

## reviews

Note: In this section, three asterisks between reviews indicate that the review above is by the same reviewer as the review below. Reviews by the members of the editorial board are signed with initials.

## literature

AMALGAMATION: Race, Sex and Rhetoric in the Nineteenth-Century American Novel. By James Kinney, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1985. \$29.95.

The title of this study is misleading in two ways. The word “amalgamation” comes from Alexis de Tocqueville’s statement in *Democracy in America* that the “Europeans” and the “Negroes” would never be “amalgamated” as races, but readers not familiar with the term in the context of miscegenation, the literary theme and cultural reality with which the book deals, will have no ready point of reference. Also, the nineteenth-century American novel with which Kinney deals is not the novel of Hawthorne, Melville, Crane and Howells, but rather those works written by black and white authors, Northern and Southern, in which race—especially the mingling of racial strains through sexual contact—is a central concern on the level of plot or “rhetoric” (here read “metaphor”). The best-known of the authors with which Kinney deals are Twain (*Pudd’nhead Wilson*), Stowe (*Dred; A Tale of the Dismal Swamp*) and Dixon (*The Clansman*); most of the rest are little-known—in some cases deservedly so, and in others probably not.

The reader who is able to get past the title to see what Kinney’s study is actually about will be rewarded with a well-researched and tightly-argued analysis of the relationship between the fact of widespread “amalgamation” of Negro and Caucasian and the representation of that union in American fiction of the nineteenth century. The implications of such a study for the history of race relations in this country are enormous, revealing as they do the power/gender relationships, issues of social status, and linguistic subterfuges that have buried interracial sexuality beneath a load of taboos that we only barely recognize.

NW

VISIONARY COMPACTS: American Renaissance Writings in Cultural Context. By Donald E. Pease. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 1987. \$32.50.

American Studies programs are not always built around American literature. Yet knowledge of the major nineteenth-century writers of the “American Renaissance” is

fundamental to a coherent overview of our national culture. Because of the importance of this Renaissance, an impressive challenge to its limning by F. O. Matthiessen, whose seminal work labeled the period, joins the small library of essential readings for interdisciplinary programs.

Donald Pease's brilliant challenge is also uniquely important because the lack of academic opportunities for young scholars for almost two decades has diverted many of the potentially ablest into high finance and high technology, so that we have lacked a "Yuppie" generation's interpretation of our past. The work of an aggressive and gifted diagnostician trained at the University of Chicago, *Visionary Compacts* fills this gap with an ambitious analysis that should certainly generate controversy.

Pease maintains that Matthiessen, writing "when the international political arena was threatened by Nazi aggression," could support the view that "the American Renaissance proved its power as a cultural consensus by silencing dissenting political opinions." Pease counters that instead, through "Visionary Compacts," the Renaissance sought to develop in the audience what Rousseau called "the common self" that "reverses things held in esteem by all the people." Borrowing language from James Miller's *Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy* (1984), Pease explains that acting in synch with this "common self" "raises to the level of an explicit joint purpose what, in any vital community, already exists as a disposition tacitly held in common."

The most conspicuous difference between Pease's synthesis and Matthiessen's is the displacement in the pantheon of Thoreau by Poe, to whom Matthiessen makes only a few passing remarks of the kind Pease does to the author of *Walden*. Pease specifies only that "Thoreau elevates disconnection into a national ideological value," but obviously an individual who wrote that he did not "wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society I have not joined" cannot be assimilated into the celebration of the tacit disposition of "a common self."

One may also be surprised to find that Pease in conclusion rejects Cold War critics' view that in *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael's rhetoric "frees us from Ahab's fixation by returning all things to their status as pure possibilities." Pease, on the contrary, finds Ishmael's "bond" with Ahab "mutually self-destructive," leading to the question of whether "we can survive the free world Ishmael handed down to us."

The question really posed here, however, is basic to the Yuppie position of a disenchanting generation—survival for what? In elevating Poe to a position long denied him, Pease both provides the most convincing rationale so far for the structure of *The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* (a tale with which he displays a powerful affinity) and tucks away in a relative clause his revelation of how Poe foreshadows the contemporary intellectual Zeitgeist, since he "could find no justification for his contemporary age at all." Here certainly is something for anyone concerned with American Studies to ponder.

University College of Swansea, Wales

Warren French

LA NOUVELLA BEATRICE: Renaissance and Romantic in "Rappaccini's Daughter." By Carol Marie Bensick. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press. 1985. \$27.50.

Professor Bensick argues that a literal historical reading of the renaissance setting of Hawthorne's most widely interpreted short story, "Rappaccini's Daughter," will do much to clarify the themes of the fiction, the relationship between the narrator and the story, and will provide an enlightening examination of Hawthorne's knowledge of sixteenth-century Italy. Although her book still may not clarify all of the disputed points of interpretation, it is a fascinating and exemplary study.

Of particular interest to cultural scholars is the background material which Professor Bensick has assembled about the interest in Italy and Italian writers and artists of the Renaissance generated by nineteenth-century American intellectuals. Such an interest opens additional avenues for not only the study of Hawthorne's work but also of nineteenth-century culture in America, especially during the period of midcentury, and the impact of Italian studies on literature, academic scholarship, architecture and the pictorial arts.

Iowa State University

Charles L. P. Silet

THEISM IN THE DISCOURSE OF JONATHAN EDWARDS. By R. C. De Prosopo. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press. 1985. \$37.50.

De Prosopo takes Edwards on terms that Edwards would accept. He produces a phenomenological study of Edwards' work, the terms of which are embedded in "theism," that is, in the irreducible reality of dual worlds. In this regard, no cultural or intellectual historian who has tried to "place" Edwards by linear or structural analysis has been successful. Thus, De Prosopo deconstructs the scholarship on Edwards at the same time he deconstructs Edwards' writing by subtracting the land (America), hence ridding the oeuvre of the improperly injected national meaning of Edwards. As a consequence, he places himself in the unusual position of asking us to change our views not by adding something new but rather by subtracting numerous learned analyses, the most important of which is that Edwards was an American writer *and* a religious thinker. This national material analysis, i.e., a linear or historical frame of reference, obscures rather than illuminates Edwards' thought because it thoughtlessly subordinates the central "theistic" reality. De Prosopo writes a difficult but interesting book which certainly stands outside the mainstream of literary scholarship. Though few will agree with his analysis, De Prosopo has the happy effect of asking us to listen to Edwards rather than to two centuries of "national" scholarship, and he thus refreshes the texts.

University of Florida

Eldon R. Turner

A HUNGER FOR HOME: Louisa May Alcott and *Little Women*. By Sarah Elbert. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1984. \$24.95.

This valuable and interesting study gives us a much more complex view of an author who, like Harriet Beecher Stowe, has been relegated to a secondary status in the literary canon because of the popularity and accessibility of her fiction. Elbert discusses such important themes in Alcott's works as "domestic feminism," sexual ambiguity, the importance of the "sad sisterhood" (women who find community with each other) and feminine utopias. Together, these discussions greatly enrich our conception of American intellectual history. Perhaps Elbert's most important contribution, however, is her analysis of the lifelong conflict in Alcott between her belief in Emersonian individualism and her feeling that women could never abandon their need for human community as exemplified by home and family (hence the title of the study). This conflict, in turn, resulted in her un-Romantic conclusion that a stay at Walden would never liberate women: only a just society which provided education and material necessities for everyone could do so. With the information and insight that Elbert provides, Alcott's life could lead to a significant revision of American intellectual history, particularly if it were placed in the context of studies of modern women like Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* and *Women's Ways of Knowing*, by Mary F. Belenky *et al.*

\* \* \*

PLOTTING AMERICA'S PAST: Fenimore Cooper and the Leatherstocking Tales. By William P. Kelly. Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press. 1983. \$14.95.

In this informative and lucid study, Kelly argues that in the early Leatherstocking tales (*Pioneers* and *Mohicans*) Cooper defines America's destiny as "a series of dialectical mediations" between the radical freedom offered by the New World and the stabilizing structures of Old World culture. However, the need to retain Old World patterns means that America, too, is doomed to repeat the pattern of the growth and decay of civilizations. Thus Cooper in the later tales (*Prairie*, *Pathfinder*, *Deerslayer*) attempts to escape this limitation by transforming Natty into an American "myth of eternal freedom and possibility." But, Kelly concludes, Cooper finally does not believe in the myth he has created and the text of *The Deerslayer* in particular deconstructs it by presenting it as an "illusion, . . . a game of dress-up." Finally, then, Cooper "leads us away from our city on a hill," from our illusion that America has a special mission in history, to "a real world." Anyone interested in American myth or in the American historiography will find this study as provocative and useful as will Cooper specialists.

\* \* \*

HAWTHORNE: Calvin's Ironic Stepchild. By Agnes McNeill Donohue. Kent, Ohio: Kent University Press. 1985. \$27.50.

By a close, careful reading of the major fiction Donohue establishes the argument that much of Hawthorne's strength as an artist derives from an ironic point of view generated by his Calvinistic conviction of original sin. For example, readers might be pleased that Hester eventually becomes the village therapist, but the narrator obviously thinks her role is a joke. To quote Donohue, "the obvious irony is that the outcast, exiled, sinful Hester becomes the village caretaker and nurse; the deeper irony is that she is yet damned." Donohue goes on to argue that the easy morality of Europe destroyed Hawthorne's Calvinistic convictions during his stay there and with it his ironic point of view. Hence his later fiction lost its tension and consequently much of its force. Donohue's argument is not new, but her scrupulous reading of the texts provides striking evidence of the pervasiveness of the ironic mode in the major works. She also is masterful in detecting the many tricks with irony and ambiguity played by the narrative voice. Unfortunately, Donohue's prose overheats at times: "Undoubtedly [Hawthorne] is still peeping about the Celestial Railroad station wearing his covert, ironic smile." But in spite of such stylistic lapses, the non-specialist in literature would find this study an excellent introduction to Hawthorne's art while the specialist will encounter a number of details in the narrative which have not been noticed before.

THH

FINGERING THE JAGGED GRAIN: Tradition and Form in Recent Black Fiction. By Keith E. Byerman. University of Georgia Press. 1986. \$30.00.

This servicable study of very recent Afro-American fiction provides useful criticism of black writers such as Clarence Major, Leon Forrest and Toni Cade Bambara whose works have generally not received the critical attention they deserve. While not as strong as some other recent black lit. crit. works, it does, like them, show the influence of Lawrence Levine's seminal book, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*. Part of Byerman's contention is correct: that with the increased concern among black writers for a usable past which includes the decoding of myth and folk material, Ralph Ellison becomes not simply the paradigmatic writer, as Byerman suggests, but the paradigmatic literary critic (along with Sterling Brown and Zora Neale Huston). The problem with the contention is that in setting up folk culture as a humane and humanistic response to rationalism, capitalism and bourgeois, materialist culture, Byerman foregoes any possibility of criticising folk culture itself (it is now simply the new existentialism) or the possibility that the black writers who are now using folk sources may be more ambivalent than he thinks. Or maybe they ought to be. Ellison is right about the richness of black folk culture, but Wright was correct in asserting its essential conservative, obscurant nature. Good readings of lesser known writers; less successful readings of writers who have been through the critical mill (Ellison, Morrison, Gaines, Walker, Reed).

Washington University—St. Louis

Gerald Early

BIOGRAPHY OF BROKEN FORTUNES: Wilkie and Bob, Brothers of William Henry, and Alice James. By Jane Maher. Hamden: Archon Books. 1986. \$22.50.

This biography thematically breaks no new ground, but is a well researched, workmanlike expansion upon Wilkie and Bob James's already known travails and broken fortunes. Neither brother is intellectually or socially important enough to be a fitting subject for a biography, the author admits; these materials instead are intended to show the larger integrity of the James family itself. This Maher especially achieves for the later years, documenting Henry James's larger humanity and William James's continued patience in helping their brothers Wilkie and Bob through recurrent troubles. In passing, there is a not entirely successful attempt to explain the somewhat romanticized question of how such divergent pairs of brothers should have been produced out of the same family circumstances: here the author is not deep enough in the biographical conceptualization of her materials. This book will be of interest to those who basically from other sources know a good deal about the more famous Jameses and are willing to invest a few hours to know a certain bit more.

University of Kansas

Floyd R. Horowitz

KEN KESEY. By Barry H. Leeds. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1981. \$8.95 paper.

This brief introductory study of Kesey's work is a useful guide to the themes and forms of Kesey's small but significant body of work, focusing especially on the novels, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962) and *Sometimes a Great Notion* (1964). Leeds approaches Kesey as both writer and public figure, pointing out the extent to which the two roles have influenced each other in what has become a peculiarly American phenomenon, a tradition of flamboyant self-publicity that includes Ernest Hemingway and Norman Mailer. Kesey's counter-culture lifestyle and his use of drugs—particularly LSD—have been influences on both the form and the social critique of his novels, and have also led to his position as a controversial figure in American life and letters. Of particular value in this short volume are the discussions of the stage and screen adaptations of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and chapters on the collection *Kesey's Garage Sale* (1973) and Kesey's more recent projects: the periodical *Spit in the Ocean* and the novel *Seven Prayers by Grandma Whittier*, the latter in progress at the time Leeds' study was published. It is Leeds' contention that *Sometimes a Great Notion* is Kesey's most significant work, one that he is unlikely to surpass.

NW

JACK KEROUAC: Novelist of the Beat Generation. By Warren French. Boston: Twayne Publishers. 1986. \$17.95.

French focuses his attention on the novels Kerouac considered to be parts of a central work, "The Duluoz Legend." (*The Town and the City*, *On the Road*, *The Dharma Bums* and *The Subterraneans* are not part of the "Legend.") French traces Kerouac's successes and failures to a split in his temperament which appears in all his novels: the Kerouac who was a conformist, red-necked French-Canadian, resistant to new ideas and attached to home and mother, and the Kerouac who was a wanderer, a rebel against discipline and conformity and a founding member of the Beat Generation. Both, however, wish to be writers. The Duluoz books describe the struggle between these two personalities until in *The Vanity of Duluoz*, the last written, the red-necked conformist wins, as he did in life.

University of Kansas

Edward F. Grier

ALONG WITH YOUTH: Hemingway, The Early Years. By Peter Griffin. Foreword by Jack Hemingway. New York: Oxford University Press. 1985. \$17.95.

Every Hemingway scholar needs to read this book, the first of a projected three-volume biography. Mr. Griffin emphasizes Hemingway's formative years—his Oak Park boyhood, his relationships with his family, his outdoor life in Upper Michigan, his six-month journalistic apprenticeship at *The Kansas City Star*, and his wartime experiences as a Red Cross volunteer in Italy during World War I. The picture that emerges is that of a precocious, romantic, ambitious youth whose provincial Midwestern boyhood, presided over by repressed Victorian parents, could not have been more at odds with the sordid urban realities he reported on for *The Star* or the traumatic wound he received in the Great War.

Mr. Griffin makes excellent use of valuable new source materials for his biography, including correspondence between Hemingway and Agnes von Kurowsky, the nurse he fell in love with as he recovered from his wound in Milan; one thousand or so pages of letters from his first wife, Hadley; five new short stories, all written before his Paris years in the 1920's; and letters from Hemingway to his good friend Bill Horne. These new documents allow Mr. Griffin to reveal elements of Hemingway's personality and dimensions of his relationships with others that until now have remained hidden.

University of Kansas

Charles G. Masinton

THE BANG AND THE WHIMPER: Apocalypse and Entropy in American Literature. By Zbigniew Lewicki. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1984. \$25.00.

Lewicki, chair of the American Literature Department at the University of Warsaw, describes how apocalypse and entropy are used as metaphors in American literature for "projecting a sense of loss and danger." He devotes a chapter to a definition and history of

each concept. In an interesting approach to the subject, he first analyzes the appearance of apocalypse in *Moby Dick*, miscellaneous works of Mark Twain, and *Invisible Man* and then examines the place of entropy in contemporary fiction by Robert Coover, Thomas Pynchon, William Gaddis, Susan Sontag and John Updike. Students of American culture can only welcome a study of concepts as important as these and they will find his definitions of both terms helpful. However, the readings of individual works add little to our understanding or appreciation of them and he fails to explain successfully how these terms "provide a significant insight into the process of shaping the American mind."

THH

**THE SECRET OF THE STRATEMEYER SYNDICATE:** Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys and the Million-Dollar Fiction Factory. By Carol Billman. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1986. \$14.95.

A thoroughly readable and as-complete-as-one-would-want-it investigation of the Stratemeyer Syndicate ('a writing mill that has turned out over thirteen hundred books, with sales estimated at two hundred million dollars'). The man Stratemeyer, the genre of the mystery series, the history of the Stratemeyer syndicate and its current status in publishing in the 1980's are described. Five chapters are devoted to information about and criticism of specific mystery series. Notes and a bibliography add to the authenticity of the book. Anyone interested in reading tastes and habits of young people for several generations will be interested in Billman's book.

University of Kansas

Edwyna Condon Gilbert

## the arts

**CANNED GOODS AS CAVIAR:** American Film Comedy of the 1930s. By Gerald Weales. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1985. \$35.00 cloth, \$12.95 paper. **SCREWBALL COMEDY:** A Genre of Madcap Romance. By Wes D. Gehring. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1986. \$29.95.

Although the dozen or so films that fully qualify as "screwball comedies" are now fifty years old, they still exercise a powerful hold over the American imagination and continue to intrigue students of popular culture. Gerald Weales' new book, as its subtitle suggests, deals with a much broader range of films actually than those properly called "screwball." He, in fact, avoids the often misused term in order to focus on a dozen quite different pictures, from Chaplin's silent-in-a-sound-age *City Lights* (1931) to the vehicle for Marlene Dietrich's comeback as a comedienne, *Destry Rides Again* (1939), providing a wealth of details to illuminate the rich vein of memorable comedies that the studio system of the Depression, despite its shortcomings, turned out. This is a rich book that any film buff will enjoy browsing and that provides a perfect guide for a memorable festival. Wes D. Gehring's *Screwball Comedy* is less useful, for it extends the genre to include more than fifty films between 1934 and 1944 (and later!), many of which were not considered "screwball" by those who coined the term. Much of the book derives from not always compatible earlier criticism, and Gehring doesn't exhibit Weales's intimate knowledge of the films and his delight with them. Curiously, both books miss one of the few films that really defined the genre—Samuel Goldwyn's *Woman Chases Man*—probably because it was a flop at the time.

University College of Swansea, Wales

Warren French

**THREE AMERICAN COMPOSERS.** By Edith Borroff. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. 1986. \$26.95 cloth, \$14.50 paper.

This book has two intertwining contributions. The first is a description of the change in the training of musicians from the institutionalized apprentice system of the music conservatory to the professional school in the comprehensive university. (The dichotomy between conservatory and university still exists in Europe, and at Harvard, but has been

eliminated at other American universities, mainly in the midwest.) As a result, many composers are now educated at and teach at universities, divorced from the real world of performers. The second contribution is a thorough discussion of how the changing situation affected three composers, Irwin Fischer (1903-77) of the American Conservatory in Chicago, Ross Lee Finney (b. 1903) at the University of Michigan and George Crumb (b. 1929) of the University of Pennsylvania. The author does not reveal that she was a student or fellow-student of all three. The composer-theorist will appreciate the detailed analyses of representative works by these composers. Those in non-musical disciplines will appreciate the identification of the conflicting traditions of conservatory and university composer, and the results on our musical life. The author knows these traditions intimately—she is of a family of practical musicians, went to a conservatory, is an active composer, yet is also a practicing musicologist and enthusiastic supporter of American music.

University of Kansas

J. Bunker Clark

**TREASURES FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART.** By William Kloss. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press. 1985 (actually published March 1986). \$39.95.

This terrific book serves as catalogue for the large travelling show of the same name, and also as introduction to the collection of the biggest museum of its type in the world. We would be biased in its favor anyhow, since its director, Charlie Eldredge, is a former member of our editorial board, but with material this good and a writer as interesting as Mr. Kloss in charge, it hardly needs the help of prejudice.

In the body of the volume are excellent color reproductions, and lots of them, with facing analyses. Tucked away in the back are biographical information, notes on provenance, black and white reproductions of related work, and discussions of the larger significance of each artist. *Treasures from the National Museum of American Art* is itself a treasure-trove. It is even a great bargain by today's standards.

No objection from here to Kloss' occasional purple prose, which is a pleasant change from some deadly art writing encountered recently. He is sometimes unfair, however, to the reader who doesn't know art jargon and concepts, as when, in a discussion of a Raphaelle Peale, he uses the term "pentimento." There is also, though rarely, some factual sloppiness—"In 1866 Whistler sailed to Chile, avowedly to join Chileans in their war for independence from Spain." Good grief! Chile had been independent for decades. Spain did in 1865 try to blockade Chile, Peru and Bolivia (which still had a seacoast then) into colonial states again, but never landed troops, and of course failed.

These, however, are quibbles. More characteristic of Kloss is solid erudition; it is pleasing to see him from time to time suggesting literary as well as artistic relationships. He can be very eloquent, too, as when he remarks of the facial expression in Gilbert Stuart's John Adams, "This reflex of disdain reminds us that, for all his virtues, John Adams was short on warmth, long on stubbornness, and hard on fools."

SGL

**t. r.**

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT: The Making of a Conservationist.** By Paul Russell Cutright. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. 1985. \$27.50.

In a chronological presentation of Roosevelt's growth from a young boy to an influential politician, Cutright sets forth and confirms the premise that Roosevelt developed into an active conservationist through his early exposure to nature. This well-written work discovers and explores, through young Teddy's hunting, travel and reading activities, the birds, plants and animals he encountered. We share with him his early efforts at writing ornithological essays and skinning birds for his Roosevelt Museum. Although he abandoned his ambition to devote his life to science, Roosevelt's studies in natural history at Harvard introduced him to many renowned naturalists who would continue to be an influence throughout his life. Cutright's effort represents a significant contribution to the

theory that the environmental ethic of Roosevelt, the President, was formed by the adventures of young Roosevelt, the naturalist.

Louisiana State University

Dana Nunez Brown

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, CULTURE, DIPLOMACY, AND EXPANSION: A New View of American Imperialism. By Richard H. Collin. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 1985. \$25.00.

This is a fascinating book that attempts to relate American cultural developments to diplomacy. What other book on American expansion devotes entire chapters to Charles McKim's restoration of the White House, Theodore Roosevelt's literary White House salon and Charles Freer's long effort to donate his priceless art collection to the national government? These excellent chapters demonstrate beyond doubt that the United States was undergoing a cultural renaissance, an awakening encouraged by the country's president.

The book is less convincing when it attempts to show that cultural expansion was more important than traditional diplomatic factors in explaining America's emergence as a leading world power. No doubt the new cultural awareness provided a sense of self assurance in dealing with the European powers. Bradford Perkins and others have made clear, for example, that the Anglo-American *rapprochement* had a deep cultural dimension. However, consideration of the power equation, not American cultural expansion, ultimately convinced the British to conciliate the Americans in the 1890s. Indeed, Collin's own chapter on the Alaska Boundary dispute is straightforward, traditional diplomatic history. Nor does Collin use any foreign archival sources in an effort to demonstrate that foreign governments based their American policies on a growing awareness of America's cultural maturity.

Because Collin insists so strongly on the primacy of the cultural dimension, he goes to great lengths to deny that the United States acted as an imperial power at the turn of the century. In fact, he scarcely acknowledges that there were real imperialists around at all. Instead, he usually refers to the "so-called imperialists" and denies that there were any fundamental differences between the "so-called imperialists" and the anti-imperialists. His portrayal of the anti-imperialists is simplistic and overgeneralized. Not all of them were the unreflective, reactionary racists that Collin pictures.

Collin defends his thesis in part by showing, correctly, that there was a good deal more to Theodore Roosevelt than brandishing the big stick. Roosevelt was a multi-faceted person, a man of deep learning and culture who, as president, tried to bring peace to the world and won a Nobel Prize for one of his efforts. More debatable is the argument that because motives of economic advantage did not figure prominently in American (and Roosevelt's) actions, the country (and Roosevelt) could not have been imperialistic. Imperialistic action can spring from a variety of motives. The seizure of a heavily populated foreign land, such as the Philippine Islands, which no one expected to colonize with Americans and for which ultimate independence was by no means assured, is an imperialistic act, even if the motives were the best.

Collin finds the Philippine American War regrettable, but he defends the acquisition of the islands and virtually all other actions which other historians have criticized. Thus, for example, American involvement in the Panamanian Revolution and the acquisition of the Canal Zone are justified by the context and the consequences. Likewise, Roosevelt's intervention in the Dominican Republic "was an example of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism at its best."

In sum, the book succeeds admirably in showing that the United States was undergoing a cultural renaissance. Furthermore, the effort to relate culture to diplomacy is well worth attempting, although this effort is not fully successful. Its portrait of Theodore Roosevelt, continuing in the revisionist vein of Frederick Marks III, is well taken. The larger point about the lack of an American imperialism is not convincing, while the portrait of the anti-imperialists approaches caricature.

University of Texas—El Paso

Kenton J. Clymer



## environment

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN CITY: Problem, Promise, and Reality. By Jon C. Teaford. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1986. \$20.00 cloth, \$8.95 paper.

From downtown to neighborhood, and then to suburb, Jon Teaford follows the urban population through eras broadly characterized by reform, the coming of the automobile, depression, war, suburbanization and urban crisis. His urbanites inhabit slums, housing projects, gold coast mansions, tract housing and sprawling ranch houses. They frequent saloons, brothels, department stores, cotillions and shopping malls. What they do not do, however, is create "community," and Teaford rejects the concept as a framework for the study of urban history. If anything unifies the American urban experience, it is fragmentation.

Beginning with attempts by progressive reformers to impose the middle-class standards on an increasingly diverse urban population, urban reformers embracing the ideal of a unified city have had less impact than forces for disunity. Technology, demographic shifts and changing lifestyles have frustrated continued attempts to create community in the American urban milieu. For a half-century, cities and their institutions somehow coped with a fragmented population and the conflicts it implied, but only by "patching, mending, and making do." Suburbanization, while hardly new by the late 1940's, provided the greatest destabilizing force in the postwar era, stripping cities of economic resources and population. By the 1960's, the weak threads of unity finally begin to snap in cities, resulting first in unprecedented levels of racial violence and then in fiscal crises.

Given its broad range, *The Twentieth-Century American City* inevitably focuses more on general patterns than specific cases. Outlining the dimensions of urbanization and its implications, Teaford measures change in terms of mass transit use, construction, production statistics, vice, race and ethnic relations (mainly tensions) and the movement of population. General patterns discernable in major cities, rather than differences between cities, structure the argument. This is, perhaps, as it should be in a brief survey that introduces readers to major issues in urban history and places those issues within a clear interpretive framework and lively narrative.

University of Chicago

James Grossman

LA REVOLUTION RURALE: Essai à partir du cas américain. By Genevieve Gavignaud. Roanne, France: Horvath. 1983. 88FF, paper.

An inquiry, based largely on census and other statistical sources and demonstrating a familiarity with American scholarship, into the post-World War II transformation of rural America through non-farming housing, industrial relocation and other significant forces, with some scrutiny of earlier change. Gavignaud suggests that modern American rural dwellers share most of the circumstances and attitudes of metropolitan Americans despite living in far less dense settlement patterns. The book is useful especially as a window on how modern rural America appears in European perspective.

Harvard University

John T. Stilgoe

## minorities

FREE FRANK: A Black Pioneer on the Antebellum Frontier. By Juliet E. K. Walker. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky. 1983. \$20.00.

In the admirable historical biography of her great-great-grandfather, Free Frank McWorter, Juliet Walker chronicles a remarkable life. Economically successful in hiring his own time as a slave, Free Frank manumitted his wife and himself through purchase. His entrepreneurial acumen flourished in freedom and, by his death in 1854 at age 77, business successes on the Kentucky and Illinois frontiers had culminated in the foundation of the

prosperous township of New Philadelphia, and made possible the expenditure of \$14,000 to free his four children and their ten progeny from bondage.

Walker's study evinces both scholarly rigor and familial insight. She supplements meager personal records with enterprising use of the family's rich oral history, although Free Frank's exceptionality makes less convincing her attempts either to fill lacunae in the biography with general sources, or generalize on the black antebellum frontier experience from her ancestor's extraordinary saga. These reservations notwithstanding, *Free Frank* is an enthralling and important contribution to Afro-American historiography.

Rider College

Roderick A. McDonald

**MAKING THE SECOND GHETTO: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960.** By Arnold R. Hirsch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1983. \$10.95.

The author informs the reader at the outset that his book is "more a work in race relations and urban history than it is a study in black history." This is a study of housing, race and racism in post-World War II Chicago. The massive migration of black Americans into Chicago during World War II necessitated a change in living arrangements. Professor Hirsch analyzes the use of governmental powers by white business and professional elites to limit and control black Chicagoans' access to housing. These groups acted in the interest of their businesses and of such institutions as the University of Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology and Michael Reese Hospital. The author also undertakes an analysis of the impact these policies had on white ethnic communities and the use of violence by white ethnics to deny housing in their communities to blacks displaced by the activities of the white elites. The result was the maintenance of segregation within new ghetto boundaries. Although the book is not without flaws, it is an excellent treatment of the subject and should be useful to scholars in several disciplines.

\* \* \*

**CHICAGO DIVIDED: The Making of a Black Mayor.** By Paul Kleppner. DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press. 1985. \$9.50.

On April 12, 1983, Harold Washington defeated his Republican opponent to become Chicago's first black mayor. Paul Kleppner uses census data, public opinion polls, exit polls, election returns, newspapers and relevant secondary sources to analyze the voter behavior that resulted in this unexpected phenomenon. The author looks behind the numbers to explore the racial fears of white Chicagoans, the growing political aspirations of black Chicagoans and the course of the political revolution that intensified under Richard Daley's successors. This is not only an important study of race and political behavior in a major city, it is also a quantitative study that is well-written and readable. Nevertheless, the author attributes too many key developments to chance, and his treatment of developing political thought among black Chicagoans lacks depth.

University of Missouri—Columbia

Arvarh E. Strickland

## other topics

**SEX IN MIDDLESEX: Popular Mores in a Massachusetts County, 1649-1699.** By Roger Thompson. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. \$30.00.

This book extends Roger Thompson's earlier work on gender, sex and popular attitudes. It traces the development of attitudes through a patriarchal dominance to the expansion of a youth culture and the extension of early modern consciousness to Middlesex County's people. Thompson finds that the people of Cambridge and Charlestown, Massachusetts, were law-abiding, generous and concerned citizens rather than crude, quarrelsome, ribald and hardened people who had to be contained by the community patriarchy. Though greater attention to life-cycle would have improved his study—for

example, the establishment of units by young adults—Thompson nevertheless gives us a rich history by showing great sensitivity to the language and law of the age.  
University of Florida

Eldon R. Turner

**SCHOLARLY MEANS TO EVANGELICAL ENDS: The New Haven Scholars and the Transformation of Higher Learning in America, 1830-1890.** By Louise L. Stevenson. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1986. \$25.00.

Stevenson demonstrates convincingly that the New Haven scholars (men like James Dwight Dana, George Park Fisher and Noah Porter) “discovered a new, Romantic way to understand religion. They redefined sanctity to mean human self-development . . . and they believed that the trained scholar could find evidence of human development in history. . . .” Stevenson argues that this view was instrumental in the evolution of “religious modernism” and that it had a marked influence on the development of modern academic study. In regard to the latter point, she draws some interesting parallels between the New Haven Scholars and Richard Hofstadter. The study is perhaps too specialized to be of great use to most American Studies scholars (the publicist for Johns Hopkins Press calls the subject an “intellectual backwater”), but it will be very valuable to those particularly interested in American religious ideas or in the history of American education.

THH

**GRAMMAR AND GENDER.** By Dennis Baron. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1986. \$23.50.

This book reviews a variety of topics in English that have been characterized as “sexist.” Baron provides a wealth of historical detail in a lively manner. Especially interesting is his treatment of earlier linguistic speculations as projections of ideologies, and particularly of anti-feminist biases. However, by restricting his discussion to English, he fails even to consider (except very casually in the last chapter) his own assumption that “sexist” forms actually have any serious consequences in the real world. The fact that gender-neutral languages such as Turkish and Chinese have hardly been associated with gender-neutral social structures suggests the necessity of a reconsideration.

Queens College

Edgar A. Gregersen

**THE CONSTITUTION IN THE SUPREME COURT: The First Hundred Years, 1789-1888.** By David P. Currie. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1986. \$55.00.

Currie set out “to provide a critical history, analyzing from a lawyer’s standpoint the entire constitutional work of the [Supreme] Court’s first hundred years . . . [to] search . . . for methods of constitutional analysis, for techniques of opinion writing, for the quality of the performance of the Court and its members.” He has admirably succeeded.

The book is divided into five parts covering, respectively, the chief justiceships of Ellsworth and Jay, Marshall, Taney, Chase and Waite. In each part, the constitutional decisions of the Court are subjected to probing scrutiny. Each part ends with a concluding section in which, in summary fashion, the performances of Court and the justices during the period under consideration are critiqued. The result is a splendid overview of a century of constitutional development which combines historical perspective with incisive evaluation of the highest court in the land, sharply illuminating the extent to which that body’s role in our society depends on the character and qualification of its members.

Curry does not purport to bring us social or intellectual history nor is he concerned with biographical matters (although he does provide full references to the available life histories of individual members of the Court). This is a lawyer’s book but one that should be of value and of interest to anyone seriously interested in the evolution of our Constitution. One can only regret that the publisher found it necessary to affix a price that is likely to discourage potential private buyers.

University of Kansas

Francis H. Heller