The Council of Literary Magazines and Presses is pleased to publish **Readers Surveys: Getting to Know Your Audience** as part of our series of monographs on marketing strategies for literary magazines and presses. This series has been generously funded by the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund.

Between 1991 and 1994, CLMP directed the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Literary Publishers Marketing Development Program which provided major marketing grants to twenty-eight literary magazines and presses. Participants in the Literary Publishers Marketing Development Program received intensive marketing training and assistance in developing comprehensive marketing plans tailored to each grantee’s organization. The goal of this program was to help these magazines and presses build larger and more varied audiences for the literature they publish.

From the beginning of the program, it was clear to CLMP that a wide range of other publishers would greatly appreciate and benefit from this kind of marketing training. That led to developing this series of monographs as one way to disseminate marketing information. As a complement to the monographs, CLMP also held a number of marketing workshops throughout the country.

In addition to **Readers Surveys**, CLMP has published monographs on circulation development, magazine fulfillment, textbook adoptions and bookstore promotions. These monographs are written to serve as primers in the subjects they cover and to present marketing methods that can be implemented by novices as well as more experienced publishers. The authors are professional marketing consultants who worked with the Literary Publishers Marketing Development Program and publishers who participated in the program. ---CLMP

**Readers Surveys: Getting to Know Your Audience**


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**►** Literary editors know that there are readers out in the marketplace who take as much pleasure in reading their publications as they do in publishing them. However, because of the time and financial demands of publishing a quality book or magazine, editors are often reluctant to take the next logical step and learn more about who those readers are. As a result, many literary publishers lack information that could be useful to their operation and may make marketing decisions with too little insight as to exactly who their audience is.

Reader research provides an opportunity for editors and publishers to get to know their readers and can also help identify and strengthen their relationships with the audience. A readers survey is the most common approach to reader research, and its goal is to learn three fundamental things about your readers: Who are they? What are their interests? Why do they read your magazine? The answers to these questions provide valuable information that can be used in a variety of ways.

One editor in the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Literary Publishers Marketing Development Program learned that nearly a quarter of the magazine’s readership had household incomes of over $100,000; this led to a first-time fundraising campaign directed towards subscribers. Another magazine discovered that over half of the respondents to its survey had subscribed for three years or more; this indicated to them that they had a loyal readership and that an improved renewal series would be a good use of marketing dollars.

Readers surveys can be very complex projects, and market research firms that specialize in this kind of work charge several thousand dollars for their services, well beyond the budgets of most literary publishers. But as this monograph will demonstrate, it is a myth that big bucks are a prerequisite for reader research. In fact, readers surveys can be quite modest in cost and still yield useful information.
This monograph is geared toward literary magazine editors because it is generally easier for magazines to do readers surveys than for presses. A magazine’s audience is readily accessible through the subscriber file. For presses, there is often less direct access to the final customer (the book buyer) because the majority of sales are through bookstores. However, if a press has a mailing list of active individual book buyers, a readers survey is feasible and such presses can and should adapt these ideas.

**Why Undertake a Readers Survey?**

When undertaking a marketing effort of any size, big or small, it is vital that such efforts generate the best possible response, thereby making the most of a magazine’s marketing dollars. Readers surveys can be an important aid in getting the biggest bang out of your marketing dollar because they provide useful information about your audience and how to maintain and expand it.

For one thing, survey results may indicate the potential size of a magazine’s audience. If you were to learn that your core group of readers represents a small yet defined niche (i.e. women between 18 and 24 who like female language poets), you could be fairly certain that even if you were able to find every reader like the ones you already have, it would still be a small group. This information is valuable for a couple of reasons. First, it helps set reasonable expectations for circulation growth. Second, knowing that you are going after a small readership means that your marketing budget and goals should also be modest; for publishers with limited budgets, knowing this at the outset of a marketing campaign is a definite advantage.

One of the most compelling reasons to undertake reader research is that it can help build your audience. Through a readers survey, you may discover things about your current readers that can be used to find new readers, as well as to keep the ones you already have. For example, a survey question might ask current subscribers how they first learned of the journal. If you find that 25% were introduced to it through a gift subscription, you will know that focusing marketing efforts on gift promotions is a wise use of resources. Asking readers what other magazines and journals they read will help identify appropriate mailing lists for use in direct mail campaigns. Or you might learn that the majority of your subscribers buy a large number of books each year, which would indicate that like-readers could be found via bookstore sales.

Advertising is another area in which data collected from readers surveys can be put to good use. This is the primary reason commercial magazines survey their readers, though it is less important to literary journals which are not driven by advertising sales. Nevertheless, reader demographics (age, occupation, gender, income and education level) certainly can be used to develop advertising sales, be they large or small.

Commercial publishers survey their readers for the marketing information noted above and for another reason. They also use readers surveys to ask questions that might help them make editorial decisions. Commercial publishers ask readers which columns, features and writers they like best and which they are less enthusiastic about. Some even ask readers how they feel about the length of articles!

While literary publishers already have a strong tie to their readers (that is, they share a love of good literature) and a firm editorial vision, some may want to consider soliciting opinions from their readers about the magazine’s content. An editor who receives an abundance of poetry manuscripts and who is considering increasing the amount of poetry in the magazine might ask a question about what genres the readers most enjoy. If a large percentage rank poetry as their favorite aspect of the journal, that information may help with the decision. Literary editors who have started to ask such questions (see *Ploughshares*’ survey questions #12-15 in appendix II) have commented that after years of working with little feedback from readers, there is a certain satisfaction in receiving completed surveys with information about their readers; it is one more way to create a dialogue between editor and reader.


What Time Is a Good Time for a Survey?

Maintaining current readership data is essential for effective editorial planning and marketing programs. Readers surveys should be undertaken every three years in order to stay abreast of changes in reader interest and taste. This is especially important if you have been acquiring new readers through aggressive marketing campaigns; your reader profile may be changing with the addition of new subscribers.

It is never too early or too late to begin surveying your audience. If you are an established magazine and have never conducted a survey, begin now. If you are publishing a brand new magazine, you probably know very little about your readers, so a survey should be undertaken after the second issue. If you do not have enough subscribers, consider printing a survey as a self-mailer and having it blown into the issues being sold in bookstores and on newsstands. Building a first-time profile of your readership, or augmenting that profile, will provide you with information that can be used to develop marketing methods that might attract new readers.

There are only three months in the year which are not recommended for mailing a survey. Due to the holidays, people are less likely to take the time to respond to a survey in December than at other times of the year. Because January and February are two of the biggest direct mail months, readers surveys face stiff competition from more sophisticated mailings and are less likely to be returned. For the remainder of the year, unless there are extraordinary and unpredictable circumstances (war, earthquakes), you should get a satisfactory response rate.

When planning a survey, the first step is to determine the number of readers you will be surveying and the method of selecting those readers. The actual number needed to obtain a statistically valid response is a reflection of both the size of your subscriber file and the number of responses you receive (known as the “response rate”). Literary publishers can usually anticipate healthy response rates because their readers tend to be highly involved (i.e. they read the magazine). Ploughshares undertook a survey in the summer of 1993 to learn about the demographics and literary habits of its readers, and the response rate was 26% for a mailing of 1,000.

In general, the following guidelines should help you determine the size of your sample:

- For subscriber files of 2,500 or less, 500 randomly selected names constitute a workable sample. If the number of subscribers is 1,000 or less, a sample can be constructed with 200 names. A response rate of 20% (100 returned surveys for the mailing to 500 or 40 returned surveys for the mailing to 200 names) will give you useful statistical information.

- For subscriber files of 2,500 to 20,000 names, a mailing of 1,000 to 2,500 randomly selected names would be optimal. Again, a minimum response rate of 20% will yield usable information.

Response rates higher than 20% are more reliable, but you can still learn a lot from smaller sample sizes and response rates. While a lower response does not meet the criteria of statistical validity, you will be able to make some useful generalizations about your readership from the responses you do receive and tally. Traditional (and well-financed) survey methods involve the use of follow-up “reminder” postcards when the response rate falls below the target. If you plan to use reminder postcards, be sure to add the costs of printing and mailing the cards into your budget.

Prior to selecting names, it is important to suppress institutional subscribers (i.e. libraries) if your aim is to survey your primary audience of paid individual readers. If you are a press, you must select individual buyers who have actually purchased a book from you; other individuals who receive your catalog but who have not placed an order are less likely to respond to a survey. You should be aware that limiting a survey to individual readers creates a bias if a substantial percentage of your total readership includes institutional subscribers or nonpaying readers (reviewers).
Once you have determined the number of names to mail and suppressed the names you are not going to include in the survey, the selection methodology is to randomly identify every “nth” name from your active subscriber file. For example, if the file size is 2,000 and the sample selection is going to be 500, then every 4th (“nth”) name on the file will be chosen to make up that selection. If the file size is 5,000 and the selection sample 1,000 names, every 5th name of the file will be used.

Components of a Readers Survey

The basic elements of a readers survey are the cover letter, the questionnaire, the return envelope and the outer envelope. Each of these components will be addressed separately.

Cover Letter

This is where first impressions are made on the people opening your envelope, so it is important to grab their attention immediately and make your case, all in two or three short paragraphs. You should include information about your publication (which they are presumably familiar with if they are subscribers) and why you are undertaking the survey. Explain why the readers’ participation is important; note that by giving just a few minutes of their time to complete the questionnaire they can make a valuable contribution to the magazine. Underscore the point that you need their help now and tell them approximately how long it will take to complete the survey. The final point to include in the letter is that their response is anonymous, as this encourages candor. The letter should be signed by the editor or publisher. Even though the letter should contain all these components, remember to keep it short and to the point.

Some literary magazines have offered survey respondents a gift incentive for completing the questionnaire. Examples of such incentives include a free subscription to a library selected by the respondent or a free issue to a friend. These offers may increase goodwill, but they do not measurably increase response rates and can be costly and time consuming to manage.

Questionnaire

As a rule, survey questions should be grouped into three sections: specific questions about your magazine’s form and content, general interest questions and demographic questions.

Specific questions about your magazine: What do your readers like or dislike about the magazine (features, columns, essays, poems, stories), how much time do they spend reading an issue, how often do they refer to it, who else reads their copy, how did they discover the magazine, what motivated them to become a subscriber, how long have they been a subscriber, do they intend to renew? If you include advertising, ask about that (do they actually respond to the ads?). In addition, ask a question about the quality of the fulfillment and customer service you offer.

General interest questions: Questions which attempt to determine their overall interest in literary journals: what other literary magazines they read, what other non-literary magazines they read or purchase and how they acquire those magazines (newsstand, bookstore, subscription), reading habits, book-purchasing patterns and other similar questions.

Demographic information: In this section, questions are asked which help you to develop a profile of your “typical” reader. You can ask about age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, income, education level, etc.

Questions which include numerical responses (age, income) should be designed using range brackets (see Threepenny Review’s question #9 in Appendix I). Respondents feel more comfortable (and are, therefore, more candid) when identifying themselves within a range rather than with a specific number. More people will respond to a question about their age by stating that their age is between 35 and 44 than will tell you they are 42 years old.
In general, there are five types of questions used in surveys to collect information:

**Rating Questions:** Respondents are asked to rate their interest in a series of items using a standard scale (see Appendix II, #8).

**Ranking Questions:** Respondents are asked to examine a list and then, after comparing the choices, order (or rank) their preferences (see Appendix III, #1).

**Multiple Choice Questions:** Respondents are provided with a list from which they select as many answers as are relevant to them (see Appendix II, #29).

**Yes/No Questions:** The simplest to answer and tally (see Appendix I, #15).

**Open Questions:** No predetermined answers are offered. Instead, a space is provided for respondents to write out their individual answers. This type of question is important in that it involves your readers and shows that their input is valued. Limit the number of open questions you use as responses must be individually recorded and cannot be tabulated (see Appendix I, #23).

When developing the actual questions, it is most important that they be clear and precise. However, here are a few helpful rules for you to follow to help make sure they are:

- Determine whether your questions can be answered easily with “yes” or “no.”
- Avoid jargon, slang, short-hand or other words which assume a respondent has specialized knowledge.
- Think about what information would be valuable to you and work backwards to create a question that when answered gives you that information.
- Use time brackets to frame questions that relate to the reader’s behavior (“how many books did you buy/readings did you attend in the past twelve months”). This helps to level out seasonality. For example, some respondents might only buy books during June, before a vacation, and in December as gifts. By asking them to tell you the total number of books they bought during the past year, their buying pattern will translate into usable information.

One way to check whether or not your survey is “user friendly” is to ask several people (colleagues, friends, family) to complete the survey before it is printed. This will serve two purposes: you will learn if there are any questions which confuse people, and you will learn approximately how long it takes to complete the survey. This information can be used to improve the survey, if need be, prior to reproducing it and sending it out.

**Reply Envelope**

This element is very important and may alone determine the size of your response rate. Including a postage-paid return envelope makes it much easier for the respondent to return the survey after it has been completed. If you are doing a fairly small survey and expect fewer than 500 responses, it may be more economical to create return envelopes by purchasing a box of #9 envelopes (which fit inside a standard #10 business envelope), stamping your organization’s address on the front and affixing first class postage stamps.

If you are undertaking a survey that will generate a response rate of over 500 pieces, or if you already have a Business Reply Envelope (BRE) permit established, it is worthwhile to print BRE’s. Business reply envelopes have a pre-printed address, a permit number, bar codes and, instead of a stamp, the words “no postage necessary if mailed in the United States.” Establishing a BRE account takes some time and requires an annual fee ($75 in 1994). The cost of each reply you receive using a BRE can range from 34¢ to 42¢ per piece, the lowest price being available to mailers admitted to the Business Reply Mail Accounting System (BRMAS). However, even at the highest rate, a BRE permit can save you money.
For example, if you were mailing your survey to 2,000 names, placing a first class stamp on each return envelope included with the surveys would cost $640 in postage. But remember, not all 2,000 would be returned to you. If instead you used a BRE, you wouldn’t have to pay postage on unreturned envelopes. A likely scenario would be that you would receive 500 responses from your mailing of 2,000 (a 25% response rate), and with a BRE you would only spend $210 on postage (500 x .42¢) and the $75 fee.

**Outer Envelope**

A standard #10 business envelope with your organization’s return address is all that is needed. Some magazines print a promotional tag line on the outer envelope to encourage the recipient to open it. For example: “Literary Reader, Your Opinion is Needed!” or, “Survey Inside—We Need Your Help.” Using a tag line requires either printing over envelopes you have or printing new envelopes which will add to your cost. An alternative would be to have a rubber stamp made and add the tag line yourself—it’s less expensive but does require time and labor.

**Tabulation and Analysis of Results**

Once the questionnaire has been mailed, it is time to turn to the task of tabulating the data as it flows back from the respondents. Tabulation is a very important part of the research process, and it requires some mathematical and statistical skills to complete successfully.

In an ideal world where we all had limitless funds, the task of tabulation would be contracted to an outside vendor with statistical training and computer software that allows for sorting data according to a variety of perspectives (called “banner points”). However, this is not an ideal world and most people will need to do this work in-house using software which allows the sorting of data and numbers in a variety of ways. Luckily, many of the spreadsheet and database programs now on the market are quite user-friendly and will do the job.

If you do not possess the statistical skills needed to tabulate and analyze your survey, don’t despair. You probably know someone who does (a colleague, student, board member or friend) and who would be willing to contribute his/her services to help you get started. Many literary publishers based on college or university campuses have found assistance from students or professors in academic departments that use statistics in research.

**Banner Points**

The information gleaned from your survey can be looked at in a number of ways. This is the creative part of tabulation, and if you work with a tabulator, s/he will be able to help you decide how to best structure your analysis. You can tabulate the answers to a question and stop there, or you can probe beyond the numbers to ascertain how readers responded based on their demographic profile (age, gender, occupation or income) or perhaps on their preference for a specific genre such as poetry or fiction. Each of the perspectives you select for analysis is a “banner point.” Some people like to tabulate all questions using banner points, and others select a few questions to be tabulated this way; it is really your choice.

On the following page is a sample format showing both total responses and those responses broken down into two banner points, gender and age. Responses to all questions should be reported both as total numbers and as percentages. In this example, one can learn a great deal about how many people borrow books from libraries (from the totals) and something about who those people are (from the individual banner points). If this sample were complete, the different banner points would extend across the page to include a breakdown of responses by income, occupation and education.
Another important element in the tabulation process is the need to include a mathematical medium (or average) for questions that ask respondents to indicate a bracketed range, such as age or income. The standard method to compute these statistical averages is to use the average within each bracket. Below is an example of how to compute this average for annual household income (question #23 in Appendix III):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bracket Range</th>
<th>Bracket Average</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$1,296,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000-$30,000</td>
<td>$25,500</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$2,091,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$31,000-$40,000</td>
<td>$35,500</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$3,231,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,000-$60,000</td>
<td>$50,500</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$8,030,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$61,000-$75,000</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$5,032,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$76,000-$100,000</td>
<td>$88,000</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$6,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>$10,542,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>641 $36,381,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To calculate the average household income, divide the total of $36,381,000 by the total number of responses, 641, to arrive at the average household income of $56,760. However, be aware that it’s easy to manipulate numbers. The bottom number used to mark “under $20,000” was $12,000; the top number used to mark “over $100,000” was $150,000. This is a conservative approach. If you had reason to believe that respondents who marked “over $100,000” were primarily lawyers living in New York City, you would have good reason to select $200,000 as the ceiling for those checking this range. Obviously, the numbers you select to denote the top and bottom income ranges will have a significant influence on the number which is calculated as your readers’ average household income.

Timeline

► Allow six months to complete a readers survey, from the initial planning meeting through final tabulation and analysis. The amount of time needed to complete the various steps in undertaking a survey is outlined below to help you prepare your own timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I.    | • Develop criteria for questionnaire.  
|       | • Determine survey goals.            | 6 weeks       |
|       | • Four to five drafts of questionnaire.  |               |
| II.   | • Determine size of reader sample.   | 2 weeks       |
III. • Begin design and production of all pieces (survey and envelopes).
• Set up postal accounts if necessary.
• Contract with mailing house to sort and mail survey (if necessary). 2 - 4 weeks

IV. • Test questionnaire with friends/colleagues. 1 week

V. • Print mailing pieces.
• Prepare mailing labels.
• Mail survey. 2 weeks

VI. • Wait for responses. 6 weeks

VII. • Tabulate and analyze results. 6 weeks

Readers Surveys Budget Estimates

It is best to create a budget estimate before you begin so that you know approximately how much everything will cost, where you will have to pay for services and where you might be able to find pro bono assistance.

There are no standards when it comes to costing out a survey (except postage) because everyone has different services available to them at different prices. Whether or not you use a designer and what you pay for that service, the number of pages of your survey, the number of surveys you mail, the number of responses you receive and whether you employ someone to help you tabulate your results will all affect your costs. All of the possible costs are listed below with a rough estimate of the highs and lows. This estimate is based on a mailing of 500 surveys.

- Design of Questionnaire $0 - $250
- Printing (includes one page cover letter, two page questionnaire, #10 outer envelope and #9 BRE) $150 - $400
- Mail Services (fold and insert cover letter and questionnaire, affix postage and address labels) $0 - $150
- Outgoing postage (@ 32¢ per piece) $160 - $160
- Response postage (range: 34¢ - 42¢) (calculated @ 20% response or 100 pieces) $34 - $42
- Tabulation and analysis $0 - $250

TOTAL $344 - $1,252

You can reduce the cost of postage by creating a one-page self-mailer survey complete with a mini cover letter at the top and include it with renewal notices. The same type of survey could be blown into copies of the magazine going to bookstores and/or newsstands. The disadvantage is that the response rate is likely to be lower, especially if you have not put postage on the mailer, and it may take a long time to get responses.

The Final Report

A completed readers survey should be well organized and clearly presented so that people less familiar with the survey can easily understand the data you have collected. This information will not only serve you now, but will be useful to future staff. The report consists of four basic components:
Methodology: A straight forward explanation of the entire survey process from start to finish. It should include how names were selected for the mailing, a description of what was mailed, how many surveys were mailed, the date they were mailed, how many completed surveys were received, the response rate, and the date tabulation began.

Highlights of findings: An executive summary which highlights what you consider to be the most salient findings from your survey. This is the section of the report which you would reproduce on its own to share with advertisers, board members, distributors, fellow magazine editors and others who might be interested in the highlights but will not comb through the tabulation section to find them.

Tabulation of survey results: A complete tally showing the base total respondents to each question (the number of responses to each question will not necessarily equal the total number of completed surveys you received because not all respondents will answer all questions and some questions will generate multiple answers). Next to the base totals are the banner points you selected prior to the tabulation.

Survey Questionnaire: A copy of the actual survey and cover letter should be attached at the end of the report so that readers can refer to it.

Conclusion

“It turns out that for once the consultants are right; it’s very useful for a publisher to be able to see what her readers think.”

Despite the time and energy you will invest in a readers survey, the thrill of seeing responses come in with the daily mail and learning about your magazine’s readers from their answers more than compensates for your effort. Several editors of literary journals found that direct contact with their readers has been invigorating and has given them a fresh perspective on their work.

In the cover letter accompanying a second readers survey undertaken by The Threepenny Review in early 1993, editor/publisher Wendy Lesser shared with readers the story of her conversion to readers surveys:

“For over ten years I published this magazine without the benefit of readers surveys. Then, in 1991, some consultants and other people of that ilk told me it would be good for The Threepenny Review to do a survey. Mainly to get the consultants off my case, and expecting very little in the way of helpful information, I sent out the first such survey a little less than two years ago.

To my surprise, the results were both interesting and informative. It turns out that for once the consultants are right; it’s very useful for a publisher to be able to see what her readers think. I have some sense of who you are out there, from occasional Letters to the Editor, from notes scribbled on renewal slips, and from general word-of-mouth. But a survey gives me a chance to check in with people—maybe you are one of them—who wouldn’t necessarily write to me on their own. And what you have to tell me can be very helpful to the magazine.

...By filling out this survey, you will help me to notice things that I don’t see, or pay attention to things I thought could be ignored. And you will let me know a little about yourself, which in turn gives me some sense of the audience we are speaking to. That will make a big difference.”

Whether you learn more about your audience through a formal survey process or by asking a few questions on your renewal notices, knowing who your readers are will greatly increase your ability to maintain the readers you have and better target your efforts to find new ones. You may not want to make use of all the information you gather from your surveys, but with the data at your fingertips you have an opportunity you would not have without it; that is, the opportunity to strengthen your ties to the audience for whom you create your literary magazine.
1. How long have you been subscribing to *The Threepenny Review*?
   - _____Less than a year
   - _____1-2 years
   - _____3-5 years
   - _____Forever

2. How did you first discover the magazine?
   - _____Mail Order
   - _____In a bookstore
   - _____Through a friend
   Other (please describe):

3. What other magazines do you subscribe to? (check as many as apply)
   - _____The New Yorker
   - _____The New York Review of Books
   - _____The Nation
   - _____The New Republic
   - _____Harper’s
   - _____The Atlantic
   - _____Granta
   - _____American Poetry Review
   - _____Paris Review
   - _____Story Magazine
   - Others: ____________________________

4. Please estimate how many books you’ve read in the last six months: _______
   What was the most recent? (please give author and title)

5. Please estimate how many times in the last six months you attended:
   - _____movies
   - _____theater
   - _____dance
   - _____concerts
   - _____other performance
   - _____art museums or galleries

6. What else do you like to do with your spare time?

7. What is your occupation?

8. What is your educational background? (please check one)
   - _____High school or less
   - _____B.A.
   - _____Graduate degree

9. What is your annual family income? (please check one)
   - _____under $15,000
   - _____$15-30,000
   - _____$30-$60,000
   - _____over $60,000

10. What do you like best about *Threepenny*? (please check one)
    - _____Stories
    - _____Poems
    - _____Memoirs
    - _____Book Reviews
    - _____Film Reviews
    - _____Theater/Dance/Art Reviews
    - _____Topical Essays
    - _____Table Talk
    Other (please cite)

11. What do you like least about *Threepenny*? (please describe)

12. Who are your favorite authors that publish in *Threepenny*?
13. Who are your favorite authors that publish elsewhere?
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

14. If *Threepenny* offered to sell you books by *Threepenny* writers at bookstore prices, might you be interested in buying them?
   _____Yes   _____No   _____Only at discounted price

15. Do you read the ads in *Threepenny*?   _____Yes   _____No

16. Are you satisfied with the service on your subscription?   _____Yes   _____No
   If no, please tell us what’s wrong:__________________________________________________________________________________

17. Do you like *Threepenny’s* size and format?   _____Yes   _____No
   If no, why not?________________________________________________________________________________________________________

18. Is our quarterly publication schedule satisfactory?   _____Just right   _____Too often   _____Not often enough

19. About how long do you spend reading each issue?   _____Less than 1 hour   _____1-2 hours   _____More than two hours

20. How do you read the magazine? (check all that apply)   _____From front to back   _____Starting with the most interesting piece
   _____Thoroughly   _____Skipping a few things   _____Skipping most things   _____Right when it arrives
   _____Gradually over the quarter   Other:____________________________________________________

21. How many others, besides yourself, read your copy of *Threepenny*?   _____1   _____2   _____3   _____4 or more

22. Do you like the art published in *Threepenny*?   _____Yes   _____No
   Comments:__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

23. What is the most unexpected thing about *The Threepenny Review*, compared to other magazines?
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for helping us with this survey. If you would like us, as an expression of our thanks, to send a free one-year subscription to a friend of yours, please fill in the name and address here:_______________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
(please include zip code)
Appendix II: Ploughshares Survey

Ploughshares Reader Survey

Dear Reader:

Before we establish our editorial plans for the Nineties, we would like the input of our valued readers. Tell us what you enjoy and don’t enjoy about Ploughshares, and how we might improve.

This questionnaire is strictly anonymous. Your identity will not, cannot be traced by your answers. The results of the survey will assist us in reexamining the mission of Ploughshares and will move the publication closer to your needs. Please complete the survey (check-marking only one answer per question unless otherwise instructed) and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope before August 1. (Librarians: Please try to answer in relation to your patrons.) Thank you very much for your participation.

—Don Lee, Managing Editor

1) How long have you been reading Ploughshares?
☐ Less than 1 year
☐ 1-2 years
☐ 3-4 years
☐ 5 or more years

2) How did you first learn about Ploughshares?
☐ Teacher
☐ Friend/family member
☐ Colleague/classmate
☐ Review or article
☐ Advertisement
☐ Literary market guidebook
☐ Gift recipient
☐ Bookstore
☐ Library

3) Do you:
☐ Subscribe
☐ No longer subscribe but buy single issues of interest
☐ Stopped buying Ploughshares because:
   ☐ Lack of interest
   ☐ Dissatisfied with quality
   ☐ Too expensive
   ☐ Discontent with submissions procedures at Ploughshares

4) Why, mainly, do you read Ploughshares?
☐ General reading pleasure
☐ Literary education
☐ Writing models
☐ Editorial or professional resource
☐ Other __________________________

5) In numerical order (1, 2, 3, etc.), please rank what attracts you most to Ploughshares.
   ☐ Reputation of the magazine
   ☐ Editorial variety from issue to issue
   ☐ Publication of “discovered” writers
   ☐ Publication of established writers
   ☐ Other __________________________

6) Do you respond (with a purchase or an inquiry) to the ads in Ploughshares?
☐ Often
☐ Sometimes
☐ Never

7) Are you satisfied with the number of pages and frequency of our issues?
   (Check all that apply.)
☐ Yes
☐ Would like more pages
☐ Would like less pages
☐ Would like more issues a year
☐ Would like fewer issues a year

8) What is your preference for the balance of works published in Ploughshares?
   More Same Less
   Poetry
   Fiction
   Personal essays
   Nonfiction
   Criticism
   Interviews
   Art/photos
   Book reviews

9) How do you primarily categorize Ploughshares?
   ☐ As a magazine
   ☐ As a journal
   ☐ As an anthology

10) What do you think of the overall quality of work published in Ploughshares?
    ☐ Very high
    ☐ Inconsistent
    ☐ Sometimes too academic
    ☐ Not provocative enough
    ☐ Other __________________________

11) Do you enjoy receiving our occasional newsletter, Ploughshares News?
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    ☐ Indifferent
    ☐ Prefer receiving more often

12) Please indicate which of the following features, if any, you would like to see in our newsletter. (Check all that apply.)
    ☐ Profiles of/interviews with guest editors/contributors
    ☐ Updates about former contributors
    ☐ General news about the literary world
    ☐ Prefer these features be in Ploughshares itself

13) How would you like to see Ploughshares redesigned? (Check all that apply.)
    ☐ Classical, traditional design
    ☐ Contemporary
    ☐ More like a commercial magazine
    ☐ More like a journal
    ☐ Just enhance current design

14) Are you satisfied with our selection of guest editors? (Check all that apply.)
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ Would like more variety
    ☐ Would like better known editors
    ☐ Would prefer permanent editors

15) What about the selection of themes?
    (Check all that apply.)
    ☐ Satisfied
    ☐ Needs to be more cohesive
    ☐ Should be more topical
    ☐ Needs to be more eclectic

16) How many of the following types of books do you typically read in a year?
    0 1-9 10-19 20+
    Fiction
    Poetry
    Nonfiction
    Criticism

17) Where do you usually buy books and single copies of literary magazines?
    ☐ Bookstore chains
    ☐ Independent bookstores
    ☐ College bookstores
    ☐ Mail Order
    ☐ Other __________________________
24) Please indicate your gender, age, ethnicity, citizenship, and zip code:

- Male
- Female
- Caucasian
- African
- Asian/Pacific
- Native American
- Other
- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55 or older

- U.S. citizen
- Non-U.S.

25) What is the highest level of education you have completed? (XX if still attending.)

- Ph.D.
- Professional degree
- M.F.A.
- Master’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Partial college
- High school
- Partial high school

26) What was or is your main course of study?

- Creative Writing
- Literature
- Liberal Arts
- Sciences
- Other

27) What is your occupation?

- Educator
- Editor/agent
- Librarian
- Writer
- Student
- Homemaker
- Professional
- Manager/administrator
- Technical/ clerical/sales
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Other

28) What is your total household income (including yourself as well as others you live with)?

- Under $25,000
- $25,000-$49,999
- $50,000-$74,999
- $75,000-$99,999
- $100,000 or more

29) Do you buy single copies of any of the following magazines listed in alphabetical order? (XX if you subscribe.)

- Agni
- American Poetry Review
- Antaeus
- Atlantic
- Boston Review
- Conjunctions
- Esquire
- Georgia Review
- Gettysburg Review
- Grand Street
- Granta
- Harper’s
- Hudson Review
- Kenyon Review
- Nation
- New England Review
- New Republic
- New York Review of Books
- New York Times Book Review
- New Yorker
- North American Review
- Paris Review
- Parnassus
- Partisan Review
- Poetry
- Poets & Writers Quarterly
- Story
- TriQuarterly
- Utne Reader
- Village Voice
- Wintertime's Digest
- Zyzzyva

OTHER LITERARY MAGAZINES:

OTHER COMMERCIAL MAGAZINES:

Please feel free to attach any additional comments. We particularly invite suggestions for future guest editors and themes, and opinions about our service, editorial content, and procedures. What can we do better?

Enclose in the business reply envelope, or mail to: Don Lee, Ploughshares, Emerson College, 100 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02116.

Thank you very much.
Council of Literary Magazines and Presses
Readership Questionnaire

1. What types of literary writing interest you the most? Please rank your preference on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 as the writing that interests you the most and 5 the least)

___ Fiction ___ Reviews & Criticism
___ Nonfiction ___ Drama
___ Poetry ___ Other _______________

2. Approximately how many books of each literary type did you purchase during the past twelve months? If none, leave blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1-4</th>
<th>5-10</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews &amp; criticism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other _______________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Approximately how many literary magazines did you subscribe to during the past twelve months? ______

4. In general, how do you decide which books to purchase? Check all that apply.

- Book reviews
- Author interviews on:
  - Radio
  - TV
  - Print
- Readings
- Browsing in libraries

5. Where do you purchase your books and magazines? Check all that apply.

Books
- Independent bookstores
- Chain bookstores
- Book clubs
- Newsstands
- Direct-mail offers
- Bookfairs
- Book catalogs
- Other _______________

Magazines
- Independent bookstores
- Chain bookstores
- Book clubs
- Newsstands
- Direct-mail offers
- Bookfairs
- Book catalogs
- Other _______________

6. Do you borrow books from a library? [ ] Yes  [ ] No
If yes, approximately how many literary books did you check out for yourself over the past twelve months and from what type of library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Do you read literary magazines at the library? [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. Do you receive any book catalogs or mailings from any of the following publishers? Check all that apply.
- Arte Publico Press
- Bilingual Press
- BOA Editions, Ltd.
- Coffee House Press
- Copper Canyon Press
- Curbside Press
- Dalkey Archive Press
- David R. Godine
- Feminist Press
- Graywolf Press
- Island Press
- Milkweed Editions
- Sun & Moon Press
- Theatre Comm. Group
- Third World Press
- Univ. of Iowa Press
- White Pine Press
- Other _______________

9. Have you purchased any of the following books during the past twelve months?

- Tell Me the Truth about Love, W. H. Auden
- A Place Where the Sea Remembers, Sandra Benitez
- Pulp, Charles Bukowski
- Selected Poems, Rita Dove
- Howl, Allen Ginsberg
- She Had Some Horses, Joy Harjo
- Pigs in Heaven, Barbara Kingsolver
- Angels in America, Part I/Part II, Tony Kushner
- Einstein's Dreams, Alan Lightman
- The English Patient, Michael Ondaatje
- The Shipping News, E. Annie Proulx
- Montana 1948, Larry Watson

10. Do you currently subscribe to any of the following literary magazines? Check all that apply.

- African American Review
- American Poetry Review
- Belles Lettres
- Callaloo
- Calyx
- Conjunctions
- Georgia Review
- Kenyon Review
- Manoa
- Missouri Review
- Ploughshares
- Review: Latin American Literature and Arts
- Triquarterly
- Threepenny Review
- Zyzzyva
- Other _______________

11. Of the magazines you checked above, approximately how many people besides yourself read your copy? ______

12. What other magazines do you currently subscribe to? Check all that apply.

- Atlantic
- Esquire
- Grand Street
- Granta
- Harper's
- Nation
- New Republic
- NY Review of Books
- NY Times Book Review
- NY Times Review of Books
- New Yorker
- Paris Review
- Poetry Flash
- Poets & Writers
- Story
- Times Lit. Supplement
- Utne Reader
- Voice Lit. Supplement
- Writer's Digest
- Other _______________
13. How did you become a subscriber to these magazines? Check all that apply.
- Direct-mail offer
- Received gift subscription
- Read at library
- Teacher recommendation
- First purchased copy at bookstore/newsstand
- Responded to ad in another magazine
- Read or purchased at a literary center
- Read review/article
- Other __________________________

14. Why do you read literary magazines?
- Writing models
- Reading pleasure
- Editorial or academic resource
- Other __________________________

15. What other media do you listen to, watch, or read? Check all that apply.
- AM radio
- FM radio
- Network TV
- Cable TV
- Public Radio Programs
- Online Info. Services
- "Morning Edition"
- American Online
- "Fresh Air"
- CompuServe
- "Prairie Home Companion"
- Internet
- "All Things Considered"
- Prodigy
- Other __________________________

Newspapers
- Atlanta Constitutional
- Chicago Tribune
- Christian Science Monitor
- Denver Post
- Los Angeles Times
- New York Times
- San Francisco Chronicle
- USA Today
- Village Voice
- Wall Street Journal
- Washington Post
- Other __________________________

16. Did you attend any literary readings in the past twelve months?
- Yes Approximately how many? ________
- No

If yes, what types of readings were they and where were they held? Check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Bookstore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>College/university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry slams</td>
<td>Festival/fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Literary center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coffeehouse/bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. In general, if you attended a reading, did you also purchase the book or magazine used in the performance?  Yes  No

18. In the past twelve months, after reading the work of a writer in a literary magazine, did you then purchase his or her book(s)?  Yes  No

19. Have you ever participated in a writing program, conference, or class?  Yes  No

If yes, where? Check all that apply.
- College
- Literary Center
- Continuing ed. course
- Writers' conference
- Festival
- Other __________________________

20. Do you have a degree in creating writing (B.A., M.F.A., or Ph.D.)?  Yes  No

21. Have you ever been active in a nonprofit literary organization?  Yes  No

If yes, in what capacity? Check all that apply.
- Volunteer
- Board member
- Donor
- Staff
- Other __________________________

22. What is your primary occupation?
- Advertising/media
- Professional (i.e., law, accounting, banking)
- Educator
- Health services
- Writer
- Homemaker
- Sales
- Clerical
- Student
- Retired
- Manager/administrator
- Other __________________________

23. What is your total annual household income?
- Under $20,000
- $21,000-$30,000
- $31,000-$40,000
- $41,000-$60,000
- Over $100,000

24. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- Some high school
- College graduate
- High school graduate
- Graduate degree
- Professional training
- Some college
- Other __________________________

25. Please indicate your gender, ethnicity, and age.
- Male
- Female
- Caucasian
- African American
- Asian/Pacific
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Other
- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-65
- 65 or older

26. Please provide your zip code and state.

Zip code ________ State ______

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. If you would be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview (approximately ten minutes), please provide your name, telephone number, and the best time to call in the space below.

Name __________________________
Telephone no. __________________________
Best time to call __________________________
Dear Literary Reader:

The Council of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP) is a national service and advocacy organization dedicated to supporting and promoting literary publishing in the United States. The organization’s work helps to ensure that readers and writers in this country are well-served by a vibrant literary culture.

As mainstream publishers focus increasingly on commercially-viable work, literary magazines and presses have an even greater role to play in the publication of serious literature — work such as experimental fiction, poetry, feminist literature, gay and lesbian writing and works in translation. CLMP supports that role through a variety of programs and services, and in recent years has raised more than $6 million in grants for literary publishers.

A close relationship with readers is a high priority shared by literary magazine editors and small press publishers. On behalf of our members, CLMP would like to learn more about literary audiences, both magazine and book readers.

For this reason, we ask your help. You are a reader of literary magazines and/or small press books and we would greatly appreciate your taking a few moments to answer our questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible. Be assured that your response is anonymous.

Thank you in advance for your help. We look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially yours,

Jim Sitter
Executive Director

Readers Surveys: Getting to Know Your Audience is available free-of-charge to CLMP members. All others may purchase it for $10. Please send a check for that amount payable to CLMP, 154 Christopher Street, Suite 3C, New York, NY 10014-2839.