

The arbitrary periods that Mr. Miner employs in dealing with Seneca's prose are "the half decade [sic] from 1550 to 1599" and "a gap between 1578 and 1614." Both this "gap" and the asserted "complete gap between 1585 and 1613" in Seneca's plays are largely unreal, as they result from omissions, errors in dates, and a failure to recognize that the London booksellers had little incentive to undertake new publications of Seneca while they were selling off the large collections of 1581 and 1589. In evaluating the publications of Seneca's prose, Mr. Miner falls into another statistical error—that of counting works of vastly differing sizes as equal units. Thus, when Mr. Miner says that "in the hypothetically un-Stoic Restoration, there are fourteen publications," he makes no allowance for the fact that they are pamphlets or abstracts, whereas the three publications between 1580 and 1630 include two folios. Evidently the Jacobean welcomed Stoicism in "whole volumes in folio," but the Restoration preferred a "brief abstract" of Seneca's prose.

In an effort to refute the accepted view that English readers turned to the un-Stoic historian Livy earlier than to the Stoic historian Tacitus, Mr. Miner says, "It is obvious that Tacitus (first published in 1585) was printed in England before Livy (first in 1589)." In fact, however, the 1585 Tacitus scarcely merits citation as a landmark in English intellectual history, since it was printed in Italian for export to Italy, and nine volumes containing translations from Livy (*STC* 5718–20, 6578, 19121–25) precede that which Mr. Miner cites as the first. He further biases his comparisons of Tacitus by counting a three-volume octavo Restoration edition as three units, whereas he counts each of seven earlier folios of Tacitus only once. These seven folios disprove his suggestion that there was a "paucity of publications of Tacitus."

Mr. Miner further biases his comparisons by counting only "separate publications" of some authors, while counting works of others even when they appear in collections. Thus, he omits seventeen publications of Marcus Aurelius prior to 1630 from Table H on the grounds that "there was no separate publication before 1634." In fact, however, thirteen of these seventeen editions were separate (*STC* 12436–47), and Mr. Miner does not demonstrate that the four editions which appeared in folio anthologies (*STC* 12427–30) should be omitted from a study of intellectual history. In Table G, on the other hand, Mr. Miner includes ten editions of Epictetus without noting that these ten are parts of collections which also include "Cebes." In Table P, Mr. Miner includes two dozen collections that contain Horace's un-Stoic *Odes*, but in Table D he omits nine collections that contain Cicero's Stoic *De Officiis*.

The validity of Mr. Miner's conclusions may be more fully tested by ascertaining that the number of Stoic publications between 1530 and 1700 that he

tabulated (in Tables A–E, G–I) is 137, of which thirty-four (25%) fall between 1580 and 1630. Since 1580–1630 includes 30% of the total time period, there would not be much evidence that the Stoic publications of 1580–1630 are disproportionately few, even if Mr. Miner's data had to be accepted without weighting or correction. From these eight tables, however, Mr. Miner has omitted nine directly relevant items in the *STC*; and the revised *STC* will reveal further omissions. It is an extraordinary fact that eight folios of Seneca and Tacitus were published between 1580 and 1630, none during the Restoration. Furthermore, a single publication of 1580–1630 is much more significant than a similar one in the Restoration, for the number of short titles recorded for the Restoration (46000) is much greater than for 1580–1630 (13000). When properly weighted, these corrected data amply support the view that the heyday of English Stoicism ran from about 1580 to 1630.

Those who employ statistics in studying intellectual history should acknowledge the full limitations of an approach that does not directly touch the fundamental issues. They should also use correct data; treat as equal units only items which can reasonably be considered as equivalents; and make comparisons on a consistent, valid, and relevant basis. Having done none of these things, Mr. Miner has provided a cautionary example of what can occur when a limited and faulty statistical method is inconsistently applied to complex questions of intellectual history.

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Stoic Reading in Renaissance England

To the Editor :

Without venturing to judge whether the error impugns his conclusions, I feel compelled to protest the fallacy underlying Earl Miner's interesting appraisal of English Stoicism in the October [1970] *PMLA*,¹ namely, the assumption that the Pollard and Redgrave *Short-Title Catalogue of English Books* is an accurate reflection of the reading of educated men in Renaissance England. For English texts the assumption cannot be questioned; for works in the learned and modern languages, whether classics, theology, or science, it is a grave misconception.

Anyone who has spent the past thirty years researching could scarcely be surprised if scholars in the field of the English Renaissance come to be called the People of the Book, their bible being this *Short-Title Catalogue*. But *STC* is one of those fountains where drinking deeply sobers one again. Thorough study will show that for works in Latin and Greek the staple wares of the London bookshops were imports. The unwary

should not be misled by H. S. Bennett's superb trilogy, *English Books & Readers 1475–1640* (1952–1970), for Bennett knowingly dons blinders: the key term in his title is "English Books." Superior editorial staffs, more efficient printing plants, and access to the international market gave Continental printers a competitive edge that London shops could not challenge. Thus from *Utopia* down, many Latin works by Englishmen were printed abroad and accordingly fail to appear in *STC*, while the few reverse lend-lease authors first printed in England are proscribed writers like Erastus, Bruno, and Sarpi.

This generalization is beyond doubt for the period down to 1640 where I can speak from knowledge, including Miner's key period 1580–1630. Miner hesitantly considers this possibility in one footnote (p. 1032), but hastily sweeps it under the rug. In fact the evidence on Renaissance book buying and ownership is by no means as scanty as he implies. The remarkable library of the wealthy collector Lord Lumley (later Prince Henry's) contained only a small minority of English books.² Administrators like Sir William Petre and Lord Burghley regularly imported books. Working scholars, whether dons like Gabriel Harvey and Robert Burton or busy writers like Ben Jonson, John Donne, and John Selden, routinely relied on foreign books.

The living scholar who has made the most exhaustive survey of the field, Sears Jayne, puts the matter bluntly: "The *Short-Title Catalogue* . . . would not represent accurately the books read in Renaissance England, since English readers owned far more Continental than English books."³ Jayne misleads in the opposite direction from Miner, since he is concerned with the elite, but then, it was the elite class that introduced Stoicism.

If Continental books were not available, where did the translators get their originals? Where did Elyot, Ascham, and other humanists expect teachers to get the classics they prescribed so liberally? It is true that one class of books was to prove an exception. Assured of a captive market in cheap schoolbooks, Elizabethan printers struck off numerous pirated editions of standard Continental texts of writers like Cicero, Virgil, and "good old Mantuan" (about 1610 English schoolmasters like Farnaby and Bond began editing worthy rivals). Most of the London Latin prints in which Miner shows lively interest, such as the Seneca *Tragediae*, the Ciceros and Horaces, fall in this dull classification, and the revised *STC* will show that the surviving editions are much more numerous than Miner realizes. But who will suppose that the cultivated Elizabethan layman did his serious reading in these equivalents of Rinehart, Riverside, and Dell paperbacks?

However interesting as a fact of publishing history, the scarcity of serious editions of the classics in *STC* is an unreliable basis for conclusions about reading habits. This writer pretends to no expert knowledge on the impact of Stoicism, but if, as Miner argues, the English did not read Stoic texts in the period 1580–1630, it was not because Latin texts were unavailable; they simply do not appear in *STC*.

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Notes

¹ "Patterns of Stoicism in Thought and Prose Styles, 1530–1700," *PMLA*, 85 (1970), 1023–34.

² Sears Jayne and F. R. Johnson, *The Lumley Library* (British Museum, 1956).

³ Sears Jayne, *Library Catalogues of the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1956), p. 4.

Mr. Miner replies:

The aim of our inquiry is to learn about the transmission of kinds of classical thought to England, about the pattern of that transmission, and about the nature of what was transmitted at various periods to various writers. The work of Pierre Courcelle (referred to in the article) shows how complicated the matter is and how many are the kinds of evidence required. Professors Williams and Freehafer put in question certain aspects of my article. Since corrections of error and additions of fact can only be welcome, I shall minimize any possible element of controversy by merely referring to what is actually said in my article, to the evidence on which it is based, and to the questions raised by these gentlemen.

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Marvell's "Little T. C." Continued

To the Editor:

I rejoice to have converted Professor Cullen [Forum, May 1971 *PMLA*, pp. 280–81] on the one point I had really at heart. Indeed my "Reply" would not have been written had he not tried to prove that "The Picture of Little T. C." was an invitation to promiscuity; I would not allow Marvell, in this poem at least, to become responsible for any present day girl-reader's going wrong. True, Professor Cullen still sees T. C. as a prospective *femme fatale*; if so, the phrase must mean in the United States something rather different from what it does in France.¹

Having pocketed the pound I shall let the pence take care of themselves. I shall abstain from discussing any other point here, all the more willingly since I am reviewing for *Etudes Anglaises* that book of Professor