



## Periodical Personae: Pseudonyms, Authorship and the Imagined Community of Joseph Priestley's Theological Repository

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' Anonymous and pseudonymous publication suggest that the freedom of expression and circulation of ideas depends on the 'negation of persons in public discourse' (William Warner). Like anonymity, pseudonymity suspends the referential anchoring which ties an utterance to a person or place. Yet rather than negating the personal identity of authors, pseudonyms shield them through fictional identities which project them into alternative imagined communities. In this paper I analyse the use of pseudonyms in a dissenting periodical publication, Joseph Priestley's Theological Repository (1769-1771, 1784-1788, rpt 1795). By resisting biographical forms of identification and accountability, the journal explored, anticipated and projected its own reception.

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