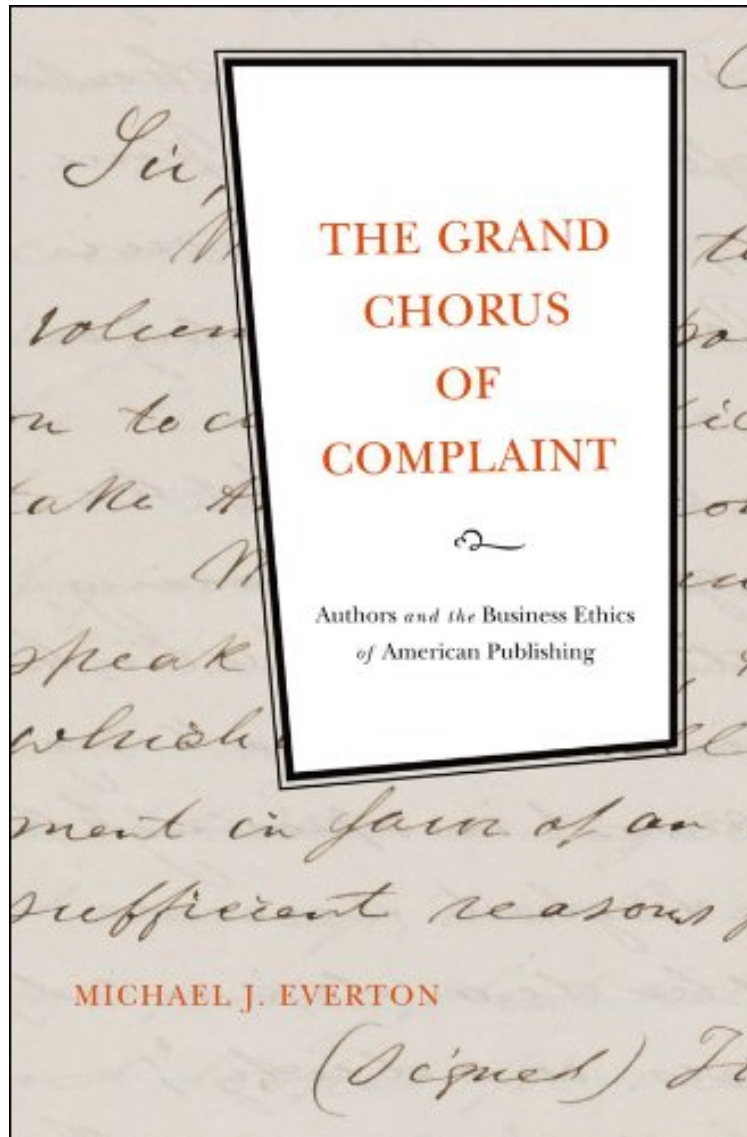


The Grand Chorus of Complaint: Authors and the Business Ethics of American Publishing

Michael J. Everton

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Michael J. Everton : The Grand Chorus of Complaint: Authors and the Business Ethics of American Publishing before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Grand Chorus of Complaint: Authors and the Business Ethics of American Publishing:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What is most important in the book is how Everton shines a light on how writers wanted the publishing world to be ethical but weBy Dark RomanticThe author has made a fascinating study of the sometimes incompatible respective expectations of publishers and editors when looking at the industry,

generally focused in the 19th century. The research here was thorough and a range of authors are represented, though he usually (and unsurprisingly) stuck to the major publishing names. Anecdotes include a Harpers author claiming he was starving and a woman who satirized her experience with Ticknor Fields. What is most important in the book is how Everton shines a light on how writers wanted the publishing world to be ethical but were not satisfied with its practices, and how publishers justified their actions as moral while trying to earn another buck. All this background, of course, affected the authors and the content of their writings, even if subconsciously. The battle for copyright protection is also highlighted but, as the title implies, the book is more about the morality of trade practices rather than the legality of them.

An engaging study of authorship, ethics, and book publishing in 18th- and 19th-century America, *The Grand Chorus of Complaint* considers the uneasy relationship between art and commerce with readings of correspondence, newspaper articles, and works by Thomas Paine, Herman Melville, and Fanny Fern.

"Michael J. Everton has provided a fascinating account, supported by deep historical and archival research, of the contentious dealings between authors and publishers that occur along the ragged line between art and commerce." -- James L. W. West III, author of *American Authors and the Literary Marketplace since 1900*"Members of the book trade receive bad press these days, creating the impression that the modern book trade is, ethically speaking, a little shaky. Those in the book business argue otherwise, defending their actions even while occasionally backpedaling. In his bold and far-reaching study, Michael Everton makes clear that such ethical debates about the book trade go all the way back to the eighteenth century. *The Grand Chorus of Complaint* is a book of great importance, insight, and originality." --Leon Jackson, author of *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America*"In this illuminating, impressively researched, and engagingly written book, Michael Everton examines the persistent rhetoric of complaint that antebellum American authors aimed at their publishers. Moving beyond the analysis of commercial practices, Everton imaginatively demonstrates that the business relationships between authors and publishers were fundamentally shaped by moral expectations." --Jeffrey D. Groves, coeditor of *Perspectives on American Book History: Artifacts and Commentary*"[An] excellent book...A thoroughly researched, well-written, and smartly argued work of mature scholarship...Literary, cultural, and intellectual historians as well as students of business practices and ethics could all profit from reading this book." --the *New England Quarterly*About the AuthorMichael J. Everton is Assistant Professor of English at Simon Fraser University.