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Editorial note: Book reviews are edited for typographical errors, and otherwise are printed as received.

Correction

The editors of *American Studies* apologize to Gregory Eiselein for the typographic errors that appeared in his review of Christopher Beach, *The Politics of Distinction: Whitman and the Discourses of Nineteenth-Century America* on pages 145-146 in the Fall, 1997 issue. The word “women” preceding “poets” was omitted in the penultimate line on page 145 while Martin Klammer’s name was misspelled in the second paragraph on page 146.

The corrected version of the entire review has been reprinted on pages 152-153 of this issue.

Reviews

JAZZ IN AMERICAN CULTURE. By Burton W. Peretti. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee. 1997.

Burton W. Peretti, author of the pioneering study *The Creation of Jazz: Music, Race, and Cultures in Urban America* (1992), now has written *Jazz in American Culture*, an impressive and highly useful synthetic history that views broad changes in twentieth-century American culture and politics against the multicolored, multidimensional canvas of jazz performance, consumption, and criticism. Informed by the latest work in both jazz studies and cultural history and written in a fluidly graceful style, *Jazz in American Culture* dances nimbly but surely across the American century. Each of the book's concisely framed chapter connects jazz's internal stylistic and sociological developments to larger trends in American race relations, family and community life, gender dynamics, leisure habits, and politics.

As in *The Creation of Jazz*, Peretti here defines and conceptualizes jazz as a singular development of American urban culture. "No music has been so closely associated with the rise and fall of America's cities" (4), he asserts in the book's introduction. Indeed, one way to read *Jazz in American Culture* is as an urban declension narrative. The early chapters detail jazz's rise as a multiracial public culture situated in the growing nightlife and leisure industries of the industrial city. 1910s ragtime, 1920s New Orleans small ensemble jazz, and 1930s swing bog-bands expressed the optimism of postmigration African Americans, Gatsby-style smart set slummers, and Depression-era "common man" jitterbuggers alike, while the rapid diffusion of these styles through the burgeoning mass media made jazz a symbol of modernity, city life, sexual freedom, and interracial exchange throughout the American hinterlands.

This cultural formation unraveled in the face of the large-scale cultural changes wrought by World War II and postwar suburbanization. Residential relocation out of the cities, the decline of the manufacturing job market, and the turn to a privatized culture of television all conspired to undermine jazz's urban base. Bebop came triumphantly out of the black ghetto in the 1940s. But in the 1960s Peretti argues, despite valuable efforts to position the new black jazz avant-garde at the center of a black urban renaissance, "jazz failed to gain the central cultural role it had once held in urban black communities" (144).

Since the 1960s, jazz's leading edge experimenters have had to look to the international avant-garde for support. In recent years jazz has been increasingly marginalized by a market research-governed popular culture industry that values the private preferences of "niche" groups over "shared mass public experience" (157). Today's jazz audience, not unlike the American city itself, is fragmented as never before: "smooth jazz" or "adult contemporary" (which jazz aficionados like Peretti loathe) serves one segment of the Yuppie and Buppie markets; Wynton Marsalis's gentrified concert-based approach serves another; swing revivalists playing at senior citizen dances serve yet another. Yet even taken together, these various strains of "jazz" fail to constitute a public urban culture reminiscent of the 1930s and 1940s. "In 1995 not a single commercially supported jazz radio station operated in the United States," Peretti rues. (176).

Peretti's powerfully-argued urban decline thesis is not as schematic as my summary of it might suggest, nor does it prevent him from registering some sharp insights into other dynamics of jazz culture. *Jazz in American Culture* suggestively tracks jazz's masculinist pulsations—from the violent gangster milieu of jazz's early "sporting life" environs, to the cold war machismo that subtly inflected jazz's 1950s urbane liberalism, to Wynton Marsalis's tendentious feminization of the 1960s counterculture—even as it gives more attention to female performers than is customary in a jazz studies literature that tends to be more male-centric than even jazz itself. On race issues, Peretti admirably steers clear of the either/or logic that hobbles so much of the discussion of jazz. His narrative shows that jazz has had heightened significance and an especially strong rootedness in the lives of African Americans; *and* that jazz developed a biracial professional culture; *and* that black jazz musicians have had to struggle against both personal and institutional racism; *and* that white musicians and audiences have figured importantly in the music's development.

Two more features of *Jazz in American Culture* make it especially compelling for American Studies. First, Peretti takes into serious account the underappreciated cultural variable of age. His narrative shows a recurring pattern in which, on the one hand, adolescents have "led the way for their elders, using music to explore their emotions and desires in the midst of constant social innovation" (181), and on the other, middle-aged and older Americans have reached back to the music of their youth for a sense of comfort and security. Paying heed to this tension between innovation and nostalgia, Peretti complicates conventional linear and Whiggish models of popular music history. The bebop moment of the 1940s was also the moment of the Dixieland revival; the "new thing" in the 1960s co-existed with record audiences for the refurbished swing of the Armstrong, Ellington, and Basie bands.

Secondly, Peretti, moving against the grain of much specialized jazz scholarship, gauges jazz's fortunes against the development of other musical idioms, and does so in a way that is so historically enriching and (with the exception of sneers at disco and "smooth jazz") even-handed. In an intriguing subplot, Peretti keeps circling back to a discussion of jazz's place in the American imagination compared with that of country music. These comparisons work to draw together his urbanist framework with his sharp observations on the dialectic of innovation and nostalgia in popular music and culture. Suggestively noting that jazz and country are "two southern musics with common taproots" which "both contributed directly to the sound of rock and roll"—and which merged in the 1930s advent of "western swing" and in the personal canon of Jimmy Carter—Peretti finds it "remarkable" that these musics have diverged so sharply in recent American culture (182).

Remarkable, indeed, but also an illuminating lens with which to view the fragmentation of American culture and politics in recent decades. A bounty of such illuminations

give *Jazz in American Culture* its distinctive glow as an excellent introductory text on its important topic.

Carter G. Woodson Institute, University of Virginia

John Gennari

COVENANT AND REPUBLIC: Historical Romance and the Politics of Puritanism. By Philip Gould. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996.

First, one is struck by the audacity of a survey of the earliest American romances treating Puritan New England that doesn't find its fictions culminating in Hawthorne. Gould is not one of those literary historians excoriated by William Shengemann for finding early American literature meaningful to the extent it previews the "fullness of American genius" in the American Renaissance. On the contrary, Gould contends that reading the works of the 1820s in the light of the fictions of 1840s and 50s obscures the language and occludes the values projected in Catherine Sedgewick's *Hope Leslie*, Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok*, James Fenimore Cooper's *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, and John Greenleaf Whittier's *The Witch of New England*. If anything, the ideological and cultural tensions of the 1790s—the contest between republicanism and liberal individualism, the clash of "feminine" sentimentalist virtue with "masculine" valorous virtue, the war between universalist spiritual ameliorism and traditional Calvinism—bear more on the concerns of these romances.

Second, one is impressed by the seriousness with which Gould fulfills the hermeneutic imperative to explore the three horizons implicit in interpreting past historical writings. He confesses his predispositions forthrightly, particularly his disinclination in 1996 to discover in Puritanism the root for any cultural problem in America, challenging the hypostasis of Puritanism as cultural origin in some traditions of historiography and cultural criticism. He equates the constructed quality of current Puritan past as pretexts for treating contemporary issues. Sedgewick's "recital" of the Pequot war is revealed to be a sentimentalist attack of classic republicanism's very masculine vision of virtue and the civic fictions constructed to celebrate military valor. John Neal's *Rachel Dyer* is shown, which explores the civic crisis engaged by a public rhetoric pitched to the demos. Cooper's *Wept* is a fantasia on the ill effects of acquisitive liberalism. Puritanism in each becomes a screen upon which to project questions of values. It operates on the level of a conceptual category, indicating a scheme of values. Within the scheme the contents vary from text to text, although gender, virtue, government, and patriarchy are matters that attach to it with some frequency. Yet part of Gould's point is the lubricity of what the Puritan past means in these writings. Puritanism was a register for the anxieties of the 1820s, and the value of this study lies in its exposition of the politics of that decade. Gould is at his most admirable and illuminating when treating the discontents of republicanism in its struggle with liberalism, and in his sensitivity to questions of gender and discursive style. He is at his most tentative when matters touch upon race. Many of these Puritan romances treat the relations of settlers with Native Americans. Yet these books are not read as having come into being in the wake of the war with Creeks. And Jackson's martial exploits signify in Gould's narrative a retrograde sort of masculine valor rather than appearing as the means of asserting by force a political and cultural dominion over the native residents of the southeast. In Gould's account race matters when the issue of miscegenation arises in romance plots. My sole other complaint about the conceptual dimension of Gould's study is its representations of conservatism as being monolithic, whether the Calvinists conser-

vatism was challenged by the Unitarians, Universalists, and Secularists of the early republic, or the Republican Right of the 1980s invoked in his Postscript. Conservatives then and now are not all one breed of cow.

In sum, this study will become the handbook for reading the romances of the 1820s. It will also serve as an example of how to manage the absorbing questions of how contestants in the culture wars of the early republic fashioned “national memory” to promote their values, and how certain terms in these memorializations took on greatly ramified, even contradictory, significances. “Puritanism” is revealed to be as meaningfully troublesome a term as, “Republicanism” and “Virtue” in the historical lexicon of American discourse.

The Citadel

David S. Shields

THE POLITICS OF DISTINCTION: Whitman and the Discourse of Nineteenth-Century America. By Christopher Beach. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press. 1996.

For the past decade, the most significant perspectives in Whitman studies have been cultural historical. The promise of Christopher Beach’s book is to add to this rich field by examining not only the relationship of Whitman to his culture’s discourse, but also “the process by which Whitman negotiated, distinguished, or chose between discourse” (12). Beach wants to show how Whitman transformed the contemporary sociolect, “the Discourses of Nineteenth-Century America,” into a personal idiolect. The first chapter looks at Whitman’s unique place among other nineteenth-century American male poets. In the remaining three chapters, Beach writes about Whitman’s poetic responses to discourses of slavery, the city, and the body. Using Bourdieu’s cultural sociology and clarifying two different senses of “distinction,” Beach sees Whitman as a poet who became distinct (different, rare) by writing verse that refused social distinctions (class hierarchies, cultural snobbery).

Unfortunately, *The Politics of Distinction* does not follow through with its promise to show us “the process” Whitman used to re-fashion these discourses into a distinct style. Beach takes neither a panoramic overview of Whitman’s relation to nineteenth-century discourses (as in David Reynold’s *Walt Whitman’s America*) nor a high-insight, historically-specific approach to selected discourses (as in Ed Folsom’s *Walt Whitman’s Native Representations*). Although he complains that another Whitman critic “provides little of the historical specificity that would be necessary to establish such ‘links between poetry and politics’” (193), Beach’s own work is historically thin, overly generalized, and not always accurate. While he makes references to Whitman’s notebooks, Beach examines few primary documents not written by famous authors. A work about “Whitman and the Discourse of Nineteenth-Century America” ought to have careful, first-hand analysis of non-literary nineteenth-century discourses.

Instead of revealing Whitman’s process for negotiating these discourses, Beach furthers his argument by making evaluative comparisons of Whitman to other writers. While calling Whitman “distinct” and “radical,” Beach dismisses other poets as conventional, “vitiating,” “hegemonic” (53), “watered-down versions of various English Roman-tics” (42); he judges Bryant as “derivative” (47), Emerson as “kitsch” (28), Douglass as “co-opted by the genteel expression of white abolitionism” (65), and women poets as “trapped” and able only to produce mediocre poetry (190). Although Beach says he will not make claims about Whitman’s “originality and creative powers” (14) or examine the poetry in terms of a “radical social or political agenda” (15), much of *The Politics of*

Distinction is devoted to a demonstration of how original and radical Whitman is compared to other nineteenth-century writers.

Other problems with this book are likely to bother Whitman scholars in particular. Beach misquotes Whitman's work. In his analysis of the 1855 poem later called "The Sleepers," Beach argues that the whale represents enslaved African peoples; yet while quoting the crucial lines, Beach omits some of Whitman's commas and a word describing the whale, "dusk" (dark skinned) (92). Because this passage's relationship to slavery is indirect, Beach's deletion of such a key word hardly helps his argument. Elsewhere, Beach unaccountably quotes from the 1891-2 version of "Song of the Answerer" to make a point about Whitman's career in 1855 (150), even though he used the 1855 version earlier in the chapter. There are other typos ("Edgar Allen Poe") and misquotations that a copy editor might have corrected. More significantly, Beach ignores major scholarship related to his project. For instance, Beach claims scholars have "tended to steer away from . . . questions" about Whitman's use of slavery discourses (78), when in fact several have written on the subject-including Martin Klammer (in *Whitman, Slavery, and the Emergence of Leaves of Grass*), Reynolds, Betsy Erkkila, and Michael Moon.

While Beach's use of Bourdieu is interesting, *The Politics of Distinction* is a disappointing and sometimes careless work that fails to realize the project it sets out for itself.

Kansas State University

Gregory Eiselein

THE COMEDIAN AS CONFIDENCE MAN: Studies in Irony Fatigue. By Will Kaufman. Detroit: Wayne State University Press. 1997.

Among its remarkable dimensions, humor is wondrously subtle, adaptable, and cunning, and its presentation is not infrequently convoluted. In the hands of imaginative practitioners, particularly those writers and performers who are social critics and born "confidence men," humor offers up a magnifying glass of immense ironic proportions. But the presentation of such irony poses an equally immense personal problem; how to present it without getting clobbered by one's countrymen and women? As they hone in on contradictions and conflicts, on the culture's taboos and boundaries, humorists possess a kind of I-kid-you-not-I-told-you-so smile. Yet that smile, states Will Kaufman in this splendid study, does not have lasting power. In his telling phrase, most writers and performers eventually dissipate into an "irony fatigue." Though not all fall prey to the malady or in the same degree, in one fashion or another these "confidence" folks pay a price.

This work, however, is much, much more than what the author's subtitle suggests. It is at once a history and penetrating interpretation of the complexities of humor and of the various individuals selected for examination. Kaufman's analytic sweep of literary texts and comic performances is wildly imaginative: Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, Garrison Keillor's *Lake Wobegon Days*; Benjamin Franklin's literary confidence games and Herman Melville's *The Confidence Man*; the routines of stand-up comics Lenny Bruce and Bill Hicks; the works of Kurt Vonnegut; and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. In between are excellent insights into an array of the most influential writers and stand-up comics.

These are his confidence men, a group that share in common "deception and frankness fitfully explored by Melville in his last novel, *The Confidence Man*." In his

introduction, Kaufman immediately grapples with his narrow gender selectees by noting that his first fictional example is a woman, namely Carol Kennicott in Lewis's *Main Street* who represents "the critic who is prepared to lie with a smile, and who, as a result faces . . . the wrath of a community that will not tolerate frankness" (14).

Thus the first portion of Kaufman's thesis is that these are smiling masqueraders, clever conspirators who deflect by creating laughter. They approach life's realities with a wariness that bespeaks of a particular knowledge: they are sure to be beheaded if they offer their biting criticisms without also offering mirth. In this way certain American comedians have employed laughter to confront sensitive and taboo issues while widening the social ground for shared beliefs. They perform, in short, as hecklers *and* healers. Kaufman succinctly sums up this byplay: "The successful comedian is necessarily a successful confidence man, and he keeps his inscrutable game going through maintaining a web of ironic tension between falsehood and earnestness, play and criticism, defense and attack, balancing his conflicting and simultaneous urges to be heeded and indulgently dismissed" (12).

In their unique role, the confidence men may not lose their heads but most assuredly, as Kaufman asserts in the other half of his deft analysis, they succumb to "irony fatigue." The tension produced when offering a true account of reality and maintaining faith in living exacts a heavy toll. Only Benjamin Franklin managed to remain a "serene ironist" because, according to Kaufman, he was only a "part-time ironist" (235). In sum, no good ironist goes unpunished.

Boston University

Joseph Boskin

RACE, RAPE, AND LYNCHING: The Red Record of American Literature, 1890-1912.
By Sandra Gunning. New York: Oxford University Press. 1996.

Just as the 1800s and the first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a florescence of African American literature, with often brilliant books coming from the pens of writers such as Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Anna Julia Cooper, Charles W. Chesnutt, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and W.E.B. Du Bois, so, too, are the final decades of the twentieth century shaping up into a renaissance of sorts, certainly in imaginative writings by black authors but also in African American literary studies and in studies that focus on race in American literature more generally. The 1997 publication of the widely-praised *Norton Anthology of African American Literature* and *Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, together with some of the most stunningly original monographs in the general field of American literary studies, signifies that the close of this century, like the last, will prove to be of central importance to future students and scholars of American and African American literature.

Sandra Gunning's *Race, Rape, and Lynching: The Red Record of American Literature, 1890-1912* is an essential continuation of this effort by scholars to ensure that issues of race in American history remain at the center, rather than on the periphery, of discussions regarding this nation's history. *Race, Rape, and Lynching* casts a critical gaze at turn-of-the-century cultural anxieties about identity, sexuality, and social transformation that surfaced as black and white writers explored in fiction the phenomena of lynching and white mob violence that escalated in this country during the post-Reconstruction era. Focusing on a twenty-two year period marked by an unprecedented rise in lynchings and other violence against African Americans, a florescence of fictional narratives concerned with white supremacy and post-emancipation "black degeneracy," an increase in political

activity by women, and an outpouring of literary productions by black authors, Gunning attempts to demonstrate the ways in which black and white, male and female Americans “contributed to a continual renegotiation and redefinition of the terms and boundaries of a sectional and ultimately national dialogue on racial violence in the 1890s and early 1900s” (4). Gunning charts this intertextual dialogue on racial violence across a diverse body of fictional and nonfictional texts, ranging from Thomas Dixon, Jr.’s unabashedly racist novels, *The Leopard’s Spots* and *The Clansman*, to Ida B. Wells’s documentary pamphlet, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*, to Kate Chopin’s local color fiction of the 1890s.

The first two chapters of *Race, Rape, and Lynching* concern themselves with what Gunning sees as a problematic relationship between Dixon’s use of the stereotype of the black male as a hypersexual beast to ease white male fears of political, social, and sexual impotence after the Civil War and Mark Twain’s and Charles Chesnut’s radical indictments of post-Reconstruction white supremacy in *Pudd’nhead Wilson* and *The Marrow of Tradition*, respectively. Working from the premise that popular race novels such as *The Leopard’s Spots* and *The Clansman* achieved their enormous success by tapping into white male fantasies of rescue enabled by the subordination of black men and white women, Gunning attempts to demonstrate that “Dixon’s use of the black rapist, together with the necessity of lynching that the stereotype’s existence inspires, works in precarious and contradictory ways to construct the myth of white male unity” (35). Curiously absent from the major plot threads of Dixon’s race novels are black women, an omission that Gunning locates in Dixon’s agenda of representing the white male as a savior of white womanhood: “If [black women] were referenced in too much detail, the reader would have to confront white male desire for the black within the plot of rescuing the domestic, and as such reveal the white man to be the foe of his own household” (33-34).

In *Pudd’nhead Wilson* Twain does indeed reveal the white man to be such a foe, exposing and critiquing white-initiated miscegenation through the story of an octoroon slave’s substitution of her white-skinned infant for her master’s heir. Gunning points out, however, that in tandem with Twain’s critique of the kinds of racial myths on which Dixon’s fiction is based “is a vision of African American violence and moral degradation that, whatever its ‘retributive’ function, continuously constructs blackness—and specifically, the black family—as a signifier of white death and as a vacuum in the absence of white civilization” (60). Similarly progressive in its indictment of white supremacy but equally flawed, according to Gunning, in terms of its problematic representation of women is Chesnut’s *The Marrow of Tradition*, a fictionalization of the Wilmington, North Carolina, race riot of 1898. While Chesnut thoroughly challenges through his representation of a morally upright black middle-class Dixionian stereotypes such as the post-Civil War degenerate freedperson, “his construction of the role of the feminine within the turn-of-the-century war over black rights,” Gunning argues, “closely approximates the very racist ideology he desperately wants to abolish” (76).

Where Chesnut and Twain faltered, according to Gunning, in contributing an alternative discourse to the dialogue about race, rape, and lynching that would challenge the white supremacist denial of black and white female subjectivity, Ida B. Wells, David Bryant Fulton, and Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins offered just such an alternative. In chapter three, which focuses on Well’s *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law In All Its Phases*, Fulton’s *Hanover; or The Persecution of the Lowly*, and Hopkin’s *Contending Forces*—each of which narrativizes black female experiences of white racial violence—Gunning argues that these writers extend the debates over race, rape, and lynching by exploring issues that

other writers ignored or were afraid to deal with. By constructing representations of sexual violence against black women through a “domestic discourse that began from the point of rape’s unspeakability,” these writers, according to Gunning, were able to explore a number of issues surrounding white violence that had gone largely unquestioned: “the fact that only white women are figured as victims of rape; the narrow representation of mob violence as solely the lynching of black men; the contested representation of black women themselves; [and] the internal contradiction faced by black communities in their own attempts to confront lynching and rape” (80).

As a means toward fulfilling her project of representing turn-of-the-century literary debates over race, rape, and lynching as a truly interracial and intergender “memory-making” (138), and as a first step toward uncovering how white women participated in these debates in literature, Gunning turns in chapter four to the works of Kate Chopin. Focusing on Chopin’s stories and first novel, *At Fault*, Gunning demonstrates that while the Southern author does not actively resist white supremacist thought, she nevertheless extends debates over racial violence by challenging some of the myths at the core of white supremacist ideology. Gunning points out, for example, that in *At Fault* Chopin fails to condemn white violence (121), but unlike advocates of white supremacy such as Thomas Dixon, she rejected the fusion of “the objectified and disempowered white female body with the nation” (121) and deconstructed “white supremacy’s myth of the black rapist in order to free her white women characters from restrictive political roles” (125).

Race, Rape, and Lynching is a provocative and important contribution to recent efforts by scholars to blur traditional and often arbitrary divisions within American literary studies as a means of exploring the kinds of intertextual dialogues about race that occurred as black and white men and women attempted to make sense of their social, political, and cultural milieu through literature. Clearly written and scrupulously researched, Gunning’s study is essential reading for anyone who wishes to better understand the red record of racial violence that occurred in this nation at the turn-of-the-century.

Westfield State College

Christopher C. De Santis

RANDOLPH BOURNE AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL RADICALISM. By Leslie J. Vaughan. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. 1997.

At birth Randolph Bourne (1886-1918), the American cultural critic, had his face twisted and scarred by a physician’s forceps, and at age four he contracted spinal tuberculosis and was left hunchbacked, barrel-chested, and stunted in height. Though he was accepted by Princeton in 1903, his uncle, a lawyer who was supporting his mother and her four children, refused to pay for his education, saying that with Bourne’s appearance he could not succeed in a profession. After six unhappy years during which Bourne was often unemployed, he applied to Columbia and received a full academic scholarship. He was editor of the *Columbia Monthly* by his second year at the university, and in May 1922 he published an article “The Two Generations” in the *Atlantic Monthly*. By the time Bourne graduated, from a four-year program leading to a master’s degree in political science, he had published seven articles there.

After returning from a one-year traveling fellowship in western Europe in 1914, Bourne got a job as a contributing editor at the *New Republic*. Between the return and his death he published extensively on American education and society and wrote in opposition to American intervention and participation in World War I. Bourne’s anti-war articles in

Seven Arts led the sponsor of the journal to terminate her support, and by 1917 the *New Republic* seems to have confined him to articles on education and to book reviews (89, 231-23). John Dewey—who had directed Bourne’s master’s thesis at Columbia, had greatly influenced his ideas on education, and had helped him get his editorship on the *New Republic*—supported American intervention; when Bourne attacked his stance on the war, Dewey arranged to have him removed as an editor of the *Dial*. A few weeks after being dismissed, Bourne died of influenza.

Leslie J. Vaughan has written a critical exposition and analysis of Bourne’s main ideas, with relevant descriptions of the social, political, and cultural scene in Bourne’s time. She has written too about historians’ and other commentators’ judgments of Bourne. In her discussions, she has called attention to points at which Bourne anticipated theories of later critics, and also to her own employment of ideas of Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and others.

Among Bourne’s memorable views, we note two that Vaughan discusses. During the phase of “preparedness” before the United States entered the war, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson attacked dual national loyalties. In this atmosphere of intolerance, Vaughan writes, melting-pot assimilationists sought to counter paranoid Anglo-conformists. Horace Kallen, a University of Wisconsin professor who differed with both groups, published an article “Democracy versus the Melting Pot” in 1915, setting forth the ideal of an ethnically diverse nation. He employed the metaphor of American culture as an orchestra, with a harmony produced by different ethnic and cultural identities. Subsequently Bourne published “Trans-National America,” in the July 1916 *Atlantic Monthly*, and “The Jew and Trans-National America,” in the December 1916 *Menorah Journal*. Bourne’s idea differed from that of Kallen. For Bourne, America’s cultural identity lay in the future: “American,” he wrote, “shall be what the immigrant will have a hand in making it” (136).

Another of Vaughan’s views was in stark opposition to John Dewey’s: that liberals could turn the war to democratic ends. Bourne argued: “If the war is too strong for you to prevent, how is it going to be weak enough for you to control and mould to your liberal purposes” (105)?

In Bourne’s “A War Diary” (*Seven Arts*, September 1917), he wrote: “One keeps healthily in wartime not by a series of religious and political consultations that something good is coming out of it all, but by a vigorous assertion of values in which the war had no part” (142). Of his view here, Vaughan writes: “Bourne’s position ‘below the battle’ . . . was another form of political engagement, a way to free oneself from hegemonic certainties that block genuine debate, preclude alternatives to politics-as-usual, and prevent democratic change” (6).

Vaughan’s study is fragmented and cluttered; if she had omitted much peripheral material, her main points would have stood out more clearly; but her perceptions are keen and most readers will profit from the book.

University of Kansas

Melvin Landsberg

GASTONIA 1929: The Story of the Loray Mill Strike. By John A. Salmond. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1995.

In the spring and summer of 1929, thousands of North Carolina textile mill workers faced company gunmen, corrupt legal police and county sheriffs, and the National Guard

in one of the most famous strikes in southern labor history. Several strikers—including singer and folk hero Ella Mae Wiggins—were killed. In the aftermath of the strike, union leaders, both communists from New York City and local activists, were convicted and sent to prison in a widely followed trial. Despite the defeat of the strike itself, it proved to be but the first chapter in a long and stirring history of southern labor struggle.

Labor history had not received a lot of attention in the South, nor had the rest of the country paid much attention to labor struggles which took place there. But this particular strike was of such a scale and significance that it had been written about several times before John Salmund undertook the project which resulted in this book. One of these studies—*Millhands and Preachers* by Yale University Divinity School Professor Liston Pope (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942)—has long been accorded “classic” status by scholars for its analysis of the influential role of the church and the company’s role in influencing the church.

Professor Salmund explains in his preface that his goal in undertaking this study was “simply to tell the story of the events of 1929” (xii). He has indeed done so, relying on these readily available secondary sources and published memoirs, a variety of local and regional newspapers from the fateful year 1929, supplemented by the personal papers of some of the activists and reporters and oral history of North Carolina. Salmund’s narrative ranges from the strike itself to the trial, which becomes the real focus of the book.

This should have been a stimulating, provocative book. These events were full of drama and suspense, and they deserved to be written about in a way which does them justice. But *Gastonia 1929* is dry, monotonous, even repetitive in places. The wonderful sources employed by the author all too rarely flavor the narrative.

Even more disappointing is the lack of interest he shows in explaining the behavior of the workers, before, during and after the strike, or in exploring the motivations, inner lives, and transformations of the key characters. Two of the strike leaders were young Jewish women and communists, from New York City. What did they bring to an ingrown company town in North Carolina? What kinds of relationships did they develop with the local textile workers? How did the searing experiences of strike, defeat, arrest, and trial impact their sense of themselves and the rest of their lives? And, from the other end of the relationship, what did the local textile workers think of these women? Did they see them as exciting models of new female behavior, or as self-centered outside agitators? The subplots of this story beg these questions, but Professor Salmund evinces no interest in them.

Gastonia 1929 is short on analysis altogether. Here and there the author interjects his own assessments about the behavior of certain individuals or the strategy of the Communist Party, the union leadership, and the legal defense team. Rarely the product of systematic analysis, these evaluations do not add to the reader’s understanding of the events and their significance.

Frankly, readers who seek either a dramatic or an insightful treatment of this important strike would do better to turn to the older studies, such as Pope’s, which are probably gathering dust on library shelves.

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GUILTY PLEASURES: Feminist Camp from Mae West to Madonna. By Pamela Robertson. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 1996.

In the introduction to her book *Guilty Pleasures*, Pamela Robertson begins with a brief synopsis of the origins of camp as an adjective and she writes straight-forwardly that

despite shifts in the meaning of the word, throughout history “[c]amp has been criticized for its politics—or rather, lack thereof” (3). From this observation Robertson initiates the revisionist goals of her project, namely, to articulate the potential political effects and aims of camp, but more importantly, to theorize the content and specific strategies of what she identifies as feminist camp.

Robertson counters those critical charges that point to camp’s lack of politics and its presumed inclination toward nostalgia by suggesting that camp redefines cultural products (for example, stars, fashions, genres and stereotypes) by historicizing them not just nostalgically but rather “with a critical recognition of the temptation to nostalgia” (5). In tracing both the history and the possibilities of feminist camp, Robertson acknowledges the quotidian view of camp as a providence of queer culture—particularly gay male culture—but again disagrees with the accepted critical paradigms which suggest that the exchange between gay men’s and women’s cultures have been wholly one-sided: her work offers a sustained analysis of the possibility that while gay men have appropriated a feminine aesthetic, women—lesbian or straight—have similarly foraged gay male culture. In so doing, she dislodges the notion that women can *be* camp, but never knowingly *produce* themselves as camp.

Guilty Pleasures itself is an example of such foraging, and Robertson’s scholarship illustrates critically the many points of intersection, as well as material differences between, feminist and queer theory. Referring particularly to the work done by Mary Ann Doane on film and Judith Butler on gender, Robertson delineates the complex overlaps between camp, gender parody and drag. Citing Doane’s notion of “double mimesis” which is located in the concept of “feminine masquerade,” Robertson points out that in opposition to drag, the shock of surprise generated by same-sex female masquerade resides between the woman masquerading and the role she plays: that of the woman she is always-already perceived to be. In short then, the woman masquerading is engaged in a gender parody of herself. For feminists, Robertson suggests, camp’s appeal resides in this very act of gender parody since it utilizes masquerade self-consciously and exposes the absence behind the mask.

Locating the “guilty pleasures” of her title in and through a reassessment of female spectatorship, Robertson is able to point out the polar tendencies prevalent in much of the criticism that attempts to account for the viewer whereby the pleasures of spectatorship are presented as either consciously resistant or wholly manipulative. Rejecting this active/passive model with one that foregrounds the “porousness of pleasure” in camp practices, Robertson accounts for the contradictory nature of camp spectatorship—its recycling of, and complicity with—the artifacts of dominant culture. Robertson foregrounds and analyzes this pleasure from the perspective of the female viewer of feminist camp. What is particularly compelling about her methods is the way in which the dynamics of such pleasure is continually historicized: In this way, the concept of ‘pleasure’ is freed from circulating within the text merely as a postmodern catch-all that diminishes or obfuscates, rather than enabling, the arguments at hand. Her chapter on Joan Crawford is particularly effective in this regard, as Robertson lucidly traces the shifts in both perception and pleasure that Crawford’s career endured from her female viewing public—shifts that ultimately posit Crawford as a camp object. Similarly, the texts engaged as examples of feminist camp in *Guilty Pleasures* are related integrally to Robertson’s theories of spectatorship and pleasure as well: She roughly historicizes the material into “three high-camp epochs”—the 1930s, the 50s and the 80s through the present—and uses the films of Mae West and the Busby Berkeley choreographed *Gold Diggers*, the films of Joan

Crawford, and Madonna both as presence and product, to represent each of those periods respectively. Given the necessary limitations of this review, I want to briefly look at Robertson's chapters on West and Madonna, namely because her analysis of these performers bracket her larger argument of the potentially optimistic politics inherent to camp, as well as tracing the diminishing return of camp's potential for subversive politics.

The distinction that Robertson wishes to make between camp as the sole province of gay male culture, and the distinguishing characteristics of feminist camp is best illustrated in her chapter on Mae West. Complex overlaps in West's persona—sex symbol, camp icon, female grotesque—particularly enable Robertson to make her point about the cross-traffic between queer camp and feminist camp; a point that is less clear in some of the other sections of the book. At times Robertson is almost exuberant about West's achievements, and her enthusiasm is both infectious and well placed. As she writes, "as a female female impersonator West represents an instance of deliberate and ironic female masquerade" (33). And once that masquerade is realigned with the performative spheres of drag and cross-dressing, we have a "complex and contradictory image of female sexuality" (34) that borrows from gay camp to produce feminist camp. Robertson optimistically, and I feel accurately, suggests that West made it possible for women to subvert the image-making process to which they have traditionally been given access.

In her chapter on Madonna—used to illustrate at least one of the "present moments" in camp as it were—Robertson is much less optimistic. Again, she insightfully deconstructs accepted binaries in the relevant criticism on camp. She points out that Madonna clearly illustrates the problem endemic to an explicit differentiation of pop from camp, as Andrew Ross has done, for example—on the assumption that camp enacts the taste of a minority elite—since pop enables the mainstreaming of camp itself. Robertson succinctly notes, "[p]op, in its broadest sense, was also the context in which notions of the postmodern took shape" (120). For purists who argue that the mainstreaming of camp attenuates its potential politics, the author reminds us that foremost camp represents a subculture's negotiations with the dominant: once again, the stance is not wholly resistant but one that takes pleasures in the objects of mass-culture as well. Although Robertson suggests that queer camp is the one exception—clearly signaling an alienation from the dominant—I don't agree that all queer camp programmatically denounces its pleasures in the objects of mass culture. It is precisely in these debates that Robertson locates Madonna. For if Madonna through her endless commodification of herself represents the "death of camp," at issue is "a conflict in camp between a subculture's desire for access to the mainstream and the subculture's desire for unique identity" (136).

Although Robertson consciously chooses not to engage race in any sustained fashion with her present arguments, as someone whose work generally implicates race into queer and gender issues, I find her work particularly helpful in this regard. If camp refashions concepts of masquerade, mimicry and drag in politically viable ways as Robertson suggests, many of her insights in *Guilty Pleasures*, can apply to re-considering the performative aspects of "race" as well. One of my current projects, for example, has to do with diasporic and/or queer autobiographical productions, and I think it would be fruitful to consider in what ways such self-conscious efforts, which must necessarily negotiate the metropolitan gaze, engage camp practices: In his theorizations of "mimicry," Homi Bhabha has forwarded the notion that all acts of colonization involve complex masquerades, thus the praxis of camp, as Robertson invests it in *Guilty Pleasures*, might offer perhaps unforeseen but productive applications beyond the realm of queer and of feminist politics.

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INVISIBLE GARDENS: The Search for Modernism on the American Landscape. By Peter Walker and Melanie Simo. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1994.

The term “modernism” can easily conjure up visions of glinting cubes and the stubborn steel boxes and towers that marched across America’s urban landscape after World War II. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s famous aphorism “less is more,” still insinuates modernism’s legacy, because instead of “more,” “less” produced sterility and cheapness in public buildings, and in private, mostly mausoleums and testaments to corporate power. While this book is about landscape architecture, authors Peter Walker and Melanie Simo concede that the term “modernism” is inextricately linked to the ideas of European-born architects and artists with names such as Le Corbusier, Gropius, Albers and Moholy-Nagy. Uneasy as they seem to be with such a narrow interpretation, they also observe that within the landscape architecture profession, there is little consensus on any other.

This is a book of questions, questions that Walker and Simo believe haunt the landscape architecture profession. For example, within the cultural legacy of modernism (defined to be from 1945 to 1970) why have the products and ideas of American landscape architecture been so poorly understood and valued? Is landscape architecture meant to be some sort of social vision or is it art? They argue that “the public was never made fully aware of the scope of landscape architecture,” and, among those who were, “attitudes have changed over the past forty years from hopeful interest to, at worst, critical wrath” (313).

Instead of directly wrestling with these issues, the authors indirectly approach them by chronicling the careers of several well-known US landscape architects, especially those who were products of Harvard’s own Bauhaus-based design school. The methodology works reasonably well as it helps Walker and Simo sort through many of the complex issues and trends that occurred during this quarter-century period which significantly changed the profession and resulted in trends toward profitability through corporatization, standardized processes, increased environmentalism, and reliance on technical skills and knowledge. More importantly for the reader, it makes clear the authors’ understanding of landscape architecture as they wrestle with its purpose as art or impulse toward social responsibility.

Peter Walker’s voice speaks as a professional insider. He is earnest in his opinion that his profession has failed to make an imprint through its works. While he wants to impress the reader with examples of evidence to the contrary, he decries the profession’s service orientation, and in effect, blames the design schools for producing “conventional” (should one say bourgeois?) professionals unable to provide cultural and artistic leadership. The authors conclude in this well-written book, that the profession’s value is dependent on the achievements of individuals, and as such, must be refocused so their “art” will provide cultural and artistic leadership. With observations such as,

The separation of design from high culture, most noticeably from the 1960s onward, not only deprived landscape architecture of direct access to the cultural elite; it also separated the field from the information and ideas flowing in and out of the worlds of art and literature (314).

The book's viewpoint is obvious. Although it presents a key-hole perspective on the profession, at least it can set the stage for meaningful thought or discussion about landscape as "art-ca-tecture," top-down/bottom-up interaction, man/nature juxtapositions and the significance of taste-makers and their protagonists. Above all, the book should at least induce one to more fully consider landscape architects' truly prolific work and power, seen at its worst in many urban renewal projects, and at its best in recreational areas; local, state and national parks and forests; parkways and waterfronts; gardens; historic landscape rehabilitations; thoughtful housing environments; campuses; and open spaces.

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Cathy Ambler

THE ORIGINS OF THE URBAN CRISIS: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit. By Thomas J. Sugrue. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1996.

In a well-written and deeply researched work, which won the President's Book Award of the Social Science History Association, Thomas J. Sugrue has traced the origins of Detroit's "urban crisis" back to the 1950s. This decade, he claimed, marked the time of "coincidence and mutual reinforcement of race, economics, and politics in a particular historical moment . . . [that] . . . set the stage for the fiscal, social, and economic crises that confront urban American today." Believing that an industrial city like Detroit was a "bellwether of economic change," Sugrue analyzes the factors that created Detroit's collapse.

World War II marked the heyday of Detroit's rise to industrial prominence, according to Sugrue, but dark clouds were collecting on the economic and racial horizons. Housing shortages, discriminatory employment practices, red-lining and restrictive covenants, and other problematic factors carried over into peacetime to make the situation for African Americans ever more severe. Then, in the 1950s, recession, automation, and incipient deindustrialization undercut the city's economic health, increasing unemployment especially for African Americans. Corporations and politicians began to shun structural explanations for poverty and fell back on racist theories about family disorganization and "communist agitation" within the NAACP and other groups advocating reform.

Still, the city's black population continued to grow, sparking friction along the borders between black and white neighborhoods. Efforts by white homeowners and real estate interests only exacerbated racial conflict, and such conflict became further heated during open housing debates in the political arena. Racial violence, which had an ugly moment in 1943, continued in some 200 more minor episodes between 1943 and 1967. The mix of conflict, economic distress, civil rights, and housing issues, of course, exploded in August of 1967. The riot, notes Sugrue, was a symptom of a disease that only continued to worsen.

This summary presents only the barest outline of a rich examination. Sugrue's book glistens with fascinating material on the automobile industry and its hiring policies, the housing history of Detroit and its discriminatory land-use policies, the evolution of African American neighborhoods from the "traditional ghetto" of Paradise Valley to the affluent neighborhood of Conant Gardens, the differential effect of expressways on black and white neighborhoods, the gains by African Americans in municipal employment, the decentralization of industry and its effects on the United Auto Workers, the court case of *Shelley v. Kraemer* which undercut restrictive covenants, and much more. The only problem may be Sugrue's argument that Detroit's decay is rooted in the 1950s. If, as he

says, “the origins of the urban crisis are . . . deeper, more tangled” than the “underclass debate” suggest, then it may well be that Detroit’s current problems may have deeper roots than Sugrue claims. It may be that the direct line from the conditions of the 1950s to the 1967 riot is too direct. Does history really move that fast?

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