

Marketing Literature

Also by Claire Squires

PHILIP PULLMAN, MASTER STORYTELLER: A Guide to the Worlds of *His Dark Materials*

PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS*: A Reader's Guide

ZADIE SMITH'S *WHITE TEETH*: A Reader's Guide

Marketing Literature

The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain

Claire Squires

palgrave
macmillan



© Claire Squires 2007

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2007 978-1-4039-9773-9

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4LP.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted her right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2007 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS and
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

Companies and representatives throughout the world

PALGRAVE MACMILLAN is the global academic imprint of the Palgrave Macmillan division of St. Martin's Press, LLC and of Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. Macmillan® is a registered trademark in the United States, United Kingdom and other countries. Palgrave is a registered trademark in the European Union and other countries.

ISBN 978-0-230-22847-4 ISBN 978-0-230-59300-8 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9780230593008

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Squires, Claire.

Marketing literature: the making of contemporary writing in Britain/

Claire Squires.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

1. Literature publishing—Great Britain. 2. Fiction—Publishing—Great Britain. 3. Books—Great Britain—Marketing. 4. English fiction—20th century—History and criticism. I. Title.

Z326.S67 2007

070.50941—dc22

2007016438

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
Introduction	1
Part I Marketing Literature: Contexts and Theory	
1. Publishing Contexts and Market Conditions	19
2. Literature and Marketing	40
3. Genre in the Marketplace	70
Part II Publishing Histories	
4. Icons and Phenomenons	105
5. Marketing Stories	119
6. Crossovers	147
Conclusion: Writing Beyond Marketing	176
<i>Appendix 1</i>	184
<i>Notes</i>	187
<i>Bibliography</i>	215
<i>Index</i>	232

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

Over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, the same period addressed in this book, I have had the good fortune to pursue my fascination with literary fiction and its publishing while located at several universities and publishing companies. My interests were initially nurtured at the Universities of York and East Anglia, both of which placed strong emphasis on the study of contemporary writing. Later, professional experience working as a publisher at Hodder Headline informed my understanding of the literary fiction market, and I learned much by working with Carole Welch and the Sceptre imprint, and with energetic and enthusiastic colleagues. The specific shape of this project began to manifest itself in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a DPhil thesis at the University of Oxford. During this period I was supervised by Professor Hermione Lee, whose inspiring and articulate interest meant I always left tutorials with a desire to extend my knowledge of my subject, and which has made an invaluable contribution to its development. I was also fortunate to have two very rigorous and engaged examiners for my thesis, Dr Peter McDonald and Professor Juliet Gardiner, who made suggestions which have substantially aided its transition to book form. Later, Professor David Finkelstein provided me with insightful commentary which assisted that transition further. Since 2002, I have worked as a lecturer at the Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies at Oxford Brookes University, which has provided me with a stimulating location both in which to extend my knowledge and understanding of contemporary publishing markets, and in which to discover the great benefits of supportive colleagues. The strong ethos of professional commitment, communication and enjoyment fostered within the Centre has provided me, and my work, with a perfect home, and I'm proud of my association with its staff and students.

In revising my original work for publication, I wish to make particular acknowledgement to the School of Arts & Humanities at Oxford Brookes, which has facilitated its completion through the funding of a period of research leave. I also benefited from an award from the AHRC Research Leave Scheme in 2006 (RL/113023). The British Academy and AHRB funded the postgraduate study that initiated this project, and I was given

financial support in order to attend numerous conferences and seminars by the English Faculty, the Graduate Committee and Wolfson College (all at the University of Oxford), Oxford Brookes University and the British Academy. The opportunities they provided me with to attend conferences, seminars and colloquia in the UK and further afield have enabled the development of this book, both through the preparation of early drafts, and in discovering an invaluable international network of research colleagues.

Earlier versions of this work have been published in a variety of guises. Some of the material in Chapters 1 and 2 previously appeared as 'Novelistic Production and the Publishing Industry' in *A Companion to the British and Irish Novel 1945–2000*, edited by Brian Shaffer. A brief version of the *Bridget Jones's Diary* case study appears in the chapter 'The Global Market 1970–2000' in *A Companion to the History of the Book*, edited by Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose. I previously wrote about *Trainspotting* in the *Edinburgh Review* (101), in the article '*Trainspotting* and Publishing, or Converting the Smack into Hard Cash'. The *Edinburgh Review* (103) also published my article 'A Guide to Literary Prizes'. A version of my work on crossover writing for children and adults appears in the chapter 'Literary Prizes, Literary Categories and Children's Literature in the 1990s–2000s' in *Pre- and Post-Publication Itineraries of the Contemporary Novel in English*, edited by Vanessa Guignery and François Gallix.

Many people have discussed ideas, shared information and showed interest in my work, and thus they have helped my thinking to take shape. I interviewed a number of publishers, literary agents, literary journalists and other participants in the literary marketplace in constructing this study: Gillon Aitken; Clare Alexander; Eric Anderson; John Carey; Kirsty Fowkes; David Godwin; Martyn Goff; Jamie Hodder-Williams; Philip Gwyn Jones; Pat Kavanagh; Mark Le Fanu; Robert McCrum; Bud McLintock; Andrew Miller; Geoff Mulligan; Alexandra Pringle; Robin Robertson; Peter Straus; and Erica Wagner. Many others have spoken to me informally. Richard Knight of Nielsen Bookscan provided me with market data. Chris Fowler, the Publishing Subject Librarian at Oxford Brookes University, has facilitated my quest for resources, and the librarians at the Bodleian have also aided my research. I would also like to acknowledge the publishers of this book, Palgrave Macmillan, in particular Paula Kennedy and Christabel Scaife. I hope that the experience of working with a lecturer in Publishing has not been too self-reflexive a process. Thanks also go to Jo North for her editorial help. For their invaluable assistance with the cover, I thank Laura Davison, Chrissy Leung and The QI Bookshop.

Finally, I'd like to thank friends and family who have provided me in turn with intellectual camaraderie and welcome distraction. Particularly, I'd like to thank Kirstie Blair, Caroline Campbell, Laura Davison, Chloë Evans, Rosie Holland, Abolição Oxford Capoeira, Jane Potter, Eleanor Purser, Julia Reid, Dan Scroop, DeNel Rehberg Sedo, and Christine, Michael, Julie and Dorothy Squires. Finally, a big thank you to the wonderful Blea Tarn Team, for whom I house-sat during the closing stages of writing this book. The fumes of generator diesel will always come to mind when re-reading these final pages!

This page intentionally left blank