



# **Magazines and the Making of America: Modernization, Community, and Print Culture, 1741-1860 (Princeton Studies in Cultural Sociology)**

*Heather A. Haveman*

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From the colonial era to the onset of the Civil War, *Magazines and the Making of America* looks at how magazines and the individuals, organizations, and circumstances they connected ushered America into the modern age. How did a magazine industry emerge in the United States, where there were once only amateur authors, clumsy technologies for production and distribution, and sparse reader demand? What legitimated magazines as they competed with other media, such as newspapers, books, and letters? And what role did magazines play in the integration or division of American society?

From their first appearance in 1741, magazines brought together like-minded people, wherever they were located and whatever interests they shared. As America became socially differentiated, magazines engaged and empowered diverse communities of faith, purpose, and practice. Religious groups could distinguish themselves from others and demarcate their identities. Social-reform movements could energize activists across the country to push for change. People in specialized occupations could meet and learn from one another to improve their practices. Magazines built translocal communities--collections of people with common interests who were geographically dispersed and could not easily meet face-to-face. By supporting communities that crossed various axes of social structure, magazines also fostered pluralistic integration.

Looking at the important role that magazines had in mediating and sustaining critical debates and diverse groups of people, *Magazines and the Making of America* considers how these print publications helped construct a distinctly American society.



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