

## reviews

American Studies instructs its reviewers to report briefly on most scholarly volumes on American subjects, stating major theses, indicating the quality of the scholarship and analysis and pointing where appropriate to implications broader than a title might suggest. New books which seem to our editors to be saying important things to the field of American Studies as a whole are reviewed at somewhat greater length. We also run review essays from time to time to brief our readers on developments in scholarly fields when we judge them to be of use to a wide range of Americanists.

## literature

AMERICAN GOTHIC: Imagination and Reason in Nineteenth-Century Fiction. By Donald A. Ringe. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky. 1982. \$17.00.

This useful but square book contains, in its introduction, a justifiable defense of historical literary scholarship, correct but needlessly fearful of other approaches. We do not need partisanship. We need to learn from one another. Too much of *American Gothic* is plot summary, and the author does not always convincingly demonstrate the nature of connections he names between philosophical movements, literary ideas, specific authors and Gothic strategies. Ringe is not a good critic; his discussions of Gothic elements in Poe and Hawthorne are mechanical and pedestrian, though finally pretty sound. But we have never before had so comprehensive a guide; he does explain the links between, for example, Scottish common sense philosophers, Emerson, the Edinburgh magazines which were so popular in the United States, and the several ways in which American Gothicists in different eras used Gothic materials. Moreover, the attention paid to little-read Gothicists like Richard Henry Dana and the author-painter Washington Allston helps fill in blanks and make connections.

Perhaps because it is very difficult to do so, Ringe fails to connect the latter parts of his study, those which deal with Poe and Hawthorne, and, to a lesser extent, with Howells, James and Ambrose Bierce, to his earlier discussions of the philosophical underpinnings of the Gothic. I find no real point, for example, to such sections as his review of Poe's use of room décor, beyond that the rooms stand for mental states. That's interesting, but hardly new, and not related to what we assumed were the central theses of the book. The author has failed also to notice, in his discussion of such late nineteenth-century manifestations of the Gothic as the use of occultism, occult elements in Naturalist writers such as Frank Norris.

When I exposed a group of good graduate students to some of Ringe's ideas, they very quickly carried them beyond anything in the book. That suggests the limitations of his critical imagination, perhaps, but it is in no sense a criticism of *American Gothic*: indeed, one of the best things one can say of a scholarly study is that it is fruitful, that it generates further creative ideas. At the very least, one can say that of this earnest and conscientious study.

SGL

FAULKNER'S YOKNAPATAWPHA COMEDY. By Lyall H. Powers. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. 1980. \$18.50.

Powers, a noted Jamesian scholar, argues that Faulkner's writings are comedic inasmuch as they are essentially optimistic. Specifically, Powers cites two recurring Faulknerian themes (the "Self-Destructiveness of Evil," and the "Second Chance" or "Quo Vadis" theme), plus an attendant theme involving those characters who function as the "Saving Remnant." Although Powers' thesis seems valid and interesting, his efforts to establish it in thirteen chapters (each devoted to an analysis of a single novel of the Yoknapatawpha Saga) prove unevenly rewarding. The chapters are often admittedly derivative and too sparsely documented, and the three themes seem oddly peripheral to the analyses.

Rhode Island School of Design

Alice Hall Petry

PSYCHE REBORN: The Emergence of H.D. By Susan Stanford Friedman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1981. \$22.50.

This informed, intelligent and learned book explores how H.D. broke out of the cocoon of an early imagist mode and emerged as a full-fledged modernist poet. She earned her wings by mythologizing Freud, with whom she doctored, and by feminizing mythology, of which she became chief sibyl, hierophant and priestess. Although living a few doors down from Jung, H.D. remained perversely loyal to Freud, who paradoxically became the Wise Old Man in her crypto-Jungian search for archetypes. She found these in her deep study of the hermetic tradition—alchemy, mystery religions, kabbalah—all of which Friedman handles with aplomb, though her astrological interpretation of Doolittle's natal chart is a bit shaky. This book is a must for all those interested in modernist culture, American poetry, occultism, psychoanalysis and feminism. Friedman's sympathetic biographical approach is much more than the sum of these parts, yet as feminist fascination with H.D. begins to assume cult proportions, she, too, fails to answer the overwhelming aesthetic question of why Doolittle's late poetry, including *Trilogy*, reads like a flat, remote translation of some lost, authentic original.

BLSA

THE COINCIDENTAL ART OF CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN. By Norman S. Grabo. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1981. \$19.00.

Anyone who has ever wondered whether it is worth figuring out all the details of a Brown plot—and the numbers must be legion—will find the answer here. With detail that almost rivals Brown, Grabo relentlessly pursues the argument that there is "more pattern and purpose in Brown's fiction than is generally granted." What exactly is the pattern and purpose is not much clearer than a Brown plot, but it has something to do with the "distinction between the stories one tells and the more satisfying story one lives." The study concludes with a chapter on fictional "doubling."

TRH

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: The Hawthorne Experience, 1853-1864. By Raymona E. Hull. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. 1980. \$21.95.

Raymona Hull's factual narrative portrays an older, increasingly less Romantic and

more Victorian Hawthorne, a man concerned with status, manners and bourgeois creature-comforts. We learn more about this Hawthorne than we really want to know, as the adventurous artist is gobbled up by the brooding and self-conscious man of letters. By becoming a transatlantic celebrity, Hawthorne lost his footing in both Europe and America—his “Old Home” was actually in a lost and idealized pastoral past rather than in a bustling, gritty and violent industrial present. Hull’s volume remains descriptive rather than interpretive, and while she admirably tracks Hawthorne’s every step through England and the continent, we miss the amplitude a full-scale psychological approach could have brought to these materials. Therefore this work should be seen as a companion to *The Marble Faun*, *Our Old Home* and the foreign *Notebooks*, and not as a substitute for deep study of their complex and rewarding ambiguities.

BLSA

TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERARY NATURALISM: An Interpretation. By Donald Pizer. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Press. 1982. \$16.95.

Pizer uses some of the most well-known novels of this century—*Studs Lonigan*, *U.S.A.*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Naked and the Dead*, *Lie Down in Darkness* and *The Adventures of Augie March*—to demonstrate how their authors create an “American naturalistic hero” who speaks to us with power and conviction because as members of a democratic society “we are moved more by the destruction of one of our fellows than by the fall of the great of our society” (p. 8). Pizer’s analyses of the individual novels are always refreshing and informative. The commentary on Mailer is particularly rewarding.

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THE ALCOTTS: Biography of a Family. By Madelon Bedell. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. 1980. \$15.95.

Bedell is very effective in depicting the “sublime and innocent arrogance” of Amos and its effect on family and friends. She also does a good job of capturing the personality of Mrs. Alcott and the children. The account of the relationship of Alcott and Charles Lane is also noteworthy. The subtitle is misleading. The book ends before the Civil War when there were, as the author admits, “still years of ‘family straits’ to be endured” and it leaves out such crucial events as the death of Elizabeth.

TRH

JOHN REUBEN THOMPSON. By Gerald M. Garmon. Boston: Twayne Publishers. 1979. \$11.95.

By personal contact or professional support, Thompson affected the careers of numerous nineteenth-century *litterati*: Poe, Stowe, Thackeray, Bulwer, J. P. Kennedy, Simms, Carlyle and Bryant. His editorial exploits for *The Southern Literary Messenger* and the *New York Evening Post* distinguished the American periodical milieu. Copious in its factual detail and suitably understated in its claims, this informative portrait records the achievements of a man of letters dubbed “a poet in journalism and something of a journalist in poetry.” Garmon amply explains Thompson’s sectional bias and Civil War activities; with data overshadowing interpretation, however, one might prefer more analysis of his distinctive literary contributions, such as his championing of the Southwestern humorists.

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THOREAU IN THE HUMAN COMMUNITY. By Mary Elkins Moller. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. 1980. \$12.50.

Through a seriatim analysis of passages in Thoreau’s *Journals*, Moller attempts to balance the misanthropic and communal impulses in his work. Maintaining a sensible perspective

on Thoreau's positive attitude toward the value of friendship and community, Moller allows "intense emotion" to explain many of Thoreau's ambivalences. The chapter on "The Problem of Death" is not sufficiently integrated with the book's other themes.  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Kent Ljungquist

ELLEN GLASGOW. By Marcelle Thiébaux. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1982. \$14.50.

After a disappointing biographical chapter which presents more analysis of Glasgow's relationship with her pets than with her companion of thirty years, Thiébaux's book does afford the reader some interesting insights into Glasgow's ambivalent feminism, as well as her indictment of pre-Civil War plantation life, even while she mourned its loss. Thiébaux treats the works chronologically, combining plot summaries with brief critical commentary. The book is primarily helpful as a survey for students, rather than as a guide to scholars.  
MAS

ELLEN GLASGOW: *Beyond Convention*. By Linda W. Wagner. Austin: University of Texas Press. 1982. \$15.95.

Linda Wagner reappraises Ellen Glasgow's life and achievements in light of feminist criticism. Her approach is biographical: she pairs Glasgow's slow but sustained growth beyond conventions with comparable development within her literary characters. Wagner also examines Glasgow's dominant themes in light of the author's varied responses to her feminine identity; these themes include the contradictions between the conventions of romantic love versus true love, social conformity versus individual determination and "womanliness" versus woman-as-writer. As such, Wagner moves the reader beyond other conventions that narrow Glasgow's achievements and ignore her later fiction.  
University of Northern Iowa  
Grace Ann Hovet

JOHN D. MACDONALD. By David Gehern. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. 1982. \$11.95; paper: \$6.95.

A well-intentioned but somewhat dogged review of John D. MacDonald's prolific output, David Gehern's monograph reminds us of how relentlessly hip Travis McGee has been in nineteen novels. (MacDonald has, in fact, written sixty-three novels and hundreds of short stories, but McGee, a private eye alert to social issues, a sexual swinger and sufficiently alive in a cultural sense to remain a "worthy" companion to his close friend Meyer, is MacDonald's most important creation.) An odd aspect of this study is that it gives away endings and identities of murderers in order to review the plots; the publisher should really have intervened to prevent Gehern from doing so. (Some conventions of writing about mysteries remain sacred.) In general, Gehern's summaries are skillful and easy to follow, though they seem more suited for MacDonald's pulps prior to 1964 (before Travis McGee's appearance) than for the later works. The chapter on "MacDonald's Artistry" barely begins to suggest the reasons why a writer who churns out a million words a year can sustain the interest of the intelligentsia as well as of the masses. A useful book, but not definitive even for this stage of MacDonald's astonishing career.  
University of Kansas  
Harold Orel

THE NEW WEST OF EDWARD ABBEY. By Ann Ronald. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 1982. \$19.95.

Using the approaches of such critics as Northrop Frye, James K. Folsom and Richard Chase, Ann Ronald analyzes in detail the chronological development of Abbey's fiction and non-fiction from 1954 to 1982, tracing his evolving skills as in writing description or dialogue and developing characters. She explores his variations in tone and point of view. Abbey, she makes clear, both detests what modern technology does to primeval nature and envisions a time when mankind will control itself and respect the environment. The book

devotes cogent academic criticism to a non-academic, unconventional, rambunctious and visionary author.

California State University, Los Angeles

Richard G. Lillard

LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA FROM 1946 TO 1974. By Ruth K. MacDonald. Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Company. 1982. \$15.00.

Ruth MacDonald's useful book analyzes literature, which, broadly defined, has been written expressly for children (as opposed to books read by children but written for adults). Her survey extends from the appearance of *Milk for Babies*, the first book for children in the American colonies, to the publication of the Chesterfield Letters. The introduction supplies a brief history of Puritan attitudes toward child rearing followed by analytical chapters on religious works, school books, advice literature, fables and fairy tales, nursery rhymes and the Arabian nights. Since by the 1730s in England book sellers replaced writers as the dominant creative force in children's literature, a concluding chapter traces their influence on the works they spawned. Professors of children's literature will find this book helpful for the historical perspective it gives as well as for its analysis of the motives behind the strident didacticism prevalent in so much of this literature; others will find the book additionally useful for its factual information on the genre, and as a source of supplementary facts and ideas to enhance the study of more traditionally defined literature.

MAS

ISAAC ASIMOV. By Jean Fiedler and Jim Mele. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1982. \$10.95; paper: \$5.95.

Since my book about Asimov's science fiction (*Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) was published just a couple of months after Fiedler and Mele's book, I am in a unique, though possibly invidious, position. In brief summary, however, let me say that their book is limited in length (only 112 large-type pages of text) and in scope, and although their intentions and organization are good, and in some ways reflect my own decisions, their execution leaves an imperfect (and sometimes misleading) image of Asimov's science fiction.

University of Kansas

James Gunn

NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE CRITICISM. Volume 2. Edited by Laurie Lanzen Harris. Detroit: Gale Research Company. 1982. \$60.00.

These volumes excerpt criticism on European and American works of the previous century. Author entries begin with brief introductions, somewhat uneven in scope; then come chunks of criticism and annotated bibliographies. For Hawthorne, as an example, we get reactions by Longfellow (1837), Charles Fenno Hoffman (1838), Poe (1842 and 1847), James Russell Lowell (1848 and 1860), George Ripley (1850), Melville (1850), Hawthorne himself (from prefaces), George Eliot (1879), Bliss Perry (1904), Paul Elmer More (1905), Yvor Winters (1937), F. O. Matthiessen (1941) and others. The excerpts seem to have been chosen, by and large, for their generality: the more like nineteenth-century criticism portions of more recent studies are, the more likely they are to be selected. The results are more satisfactory for authors one does not know well than for those one does. Still, I found the collection absorbing and fascinating, though, it will, alas, misguide generations of students into platitudes.

SGL

## environment

COMMON LANDSCAPE OF AMERICA, 1580-1845. By John R. Stilgoe. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1982. \$29.95.

Focusing on the social conventions of environmental design, this lucidly written, well-documented study is essentially an extension of the thesis promulgated by such classics as Smith's *Virgin Land* and Marx's *Machine in the Garden*. Defining landscape as the physical embodiment of what has been called the pastoral or agrarian ideal, Stilgoe argues that the shaped landscape of America from 1580-1845 constituted a "national form" based on a "traditional arrangement of space and structure derived from a heritage of agriculture and artifice." The book's wide-ranging scope, which includes discussion of phenomena as diverse as revival meetings and canal building, unfortunately forces it on occasion to be a compendium of details lacking adequate analysis, or a mere summary of developments more fully treated elsewhere. Stilgoe is at his best when treating the spatial arrangements and folkways of agricultural life, such as the traditions and lore of farmstead construction. Given its thesis and approach, historians of ideas will find in this study little that is new. Its wealth of information, however, should make it valuable to students of material culture, social historians of rural life and general readers seeking greater detail about the man-made environment of America's past.

Ohio State University of Lima

James L. Machor

JOHN MUIR AND HIS LEGACY: The American Conservation Movement. By Stephen Fox. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1981. \$17.50.

Fox shows the central, enduring importance of amateur conservationism as both inspired and personified by John Muir. The author supplies fresh information and insight and writes with authoritative candor as he presents and evaluates twentieth century conservationist and environmentalist organizations and their spokespersons and leaders. Among these are Bernard DeVoto, David Brower, Rachel Carson, Howard Zahniser and Rosalie Edge. The book offers a wealth of significant ideas to students of life, natural or human, in America.

California State University

Richard G. Lillard

## religion

THE ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE MODERNIZATION OF JEWISH RELIGION (Brown University Judaic Studies, 5). By S. Daniel Breslauer. Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press. 1978. \$9.00.

This is a significant study of three influential American theologians from the Conservative movements in Judaism: Jacob Agus, Robert Gordis and Abraham Joshua Heschel. Breslauer's thesis is that in spite of their differences, their attempts to come to grips with the demands of modernity lead them to share in what Breslauer calls "the ecumenical perspective." The ecumenical perspective affirms that religious diversity is challenging, creative and that it is the will of God. This work also contrasts the vision of the ecumenical perspective with the thought of Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of the Reconstructionist movement in Judaism. Breslauer's interpretation of the attitude of these theologians toward other religious traditions can contribute to Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Grinnell College

Harold Kasimow

MORMONISM AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. By Klaus J. Hansen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1981. \$15.00.

Hansen's study of Mormonism may be the best introduction to this subject that has yet appeared. It should certainly attract both popular and scholarly interest, for Hansen's engaging analysis of Mormonism's appeal is based on a solid mastery of Mormon sources and a lucid exposition of Mormonism's place in American culture. Other treatments of Mormonism have usually dwelled on the Jacksonian origin and character of the movement. Hansen offers a more sophisticated appraisal, showing that Mormon views on religious authority, death, sexuality, race, economics and politics often represented significant alternatives to the dominant cultural and religious ethos of Jacksonian America. Hansen

explains Mormonism as a creative blend of popular folk beliefs and a communal orientation that hearkened back to the medieval English village and seventeenth-century Puritanism. Although Hansen's treatment of the later transformation of Mormonism is somewhat thinner by comparison, his thesis of gradual cultural accommodation is convincing. No student of American religion or culture will want to ignore this book.  
University of Virginia William McGuire King

RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FEMINISM. By Dona A. Behnke. Troy, New York: The Whitston Publishing Co. 1982. \$22.50.

Behnke does a good job studying the delimited portion of the subject that she has chosen to emphasize: the nineteenth century American WASP woman's encounter with the trioka of biblical, ecclesiastical and historical forces that stood in the way of her advance to sexual equality with men. She deals with the conventions that the feminists organized, the counter-principles of exegesis that they developed and the back-lashes that they suffered. The work is clear and informative—a good resource for both specialists and lay readers interested in the topic.

Wichita State University

Denise Lardner Carmody

## arms

WAR AND AMERICAN THOUGHT: From the Revolution to the Monroe Doctrine. By Reginald C. Stuart. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press. 1982. \$19.50.

The American political leaders of the Revolutionary and early national periods, the author contends, possessed a "limited war mentality." Armed force was considered a legitimate instrument of state power to be employed rationally for specific carefully-defined objectives. Following the War of 1812 nationalism and ideology combined to provoke a crusading zeal that regarded war as a method for furthering the American "mission," resulting in aggression, conquest and total war in means and ends. Final chapters deal with legacies, legends and myths in the American military experience.

To support his thesis the author uses examples and numerous quotations from primary and secondary sources, although his brief and cursory treatment of American military involvement for the past 250 years weakens his case. Also, while he addresses issues such as the treatment of civilians, property and prisoners of war, he does not introduce the strategic and tactical dimensions of hostilities which relate to what the author calls "the overall character of a conflict." The "cost and gain" factor is missing, and modifications of war aims during combat or negotiations are not adequately covered. But the author admits that much work needs to be done on this complex and highly charged topic, and he has made a stimulating and provocative contribution to the understanding of this perennial human institution.

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STRATEGIC STUDIES AND PUBLIC POLICY: The American Experience. By Colin S. Gray. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky. 1982. \$19.50.

This book is a critical analysis of strategic thought as expounded by civilian theorists since 1945 and its impact or lack thereof on government policy. Defining strategy essentially as the use of force in international relations, the author describes and points out the shortcomings of prescriptions for deterrence, war and arms control. Nuclear weapons rivalry is emphasized and the peaceful use of conventional forces, such as the Navy, as instruments of diplomacy is virtually ignored. In this well documented work strategic theory is considered a legitimate field of intellectual history, and new approaches are suggested to the study of this vital subject.

University of Miami

Raymond G. O'Connor

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. By Douglas Kinnard. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky. 1981. \$19.50.

Kinnard is eminently qualified to analyze the office of Secretary of Defense and evaluate its incumbents. As a regular army officer, he had several tours of duty in the Pentagon; as a political scientist, he has demonstrated, in two previous books, that he can look at his first profession with the detachment of the scholar. In this volume, Kinnard traces the development of the office from its beginnings in the late forties through the administration of James R. Schlesinger (1973-1975). The latter, incidentally, he considers "probably the most qualified person ever to assume the office." Kinnard recognizes that the role of the Secretary of Defense is at the vortex of the entire issue of civilian-military relations in this country. He concludes that, as a nation, "we have been fortunate in the caliber of men who have served" in that position. Each has made a unique contribution to the evolution of the office, as well as to the evolution of national security policy, the formulation of which presents a difficult challenge in an age of unprecedented danger.

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WAR POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS: Who Holds the Arrows and Olive Branch? By W. Taylor Reveley III. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia. 1981. \$15.95.

When the Constitution of the United States was drawn up in the closing year of the eighteenth century, war was something that one nation formally declared on another, in formal notes in which ambassadors and foreign ministers, having pronounced their government's enmity, assured each other of their mutual personal respect. It seemed plausible, therefore, to prescribe that it should be Congress that should declare war while the President should take action if the nation should be suddenly attacked. History, however, has virtually discarded this neat dichotomy. Increasingly, the balance tipped in the direction of the executive branch until Congress, by the War Powers Resolution of 1973, sought to reverse that trend. Reveley offers a carefully balanced account of the path the nation has taken from the debates in the Constitutional Convocation to the War Powers Resolution and its application during the presidencies of Ford and Carter. His analysis of the Resolution is painstakingly detailed, leading to the conclusion that, while the Resolution is not without flaws, it could become the foundation for the institutionalization of a practice of joint action of President and Congress that would bridge the gap left by the language of the Constitution. For the answer to the title's question, "who holds the arrows and the olive branch?" is that it is neither the President alone nor Congress alone, but the two together.

University of Kansas

Francis H. Heller

## blacks

SCIENCE, MYTH, REALITY: The Black Family in One Half Century of Research. By Eleanor Engram. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1982. \$27.00.

After examining, analyzing and criticizing the broad range of literature on the black family, Eleanor Engram, owner-manager of the California based Scientific and Management Research Group, probes the reality of black family life. She asserts that this literature fails to understand the complex African-American cultural background of American blacks. These studies, because of this failure, tend to foster and perpetuate social stereotypes, folk lore and racial myths. Engram concludes with a plea for scholarship based on "fundamental human needs and cultural realities." A comprehensive 52-page bibliography rounds out this interesting sociological analysis.

RL

BLACK DRAMA OF THE FEDERAL THEATRE ERA: Beyond the Formal Horizons. By E. Quita Craig. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. 1980. \$15.00.

In 1974 the lost archives of the Federal Theatre Project were found; they contained a number of largely forgotten plays written by black playwrights. Craig attempts to demonstrate how these writers used “the European mode of viewing the world to speak through their plays to the caucasian audience and, at the same time, how they were able to present the African aesthetic and philosophy to a second audience of Afro-Americans” (vi). Craig’s conclusions are debatable and she has a weakness for the overreaching generalization, but she does provide a useful corrective for the extravagant claims for the originality of the Black Revolutionary Theatre of the 1970s.

TRH

WOMEN OF THE REPUBLIC: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America. By Linda K. Kerber. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1980. \$19.50; paper: \$9.00.

Kerber premises her study on a progressive view of American history: some citizens of the Republic moved from a prepolitical existence, where their power was restricted to petitions, through “a restrained, deferential democracy” (colonial period), to an “aggressive, egalitarian, modern participatory democracy” (the Republic). Whereas male citizens so advanced during the American Revolution, women, Kerber contends, did not. She then analyzes how, despite a revolutionary rhetoric that trumpeted rights and freedoms, men shaping the Republic saw only in terms of the generic he. She shows how, despite women’s participation in the war (documented by their diaries and letters), policies regarding such women’s issues as divorce, coveture, education and reading remained rooted in European Enlightenment and not American Republican thought. Finally she illustrates how women, restricted to the domestic sphere, enlarged and elaborated their duties as the mothers and educators of the Republic’s young; by doing so they began their own revolutionary movement and progress toward the democratic goals men had already won.

Kerber’s research and fine analysis testify once again to the wealth of new materials and insights encouraged by revisionist history. Her discussion, however, calls for further exploration of how pervasive the cult of domesticity actually was among various classes and regions and, also, how pertinent to women’s political development their tastes in reading—especially fiction—were.

University of Northern Iowa

Grace Ann Hovet

## local history

NEARBY HISTORY: Exploring the Past Around You. By David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty. Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History. 1982. \$15.95. Illustrated.

Kyvig and Marty provide a comprehensive methodology for students and scholars investigating the history of families, neighborhoods and other “nearby” subjects; they range over the use of photographs, government documents, architecture, oral narratives and other sources, and provide extremely full bibliographies of more specific guides. Of particular value is the final chapter, “Linking the Particular and the Universal,” which emphasizes the importance of placing nearby history in larger contexts.

Harvard University

John R. Stilgoe

DIRECTORY OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND AGENCIES IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. By the American Association for State and Local History. Nashville: AASLH. 1982. \$35.00; members: \$26.25.

The twelfth edition of the *Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies in the United States and Canada* is a new edition of an old friend. Published by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), the *Directory* provides in alphabetical order, by state and city,

the most complete listing of state and local historical societies and museums. The broad "special interest" indices listing organizations specializing in agriculture, archaeology, ethnicity and religion, genealogy, historical individuals, history of an area or era, industry, military history, pioneers, preservation or transportation offer a helpful cross-reference guide. This is the basic tool for any scholar or tourist interested in the American or Canadian past as collected and viewed at the local level.

DMK

## philosophy

CONSEQUENCES OF PRAGMATISM. By Richard Rorty. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1982. \$29.50; paper: \$11.95.

This is an important collection of essays by one of America's leading analytic philosophers. That said, what is remarkable about this book is its interest in history, in the disciplinary and institutional framework of contemporary thought, in "continental" philosophy from Hegel to Foucault and Derrida. Also remarkable is its view that the problems of epistemology, which were at the center of philosophy from Descartes to Kant and in Anglo-American analytical philosophy of this century, are a set of provincial concerns which need to be overcome by a thought which will be both more traditional and more contemporary: traditional in its attempt to produce an edifying discourse about the great human questions and contemporary in its openness to assimilating the lessons of modernist literature, existentialism, psychoanalysis and other discourses which the analytical philosophers of 1950-70 tended to meet with rejection or indifference. The *Consequences of Pragmatism* to which Rorty's title refers are the implications of the philosophical position held by James and Dewey, as informed by the epistemological relativism of Quine and Sellars; but they are also the historical consequences or results which have come on the heels of the pragmatic movement within American philosophy. Dewey is not only rehabilitated by means of comparing him to Wittgenstein and Heidegger, but Rorty also sides very definitely with the values of Dewey's pluralistic social philosophy rather than with Wittgenstein's ethical mysticism or the irrationalism which led Heidegger to first endorse the Nazis and later to announce gnominically that "only a God can save us." Rorty's essays on these topics and on the nature of fiction, skepticism and Derrida's deconstructive philosophy are consistently rewarding, lucid and witty. Students of American culture and intellectual history will want to get their bearings from the papers on "Professionalized Philosophy and Transcendentalist Culture," while analytical philosophers, one hopes, will go far enough with Rorty to consider the papers on history and continental philosophy in the spirit of pragmatism's demand that an intellectual theory be judged by its consequences in making sense of new and diverse experiences. Those in American Studies should take note of the fact that Rorty not only defends the philosophical significance of the classical pragmatists but that he also suggests a way in which their thought ought to play a dynamic role in assessing American history and culture; he shows that American thought offers a distinctive method and not merely a subject matter to be investigated by other approaches.

University of Kansas  
Gary Shapiro

ROYCE'S VOYAGE DOWN UNDER: A Journey of the Mind. By Frank M. Oppenheim. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. 1980. \$11.50.

Josiah Royce (1855-1916) has always been difficult for post-Idealistic minds to grasp. With this suggestive little volume, however, Oppenheim moves us a major step closer to a reconstruction of the Roycean vision adequate for our day. He does this through a minute study of the fruits of Royce's 1888 recuperative voyage to Australasia — exploring Royce's metaphysics, ethics and social and political thought for indications of the early origins of key Roycean themes like Community, Loyalty and Individuality, which were to surface fully only years later, and demonstrating thereby a greater continuity in Royce's thought than had been previously recognized. Modestly, yet skillfully, Oppenheim helps us to achieve a broader understanding of Royce as philosopher and human being.

University of Toledo  
James Campbell

CONSERVATIVE ORDEAL: Northern Democrats and Reconstruction, 1865-1869. By Edward L. Gambill. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1981. \$15.95.

By focusing on the issue of race, Northern Democrats sought to re-emerge as a powerful political party in the post Civil War years and to shed their connection with secession and the collapse of the Confederacy. That they were largely unsuccessful in this effort allows the author the opportunity to explore the complex and diffuse response of the Northern Democracy to the issues of Radical Reconstruction during the presidency of Andrew Johnson. Northern Democrats to survive had to adjust and accommodate to new realities and in doing so in varying degrees were forced to cast aside traditional principles.

RL

AMERICAN PROFILE, 1900-1909. By Edward Wagenknecht. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press. 1982. \$22.50; paper: \$10.00.

Written footnote-free for the intelligent general reader, *American Profile* attempts to evoke a decade that, according to Wagenknecht, felt quite new to its participants. The blandness of the author's interpretation, however, is complemented by his uneventful prose. A dozen photographs, poorly reproduced, undated, unattributed, undiscussed, were to me the only part of the book with much life. The *Profile* treats TR, prominent personages, Culture, commerce, scandal and TR again. The author promises a sequel.

JM

JOHN ARMSTRONG, JR., 1758-1843: A Biography. By C. Edward Skeen. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 1981. \$22.00.

Relying heavily upon primary sources, C. Edward Skeen has produced a carefully crafted primarily political and diplomatic study of an important but neglected public figure in the early history of the American Republic. Since no significant collection of Armstrong letters exists, the author had to sift through well over one hundred manuscript collections in reconstructing his public career. This formal biography examines the historical events of Armstrong's lifetime, spanning the period from the Revolutionary War through the War of 1812.

Armstrong served as an officer in the American Revolution and in state and national legislatures, first from Pennsylvania and then from New York. Jefferson sent him to France as American ambassador and he served as Secretary of War during the War of 1812. His career, aided by a fortuitous marriage into the powerful Livingston family, brought him social as well as political prominence and eased his premature retirement after the War of 1812, a retirement in part the result of his abrasive personality.

RL

CONCISE HISTORIES OF AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE. Edited by M. Thomas Inge. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1982. \$9.95.

This five-hundred page volume is much better and more useful than you think it is going to be. Although a few of the concise histories are smart-alec essays and not histories at all, the authors of a great many of the others have succeeded in making thoughtful and coherent brief syntheses of the fields assigned them, and have appended good bibliographies to help the reader go further. Some headings, of course, can better be covered in a few pages than can others; that some of these pieces fail is not entirely the fault of their authors, who must have winced at the assignment of summarizing some enormous field in six or eight pages.

Topics covered included almanacs, animation; best sellers; circus and outdoor entertainment; comic art; detective and mystery fiction; film; gothic novels; illustrations; jazz; leisure vehicles, pleasure boats, aircraft; magic and magicians; newspapers; the occult; physical fitness; propaganda; pulps; romantic fiction; science fiction; stage entertainment; stamps and coins; television; trains and railroading; verse and popular poetry; and westerns, along with a lot of others.

The damn thing is easily worth the ten bucks they are charging for it.

SGL

HENRY FORD: "Ignorant Idealist." By David E. Nye. Port Washington, New York and London: National University Publications, Kennikat Press Corp. 1979. \$12.50.

Nye briefly reviews the very extensive Ford biographical literature critically in a bibliographic essay at the end of this book, finding the interpretations of other scholars wanting. His own analysis proceeds from the American Studies "high humanist," myth and symbol school of cultural analysis, which has come under scathing criticism in particular by Bruce Kuklick and by Cecil F. Tate. Nye contends that "An analysis of Henry Ford's public life reveals . . . a symbolic figure, one who lived a series of mythic lives," and that "By analyzing the structure of both Ford's public images and his private world view something of the essential character of culture emerges [sic]." Whereas most other scholars have found Ford a most complex, enigmatic and contradictory personality, Nye perceives that Ford's philosophy of life and/or character were unified and consistent derivations from his belief in reincarnation, which Nye focuses upon as the key to understanding him. This approach is novel and interesting, and Nye supports his position well empirically. Whether one accepts his conclusions as valid, however, depends very much on whether one subscribes to the methodological/theoretical assumptions of myth and symbol scholarship.

University of California, Irvine

James J. Flink

ACADEMICIANS IN GOVERNMENT: From Roosevelt to Roosevelt. By Paul B. Cook. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1982. \$25.00.

This doctoral dissertation illuminates a commonly overlooked aspect of American public life: the contribution of academics to the work of the federal government. Cook points out that this had its beginnings with the emergence of the idea of public service as an appropriate function of a public university ("Wisconsin idea"), but that it was not until social scientists turned from theoretical disputations to the resolution of current issues that a major reservoir of talent became available. The preeminence of academics in the New Deal is, of course, well known, but Cook provides interesting material on their provenance and, to a lesser degree, their contributions. This narrative does not, however, extend into World War II. Cook concludes that academicians replaced lawyers as the intellectual workhorses of government and that, on the whole, they "did not lead the action astray."

University of Kansas

Francis H. Heller

FELIX FRANKFURTER AND HIS TIMES. By Michael E. Parrish. New York: The Free Press. 1982. \$17.95.

The first of a two-volume biography of Felix Frankfurter, this recounts the rise of an immigrant to the inner councils of reform politics and the White House. Focusing on the pre-court years in this volume, Parrish affirms the well-known story of Frankfurter as central to reform battles and as mentor to a generation of influential reformers. What is new is the emphasis on Frankfurter as Zionist active on both sides of the Atlantic. Those interested in learning more about Frankfurter personally will have to look elsewhere; the emphasis here is on the public, not the private, man.

DMK

RAYMOND CHANDLER AND FILM. By William Luhr. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. 1982. \$7.95.

A well-written survey of biographical, socio-cultural and cinematic elements that affected not only the films on which Chandler worked (*Double Indemnity*, *And Now Tomorrow*, *The Unseen*, *The Blue Dahlia*) and to which he contributed (particularly *Strangers on a Train*), but also a number of dry runs and aborted efforts; there is also a fairly substantial section on films based on Chandler's fiction. The reasons for Chandler's disenchantment with Hollywood are convincingly sketched; Luhr is fair to both sides, and clearly shows that the novelist was a very difficult man to work with. The study benefits from Luhr's knowledge of original texts, various versions of individual film scripts, and personalities involved. A final look at Altman's debunking *The Long Goodby* (which Chandler fans detest) and Winner's

*The Big Sleep* (which the critics unanimously dislike or dismiss as inferior to the Bogart original) implies that Hollywood's interest in Chandler's works may have come to the end of a road that took approximately forty years to travel. Strongly recommended.  
University of Kansas Harold Orel

THE PRESIDENCIES OF JAMES A. GARFIELD AND CHESTER A. ARTHUR. By Justus I. Doenecke. Lawrence, Kansas: Regents Press of Kansas. 1981. \$14.95.

Garfield's term as President was cut short by an assassin's bullet so soon after his inauguration that he is customarily omitted in any recital of the achievements of former presidents. Arthur normally does not get much more space than Garfield: he is usually given credit only for not having been as bad as he was expected to be. Doenecke is not a revisionist, but his careful account of the years from 1881 to 1885 leads to the conclusion that the presidency was not in total eclipse. Although he acknowledges that Garfield's term was too brief to permit a conclusive judgment, he notes that "long before Woodrow Wilson made his remark, James Abram Garfield was 'the scholar in politics.'" Arthur, "one of the nation's great political surprises, . . . conducted the office with dignity and restraint." Doenecke particularly stresses the active foreign policy of the United States during this period. In this respect, as in others, this volume is a useful reminder that the nation's growth and development did not—as we have often been led to believe—come to a halt while Garfield and Arthur occupied the White House.  
University of Kansas Francis H. Heller

THE ELUSIVE QUEST: America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security, 1919-1933. By Melvyn P. Leffler. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1979. \$17.50.

This book is both imposing and important. Leffler addresses the period's most complex issues (intergovernmental debts, tariffs, central bank cooperation, foreign loans, disarmament, French security, German rehabilitation and currency stabilization), and he provides a perceptive synthesis of the nation's foreign policies during Republican ascendancy. Leffler argues convincingly that Republican policymakers sought a politically and economically stable Europe, but ultimately their proposed international initiatives fell victim to such domestic imperatives as tax reduction, fear of inflation, legislative-executive struggles and the popularity of non-entanglement in European politics. Cogent if less original are his analyses of Hoover's internationalism during the interregnum and Roosevelt's uncertain but eventual commitment to economic nationalism in 1933. However impressive his research in American archival materials, use of the transcripts of Coolidge's press conferences would have strengthened Leffler's treatment of Franco-American divisions.  
Iowa State University Richard N. Kottman

AMERICAN SPORTS: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Spectators. By Benjamin G. Rader. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. 1983. \$19.95 paper.

A good book, of concern to us because Rader tries to tie sports to society. It is true that he makes errors; he does not, for example, understand Puritan beliefs, and his model of U.S. social patterns is not sophisticated. But such matters amount, perhaps, to 1/100th of the volume; most of the rest is very good, and presented thoughtfully. The reader can draw his own connections between sports and society. Rader tries to cover sports of all sorts, at least naming those he must omit in given periods, and selecting those which he feels typify major tendencies. His section titles represent his major thesis: The Age of Folk Games (1607-1850); The Age of the Player (1850-1920); The Age of the Spectator (1920 to present). The dates nicely match watersheds in Modernization Theory, don't they? Readers sensitive to other approaches to our national experience will also find useful evidence here.

SGL