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Alan G. Thomas

Editorial Director,

University of Chicago Press

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Dear Alan G. Thomas,

I am pleased to submit an original book manuscript entitled *The Image in the Text* for publication consideration with the University of Chicago Press. *The Image in the Text* confronts the oddly marginalized relationship of nineteenth-century illustration to literary, art, and media history and argues for situating nineteenth-century American literature into the wider media history of which it was a part. Upon its publication, *The Image in the Text* will be the first book to synthesize literary, book, and art history with theoretical work from visual and media studies in its exploration of the role that literary images–verbal, mental, and visual–played in the development of a mass visual culture in nineteenth-century America.

The significance of *The Image in the Text*, however, extends well beyond the history of either literature or illustration. Its pages lay the foundation for articulating a new history of the dominance of optical media during the twentieth century and beyond. By understanding the rise of the mass-produced image (from illustration to photography and later to film) as the extension rather than the antithesis of prior literary forms, *The Image in the Text* reverses our familiar understanding of the relationship between technology and culture, one in which technological innovations always drive cultural transformations. Instead, it demonstrates how prior cultural forms of the image—such as sketch and the novel—generate practices which facilitate (or, alternatively, restrict) the introduction and acceptance of new cultural technologies. One of the book’s more provocative conclusions is the importance of the practice of racialized viewing not only to nineteenth-century American literature, but to the subsequent emergence of a US mass visual culture.

Given the ubiquity of the image in our culture today as well as the current debates within the humanities concerning the relationship between literary and media history, *The Image in the Text* is well-positioned to engage a wide audience and impact a number of fields (including Literary Studies, American Studies, American History, American Art History, Book History, Visual Studies, and Media Studies).

I believe that this manuscript should be of interest to the University of Chicago Press given its reputation of publishing ambitious, thought-provoking books in American literary studies.

This manuscript has not been published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Lukasik

Associate Professor of English and American Studies