

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910788669303321
Autore	Lupton Christina
Titolo	Knowing books [[electronic resource]] : the consciousness of mediation in eighteenth-century Britain // Christina Lupton
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia, : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2012
ISBN	1-283-89700-8 0-8122-0521-9
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (199 p.)
Collana	Material Texts
Disciplina	820.9/005
Soggetti	English literature - 18th century - History and criticism - Theory, etc Mediation in literature Self-consciousness (Awareness) in literature Literature publishing - Great Britain - History - 18th century Books and reading - Great Britain - History - 18th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Prologue -- Introduction. Giving Power to the Medium -- Chapter 1. Powerlessness as Entertainment -- Chapter 2. What It-Narratives Know About Their Authors -- Chapter 3. The Theory of Paper -- Chapter 4. Sermons Written on the Screen of Print -- Chapter 5. Gray and Mackenzie Printing on the Wall -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	The eighteenth century has long been associated with realism and objective description, modes of representation that deemphasize writing. But in the middle decades of the century, Christina Lupton observes, authors described with surprising candor the material and economic facets of their own texts' production. In Knowing Books Lupton examines a variety of eighteenth-century sources, including sermons, graffiti, philosophical texts, and magazines, which illustrate the range and character of mid-century experiments with words announcing their status as physical objects. Books that "know" their own presence on the page and in the reader's hand become, in Lupton's account, tantalizing objects whose entertainment value competes with that of realist narrative. Knowing Books introduces these

mid-eighteenth-century works as part of a long history of self-conscious texts being greeted as fashionable objects. Poststructuralist and Marxist approaches to literature celebrate the consciousness of writing and economic production as belonging to revolutionary understandings of the world, but authors of the period under Lupton's gaze expose the facts of mediation without being revolutionary. On the contrary, their explication of economic and material processes shores up their claim to material autonomy and economic success. Lupton uses media theory and close reading to suggest the desire of eighteenth-century readers to attribute sentience to technologies and objects that entertain them. Rather than a historical study of print technology, *Knowing Books* offers a humanist interpretation of the will to cede agency to media. This horizon of theoretical engagement makes *Knowing Books* at once an account of the least studied decades of the eighteenth century and a work of relevance for those interested in new attitudes toward media in the twenty-first.
