



The Loudons and the Gardening Press: A Victorian Cultural Industry (Nineteenth Century)

Sarah Dewis

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Through close readings of individual serials and books and archival work on the publication history of the *Gardener's Magazine* (1826-44) Sarah Dewis examines the significant contributions John and Jane Webb Loudon made to the gardening press and democratic discourse. Vilified during their lifetimes by some sections of the press, the Loudons were key players in the democratization of print media and the development of the printed image. Both offered women readers a cultural alternative to the predominantly literary and classical culture of the educated English elite. In addition, they were innovatory in emphasizing the value of scientific knowledge and the acquisition of taste as a means of eroding class difference. As well as the *Gardener's Magazine*, Dewis focuses on the lavish eight-volume *Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum* (1838), an encyclopaedia of trees and shrubs, and *On the Laying Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries* (1843), arguing that John Loudon was a radical activist who reconfigured gardens in the public sphere as a landscape of enlightenment and as a means of social cohesion. Her book is important in placing the Loudons' publications in the context of the history of the book, media history, garden history, urban social history, history of education, nineteenth-century radicalism and women's journalism.

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