wishing to enter 'the sacred company.' The club could be viewed almost as a physical representation of that barrier to entry. As pointed out by historian Richard Salmon, in the mid nineteenth century literary professions began to define their 'collective autonomy' which began to resemble 'modern sociological definitions of professional ideology' (Salmon 2013, 12 - 3). However, formal qualifications which are generally identified as being required for an occupation to be classed as a profession, were not and are still not required for entry to work in the publishing industry (Evetts 2011; Freidson 1988; Millerson 1964). Yet some of those who worked in Victorian literary businesses classed themselves as professional (Murray 2006).

Research on the professions and more widely professional work has moved away from what Muzio, Brock and Suddaby (2013, 701) refer to as 'trait-based perspectives' which primarily explore 'occupational dominance and monopoly' (Abbott 1988; Anteby, Chan, and DiBenigno 2016; Brock and Saks 2016; Evetts 2011; Larson 1977). Conversations have moved towards exploring the broader roles that professionals conduct in organizations, instead of being focussed on what constitutes a profession. Social historian Rosemary O'Day (2000)

argues that the previous descriptive nature of the profession in research is static. Instead she calls for historians to explore the role professions played in society, which intensifies the meaning of their historical development. Therefore exploring the juxtaposition between literary businesses and gentlemen's clubs in the context of professional work, provides a framework for understanding why clubs had an impact on how authors, publishers and literary agents did business; as it is 'sometimes forgotten that clubs were for many members a working environment, where business was conducted and working partnerships sustained' (Tosh 2015, 570). Historical research and archival methods can bring further understanding to how professional contexts impacted the publishing industry through an exploration of narrative sources which are discussed in the next section.

Method & Sources

Examining gentlemen's clubs in relation to the publishing industry is particularly apt for using historical research methods. There is an increasing dialogue which discusses how historical research and archival research methods are useful for exploring how businesses develop and subsequently how organizations change within their institutional environments (Pfefferman 2016; Powell and Colyvas 2008; Rowlinson and Hassard 2013; Suddaby 2010; Üsdiken and Kieser 2007). Adopting an historical approach and drawing on archival sources can provide valuable insights when interpreting the role of culture in business and can further understanding of organizational culture and change (Godley and Westall 1996; Hansen 2007, 2012; Rowlinson and Hassard 2014).

Organization theorists Rowlinson, Hassard and Decker (2014) argue that it is feasible to use historical sources generated by organizations themselves. They discuss one approach is 'ethnographic history' which involves 'reading sources "against the grain" in order to recover practices and meanings from organizations' (Rowlinson, Hassard, and Decker 2014, 251). This

paper takes an interpretative approach, and utilizes ethnographic history as a research strategy, which has involved analyzing sources which demonstrate what life was like at the time and placing significance in the narrative on intriguing sources. Rowlinson, Hassard and Decker (2014) discuss that organizational archives are under-utilized sources of data and hold vast amounts of 'unexplained' sources. They highlight that there is much 'serendipity' when it comes to finding sources, although you still need to know what you are looking for (Rowlinson, Hassard, and Decker 2014, 267).

Historians are bound by the sources which are presented to them in the archive, they do not create their evidence and to a certain extent their research can be restricted. As discussed by Rojas (2010) there are variances between organizations in what is saved and when it is saved, which can lead to gaps in archives and limitations on research. He also highlights that organizational archives tend to be rich in documents about leaders as opposed to other actors, potentially discounting significant contextual points of interest. These practical concerns can somewhat be alleviated by supplementing archival sources with secondary sources such as newspaper accounts, interviews and memoirs to provide additional information (Rojas 2010).

These considerations Connors (1992) argues should prompt historians to let evidence from the sources guide the construction of the narrative, as opposed to drawing on sources that rigidly supports a set of research questions; leading to 'forcing' answers from the sources (Connors 1992, 23). This approach has been utilized in this paper, as it allowed the narrative to follow storylines within sources which led to other sources and persons of interest. Using this method increased the probability of finding sources 'unintentionally,' meaning that sources could be included in the research that initially had an indirect association with the research question, however these 'fascinating anomalies' and 'unexpected treasures' turned out to be valuable sources (Connors 1992, 24).

One example was a menu card held in the archive of the Garrick Club in London that had been signed by influential nineteenth century politicians, authors and publishers. The archive holds information regarding the membership of the Macmillan family, founders of the Macmillan publishing house and a range of authors who frequented the Garrick; the menu card was shown as a point of interest. Initially the archive was visited in order to verify whether certain literary figures had membership at the Garrick, however the discovery of this card prompted further exploration into the significance of this club to literary businesses. According to the archivist, attendees at a party or special occasion signed the menu card as a commemoration of their attendance at the event. To verify the authenticity of the signatures the menu card was compared with a range of independently verified primary sources which also displayed the signatures of those believed to be in attendance at this event.[1] The signatures on the menu card matched the hand-scripts displayed on verified source materials and therefore this gives further credibility and authenticity to the document.

The archivist explained that the menu card was kept because his predecessor had kept it, which in turn had also been kept by their predecessor etc., therefore the card has been passed down from archivist to archivist but unfortunately the initial reason as to why the card was kept has been lost. It is now normal practice for the archive to keep the card and other similar sources, reiterating Rojas' (2010) point that organizations selectively record what transpires in an organization. The menu card is now considered by the archive as an important piece of historical evidence of club culture.

Sources outside of membership records and corporate histories which can sometimes portray stylized versions of club life and club culture are difficult to find, due to the 'club cult of secrecy,' as discretion was a priority for most clubmen (Milne-Smith 2011, 11). Cowell

[1] For example, the signature of John Morley was compared to a primary source authenticated by Dr. Richard Ford, Antiquarian Bookseller, member of the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers (ILAB).

(1975, 41) comments that references to clubs are often 'scattered' throughout biographies, memoirs and letters of club members, a product Milne-Smith (2011) surmises is due to club members taking for granted such a large aspect of their everyday life, therefore it was not of extended discussion. In comparison to the rare menu card, the archives of publishing houses are far richer in sources. Through piecing together, "scattered" anecdotes in memoirs, gossip accounts in newspapers and archival letters, it has been possible to create a narrative which highlights some of the practices that literary businesses used in the nineteenth century, and why the club was of significance to the publishing industry.

The information taken from the sources used in this paper has not been taken at face value. The analysis and interpretation does not stop at what is on the surface, instead the "reading" of the source goes beyond face value to ascertain elements of factual accuracy, bias and potentially hidden meaning (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). This has been achieved by using triangulation and drawing on multiple types of sources ranging from those held in business archives to published autobiographies. As argued by Decker (2013) there is an increasing need to work with more than one archive to fill the gaps and identify the bias and silences within sets of records. Drawing on multiple sets of sources supports corroboration of factual information and allows for analysis from multiple perspectives.

A range of publicly accessible archives in the United Kingdom and United States were used for compiling sources. This included the manuscripts collection at the British Library; the business archive of the A. P. Watt Literary Agency held at the University of North Carolina (UNC) and the Berg Collection which is kept at the New York Public Library; as well as the Archive of British Printing and Publishing housed at the University of Reading. Throughout this paper, I use an abbreviated citation for each archive in the footnotes, the complete citations are included in the reference list. Other sources were consulted through published media such as periodicals, memoirs, printed collections of letters and (auto)biographies. As this paper is

concerned with exploring individuals understanding of their social world, corporate documents such as minute books and contracts did not provide rich contextual information which highlighted this perspective. This was due to a large proportion of business being discussed verbally through informal meetings, an aspect that will explored in more detail later in this paper.

I use the term Victorian to describe the literary businesses I examine. This period is generally considered as 1830–1901 in British history in reference to the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to her death in 1901 (Warwick and Willis 2008). The literary businesses analyzed including the A. P. Watt Literary Agency (founded circa. 1875) and the Macmillan Publishing House (founded 1843) are referred to as Victorian in cultural and literary studies (Sutherland 2006; Sutherland 2013; Weedon 2003). These businesses have been included due to their significance to the publishing industry in the mid to late nineteenth century. Furthermore, they have extensive business archives, predominately because these organizations and individuals were at the time market leaders and their influence and legacy is still shown today. The businesses analyzed were either established or had offices in London by the end of the Victorian era. London was the centre of the publishing industry in Britain and the literary businesses operating in the city held significant influence hence why these firms were selected for the study, country or provincial literary businesses have not been included as their practices were slightly different.

The publishing industry is quite broad as it incorporates different types of media businesses, which sell magazines, books and other print material. The paper focuses on literary businesses which catered to the mass market through the sale of novels, stories and to some extent newspaper and periodical publishing. Many Victorian literary houses incorporated these forms of literary outputs, and journalistic contributions from authors were significant therefore the press must be included in the analysis. The remainder of this paper explores how the popular

literary and artistic clubs of the Victorian era influenced the behavior of these literary businesses, and why the club was a facilitator for their activities.

Historical Contexts

The Victorian Publishing Industry

Nineteenth century Britain was a time of great social change, the period saw the rise of industrialism and urbanisation, a shift away from a life in the rural countryside to a life based on trade, commerce and manufacturing. It was a time that saw a revolution in publishing, as the industrial age brought down the cost of production and a rise in output (Finkelstein and McCleery 2013). The mechanisation of book production and a shift in culture towards literacy and reading created a market for new material, and with new distribution networks enabled by the railways commercialism in books could be realized with more vigour (Finkelstein and McCleery 2013). The surge in the market can be seen through publication data. New printing technologies provided opportunities for printed materials to be supplied in large quantities. The sale of newspapers quadrupled in less than half a century rising from 16 million a year in 1801 to over 78 million by 1849 (Eliot 1994). From around 1807 steam power was introduced to papermaking and the first steam driven printing press was introduced commercially in 1814 when it was installed at *The Times* (Feather 2006; Raven 2009). As book production progressed on an industrial scale, publishers were able to benefit from cheaper print runs and so were more able to supply the growing reading market. The records of the Stationers Company which was the guild responsible for issuing licences to print between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries highlights that 3096 books were published between 1800 and 1809, yet by 1839 the numbers of books registered had more than tripled to 11,905 a predictable trend that continued through to the 1850s (Eliot 1994).

Leading up to nineteenth century London had been the centre of book production (Feather 2006). However, as publishing began to spread beyond the capital, the industry started going through a phrase of 'decentralisation' (Finkelstein and McCleery 2013, 57). Book publishing began to reach the provinces, as booksellers and printers in London used the commercial contacts in the Midlands and the North to get their publications into the hands of the readers beyond the city (Finkelstein and McCleery 2013). Decentralisation triggered dynamic changes in the industry both at the individual level and the field level which had a significant impact on how individuals chose to do business, as the industry started to progress towards being a recognisably modern publishing industry (Feather, 2006). Alongside the geographical changes, the roles in producing literature including publishing, printing and bookselling also started to fragment, with some booksellers leaving their retailing shops behind and concentrating on the new business of publishing (Feather 2006).

Publishing has been noted as a traditional and conservative profession, and most early nineteenth century publishers were incurious about the growth of markets and were slow and unresponsive to the rapid changes in the industry (Sutherland 2013). Prior to the Victorian era, competition between houses had been kept to an acceptable minimum and there was a comfortable co-operation in terms of price, with 'trade sales of remainder titles being conducted at dinner over the wine and walnuts' (Feather 2006, 103; Sutherland 2013, 10-1). Enterprising young men such as John Blackwood (1818–1879), George Murray Smith (1824–1901) and the Macmillans, were newcomers to the industry who were confident to commission new works and move away from the old cautious 'toe-dipping' spirit of the field (Sutherland 2013). These individuals were building on an industry centuries old, yet they were innovative by the methods they used to produce and advertize literature to the growing reading market. Scottish brothers Daniel (1813–1857) and Alexander Macmillan (1818–1896) started in retailing with bookshops in London and Cambridge in 1843, however the brothers' passion had

been to bring new literary works to the market and start their own publishing house. This would be realized a year after Daniel's death, when in 1858 Alexander took out a lease for 23 Henrietta Street in Covent Garden in London, this would be the home of the Macmillan publishing house (Morgan 1943).

The Macmillans utilized the old traditions of nurturing professional relationships with authors, they hosted weekly dinners, and opened their professional home to those whom they saw as their professional family; an aspect that will discussed further later in this paper. One author remarked that working for Macmillan was on par with being 'elected to a first class club' ("A Great Publishing House" 1891, 285). They were also innovative by publishing in multiple lists; educational and academic, alongside fiction and poetry, furthermore they were one of the leading houses alongside Chapman & Hall, Bentley and Blackwood who had a periodical. These were vehicles for publishers to trial the work of new authors, serialize fiction[2] and advertize their other titles, which proved to be an important part of a publisher's portfolio (Brake and Demoor 2009; Cox and Mowatt 2014). Fiction primarily sold as novels was the dominant literary form in the nineteenth century, and was a profitable genre (Feather 2006). Capital could be tied up in books for a long period of time and profit could be realized more quickly within periodicals, newspapers and magazines as they generated 'immediate and regular sales' (Brake and Demoor 2009, 396). Not confining themselves to one literary genre or publication output allowed the Macmillans to diversify their portfolio of literary products, which created further opportunities to capitalize on what would now be referred to as the mass market.

As discussed earlier, the traditional ways of doing publishing were being phased out replaced with increased competition, strong commercialism and an acceptance for a more

[2] Serialization was the practice of publishing successive parts of a story in a periodical, newspaper or magazine (Wald 2009).

entrepreneurial approach to the sale of literature. Developments in copyright law was one of the factors which steered the industry down this pathway as it became the bargaining chip between authors and publishers, as authors sought to make profit from their literary property (Salmon 2013). As the publishing industry became more dynamic through multiple literary products, the contracts and negotiations between authors and publishers became more complex leading to opportunities for a new role to enter the field; the literary agent.

Literary agents as we know today emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, providing a valuable link between authors and publishers. Initially, literary agents were not welcomed by some, referred to as 'unscrupulous opportunists' seeking to upset the dynamics of the Victorian publishing industry (Heinemann 1893, : 663). However, within a short space of time, agents progressed from being considered as outsiders to a key function of the production of literature (Gillies 2007; Hepburn 1968; Joseph 2018). Agents are a progression of the author's reader, who would edit literature and act as informal agents on behalf of authors to publishers. The increased commercialization and professionalization of roles in the industry shifted this informal and sometimes unpaid service into a formal role where the literary agent became authorized and legally empowered to act on behalf of their clients; usually for a commission fee of ten per cent (Joseph 2018). Although not the first, A. P. Watt (1834–1914) is considered as the most notable literary agent, representing some of Victorian fiction's most prominent authors such as Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and Sir Walter Besant (1836–1901) to some of the leading houses including Macmillan and Smith, Elder & Co. (Watt 1909). He was innovative with his use of contract law to formalize and professionalize transactions between himself, authors, and publishers. Consequently, by 1900 Watt's literary agency became the 'blueprint' for the second wave of literary agents (Joseph 2018). These included James Brand Pinker (1863–1922), whose agency folded in the mid-1930s (Gillies 2007) and Curtis Brown

(1906–1980), who founded in 1899 one of today's leading international literary and talent agencies.

The Victorian era saw many advances beyond the commercialization of literature. The mid nineteenth century saw the phrase 'author by profession' become part of the industry dialogue (Salmon 2013, 10). This shift towards an increasingly professionalized culture influenced how individuals choose to do business. The fragmentation of bookselling with some retailers choosing to enter publishing triggered a cultural separation. Bookselling continued to be regarded as a trade, whereas publishers actively sought to raise the status of their businesses by aligning themselves with the established professions. One mechanism they used to achieve this was by emulating the cultural practices of politicians, aristocrats and lawyers, which included socializing at gentlemen's clubs.

Victorian Clubland

During the Victorian period clubs were at their most popular with London housing over four hundred, today less than forty remain (Thévoz 2018). A progression from the seventeenth century coffee house, exclusive clubs emerged in the 1730s. the first was opened in 1652 in St. Michael's Alley, in Cornhill London, and is deemed to be the precursor of the gentlemen's club (Ellis 2005; Porter 2000). A homosocial male hamlet, the coffee house set the foundation of the club, enabling men to consolidate friendships and support professional ambition (Porter, 2000). The clubs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were highly exclusive, architecturally ornate buildings that were 'convenient spaces for dining and conversation' (Milne-Smith, 2011, 2). The concentration of London clubs was referred to as 'Clubland' in St James,' as it was one of London's more affluent districts, due to its ties with the aristocracy stretching back to the sixteenth century (Thévoz 2018).

Cecil Hay in his comprehensive two volume history of the London clubs, describes them as voluntary associations formed for a purpose (Hay 1870). In quoting Samuel Johnson, Hay refers to the men who frequented the clubs as an 'assembly of good fellows meeting under certain conditions' (Hay, 1870, 22). Hay (1870, 1) comments that 'it is impossible to separate the history of the clubs from the history of society in general. The changes that took place in the economy of one keep pace exactly with those that took place in the economy of the other.' The club provided a comfortable place where politicians, businessmen and artists could meet, converse and exchange information. Individuals were able to widen their immediate networks, and form ties, what Granovetter (1973) describes as individuals who are sources of useful information. Originally aristocratic in nature, the club operated with a culture that upheld class boundaries in society. In the early nineteenth century, clubs were extremely strict with the calibre and interests of members. They were established through common interest, political allegiance or by profession, and a person's occupation or profession was one of the main criteria considered when a candidate was proposed for membership. These clubs were highly exclusive and referred to as elite, including two of the oldest clubs Brooks's and White's (Milne-Smith, 2011).

The ideal of the businessman was dominant in nineteenth century public imagination, and this change in society was reflected in the constitution of club membership. The club initially represented an idealized tradition of the upper class, and those with ties to the gentry and landed property were wary of new members (Milne-Smith 2011). Yet most clubs allowed a significant amount of middle-class men through the doors. These were the 'new' clubmen who came from public schools and represented commerce, and were symbolic of the challenge to the constraints of traditional hierarchical social structures; their presence was begrudgingly welcomed (Black 2012). The old world of the gentry and the new world of business, new money and social mobilization were blended in the club. It became the environment of the

young enterprising men of the publishing industry, many of whom had come to London to make their fortune.

It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that publishing, drama and the arts were considered as sufficiently respectable professions to warrant entry to the elite clubs as White's which was 'the most select and aristocratic of the social clubs…[was] seldom without its supply of noblemen of high rank' ("Club-Life" 1876, 305). The first exclusive club for the arts and sciences was the Athenaeum founded in 1824, although the club house did not open until 1830 (Griffiths 1907). One of the founding members was Statesman and author John Wilson Croker (1780–1857), as he believed that 'literary men and artists required a place of rendezvous' (Cowell 1975, 8). By the mid nineteenth century there were a plethora of literary and artistic clubs including the Garrick (1831) and the Savile (1868), all of which still exist today. It was noted that that these clubs, particularly the Athenaeum due to its 'prestige' would retain their popular status (Hay1860, 208). Indeed the Athenaeum today is still considered as one of the most exclusive clubs for the 'intellectually elite,' although broke with tradition when in 2002 the club invited women to apply as members (Major 2002). The Garrick, Savile and Athenaeum were considered as the major literary clubs, election to these were not an easy task and it was noted that social comfort could not be found at these clubs unless 'one [was] in the inner circle' (Bonham-Carter 1978, 133). Those who were less prolific in the publishing industry were referred to as 'literary burglars.' They were not welcome at the major clubs, instead relegated to socializing at the minor clubs such as the short-lived Hogarth (1858–1861) and the Burlington Fine Arts Club (1866–1952) (Waller 2006, 495).

Despite the club being formed as a light-hearted social space of sophistication, where certain men could go to have access to the traditional rituals of drinking, dining and companionship, the club was often used as a hub for doing business (Milne-Smith 2011). However, talking about business was seen to be a negative point of club etiquette, frowned

upon and in some clubs strictly forbidden, furthermore members were discouraged from conducting 'trade, profession or business' on the premises (Black 2012; Milne-Smith 2011).[3] Despite this, historians have commented on how the construction of the club instead of hindering talk about business, fostered business by 'affirming social cachet and cementing social networks' (Black 2012; Milne-Smith 2011, 13). Although individuals may have been instructed to abstain from talking about business specifically, there was no rule in refraining members from making – what can be referred to as strategic friendships – relationships made with a motive in mind to further particular ambitions; a subtle form of self-promotion. Strategic friendships with others in a professional network could provide opportunities and those involved with literature could use the elite literary clubs to further their businesses which is discussed in the next section.

Gentlemanly Business: Clubs and Literary Businesses

Inclusion

Those who worked in the Victorian publishing industry identified that engaging with the culture of the club allowed for mobility into the social elite by emulating the social habits of the established professions (Foreman-Peck and Smith 2004). Leading up to the nineteenth century, working within the publishing industry was not considered as a profession, yet due to the intellectualism required to be an author, publisher or editor, men of letters deemed their industry should be considered professional. This was noted by prominent Victorian author Sir Walter Besant (1836–1901) who argued in his famous lecture *The Art of Fiction* in 1884, that the distinctions granted to men in the professions should be extended to the great novelists in literature (Besant 1884, 5). Men of letters aspired to professional status to garner power within

[3] For example, the bye-laws of the Travellers Club (rule #41) state that "A member should not use the Club House for the purposes of any trade, profession or business" or "conduct business in the Club House" (Black 2012).

the social sphere. In order to do this, they needed to mimic the habits and routines of the established professions, which included socializing at elite clubs (Heyck 1982).

Being included in the professional class was one of the leading reasons that men of letters socialized at gentlemen's clubs, as defining one's social status in Victorian England was serious business (Milne-Smith 2011). This behavior demonstrates how wider societal influences informed the behavior of individuals, consequently affecting how organizations behaved. Prolific authors, publishers and editors engaged fully with club life, and as these individuals became powerful in the industry, others with less influence entering the field conformed to the rules to obtain a foothold in the industry. By the late Victorian era these routines became so engrained in the culture of the publishing industry, that authors, editors and publishers placed great importance on having a club membership. It kept them within the network of their peers, provided access to opportunity and furthermore memberships to elite clubs attached them to the perception of being professional, demonstrating how the culture of the club permeated professional literary life. Therefore, despite the publishing industry changing during this period, networking and club membership remained remarkably consistent, as highlighted in the remainder of this paper.

Memberships at elite clubs were highly sought after, and to hold one was considered an honor, giving the recipient a 'measure of distinction' (Hay 1870, 209). As noted by a journalist the club had the advantages of 'bringing persons of power and ability into contact,' and consequently authors were able to promote themselves to publishers, editors and to the general public; as men with shared interests in a variety of professions used club facilities (Fraser's Magazine for Town and County 1830). It became routine that authors were seen daily at the literary and artistic clubs, either working on their new novel or reading newspapers; a part of literary life that was vital to stay current in the business (Black 2012). Authors such as Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) and Charles Dickens (1812–1870) who were both members of the

Garrick Club (Escott 1914; Fitzgerald 1904) utilized the way the networks at the club helped to increase their public profile which in turn led to increased financial reward.

Dickens was first elected to The Garrick in January 1837 by his publisher Richard Bentley (1794–1871), highlighting how those with access to the club were able to support others in their professional network. The proposal not only helped Dickens who was a gaining rapid popularity due to his stories *Sketches of Boz* which had been issued as a book in 1836, but also Bentley could utilize his professional relationship with Dickens, as in November 1836 he had appointed Dickens to be the editor of his literary magazine *Bentley's Miscellany* (Patten 2004). In his history of the Garrick, Fitzgerald (1904) makes a point of highlighting that Dickens resigned from the club in the November that year, musing that one of his novels the Pickwick Papers (published in 1837) was running 'triumphantly' at the time (Fitzgerald 1904, 70). Fitzgerald (1904) hints that Dickens became a member of the Garrick in order to support his literary career, resigning when he no longer had use for the club as his popularity was further established. Throughout his literary career Dickens numerously resigned and reinstated his membership, suggesting that he was using his club as required to support his professional ambitions. Furthermore, when Dickens young protégé Edmund Yates (1831–1894) was expelled from the Garrick it negatively affected his career.

A contributor to Dickens' periodical publications *All the Year Round* and *Household Words*, Yates had written a piece published in the gossip paper *Town Talk* regarding Thackeray and the Garrick Club without fully disguising who was the inspiration behind the character (Yates 1884). Thackeray protested that the talk Yates had heard was not intended for newspaper remark, requesting he 'refrain from printing comments upon [his] private conversations' (Yates 1859). Yates refused to apologize, and his membership was revoked. Quoting a letter written by Yates in 1889, Leary (2010) explains how Yates' expulsion from an elite literary club would throw a shadow on his career. Yates referred to the situation which had been inflicted on him

by Thackeray as ‘social degradation,’ and it took some years to regain social respectability and financial security (Leary 2010, 106). This demonstrates how being removed from the professional networks the club provided could be a barrier to advancing in the publishing industry.

In addition, Trollope understood the importance of the club to professional authorship. He was well known to frequent the artistic and literary clubs of the day and was affiliated with the most popular including the Arts Club and the Athenaeum, and general interest clubs such as the Cosmopolitan and the Turf (Waller 2006). In his autobiography Trollope wrote that, ‘a man who could write books ought not to live in Ireland – he ought to live within reach of the publishers, the clubs, and the dinner parties of the metropolis’ (Trollope 1922, 132). There is little evidence to suggest that Trollope or other literary businesses wished to deviate from this culture.

Gentlemen’s clubs were one of the most utilized channels for self-promotion, as in some cases being invited as a guest to a club was a mark of social prestige (Milne-Smith 2006). When popular individuals were seen dining at prominent clubs, sometimes the “gossip” would spread around the literary community to some extent within the gossip pages of the literary and general topic periodicals (Brake 1997). Gossip, speculation and commentary about club life was a topic of great interest in the Victorian press, demonstrated by an array of articles, columns and club histories published in leading journals such as *The Literary Gazette*, *The Athenaeum* and *Fraser’s Magazine*. Being regularly seen at the club increased the possibility that an author would be mentioned in the society gossip pages.

For instance, the elitist social paper the *Court Circular* had a weekly column in the 1880s entitled ‘Club and Social Gossip,’ written by a ‘man-about-town’ (Milne-Smith 2009, 90). This practice allowed authors a sphere of indirect advertising which worked on two levels. Firstly, it ensured that the reading public became aware of the prominent and upcoming authors

of the day, secondly this also helped to boost the saleability of authors' work to agents and publishers. For example, leading literary agent A. P. Watt chose only to represent authors who were well known and popular, such as Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) who had become popular through socializing at the Savile (Gillies 2007; Kipling and Pinney 2004). This was also a strategy of other literary businesses such as publisher John Murray (1808–1892) who was noted for only buying novels from authors who already had some standing with the public.

The club was such an integral part of literary life that some individuals would go to extreme lengths to ensure they were kept connected within its networks. Author Matthew Arnold (1822–1888) had a membership at the Athenaeum and he was known for being a socialite, dining out regularly and expensively with the most notable literary and political figures of the day (Paul 1978). This behavior quickly led to Arnold running out of money and consequently he asked his publisher George Murray Smith (1824 –1901) of Smith, Elder & Co. for a loan of £200 in order to keep his memberships (Bell 2002). This was not an uncommon practice, as author Arnold Bennett (1867–1931) also borrowed money from his literary agent J. B. Pinker to support his sociable habits (Bennett and Hepburn 1968). Some authors felt compelled to have a club membership whether they could afford it or not, as it was deemed that a membership was vital for professional and social upward mobility.

Exclusion

Published in 1891, *New Grub Street* written by George Gissing (1851–1903), a clubman himself who frequented the Savile, tells the tale of struggling authors in the late nineteenth century (Gissing and Gissing 1926; Gissing 1891). This novel has been held up by literary historians and critics as an authentic representation of the literary life of the aspiring Victorian author (Severn 2010; Taft 2011). Gissing makes frequent references to the clubs and London social life, stating how the club was such an important part of being a successful author. The

character Alfred Yule, an author close to retirement relates to his daughter, that had he been able to meet editors and publishers, been able to dine with them and belong to a club then he would not be what he is in his 'old age' (Gissing 1891, 106). Yule was referring to his lowly status as a contributor to periodicals who did not make a significant income from his work. This is an example of the stratification of the industry as certain types of journalistic contributors were considered as hired pens, stigmatized as hack writers who produced work of low literary value (Johnson and Lynch 2004). Due to this status hack writers did not have sufficient social capital to warrant memberships to clubs, and furthermore did not have the financial capital to do so either, a cycle that was difficult to break without access to opportunities. Although a work of fiction, *New Grub* Street offers a realistic portrayal of publishing in Victorian London, as it was recognised that literary life in London was so 'interwoven' with other kinds of life (Rideing 1898, 699). Furthermore, hack writers being barred from the clubs demonstrates how the culture of the publishing industry was also mirrored in the culture of club, reiterating that organizational life in one sector can affect another.

The club facilitated communication between literary businesses as it provided a space where those who worked in the industry could find each other easily. In March 1880, Alexander Pollock Watt's literary agency was at an early development stage, so he continued to work simultaneously as an advertising agent to supplement his income (Gillies 2007). Watt wished to approach Frederick Greenwood (1830–1909) editor of the popular evening newspaper the *St. James' Gazette* which had launched in 1880, as Watt wanted his agency to solely handle the advertizing (Black 2012; Morris 2004). Greenwood was an influential journalist who kept regular hours at the Garrick and the Reform Club (one of the grandest in St James), and sometimes dined with other authors and publishers – such as the Macmillans – to discuss business (Scott 1950). Furthermore, Greenwood was known for finding and nurturing new

talent through his club connections, as socializing with the literary elite would allow him to meet new authors that he could commission for his publications (Black 2012; Brake and Demoor 2009). Despite the Garrick being one of Greenwood's frequented clubs, Watt did not find him and so instead wrote him a letter documenting the details as to why he wanted an invitation for a business meeting. Watt wrote: 'I called at the Garrick Club…instead by way of letter, the business as to which I wished the favor of an invitation,' his letter confirmed frequenting at the club aided literary businesses demonstrating the space was a facilitator.

Social commentary in a popular periodical lightly discusses how 'a man of humble birth or unknown to the committee would have been for sure blackballed' ("Clubs" 1877, : 190). Unlike publishers and authors, literary agents had issues with gaining entry to the elite literary clubs of the day; this was predominately due to their reputation. Some of the influential publishers regarded literary agents with ambivalence and accused them of being 'parasites' and 'ungentlemanly' in how they conducted their business, as agents altered the dynamics of power in business relations between publishers and authors (Heinemann 1893; One Of Them 1906). By the late nineteenth century working in publishing or as an author were considered as professions, however literary agents were relatively new in comparison therefore they were excluded from the "old boys' network." Despite the initial snubbing in the elite clubs, in 1896 Watt was nominated and accepted to The Reform club. This was due to the help of his long-standing client author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) and friend novelist and playwright Anthony Hope (1863–1933) who used their influence to get Watt accepted (Waller 2006). However, it would take a significant amount of time for the major clubs to relax their ambivalence towards this profession; the first literary agent to be accepted for membership by the Garrick was Watt's grandson Peter Watt in 1960.[4]

[4] Confirmed by The Member's Record Books, The Garrick Club Archive, London.

The initial exclusion of literary agents from the artistic and literary clubs further demonstrates how the culture of the Victorian publishing industry mirrored social and cultural behaviors of the wider environment. Watt had not yet "earned" entry to the literary profession, therefore was barred from the spaces that were connected to the powerful individuals of the publishing industry. As discussed throughout this paper, men of letters accepted that the club was an integral part of the profession, therefore Watt still frequented the clubs in attempt to be accepted into the sacred company of the publishing elite. Thus, despite significant changes in the publishing industry newcomers to the industry, even in the late nineteenth century still wanted to be club members. It was still seen as important to working in the publishing industry. As Watt began to represent some of Victorian literature's most popular authors to the leading houses of the day, Watt and his agency were more readily accepted, as some authors and publishers soon realized the benefits that literary agents provided to their business (Gillies 2007; Joseph 2018).[5] Exploring how literary businesses engaged with club life to further their professional ambitions demonstrates that these exclusive spaces were enabling environments for men to capitalize on their professional status and foster social ties which could be a benefit to their businesses. Another aspect was using the club facilities as spaces to hold meetings as discussed in the next section.

Club Dinners: Mixing Business and Dining

Outside of the club, discussing terms of contracts, purchasing new titles and literary gossip over dinner was a practice in the publishing industry. Some of the so called "old traditions" of trade sale dinners where the 'most important London booksellers' (Gettman 2010, 132) would

[5] For example, Watt represented Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) almost exclusively to the Macmillan Publishing house. Demonstrated in an agreement between Watt and Rudyard Kipling, giving Watt power of attorney and to act as Kipling's agent, 13th August 1891; Folder 452.53/4, A. P. Watt (UNC)

buy titles at auctions was an entrenched practice; with one commentator even referring to these trade dinners as a ‘publishing institution’ ("Notes and News" 1898, 173). Often publishers hosted dinners for popular authors, and usually an invitation to these dinners were highly sought-after as they could provide valuable introductions ("The House of Bentley" 1898). Milne-Smith (2011, 120) discusses that club dining rooms served as convenient function spaces if a member’s home was not ‘up to the challenge.’ Therefore, it could be argued that literary businesses used the club for entertaining for business to display their social standing and demonstrate the strength of their professional network.

In 1858 when the Macmillan publishing house was established in London, Alexander Macmillan was still based at its Cambridge location. In order to foster relations with new authors and editors in the capital and get his house up and running, Alexander made a weekly trip to London on a Thursday and would host dinners at the house’s location in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. These weekly dinners would eventually become well known and were informally labelled the ‘Tobacco Parliaments,’ as guests would discuss current affairs and socialize over a cigar (Macmillan 1908, 4). Alexander referred to Henrietta Street as his home despite this building being the offices and registered business address of the publishing house (Van Arsdel 2004). In a letter to his friend fellow publisher James MacLehose (1811–1885) comments that he ‘“makes a point” of spending an evening at home so any friend coming in can have a cup of coffee or a glass of beer and a chat’ (Macmillan 1908, 4). It’s worth noting that Macmillan used his professional home as a social space to create a relationship with potential new talent, similarly to men using the club as second homes to meet with peers and friends who could become important contacts in the future (Milne-Smith 2011). The Henrietta Street premises blurred the lines between the home and business space, much like the club which has been described as a ‘home from home’ for the middle and upper class gentleman,

where they can find the comfort of home in a masculine environment which also as I argue fosters professional networking (Tosh 2015).

In comparison, when Alexander wanted a more high-profile space, he would often use the Garrick. Charles Graves, biographer of Alexander Macmillan makes frequent reference to him dining at the Garrick in order to commission writers or to socialize with others in the industry (Graves 1910). Here, the club could be viewed as an extension of his office, blurring the boundary between the social and professional space. The Garrick was noted for being exclusive and restrictive when it came to its membership policy, as 'nearly all the leading actors of the day [were] members, and there [were] few of the active literary men who [were] not on its list' (Fitzgerald 1904, 2). During the nineteenth century the Garrick prided itself on being a club for 'the purpose of bringing together the "patrons" of drama and its professors, and also for offering literary men a place of rendezvous' (Timbs 1866, 257). Actor Frank Mills (*flour* c. 19th) is credited as the founder of the Garrick; he believed that actors and men of refinement might meet on equal terms (Barham 1896; Fitzgerald 1904). Historian of the Garrick Percy Fitzgerald (1904), discusses that Mills' statement hints towards the social status of actors at the time. He comments that 'actors' and 'men of education and refinement' paths did not often cross without the assistance of a club where meetings may lead to transactions that were 'mutually advantageous and agreeable' (Fitzgerald 1904, 2-3).

Initially those concerned with drama, literature and the arts were barred from the elite clubs such as Brooks's and White's (Milne-Smith 2011), and so the Garrick's main purpose was to further the social status of actors. It was named in honor of actor and playwright David Garrick (1717 – 1779), who often socialized in elite clubs including the Literary Club (1764) and Brooks's despite their ambivalence towards actors (Garrick 1831; Griffiths 1907; Timbs 1866). As the respectability of drama and the literary arts progressed, the status of the Garrick rose in tandem, leading it to become part of the elite club community (Milne-Smith 2011).

Today the Garrick is known for its theatrical portrait gallery, its extensive collection of art, and the club now has over '1300 members, many of which are distinguished actors and men of letters,' (The Garrick Club 2018a). The rise in status of the Garrick as a club associated with drama reflects the cultural status of actors in the nineteenth century, which further demonstrates how culture permeates organizations.

The archives at the Garrick have extensive records of previous members, alongside all proposal forms which state the individuals who proposed and seconded new members. Other than this, there are not many qualitative primary documents left in the archive, apart from a handful of ephemera. In his historical study of the Athenaeum, Cowell (1975) comments that if researchers were able to reprint club menus and wine lists from dinners it would be an interest to many people, although he states that unfortunately such ephemeral facts were not preserved by this club. Unlike the Athenaeum, the Garrick has kept some ephemera relating to its history, and in consulting the archives, I was fortunate to view a menu card which, as argued by Cowell (1975), has been valuable to research in this area. The card is dated 9th December 1880,[6] and on the back has been signed by publishers, authors and politicians. Items such as these were rarely kept therefore this menu card is now considered by the archive as an important piece of historical evidence of club culture.

It has been signed by significant political figures and literary men, including members of the Macmillan family, Matthew Arnold and Henry James.[7] The dinner was held as a celebration by Alexander Macmillan for the new edition of *Etchers and Etchings* written by

[6] Menu Card 9th December 1880, Garrick Club Archives, London

[7] The 12 attendees included: Alexander Macmillan (1818–1896); Frederick Macmillan (1851–1936); George Macmillan (1855–1936); John Morley (1838–1923) editor of *Macmillan's Magazine;* Matthew Arnold (1822–1888) author; George Lillie Craik (1837–1905) Director of Macmillan's New York; Henry James (1843–1916), author; James Russell Lowell (1819–1891) (known as J.R. Lowell) American poet; Philip Gilbert Hamerton (1834–1894) author; Lawrence Alma Tadema (1836–1912) artist. Three signatures were not discernible. I have taken advice from a professional document examiner and handwriting expert and he mentioned that it is extremely difficult to decipher signatures as they do not necessarily contain letters from the person's name, and to his knowledge there are no experts in the field that decipher signatures, stated in email dated 7th February 2014.

Philip Gilbert Hamerton (1834–1894) which was published in December 1880 (Hamerton and Hamerton 1897). A short discussion of this meeting is detailed in a memoir written by Hamerton's wife Eugénie Gindriez Hamerton (b. *c.*1839). She comments that Macmillan had thrown the party in honor of her husband, 'who was warmly congratulated by the other guests' (Hamerton & Hamerton 1897, 437). Alexander was known by his friends and family to print menu cards with the signatures of those who attended an event as a commemoration, a tradition he often used at the Garrick (Graves 1910; Macmillan 1908).

Although this dinner was a social function, from Alexander's perspective it may have also been to socialize with his authors and team. Craik and Morley worked with a range of Macmillan authors in Britain and America, plus the house had been Lowell's publishers in Britain since 1864. Furthermore, Lowell was also a contributor to the *Macmillan's Magazine* as was Matthew Arnold (Worth 2003). He had become a popular figure due to his criticism and reform of the education system in England, and he was usually invited to make speeches and dine with the influential people of the late Victorian era (Collini 2004; Worth 2003). Arnold wrote a letter to his son on 3rd December 1880 outlining the following week he would be dining at the Garrick in order to meet a number of authors (Arnold and Russell 1895). This letter confirms that it was likely the dinner was arranged for business as well as social purposes.

The Garrick continued to be the club of choice for the Macmillan family for doing business even though this was a large-scale enterprise with separate premises in Henrietta street that were used for business and entertaining. For example, after Alexander's death his son George along with his nephews Maurice and Frederick took over the publishing house. In May 1898 they were in the midst of negotiating a complex deal as they had offered to buy the House of Bentley, who had been strong publishers of fiction in the early nineteenth century (Feather 2006).The archive holds copies of letters from the Macmillans to Bentley discussing the terms

of the agreement as neither side were agreeing on the valuation of the publishing house.[8] The Macmillans invited Richard Bentley (1854–1936) to lunch at the Garrick so they could discuss the terms of the purchase.[9] This may have been to impress Bentley, demonstrating that the Macmillans were in a strong professional position, or to make Bentley more amenable to their terms by "wining and dining" him at an exclusive gentlemen's club instead of at their Henrietta Street publishing house. Furthermore, Bentley's grandfather Richard Bentley who founded the publishing house was a member of the Garrick and so may have used this space to provide a familiar environment (Barham 1896). The lunch may have helped the negotiation of terms as the deal was agreed later that year ("Notes and News" 1898). These sources act almost as bookends of information relating to this deal, demonstrating the conversations leading up to and its conclusion highlighting some of the difficulties of following the story in the sources. The minutiae of the negotiation were unlikely to have been documented as the club demanded secrecy and their committees frequently attempted to control published information (Milne-Smith 2011).

Sir Walter Besant was also known for using the Savile as a space for entertaining and dining both socially and professionally, and was well known as a 'clubbable man' (Eliot 2004).. The Savile like the Garrick was well known to literary and artistic men, and was described as the 'most literary' of the elite clubs (Rideing 1898). The archives of the Society of Authors hold letters by Besant inviting colleagues to dinner at the Savile to discuss business.[10] In addition, these exclusive and secret spaces have also helped forge professional societies. Besant writes in his autobiography that he joined the Savile in 1873 at a time when it was 'full of young writers, young dons and young scientists' and Saturday afternoons when he would join

[8] From Maurice Macmillan to Richard Bentley Letters #136, 137, 140 May 16th – May 25th 1898, Add MS 59637, Correspondence of the Macmillans, BL

[9] Frederick and Maurice Macmillan detail meeting for lunch to discuss the terms of buying out Bentley's publishing house, May 19th 1898 Letter #138, Add MS 59637, Correspondence of the Macmillans, BL.

[10] For example, see letter to S. Squire Sprigge Secretary of the Society of Authors, Letter #52 February 20th 1891, Add MS 56863 Society of Authors Archive, BL

the luncheon party became a staple way to meet new people (Besant 1902, 176 - 7). By 1883, Besant was a frequent attendee at the Savile, and through his club connections was able to garner support to start the Society of Authors in 1884 which would eventually become the leading organization for representing authors rights (Bonham-Carter 1978; Law 2000). Some of the first key committee members of the Society of Authors were Savile members including James Cotter Morison (1832–1888), demonstrating how strategic friendships fostered through club contacts could be beneficial for professional purposes and that the club was an important part of working in the publishing industry (Besant 1902; Waller 2006).

Conclusion

The gentlemen's clubs of nineteenth century London have been referred to as a playground for the middle and upper-class gentleman (Milne-Smith, 2011). Luxurious spaces constructed around the cultural ideals of class, the club helped to enforce social divides and promote male personal and professional relationships, as it was a space where men could promote their ambitions. Although it was accepted that business should not be discussed, the physical construction of the club formulated an ample environment to foster social ties and professional links. Authors would frequent multiple clubs creating a public profile that would be talked about in gossip pages which could lead to securing lucrative commissions, and publishers would use club dining rooms to entertain potential business partners; evidence that clubs facilitated literary businesses. By the late nineteenth century, when publishing had become more commercialized and large-scale business such as Macmillan existed, the club remained important for those working in the industry.

This paper has argued that men of letters aspired to be professional and so socialized at clubs to emulate the behavior of established professions; clubs became sought after spaces for professional advancement. It was accepted and understood that engagement with club life was

a part of literary life, demonstrated in the sources by the extent to which men of letters valued their memberships, to ensure they were included in the network of clubs, as they believed this was one of their best pathways to opportunity. The paper also examined whether the role of the club to those working in the publishing industry changed throughout the nineteenth century. Generations of family businesses used the space of the club to do business, and this demonstrates how the club and the connections it fostered was still valuable. In addition, newcomers to the industry such as A. P. Watt attempted to join the sacred company of the gentleman's clubs in order to gain prestige and to ingratiate with those who were considered elite in the world of letters; highlighting that the role of the club did not change throughout the Victorian era.

Analyzing the connection between socio-cultural factors and organizations, highlights that individuals within organizations are affected by social behaviour which 'informs and shapes their own attitudes and values' (Godley and Westall 1996, 4). Actors who did not have a high social standing were initially barred from elite clubs, which led them to create their own clubs. Similarly, literary agents were also barred, and it took almost two generations for them to be accepted to the elite clubs, demonstrating how clubs also pulled influence from organizational life. In conjunction, the upward surge in professional and consequently social status of the publishing industry allowed literary businesses industry to be accepted by elite clubs, demonstrating that the pace of one keeps pace with the other.

The initial reasons for the way the club developed as a masculine homosocial space is an argument that has been thoroughly explored within gender studies. Yet this paper has presented how the culture of the club impacted organizational life in the publishing industry, an area of research not widely explored in organization studies. In addition, this paper has contributed to studies on the professions which explore their role in society, providing further understanding of their historical development in the nineteenth century by discussing how

literary professions attempted to become part of the professional class, using the clubs as a mechanism to do so.

Many of the leading artistic clubs still hold their prominent positions today. The Athenaeum has widened its membership criteria, accepting 'persons of attainment in fields of intellectual or artistic nature', and women are welcomed as members (The Athenaeum 2018). In contrast, the Garrick has held firm with its traditions and continues to support the patronage of drama, plus women are still barred from being members. In addition, the Garrick outwardly forbids business to be conducted in the clubhouse, including 'discussing business matters' (The Garrick Club 2018b). Evidence of traditional values in contemporary clubs demonstrates that further research could be done which explores how the culture of clubs influences organizational fields in contemporary times. One noticeable difference in the publishing industry today, is that women are now in senior management positions, and so this environment would not be amenable for key decisions to be made or major negotiations conducted (Clark and Phillips 2014; Kean 2017). It would be difficult for clubs to play such a significant role in business transactions today in comparison to the nineteenth century as the socio-cultural landscape has changed, however there is scope to explore what has replaced these exclusive spaces that were once integral to literary businesses.

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Documentary sources are referenced throughout this paper, and rather than cite them separately in the reference list, these are cited the item in the footnotes with an abbreviated reference to the archive in which they are held. Where possible citations for the archive are in the format provided by the holding organization. Below are the full details of the archive collections cited:

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- A. P. Watt Records #11036, Rare Book Literary and Historical Papers, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (cited in the footnotes as A. P. Watt [UNC]).
- Multiple collections cited from Special Collections, University of Reading, (cited in footnotes as [item location, collection name, Reading]).

- Several collections were consulted at the British Library, the full reference is Archives and Manuscripts, British Library, London, (cited in footnotes as [item location, collection name,], BL).

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