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

## Reviews

AMERICA AND THE SEA: A Literary History. Edited by Haskell Springer. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press. 1995.

The literary history of Americans' relationships to the sea has been less thoroughly articulated than their relationships to the land. In part, this may be the result of a multiplicity of relationships Americans developed; as opposed to the land of the New World, most often perceived in binary terms as either edenic garden or howling wilderness, the sea—and its analogues the lakes, rivers, and several oceans—appeared to Americans in numerous guises. Haskell Springer, to his credit, has signed on a wide-ranging crew of able scholars to represent American perceptions of the sea. They explore different versions of the sea, represent different viewpoints, employ different methodologies, record different geologies, plumb different historical periods, literary genres, and social experiences—and this approach makes for an interesting cargo: there are the mandatory essays on Cooper, Melville, and sailors' journals and chanteys, but there are also several fascinating sections on American poetry and painting. Although there is some inevitable repetition—Melville is repeatedly invoked as the imaginative father of American sea literature (too often by quoting Ishmael's "meditation and water are wedded for ever")—and some will surely desire fuller expression of Native Americans', women's, and inland waterways' traditions—Springer's collection succeeds admirably in bringing together in an accessible style fourteen chapters that at their best make us want to rethink the presence and the influence of the sea in American literary history, whether the literature we consider is colonial broadside, antebellum ghost story, realistic novel, or contemporary poetry and prose.

*America and the Sea* is a true miscellany in the best sense: a collection of interpretive seascapes that strives to be representative and suggestive rather than comprehensive and delimiting. It is good to be reminded that Walt Whitman is not the only American poet to focus upon the sea: T.S. Eliot (in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and the "Death by Water" section of *The Waste Land*) and Wallace Stevens (especially "The Idea of Order at Key West") we might have recalled without prompting, but what about H.D., Robert Frost, Hart Crane, Elizabeth Bishop, Adrienne Rich, and even Emily Dickinson? And how

many of us can recite the names of half a dozen authors writing in the Great Lakes maritime tradition? "A Portfolio," Roger Stein's impressionistic glance at seventeen works of American art, leads the reader on an eclectic tour through the "visual tradition of American seascape" (146) from colonial to the twentieth century, ranging formal portraits, ship portraits, sculpture (including a wonderful photograph of Frederic MacMonnies's *The Barge of State; or, the Triumph of Columbia* from the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition), an emblem book image, and a 1947 Jackson Pollock painting to emphasize the range of American plastic art responses to the sea.

Although as Elizabeth Schultz notes, "African-American experience has been an inland one" (233), the sea has had a pivotal role in black experience. It did not offer a symbol of individual escape, as it had to Ishmael, but it became a means of enslavement, the notorious "middle passage" exposed by Melvin Tolson and Robert Hayden in poetry and Charles Johnson in prose. Folktales, spirituals, slave narratives, and popular tales from the oral tradition join in this century with a formal African-American literary tradition created by Paul Laurence Dunbar, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Michael Harper, Alex Hailey, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, and Ntozake Shange. And a concluding chapter on "Prose Since 1960" lists a judicious selection charting the differing modern responses to the sea—from *The Old Man and the Sea*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *Run Silent, Run Deep*, and *Hawaii*, through *Ship of Fools*, *Jaws*, *Far Tortuga*, and *The Hunt for Red October*, to *Mrs. Caliban*, *Galapagos*, *Closest Possible Union*, and *Adrift: Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea*.

Structured chronologically, *America and the Sea* is a useful reminder that the sea has been with us more than we have admitted in our obsession with the western frontier. Springer's introduction is a fine place to begin the study of the sea, and the primary and secondary bibliographies contained at the end of the volume are excellent resources for further voyaging.

Chatham College

William E. Lenz

**NATIVES AND NEWCOMERS: Ethnic Southerners and Southern Ethnics.** By George Brown Tindall. Athens: The University of Georgia Press. 1995.

For too long, historians of the American South have ignored the region's ethnic diversity. Nor is this surprising, given the centrality of black-white relations in southern history. Recently, however, the growing impact of immigration and internal migration on parts of the South and interest among historians of immigration and ethnicity in American minorities other than blacks have combined to focus attention on the region's surprisingly rich ethnic mosaic.

George Tindall, one of our most accomplished southern historians, has played a key role in promoting this new development. As early as 1973, he devoted his Presidential Address to the Southern Historical Association to the importance of ethnicity in southern history. He was primarily making a case for treating southerners as an ethnic group, but in that talk and in his subsequent work he advocated looking at more traditional ethnic groups as well. His first systematic attempt to do so came in a lecture in Genoa, Italy, in 1989, which became the foundation for the Jack N. and Addie D. Averitt Lectures delivered in October, 1992, at Georgia Southern University. This slim volume is an expansion of the Averitt Lectures.

In three brief, but well-footnoted chapters, Tindall develops in roughly chronological fashion three main points. First, the early South had the most polyglot population in the English colonies. Second, during the two centuries after the American Revolution “relatively few immigrants came south, the Indian population was largely expelled, and the South became that part of the country where the melting pot worked best” (xii). Two new ethnic groups emerged—white and black—or even a “single group of ethnic southerners with white and black sub-groups” (xii). Finally, history came full circle after World War II as an influx of immigrants—mainly Hispanics, Caribbeans, Asians, and “Yankee” ethnics from other regions—once more made the South a genuinely multi-ethnic society. As late as 1940, the South contained only 5.47 percent of the nation’s foreign born, roughly the same percentage as in 1900; even 20 years later, the figure was only 9 percent. By 1990, however, the figure had risen to 23.2 percent. Nevertheless, we should not forget that this was still considerably less than the region’s 34.4 percent share of total U.S. population, and was only 5 percent of the regional population. And those individuals were concentrated largely in only two states—Texas and Florida.

Tindall correctly describes what is really an extended essay as “commentaries” rather than a sustained analysis of immigration and ethnicity in the South. Much of his evidence comes from direct observance based on over 70 years residence in the region, the rest from a broad reading of the growing interdisciplinary literature on the subject. Tindall has a sharp eye for the telling anecdote and illuminating statistic and writes with grace and humor. For the already initiated, there is little new or startling here, but publication of the lectures serves to alert a wider audience to the considerable work being done on the South’s growing ethnic diversity. And historians of the South would do well to follow Tindall’s injunction about the most recent (Fourth?) New South: “The shades of the Sunbelt will no longer be a simple matter of black and white. They will span a much broader spectrum of color” (57). But as he has also reminded us, the same has been true of the rest of southern history and Tindall has, as usual, given us many leads to follow.

University of New Mexico

Howard N. Rabinowitz

THE OXFORD HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST. Edited by Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O’Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss. New York: Oxford University Press. 1994.

Ten years ago, western history was a nearly moribund field, populated by slightly moth-eaten cowboys and Indians, a few heroic white pioneers, and a number of fragmented discussions of topics like transportation, mining, territorial politics, and water rights. Many universities were preparing to drop their specialized courses in the West and pick up on more interesting topics. That sorry picture changed in 1987, when Patricia Limerick published *Legacy of Conquest*. Her new synthesis of western history, and the disputes it generated, have enlivened the field ever since. In a nutshell, Limerick discarded Fredrick Jackson Turner by substituting region for frontier process, moving on into the twentieth century from the “end of the frontier” that Turner located in 1890, and insisting that the western story was a multicultural one rather than simply the saga of white pioneers. Many of us greeted *Legacy* with sighs of relief and mutterings of “it’s about time.” But others greeted this “new western history” less happily, and there were several years of acute hostility and nasty vituperation. At the height of the controversy (which has since thankfully subsided), Milner, O’Connor, and Sandweiss began planning the volume now under review. The form of the volume betrays its origins: neither new western history nor

old, it attempts to mediate, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. Frontier fans will find much to please them here, and so will followers of the new western history. Neither will be completely pleased about anything, except perhaps the pictures, for this is a lavishly and beautifully illustrated volume.

The first problem with *The Oxford History of the American West* is with the title. This is not a history in the sense of a coherent story, but a group of 23 articles by authors of varying viewpoints, some old, some new, some idiosyncratic. This is mediation as muddle, and history as lack of synthesis.

The articles are divided into four sections: Heritage, Expansion, Transformation, and Interpretation. Two of the four articles in the Heritage section concern events outside the trans-Mississippi West, and tie us back into the Turnerian notion of the moving frontier. Nevertheless, all four articles are excellent. Peter Iverson's essay is a fine introduction to the dynamic, changing, and spiritual world of "Native Peoples and Native Histories," while David Weber's survey, "The Spanish-Mexican Rim," is a marvelous distillation of his 600-page *The Spanish Frontier in North America*. Jay Gitlin and Elliott West both contribute fine articles on earlier eastern frontiers.

The second section, Expansion (note: *not* conquest) concerns the nineteenth century and is the most troublesome. The choice of topics in this section seems designed to distract attention from serious efforts to come to terms with the meanings of conquest. Richard White's essay, "Animals and Enterprise," brilliantly charts the stages in the transition from the wild to domesticated animals, thereby providing a new way of viewing both the environment and industry. Where, in this section of the *Oxford History*, are equally engrossing accounts of the Mexican-American War, the many Indian wars, and the viewpoints of the conquered peoples? These are not completely missing, but are submerged in larger essays bearing titles such as "National Initiatives," and "Religion and Spirituality." Regrettably, four other articles—Richard Brown's "Violence," Kathleen Conzen's "A Saga of Families," Allan Bogue's "An Agricultural Empire," and Keith Bryant's "Entering the Global Economy"—either focus *only* on white pioneers or give Mexicans and American Indians only passing mention.

The third section on the twentieth century West is more satisfactory. Carlos Schwantes's "Wage Earners and Wealth Makers" provides a survey of work patterns in the West that makes some comparisons with eastern labor possible. Carl Abbott contributes an exceptionally clear and useful essay on the changing nature of the federal presence in the West which goes a long way to explain the current "Sagebrush Rebellion." William Cronon's "Landscapes of Abundance and Scarcity" is a fine and sweeping survey of all of western environmental history, not just the twentieth century. And the rich article by Sarah Deutsch, George Sanchez, and Gary Okihiro, "Contemporary People/Contested Places," although too compressed and somewhat confusing, contains a perspective that ought to have been used throughout the whole volume.

There are five articles in the concluding section, Interpretations. One, Brian Dippie's forthright assessment of western art, is outstanding. But the remaining articles, useful as each may be, point again to the problems plaguing western history. Thomas J. Lyon's competent article, "The Literary West," mentions the creative explosion of the past twenty years but devotes no real critical attention to it, while Anne Butler's "Selling the Popular Myth" cannot, by its very nature, move beyond gender and ethnic stereotypes. How can we ever expect to get a realistic history of the West when we continue to treat the mythic and popular aspects in such a gingerly and respectful fashion?

Overall, although some individual articles are excellent, *The Oxford History of the American West* does not add up. Environmental history is well represented, and there are

several good articles on the federal presence in the West (formerly a non-topic). But you would hardly know, from reading this volume, of the vast amount of new scholarship on American Indian, Chicana/o and Asian-American history, on labor history, on women's history. The job of writing the multicultural history of the American West—the new western history—is yet to be done.

Washington State University

Susan Armitage

DISCOVERING DIFFERENCE: Contemporary Essays in American Culture. Edited by Christoph K. Lohmann. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1993.

The ten essays in this collection grew out of a lecture series at Indiana University, and features work by both indispensable and emerging scholars of U.S. literature and culture. The title "Discovering Difference" is potentially misleading. By definition, difference—in both its original and Derridean (*différance*) inflections—is a concept capable of charting the shifting complexities of almost any amalgamation of potentially disparate elements. But this is so broad a paradigm as to tell us little about the subject matter at hand. The core of the collection is a very solid and useful group of essays on pre-twentieth-century U.S. literature, rounded out by pieces on Columbus, contemporary critical paradigms, twentieth-century cultural analysis, and, in the essay by Myra Jehlen that opens the collection, a historical and theoretical analysis of understanding cross-cultural encounters.

Jehlen's essay is broad-ranging, including an impressive discussion of Montaigne's complicated text, "Of Coaches," but unified by its concern to critique the way that our paradigms for understanding cultural encounters fall short. Her suggestion that cultural critics replace a rhetoric of self and other, and even difference, with the notion of "zones of contest" is particularly helpful. Her essay is followed by Terence Martin's account of how Columbus has been figured by writers and historians, and then the collection shifts to five essays on U.S. literature.

All of these essays but one are on nineteenth-century narratives and figures. In her analysis of *Charlotte Temple*, Eva Cherniavsky argues that Charlotte's "merely generic femininity, allows her to stand in for the novel's readership . . . whom she . . . transforms into a constituency" capable of disputing Republican culture's equation of the masculine with the universal. James Justus analyzes ways that vernacular language and incidents in writing of the Old Southwest was mediated by traditional narrative forms, and Jonathan Elmer's discussion of "William Wilson" impressively relates Poe's obsessions about plagiarism to the fear "not that we will be plagiarized, but that we *are plagiarisms*. . . not that our possessions will be taken from us, but that we are ourselves possessed" by the operations of language. Michael Gilmore uses his discussion of *The Scarlet Letter* as an occasion to demonstrate how recent theory has tended to stress race and gender at the expense of class—how, in his words, "class refuses to be permanently absorbed into gender in Hawthorne's text," and, perhaps most importantly, how class itself must be now understood in non-essentialist terms. Finally, Cynthia Wolff discusses Margaret Garner, a fugitive slave who served in part as a model for Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, but also bears an enigmatic relation to Harriet Beecher Stowe.

The collection is rounded out by a trio of essays. Cary Wolfe's "Antinomies of Liberalism" critiques Walter Benn Michaels, and more generally, the liberal assumptions undergirding even ostensibly anti-liberal work. Michael Rogin analyzes psychoanalytic themes in D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance*, and Carolyn Mitchell dissects the racial iconography of the Clarence Thomas hearings.

Overall the collection is impressive and useful, most especially to the scholar of nineteenth-century U.S. literature.  
Southern Oregon State College

Warren Hedges

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE. By Robert J. Scholnick. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press. 1992.

The editor of this volume is Robert J. Scholnick, Professor of American literature at William and Mary. In his introduction he discusses the major points in all of the essays and provides a very useful bibliography, "American Literature and Science Through 1989." Scholars in American literature and mass communications present analyses of the way Edward Taylor, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, a group of little known eighteenth-century humorists, Mark Twain, Hart Crane, John Dos Passos, Charles Olson, and Thomas Pynchon understood the relationship of art and science. In a concluding essay, "Turbulence in Literature and Science: Questions of Influence," N. Katherine Hayles asks why "When influence is discussed in literature and science, it nearly always turns out to be the influence of science on literature" (229).

There is a general consensus among the scholars writing in this volume that men in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not imagine sharp divisions between religion, art, and science. But by the mid-nineteenth century, artists and theologians were no longer able to claim that they were equal to scientists in ability to discover reality. This is why, for Hayles, that current literary critics assume "that the scientific theory has discovered the way reality actually is, and that the writer is adapting or interpreting this truth for her own ends" (229). This view that the scientist rather than the artist or theologian discovers reality has remained persuasive until the last generation when, as Hayles points out, there is a "growing body of work demonstrating that scientific theories are themselves social constructions" (229).

Hayles concludes, "Given the current state of the field, a book entitled *American Literature and Science* could be predicted to speak of how literature has been influenced by science. My essay speaks in a different voice, urging us to consider science and literature as two sites within a complex cultural field" (248).

Hayles sees in chaos theory a new emphasis on the fluidity of the natural world and a potential shift of metaphors from "hard" science studying "hard" matter to "soft" science studying "soft" matter. This would be a shift from a masculine metaphor to a feminine one. The male artists analyzed in this book very likely shared the definition constructed in the Renaissance and Reformation that all traditional cultures were soft, chaotic, and lacking in reality. It is possible that they believed their art was the antithesis of the art of traditional cultures. They too were discovering a "hard" reality which they supposed existed outside of culture. In this respect the current crisis of literary criticism shares the current crisis of scientific theory. Modern art, like modern science, can no longer be seen as the antithesis of the imagined worlds of traditional cultures. Modern society has not discovered reality. Rather, modern people have invented themselves in art, theology, and science, but have denied their own creativity.

University of Minnesota

David W. Noble



SALEM STORY: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692. By Bernard Rosenthal. Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture Series #73. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. 1993.

In *Salem Story*, Bernard Rosenthal, Professor of English at the State University of New York at Binghamton, provides a useful and methodologically somewhat different approach to the story of the Salem witch trials. He has organized the surviving documentation into a chronological account that allows him, he explains, to read the story as he would a novel, and to explicate it accordingly. He then contrasts that explication with the way the events of 1692 have been mythologized in America ever since.

Among the myth making Rosenthal examines are the scapegoating of the slave Tituba, the sexualizing and age stereotyping of “witches” in our popular culture, and attempts to force interpretations of the witch-hunt into paradigms of future generations. Among the various principle assumptions he rejects is that the Salem witch trials were instigated by a circle of hysterical young girls. Instead, Rosenthal joins a growing list of other students of the event who have found a logical, rational strategy of accusations and confession employed by accusers and accused, alike.

The symptoms experienced by the children of Salem Village were consistent with those reported earlier in seventeenth-century new England. What was different, however, was what those symptoms wrought. In all other cases, such symptoms precipitated only local, discrete cases, seldom including more than one individual and hardly ever ending in conviction. In Salem they resulted in fears of a conspiracy of witches and a raging and widespread hunt ending in almost certain conviction.

Many have sought to explain the Salem difference. Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum in *Salem Possessed* (1974), for example, have made a convincing case for the existence of a pattern of quarrels which divided Salem Village into accusers and the accused, but that hardly explains the spread of accusations beyond its borders. The traditional explanation focuses on the political and social turmoil, the uncertainty and the anxiety, that resulted from revocation of the Massachusetts charter in 1684, the persistent threat of Indian attacks, and the decline of power among orthodox clergy. As Rosenthal points out, however, although this explanation, in the seventeenth-century context, does make the search for enemies in the invisible world plausible, it has never been particularly satisfying. The same, or similar, ingredients existed at other times—as in 1688 when the Goodwin case occurred—but no witch hunt resulted.

Rosenthal argues that what made Salem different, setting it on a separate course from all other similar episodes in seventeenth-century Massachusetts, was the support authorities lent the accusers. Prior to 1692, clerical and judicial authorities generally suppressed, or at least discouraged, such accusations. Rosenthal explains that although, in theory, belief in witchcraft was an accepted principle in seventeenth century Massachusetts, in practice, charges of witchcraft were usually regarded with skepticism and perceived as superstitions. In 1692, that attitude changed.

Rosenthal spends most of his time seeking an answer to that question—Why was there a change of heart among Massachusetts authorities in 1692? He suggests that it might have been due to the peculiar circumstances of who was in power at the time, what religious debates and animosities were occurring in the colony, and who was profiting from the trials. And, in the end, he resists the temptation to find a single all-encompassing answer. Instead, he offers a variety of motives that converge in the Salem witch trials.

The Salem witch trials were not inevitable, Rosenthal concludes; they did not occur out of historical necessity. Moreover, they could have been avoided or, once begun,

stopped at any point. Those in charge had opportunities, sufficient popular support, and even legal grounds, if they had chosen to employ them, to reassess the situation and end the trials. Instead, as explained in *Salem Story*, authorities cast their net of accusations even further afield, and the lines of the gallows grew even longer.

Creighton University

Bryan Le Beau

INVENTING NEW ENGLAND: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century. By Dona Brown. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press. 1995.

Dona Brown focuses on nineteenth-century tourism and the promotion of New England as a distinctive American region. Regional stereotyping was not some obvious outgrowth of changing built environment, itself a mere function of “natural” historical development. Rather, nineteenth-century images of New England were deliberately constructed through an emergent tourist industry driven by specific entrepreneurs and publicists operating in specific locations over finite periods of time. The author offers a set of case studies focused on various touristic developments which, taken together, provide overview of mythic New England’s “inventing.”

She begins by treating two kinds of tourists. Gentry travelers pursued the “Grand Tour,” networking socially place to place through letters of introduction. Their’s was as much a quest for status through interaction with local elites as exploration of place. With the rise of improved transportation (canals and railroad) and the development of fashionable hotels (as opposed to common inns), the true tourists—the middle-class vacationers that Brown emphasizes—emerged to dominate. They used sight-seeing more and socializing less in assessing places encountered, status accruing mainly through the reporting of their travel experiences back home. Increasingly important were contrived tourist attractions specially packaged for their pleasurable consumption. Brown emphasizes the so-called “northern route” by which tourists moved from New York City up the Hudson River to Albany (and Saratoga Springs), and westward to Niagara Falls. However, her idea that tourism in New England was merely an offshoot of this movement is, in my opinion, overstated.

Case studies follow. Concern with New Hampshire’s White Mountains (especially Crawford Notch and Mount Washington) emphasizes the rise of sightseeing through the promotion of wilder or “natural” scenery. How were tourists instructed in the art of sightseeing? And, by whom? What kinds of symbolic associations were promoted both through place naming and the structuring of the built environment? Concern with Martha’s Vineyard focuses on the rise of the cottage camp, especially the island’s Wesleyan Grove and Oak Bluffs developments. Nantucket is used to illustrate the rise of history displays (Olde New England) where quaintness was made to promote a nostalgia for past times deemed less complicated, and thus instructive of quintessential American values. There arose a penchant for renovating old houses as summer residences, and for establishing house museums. Vacation farms in various locales were promoted as a means of invigorating rural economy by returning urbanites to rural roots if only vicariously through recreation. The author elaborates themes previously developed in a synthesizing case study of the “Piscataqua” area of coastal New Hampshire and Maine.

A concluding essay stands as epilogue, extending the author’s view of nineteenth-century New England into the twentieth century. Whereas travel to resorts had been primarily by steamship and railroad, after 1910 the automobile came forcefully to the fore.

Tourists were no longer so inclined to sojourn for periods of time at select places. Rather, they undertook by car to move continually between places—touring in the fullest sense of the word. Not only were the contrived attractions of resorts sought and experienced, but also consumed were the intervening opportunities for pleasuring provided by the common wayside. The resort vacationer became an automobile tourist.

Dona Brown's major contribution is her linking regional icons rooted in landscape with the rise of tourism as a form of economic development. She describes developmental schemes whereby selected symbols of place came to stand metaphorically for New England as a whole. Concern with the realities of place, their representations through both written word and visual portrayal, and the developmental or promotional uses of both, are fully intertwined in her reporting. Perhaps, these various dimensions of place creation are too intertwined? Perhaps, they should have been separated and linked more analytically—cause and effect relationships emphasized. The reader is left with much valuable description, but relatively little analysis. Additionally, the "cases" presented are overly exclusive, important topics being neglected. For example, how can New England be understood as a region without fully considering Boston as its urban core? Several of the book's principal themes (historical place, for example) could have been more fully developed with focus on tourism in Boston. Nonetheless, an important foundation for understanding mythic New England has been firmly laid. Since the book excites more questions than it answers, it points the author and reader to exciting future contemplation.

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  
John A. Jakle

**PARTISANS OF THE SOUTHERN PRESS: Editorial Spokesmen of the Nineteenth Century.** By Carl R. Osthaus. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press. 1994.

Carl R. Osthaus's *Partisans of the Southern Press* is a thoroughly researched and well written account of nineteenth-century Southern journalism. Osthaus selected the press and "mainstream editors" in Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans because they epitomized the "voice" of the South and simultaneously functioned as "narrators," "advocates," and "weathercocks" who disseminated the opinions of the planters, professional, and commercial interest in the South.

Osthaus's thesis is that the press interpreted the Civil War through the "prism of patriotism and propaganda" (114). Also, Osthaus theorized that "The war devastated the South's newspapers, and Reconstruction delayed their technical modernization while prolonging their fixation on politics" (149). The editors' obsession with politics, Osthaus noted, and their editorials helped to lay the foundation for the "solid South."

Osthaus acknowledged that the black press was "worthy of study," but he excluded black editors because the "major thrust" of his research is the daily press which collectively illuminated the history and character of the South (xi). It was a wise decision. The addition of black editors would have altered the book's purpose. A black press did not exist during the antebellum period, and, during the Reconstruction period, the black press was weak while the daily press was "powerful," "colorful," and "monopolized" the dissemination of news.

The author divides the history of Southern newspapers before 1900 into three chronological periods: 1790-1850s; 1850s-1870s; and 1870s to 1900. The dates were not selected arbitrarily but rather were fixed by watershed issues and events within each period.

Chapter One is an analysis of Thomas Ritchie, editor, *Richmond Enquirer* (Va.) who is characterized as “the Napoleon of the Press,” and “dictator of Virginia Politics.” Other “editorial giants” were George Wilkins Kendall and Francis Asbury of Lumsden of the *New Orleans Picayune*, Robert Barnwell Rhett, *Charleston Mercury*, and John Forsyth of the *Mobile Daily Register*. They deemed themselves to be “paladins of Southern virtue,” critics of Northern culture, and the “voice” of the South (xiii).

The editors *never* changed their political parties; consequently, their “partisanship” and personal journalism spawned “a multiplication” of newspapers. As the various presses competed throughout the antebellum South, they expanded American democracy, the First Amendment, and professional journalism. Newspapers, at the time, were regarded as “archaic,” and “old-fashion” (10) but the editors made the newspapers a necessary and integral part of the political system (45).

Orthaus was especially perceptive in analyzing the *New Orleans Picayune* which debuted in January, 1837. The *Picayune* was “a new phenomenon,” the first of its kind, and “modeled” after Penny Presses such as the *New York Sun* and the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, which dramatized murder, fraud, and scandal. Although the *Picayune* was “indifferent politically,” Orthaus skillfully shows how the Penny Press coincided with advanced literacy, communications, transportation, and technology during the Jacksonian Era to advance democracy (49).

Orthaus captures the social diversity of the South and his conceptualizations of major issues such as the Mexican War of 1848 and Reconstruction, are both clear and concise. He concluded that the Mexican War of 1848 “made” the *Picayune* and he lamented the naivety of Reconstruction, editors who advanced “simplistic solutions to nearly intractable complex problems” (65-68, 142). His analysis is fair and is designed to address misinterpretations and to correct faulty interpretations of American journalism.

A newspaper is not only a microcosm of society, but an institution which records history everyday. Because the *Richmond Enquirer*, *Mobile Daily Register*, and the *New Orleans Picayune* are primary sources, they are invaluable to the history and historiography of the South. The “Partisan” editors molded and directed public opinion, “enshrined the Democratic party,” intensified sectionalism, and romanticized the New South. The editors’ fixation with the Enduring South caused them to overlook an important paradox, “the South’s press was free because Southern society was closed” (110).

*Partisans of the Southern Press* is a well-written, comprehensive, and analytical perspective about editorial spokesmen of the nineteenth century. It is an excellent resource for curriculums under the rubric of the American South, journalism, and communications.  
Clemson University  
H. Lewis Suggs

THE EMERGENCE OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTIST: Robert S. Duncanson, 1821-1872. By Joseph D. Ketner. University of Missouri Press. 1993.

An archival research and scholarly study from an art historian’s perspective, *The Emergence of the African-American Artist: Robert S. Duncanson, 1821-1872* details the life and art of Robert Stuart Duncanson and his contribution to American art and culture. Shored up with a catalog of 163 known works, 115 black and white illustrations of Duncanson’s and other works, 20 high quality color plates, a list of illustrations, and a good index, the nine-chapter study details Duncanson’s personal life—from his humble beginnings through his struggles as a “free man of color” landscape artist, circumscribed

by the discriminatory social and political system of the antebellum United States—to the forgotten but resurrected genius acclaimed today as one of the most notable nineteenth-century American landscapists.

A culmination of a decade-long research extending from a 1979 M.A. thesis at Indiana University, *The Emergence of the African-American Artist* provides a critical biography of an antebellum African-American landscape painter whose life and art fell into obscurity at his death in 1872. Thereafter, critical commentaries about Duncanson prior to the rediscovery of his work in the 1950s and 1960s were scant because they were based on oral tradition. While James A. Porter's 1951 pioneering essay, "Robert S. Duncanson: Midwestern Romantic-Realist" resurrected interest in Duncanson's work after eight decades of obscurity, it would take yet another four decades, with the 1993 publication of *The Emergence of the African-American Artist*, to underscore the merit of Duncanson's art and his important contribution to American landscape art. With all due credit to Porter's pioneering effort in his 55-page reappraisal published in *Art in America* (October 1951), Ketner's study remains the single, up-to-date, documented, full-length bio-critical study of a man internationally hailed by mid-nineteenth century critics as "the best landscape painter in the West."

Although a "free man of color" in antebellum America, constricting racial barriers and racial strife prompted his self exile in 1860 to Canada and England. A synthesis of Scottish and Italian literary subjects and landscape aesthetics—obviously the result of his travels abroad—influenced his thirty-year career and artistic work. His picturesque-pastoral vision of landscape painting is his legacy to American art.

Even though he was somewhat handicapped by the social environment of mid-nineteenth century America because of his mixed-race heritage—a black mother and a white father—Duncanson rarely used his art as a platform for addressing issues of racial oppression and prejudice. However, his anti-slavery stance was fairly clear in his close and visible association with well-known abolitionists.

A critical text, undoubtedly an important contribution to American art history and criticism, the book's title is problematic. In his choice of title, Ketner unequivocally delineates Duncanson's role in trailblazing the way for subsequent nineteenth-century African-American artists—Edmonia Lewis, Henry O. Tanner, Edward M. Bannister—as much as he overplays Duncanson's African-American mixed heritage and the "free man of color's" triumph and success in mainstream American art. The title, "The Emergence of the African-American Artist..." is too assuming, too generalized, even understandably so, despite Duncanson's precursory role in the evolution of African-American art. Furthermore, while the title generalizes, use of the colon particularizes the study, suggesting that Duncanson is *the* embodiment of African-American art. Equally troubling is "emergence," a term that presupposes non-existence prior to Duncanson.

Nonetheless, at once a full assessment of Duncanson's life, art, influence, and contribution, the study provides a solid point of departure for further authentication and identification of Duncanson's work. More broadly, while it would increase further studies of Duncanson in both breadth and depth, it also would be important for the potential interdisciplinary and comparative studies Ketner envisions between "Duncanson's art and romantic literature, American culture studies, African-American studies and psychological analysis."

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Pamela J. Smith

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE: A Life. By Joan D. Hedrick. New York: Oxford University Press. 1994.

This biography of Stowe, the first since Forest Wilson's *Crusader in Crinoline* (1941), is fresh, richly textured, and convincing. While giving vivid accounts of the limitations and burdens placed on women in the nineteenth century, particularly the cost to them of repeated childbirth and exhausting domestic labor, Hedrick emphasizes the positive forces in Harriet's life. First of all, of course, she was a loved and respected member of the famous Beecher family and she received a superior education both at home and in the female academy. But most of all, Hedrick forcefully demonstrates that the future author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was nurtured by a female culture that historians of American literature have largely ignored.

Central to this culture was the Hartford Female Seminary established by Harriet's sister, Catharine Beecher, in 1823. Far from being a "finishing" school in the traditional sense, the Seminary emphasized "efficiency and professionalism, both of which were meant to promote greater freedom, dignity, and independence for women" (33). Moreover, it developed a decentralized administrative structure which stressed the mutual responsibility of students and teachers for daily instruction and governance. These innovations in the education of young women crystallized when a nervous breakdown forced Catharine to take a leave of absence in December of 1829. Harriet, who came to the Seminary as a student but soon became an effective teacher, assumed leadership of the Seminary and she rapidly expanded the antihierarchical and decentralizing principles initiated by Catharine. When Catharine returned, she institutionalized the events of the "December Republic" into what Hedrick describes as "a new antiemulationist policy" in "the spirit of republican sisterhood" (61). As Harriet later remarked, "There never was such a school as that!" (66).

Hedrick also established the importance to Stowe's literary career of "parlor literature," particularly letters read to the assembled family. As families migrated West, women's letters assumed an important cultural and social function. They generally avoided the "abstract and allegorical tradition" of men's literature in order to capture the "material reality of everyday life" by "painting pictures" for those left behind (81). As Harriet explained to her correspondents, "I want to hear about details" and "trifles" (79). Hedrick makes the point that because of the emphasis upon everyday reality, this "parlor literature" created "the ground from which emerged American realism" (81).

Parlor literature before the Civil War also made it easier for talented writers like Stowe to make the transition to a more public sphere. Hedrick points out that the habit of reading letters aloud to the assembled family evolved into co-educational literary clubs like the Semi-Colon Club that Stowe joined in Cincinnati. Stowe's first significant publication, "Uncle Lot," was written for the Semi-Colon Club. In short, Hedrick demonstrates how parlor literature constituted a bridge between Harriet's domestic labors and her emergence as a literary luminary.

But if Hedrick emphasizes the support network available to Stowe in Antebellum America, she paints a disturbing picture of the fate of the woman writer after the Civil War. Stowe's literary reputation, like that of Rebecca Harding Davis or Anna Dickinson, was virtually demolished by two developments in literary culture. Men's clubs like Boston's Saturday Club began replacing the non-gendered parlor as the disseminators of literary values. As a result, women writers were pushed to the margins of literary culture. To quote Hedrick, "the establishment of the white male canon of American literature began in these

Cambridge men's clubs" (291). Secondly, the *Atlantic*, which Harriet had helped establish, and the *Nation* increasingly identified themselves as the guardians of "literary art" which they equated with "realism" as opposed to domestic and sentimental fiction, i.e., women's fiction. The *Nation*, in fact, initiated what amounted to a verbal assault on women writers. Insisting that realism constituted "the art of fiction," its reviewers branded works of prominent women writers with terms like "sentimental" and "didactic" (350). Henry James, for example, attacked Anna Dickinson's story of miscegenation on the grounds that it was "bad art" because it approached the subject with "passionate conviction" rather than artistic "objectivity." "Such reviews," Hedrick appropriately concludes, set "the agenda of the New Criticism that would dominate twentieth-century academic reading tastes" and relegate Stowe to a literary footnote for much of this century (351).

Hedrick's brilliant positioning of Stowe in the nineteenth-century context is not matched by her readings of the fiction. Although she achieves a nice balance between criticism of Stowe's imaginative power, she mostly skirts around the complexity of Stowe's fictional constructions. For example, she pays little attention to the powerful image patterns in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, particularly the opposition of nature and machine images, and she doesn't explore in any depth Stowe's brilliant evocation of the transformation of southern agrarianism into modern capitalism. Nor does she discuss Stowe's provocative employment of the topological tradition in which the Harris's escape North simultaneously reflects the biblical Exodus and the conversion narrative. Similarly, she dismisses *Dred* as a poor novel without noting its disturbing examination of the relationship between political oppression, psychological repression, and the cycle of revolutionary violence, a theme brilliantly symbolized by the Great Dismal Swamp. Hedrick applies much the same rather casual readings to Stowe's local color stories and the late domestic fiction. Hedrick leaves the impression that it is interesting today only because of the woman's perspective it brings to American history and culture.

But rich and complex readings of literary works do not often characterize literary biographies. The biographer is more intent on showing the relationship between the literary works and the author's life. In this regard, Hedrick has succeeded admirably and her portrait of Harriet Beecher Stowe's relationship to nineteenth-century culture will have a profound effect on the way scholars approach studies of women in American history.

University of North Iowa

Theodore R. Hovet

**OZARK VERNACULAR HOUSES: A Study in Rural Homeplaces in the Arkansas Ozarks, 1830-1930.** By Jean Sizemore. Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press. 1994.

Jean Sizemore has dug deeply into Ozark culture through her study of common house types in northwest Arkansas and the place of these houses in an Old World patchwork of woodlands, pastures, and meadows. The traditional nineteenth-century Ozark landscape, now almost gone, consists of narrow roads winding over mountainous terrain and fertile plains, around small fields with wooden fences to hold off wandering farm animals on open range land, and past plain houses with a cluster of small barns, sheds, pens, outhouses, and smokehouses. This book weaves all the main parts of the landscape into a whole fabric of significance.

In their "mind's eye," Protestant Anglo-Saxon settlers from Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, and North Carolina brought six traditional house types and built them using the

constructional methods and materials common in the Upland South and in the Middle Atlantic cultural hearth. Based on a square module that was additive in nature, these Southern Highlanders erected their log, balloon frame, box construction, or braced frame houses one room deep, gave them gable roofs, placed doors on the long side facing the road, laid up exterior end-chimneys of stone, and created symmetrical facades with the arrangement of windows and doors. The simple, boxy interiors of these houses offered little privacy, regardless of type, and were composed of unspecialized spaces—except for cooking and eating—with a bed in nearly every room. Of the six traditional houses—single pen, double pen, saddlebag, central hall cottage, dogtrot, and I-house—the double pen house with two front doors, sometimes called the “Cumberland” house, was preferred.

New possibilities from an expanding national culture eventually flowed to the eddies of Ozark life with the help of railroads, pattern books, magazines, catalogs, and architects, in spite of the people’s suspicion of new ideas and outsiders. Some folds adopted one of three popular house types—the ben house, the prow house, or the one-story pyramid house. The house ideas, however, were never copied exactly, for Ozark values had to be considered. Putting on airs was frowned upon, which pressed more progressive Ozark people to tone down their new houses, eliminate extravagant Queen Anne details, keep the interiors simple, and maintain elements of traditional houses in their new popular ones. If Ozark people wanted to express their status or economic success, they chose larger rather than fancier houses.

Whether traditional or popular, Sizemore’s study confirms the conservative nature of Ozark life, of “making do,” being self-sufficient, and having anti-intellectual tendencies. Although other studies of the Ozarks point to two Ozark cultures and divergent styles of life based on the fertility of the soil, topography, transportation and differing standards of living, Sizemore’s study of houses reveals a “fundamental unity” (211) in Arkansas Ozark life. While she found some significant differences in the distribution of house types in the Boston Mountains compared to the Springfield Plain, there were more commonalities between the houses of these two parts of the Ozarks than differences. All of the houses displayed important aspects of the cultural values and traditions of the Upland South, especially the practices and procedures of long-standing carpentry traditions.

Sizemore’s book is more than a discussion of common houses in Arkansas. It is also a primer of vernacular architecture that introduces many of the most important theories and findings in the discipline. For the beginner, this introduction is very good; however, those already familiar with the discipline may find the first didactic chapters frustrating. The subtitle of the book is also somewhat befuddling. I read the book twice but could not find the word, “homeplaces,” which has special meaning in vernacular studies. Still, this book is an important contribution to the understanding of the Ozarks, because “time is running out for the ordinary and unpretentious houses” (1) of this fascinating region of our country.

University of Kansas  
Dennis Domer

WALT WHITMAN’S AMERICA: A Cultural Biography. By David S. Reynolds. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1995.

In the first half of this six-hundred-page volume, David Reynolds runs a biographical thread through an array of bulky beads—or, rather, of cultural and historical influences on Walt Whitman’s work. Reynolds describes Brooklyn and other parts of Long Island; Manhattan; its Bowery B’hoy culture; New York theater; American oratory; musical



performances in New York; the opera there; popular physiologists; the American women's rights movement; evolutionary science before Darwin; phrenology; mesmerism; spiritualism; Swedenborgian and post-Swedenborgian mysticism; the Harmonial movement, with its trance voyages and bonding with nature; American daguerreotypists; and American painters, especially genre painters and luminists.

At the beginning of the second half of his biography, Reynolds turns to a discussion of the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1855), calling it a "utopian document." With it Whitman as a poet, he says, sought to unify the nation, after the politicians had failed. The poet trusted in its heritages of artisan labor and the unified stem family, reverence for the nation's founders and for the Revolutionary War, and in other elements of a common culture:

The lively audience-performer interaction that characterized popular plays, music, and speeches had engendered a participatory style enjoyed by most Americans. Religion and progressive science, which mingled with the rise of Harmonialism and spiritualism, were other areas of widespread interests, as were popular visual media. . . .

The dissolving of boundaries between different occupational categories was very much part of the daily life for many antebellum Americans. Actors, musicians, lecturers, scientists, popular preachers, showmen, photographers, and painters—all borrowed from each other and appealed to an ever-widening audience. The 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass* was a proclamation of these fertile cultural interactions, made in language that dissolved the boundaries between prose and poetry, between polite diction and slang (308).

When Whitman's country did not "absorb" him after the book appeared, he felt rejected, Reynolds says. Though successful in selling and publishing his writings during his career, he thought himself a victim of neglect; the reason was that he did not have the cultural impact at which he had aimed.

Reynolds offers so much material and so many opinions on Whitman's life and work that few of the particulars can be assessed in a brief review. His book is informative and provocative, it will without doubt influence interpretations of important details in Whitman's poems, but it is nevertheless an uneven work. I will cite only three problems.

Descriptions of the cultural influences on Whitman are often poorly focused. One example is in Reynolds' section on the influence of the New York theater, where he writes at length about the actor Junius Brutus Booth and about the Astor Place Riot of 1849 (156-66). I found myself objecting that I had set out to read a biography of Whitman, not a history of the New York theater.

Still more serious is Reynolds' sometimes riding hobby horses in interpreting Whitman's poetry. He shows little appreciation of the store of traditional literary experience the poet—unconsciously as well as consciously—drew upon, pays minimal attention to the phenomenon of creative imagination, and occasionally even to the immediate sense of Whitman's text. These deficiencies may be seen in Reynolds's interpretation of "Passage to India." Having presented evidence of Whitman's favoring contemporary ethnological science and his believing that certain races would eventually disappear (471-73), Reynolds suggests a sinister interpretation for line 4 of the following verse (500):

Passage to India!

Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?  
The earth to be span'd, connected by network,  
The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,  
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,  
The lands to be welded together (section 2).

To a mind untutored by this biography, *marriage* will not imply extinction.

Again, "Passage to India" posits a quest by the human soul—through myth, religion, literature, technology, geographical exploration, and science—for ultimate discoveries and experiences. In stanza eight, Whitman's soul, fearless of death, continues man's journey on to a union with God. Here Reynolds comments: "The poem's movement from rapture over technology to imaginings of spirituality suggests an underlying uneasiness, as though Whitman wants to exalt capitalistic America but also to escape it" (501). Surely religious ecstasy and the contemplation of death cannot be subsumed under the description "escape from capitalism." In the commentaries on the poems, Reynolds's book seems to me much inferior to Gay Wilson Allen's *The Solitary Singer: A Critical Biography of Walt Whitman* (rev. ed., 1967).

Finally, there is Reynolds's discussion of Whitman's homosexuality. He is illuminating in his discussions of same-sex passion in pre-Civil War America; to a degree startling in contemporary America, hugging, kissing, and lying in bed together were not considered abnormal. However, Reynolds is less than just to Whitman in his commentary on an oral tradition that he suffered a calamity in 1841 while he was a schoolteacher in Southold, Long Island. According to the tradition, a pastor charged him with sodomizing pupils, whereupon a mob tarred and feathered Whitman (69-80). There is no preponderance of evidence that Whitman was guilty of sodomy. But Reynolds will not say this. Instead, he dwells and dwells on the possibility. "There is some evidence he [Whitman] himself had committed it [forced sodomy'] or at least been charged with it . . ." he writes (395). Reynolds need not be a lawyer to know that there is a huge difference between the two.

University of Kansas

Melvin Landsberg

WALT WHITMAN'S NATIVE REPRESENTATIONS. By Ed Folsom. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press. 1994.

This lucid and engaging study examines how four nineteenth-century cultural events—the development of American dictionaries, the growth of baseball, the evolution of American Indian policy, and the development of photography—helped shape Walt Whitman's democratic poetics. Folsom sees Whitman as "one of the first American cultural semioticians, reading cultural activities as a vast text of democracy, searching for ways these cultural actions could be turned into American words, into a rhetoric of democracy" (2). Folsom focuses on these cultural events less as subjects in Whitman's poetry than as influences which helped Whitman to define and clarify his own artistic purposes and "to generate a new kind of American language, a native diction" (3).

Folsom's thesis is most compelling in his two chapters on Whitman and photography (almost half the book), where he argues that the new art of photography had a profound influence on Whitman's poetics by teaching him a "democratic field of seeing." Unlike

painting or sculpture which emphasized formal structuring and selectivity, photography gained its effectiveness precisely because it did not discriminate but insisted on every detail to create its overall impression. According to Folsom, Whitman “set out to make his poetry as absorptive and nondiscriminating as photography . . . The poet, like the photographer, would literally become the seer embracing the world” (110). This radically democratic and visual poetics is most evident in Whitman’s catalogs, where he turned the “clutter” of reality revealed by photography into language that pictured the “vast and untidy variety of the world” (114). Whitman rejected the purely mechanical role of camera, however. He believed that, like the photographer, the poet begins with the material things of the world but illuminates them in such a way that their latent beauty and meaning will become clear to the reader. Moreover, it was through the photography of Alexander Gardner, Mathew Brady, and others that Whitman learned to write about the Civil War in nonheroic terms, capturing the overlooked details of war by turning his attention from battlefield to hospital, from heroism to convalescence, and from scenes of courage to scenes of grief. Whitman himself was photographed more often than any nineteenth-century writer, and he sought through these changing images to fashion an identity consonant with his current poetic project. Folsom describes, for example, how Whitman’s full-bodied portrait on the frontispiece of the 1855 edition sought to convey an image of the poet as self-assured, informal, corporal, and non-traditional as the poetry itself.

Folsom demonstrates with equally suggestive detail the effect of other cultural activities on Whitman’s democratic poetics and outlook. He describes how Webster’s and Worcester’s continually expanding dictionaries provided Whitman with new words and etymologies by which he could fashion *Leaves of Grass*. He traces the history of Whitman’s ambivalence toward American Indians and shows how Whitman sought to absorb their words and stories into his poetry before he felt Indians would vanish from the land. And in a chapter that seems particularly apt today, Folsom describes how Whitman viewed baseball as a metaphor for American culture—celebrating its American originality, its continental expansion, and its teams made up of immigrants and working men, but disheartened in his later years by its increasing greed, commercial spirit, and deception (i.e. the curveball). Such insights consistently reward the reader with a rich sense of how Whitman, as Folsom says, composes the materials of a changing and conflicted democratic culture to compose the stuff of his poetry.

Luther College

Martin Klammer

THE VACANT CHAIR: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home. By Reid Mitchell. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

Reid Mitchell has attained considerable mastery of a formidable array of data, much of it within the matrix of cross traditional disciplinary lines, and this mastery is reflected in his works; the present book being no exception. There is, however, some lack of conventional cohesion herein, for it is comprised of nine distinct essays, three of which have appeared elsewhere. Mitchell winds up not only being unable to cover all of the sub-elements of his topic, a chapter on black soldiers seems out of place. Still, the work is so thoughtful and illuminating that it likely would have some appeal to anyone with even the remotest interest, and is quite essential reading for specialists.

The theme is “domestic imagery.” It is about espoused visions of home and family, which meant so very much, and how they affected, shaped, and guided conduct. It is about

the Northern soldier's "coming of age," and fulfillment of duty to the Union—which was itself "a family." The military historian Gerald Linderman's concept "the cement of armies," Mitchell asserts, includes "small-town mores," and "love of home" (31). Indeed, the Civil War itself was "a war over the meaning of home" (37).

"Women were key to domesticity and its virtues" (74). Yet, this is a book *not* about women, but rather about the mental and emotional importance of women and the quality of esteem that young men had for them. The Northern mother, because she was "a good woman," provided the impetus for her son to serve, and to persevere in a long and bloody war. But "a good woman" was "mother," less commonly perhaps "sister," while *not* sweetheart or wife—because "too dangerous" (76), and certainly not prostitute or rape victim—for a myriad of other reasons. Mitchell offers much insightful speculation. Most notably, female nurses (the women whom soldiers most often encountered personally while the war raged on) were almost always "mothers"—both in the ways the soldiers related and responded to them *and* in the manner that they presented themselves to the soldiers. What about the rebels? Did not they have mothers too? Well, yes . . . but "southern women bore culpability for the rebellion" (86).

Why do men fight? Mitchell suggests that properly approaching this question not only brings the military and the social historians into joint effort, but that the answer probably varies depending upon which particular men and more crucially what kind of "specific culture" might be fighting what kind of "peculiar war" (152). Not so much was the Civil War's outcome inevitable—because other variant factors could have impacted—but it was ultimately true that the differences between Northern culture and of Southern culture resulted in the Northern soldiers willingly making the sufficient sacrifice required for victory while enough of the Southern soldiers in the end opted to quit fighting and go home. Mitchell's enticing and too brief appended closing essay "Domesticity and Confederate Defeat" might be a good topic for another book.

University of Missouri, Kansas City

Herman Hattaway

LINCOLN IN AMERICAN MEMORY. By Merrill D. Peterson. New York: Oxford University. 1994.

Every thirty years or so a historian steps forward to assess the place of Lincoln in American memory. At the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in 1934, James G. Randall asked, "Has the Lincoln Theme Been Exhausted?" Three decades later, in 1965, Lincoln author and curator Paul Angle declared that "The Lincoln theme, if not exhausted, is becoming very, very tired." In his encyclopedic account, *Lincoln In American Memory*, Merrill Peterson attempts to respond for this generation. His answer: "Lincoln, the natural resource, still appeared inexhaustible in the last decade of the twentieth century. His memory had lost some of its clarity, warmth, and power among Americans, but it exerted more appeal than that of any other national saint or hero" (395).

Going beyond an assessment of Lincoln in the minds of Americans today, Peterson examines the uses of Lincoln's memory from 1865 to the present. The result is a massive catalogue, a compilation which reflects an heroic effort to come to grips with a sea of Lincolniana. Peterson is no newcomer to such an approach. He gave the Jefferson memory similar treatment over thirty years ago in *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (Oxford, 1960). In the current Lincoln study, Peterson expands to consider more media, more sources, and more diverse groups of people.

Peterson is at his best in the first and last chapters of the book. He begins with an effective narrative of the assassination and funeral cortège of Abraham Lincoln, drawing the reader into the pageantry and power of the slow, circuitous train passage of Lincoln's body from Washington, D.C. to Springfield, Illinois. Peterson then establishes an effective, general typology of Lincoln memory centering on five themes: Lincoln as Savior of the Union, Great Emancipator, Man of the People, first American, and Self-made Man. The first two themes, especially as they reflect shifting interpretations of the meaning of the Civil War, are particularly effective. The distinction between the last three themes is, at times, unclear. They could perhaps have been more effectively combined as Lincoln, product of American democracy.

As Peterson launches into his catalogue, he reveals both the strengths and weaknesses of his general strategy. He lists and discusses statues and memorials, biographies, and early Lincoln collectors. He goes on to tackle topics such as Lincoln and African Americans, Lincoln and politicians, Lincoln and the South, Lincoln and religion, Lincoln and the world (most notably Great Britain during the First World War). The result, as in the Jefferson book, is a fantastic resource for students of presidential afterlife. Scholars in all branches of American studies can and should mine this book for new research ideas and clues to new cultural insights. But some of the treatment is perfunctory. Specifically, Peterson is better with literary artifacts than with visual evidence. In general, by sacrificing depth to coverage, he provides fodder for others but misses the opportunity to make deeper cultural observations himself.

Peterson is stronger in the post-World-War II period. His sections on Lincoln and the early civil rights movement and Lincoln and civil religion are effective, if not strikingly original. His work on Lincoln since 1963 is both fresh and insightful. Lincoln as white Moses is gradually overshadowed by Martin Luther King, Jr. as black Moses, while the whole paradigm of heroes and saints is called into question in an attempt to locate power in broader groups of people. And yet while "the currency of Lincoln in the America mind showed signs of fading" during the 1980s and 1990s, the Lincoln enterprise among scholars and buffs appeared to be alive and well. The 1950s view of Lincoln as vindication of American democracy and character was challenged and is credited in many quarters, but Peterson rightly notes that "many Americans continued to search in Lincoln's life and thought for the meaning of the national experience" (374).

In the end, Peterson offers no startling revision of what the study of memory can, should, or will yield. Nor does he radically reinterpret the basis of Lincoln's enduring cultural power. Yet Peterson establishes a useful thematic typology of Lincoln memory, something which others had only hinted at or which remained buried in unpublished dissertations. He provides an exhaustive chronicle of the myriad ways in which the Lincoln memory has manifested itself providing countless leads for students of American culture. The writing is effective and accessible. The research is impressive. Peterson could, perhaps, have teased more out of his material, but he has written a very useful book.

Tennessee Technological University  
C. Todd Stephenson

**A HISTORY OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY 1857-1909: Yankee Humanism At High Tide.** By Ellery Sedgwick. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 1994.

The *Atlantic Monthly* has long been regarded as one of the significant voices in the preservation of "high" literary or intellectual culture in America. Sedgwick examines this tradition primarily through the study of the magazine's first fifty years as personified in

the careers of its editors until 1909. The magazine had a difficult birth, beginning as it did in the turbulent pre-Civil War years of the 1850s. Founder Francis Underwood's first initiative in 1854 with the Jewett publishing house, which had brought out *Uncle Tom's Cabin* so successfully just two years earlier, failed. His second effort, this time with his own publisher-employer, Moses Phillips, met with success in May 1857. Phillips hosted the dinner at the Parker House and was so pleased to be in the company of such literary stalwarts as Ralph W. Emerson, Henry W. Longfellow, James R. Lowell, John L. Motley, and Oliver W. Holmes that in spite of a deep economic depression later that year, he stood by his agreement with Underwood and brought out the first issue in November. Sedgwick comments that the *Atlantic* may have been launched by vanity and champagne.

Sedgwick devotes a chapter to each of the editors: James R. Lowell (1851-1861); James T. Fields (1861-1871); William Dean Howells (1871-1881); Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1881-1890); Horace E. Scudder (1890-1898); Walter Hines Page (1898-1899); and Bliss Perry (1899-1909). The magazine's founding members proposed it as a vehicle to represent an elite literary expression, and to expand the market for publication, distribution, and recognition of the relatively new American literary culture, particularly around Boston. The history as told by Sedgwick shows the ongoing tension through the nineteenth century between this elite tradition and the changing demands of a mass market for popular content. The change in the magazine as it finally evolved came from ideological as well as economic forces. The perception by some that the *Atlantic* had lost touch with the social realities, the abandonment of former subscribers to the new middle brow magazines, and the resulting decline in readership, led to efforts to popularize the magazine but not destroy its intellectual image. Initially, the *Atlantic* had tried to spread its own cultural values—high ethical, aesthetic, and intellectual values—transmitted through a humanistic culture. These rather than social and economic values, had held its interest. Editor Aldrich typified the most conservative political, cultural, and literary attitudes. Scudder realized that he had to do more to keep in touch with social realities if he would maintain the *Atlantic's* readership. Page and Perry represented the new generation in editors in that their more progressive ideology responded to the new social conditions. As a result, while it had early on showcased some new writers like Henry James, who had his first exposure in the *Atlantic*, now they tried to bridge this gap as they shared the pages of each issue with articles on the social and political issues. The completion of this transformation would come with the next editor, Ellery Sedgwick, editor after 1909, who would accomplish this change before World War I.

It is no small accomplishment to tell a history of a magazine with such interest as Sedgwick presents it to us. He brings together a consideration of authors, publishers, and reading public as they interact as a cultural entity and as they affect many aspects of the nineteenth-century culture. The work is scholarly, presented in a readable and interesting manner.

Saint Louis University

Elizabeth Kolmer

**BERT GEER PHILLIPS AND THE TAOS ART COLONY.** By Julie Schimmel and Robert R. White. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 1994.

Schimmel and White's book on Bert Geer Phillips (1868-1956), the first Euro-American artist to settle in Taos, New Mexico, and the art colony he and fellow painter Ernest Blumenschein founded there chronicles the relationship of this group of academically trained eastern artists to the unique community they both inherited and created. An

effort in part to construct a romantic retreat from modern America where traditional themes and aesthetics could be indulged, the Taos Society of Artists' experiment was in many ways an imposition of contemporary culture onto an existing, albeit very different, society, and Schimmel and White engagingly reveal the struggles such aspirations demanded. The artists attempted to conform their new subjects to their preconceptions at the same time as they adapted to them, and they consciously sought a wider audience for their work by encouraging tourism to the region and through traveling exhibitions they sponsored that took their view of Taos and its people to cities throughout the East. Although a cohesive group through much of its twelve-year history the individuals of the Taos School, including Phillips and Blumenschein, Joseph Henry Sharp, Oscar Berninghaus, Kenneth Adams, Walter Ufer, E. Irving Couse, Victor Higgins, and E. Martin Hennings, sometimes differed strongly as to how their mutual interests were to be achieved.

White and Schimmel recount details of many of these struggles, and one of the most useful aspects of the book, which will recommend it as a basic reference for years to come, is the thoroughness of its documentation. In addition to the author's reliance on original documents—from the Phillips family collection and local newspapers, and a variety of archives from around the country—they have reprinted a number of these in appendices and include a catalogue *raisonne* of Phillips's art and an exhibition history. Such comprehensive treatments are increasingly rare in scholarship today and are especially welcome.

But the book is unusual in other ways. As the authors quietly point out in the preface, this is more a series of essays than it is a tightly-knit chronology or thematic narrative. Although intended and certainly more convenient to two authors, the structural looseness is rather unsettling. The lack of integration and the wide range of subtopics—from "Life in Taos" to a brief history of "The Academic Tradition and Mural Painting"—sometimes leaves the reader wondering what this book is really about; it is neither a monograph on Phillips nor completely a cultural study of the art colony. Each chapter is well conceived and interesting unto itself, but greater continuity among them and a clearer focus would have strengthened the overall result. Another weakness is the clustering of plates. Admittedly less expensive and time-consuming to design, this format is much less interesting and efficient to read than books in which the reproductions and photographs are integrated with the text. The book could also have benefitted from more thorough proofreading—at least one plate (no. 27) is flopped.

Because the book is structurally disjointed, a thorough review would comment on each of its different chapters. One of the more astute sections, for example, is Schimmel's on the Taos School artists' portrayal of Native Americans. "Touched by modernism and deeply influenced by academic idealism" (119), she explains, the painters appealed to contemporary (Anglo) patrons through highly stereotypical and mythologized images. She points out that these clichéd compositions and their cultural inaccuracies created an Indian that is "the possession of the imaginations of white men, who dress them up for a new game of white and red man, in which the Pueblo Indian, indeed, gets to play the good guy, but only as seen through a pattern of beliefs characteristic of white America" (147). Such perceptive interpretations, couched in the social intricacies of the time and place and through analyses of specific paintings, make this book more than a simple chronology; it offers an insightful glimpse into the motivations and the actions that have contributed to our understandings of the Southwest and its peoples in the twentieth century.

The University of Iowa

Joni L. Kinsey

ACE OF HEARTS: The Westerns of Zane Grey. By Arthur G. Kimball. Forth Worth: Texas Christian University Press. 1993.

In the introduction to *Ace of Hearts*, Arthur Kimball writes that his “book is not an attempt to rehabilitate Grey in the sense of trying to make him out an unappreciated talent, nor does it have an overriding thesis to establish. Rather it is an attempt to offer a fresh reading based on all 56 of Grey’s Westerns, something most critics have not attempted.” In that declaration of purpose lie the weaknesses and the counter-balancing strength of this study. *Ace of Hearts* is not a systematic analysis of Zane Grey’s writing. It does not attempt to fit the writer into a literary or social historical context, and Kimball simply ignores a great deal of recent thinking about literary critical traditions, popular culture, and the relationships of literature and society. At the same time, Kimball just takes for granted that Grey is worth serious thinking about. He spends little time on the social or aesthetic implications of Grey’s popularity, and happily next to none justifying or apologizing for his interest. While *Ace of Hearts* may therefore seem to float free of literary and historical critical traditions and conventions, it also avoids both the special pleading and the condescension which has crippled so much commentary about popular American writers—particularly this one.

Kimball’s approach to his subject consists for the most part of lining out what he considers the standard, or most dominant, critical characterizations of Grey’s fiction and then exposing them to his comprehensive reading of all the novels. He generally seems satisfied to undercut received ideas and make space for alternatives rather than to struggle toward establishing the exclusive truth of his own conclusions. The study is divided into five parts. “Section I, the Formula” tries briefly “to set Grey within a general critical context” of writing about the western novel. “Section II, The Land” deals with the correspondence of “external and internal” landscape in Grey as well as the varied concepts of nature found there. “Section III, the Lovers” examines Grey’s heroes and heroines and the “ways their erotic encounters comment ironically on American values.” Believing critics have traditionally misread the importance of the erotic in Grey, Kimball is particularly interested in “seduction as a metaphor of unrestrained economic activity, and erotic desire as an ironic source of violence.” “Section IV, The Law” treats Grey’s “ambiguous portrait of the concept of justice.” “Section V, The Dream,” concludes *Ace of Spades* with a discussion of Grey’s equally ambiguous working out of the American dream in his treatments of “the Frontier Idyll” and Native Americans. An appendix briefly summarizes all 56 novels.

Kimball’s critical method includes explication, often psychologically based, of descriptions, key passages and words as well as a playful, if sometimes unclear, manipulation of phrases with textual or, as in the case of “the invisible hand,” cultural resonance. His primary concentration is, however, on highlighting plot elements which convey the sense of Grey’s writing and challenge what Kimball clearly believes the reductive tendency of most commentary on the writer and his fiction. Because of the predilection for myth criticism in so much writing on Western literature, that focus does prove effective at revealing both the incompleteness of much mainline commentary on Grey and the complexity or contradiction within the body of his work.

Kimball particularly likes to identify what he labels the “ironies” discoverable in the fiction, but he seldom elaborates what he believes the causes or implications of these personal or cultural ambiguities, conflicts, contradictions. This reticence must in part be an effect of the focus Kimball has chosen, but is also a consequence of the study’s lack of connection to a wider reaching literary or cultural criticism. While more attention to its



literary and social background may not have made *Ace of Hearts* a better book, it might have given Kimball more confidence in what he is up to. Although justly exasperated with the critical narrowness or condescension which has characterized much writing about Grey, he does not seem completely certain of what a viable alternative should be—as is revealed, for example, in his indecisiveness about exactly how conscious Grey could have been of what he was actually putting down on paper.

That kind of uncertainty leads to what I think are the weakest points in the book: the moments when, forgetting the implications of his comprehensive reading, Kimball follows too closely on the lead of a recognized authority to validate his study by showing how neatly Grey's work fits into a particular theoretical scheme—as, for instance, in a demonstration of how well *The Border Legion* conforms to Richard Slotkin's paradigm of the Indian captivity account. The overall virtue of Kimball's study is how effectively it uncovers the impossibility of reducing Grey's fiction to "one thing." When he willingly accepts such a reduction of Rowlandson, Cooper, or the "authentic" Western novel, Kimball implicitly agrees that in his difference Grey must be some kind of literary or cultural sport. That, arguably at least, continues a traditional misrepresentation of American literature's carnival babble and this Western writer's relation to it.

Nevertheless, Kimball's uncertainty—or humility—adds more than it detracts from what is an interesting and suggestive study of Grey's fiction and the conventional critical response to it. *Ace of Hearts* is a clear and well-written book. Although it is not comprehensive enough to be taken as the one study of Zane Grey's fiction, it is in its own way an effective introduction to the writer—and to the scholarly and critical possibilities of his work. Far better than more conventional studies committed to sustaining a particular literary theory or aesthetic standard, Kimball's highly illustrated discussions of the novels convey a full sense of Grey's fiction, of what is so interesting about it, what might make it useful in the classroom or as part of a wider literary or historical study, and, for extra measure, why it can be so much fun to read.

University of Kansas

M. D. Butler

THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS: The East/West Encounter, Chicago, 1893. By Richard Hughes Seager. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1995.

The Columbian Exposition of 1893 and its "White City" symbolized American optimism, Euro-American triumphalism, and nineteenth-century liberalism at its grandest and its worst. It was, as Seager reminds us, a fusion of Anglo-American patriotic, classical, and Christian signs of the elite and, thus, the signs affirmed by turn-of-the-century "mainstream Protestantism." Seager describes the assumptions of the Exposition as the background for the World's Parliament of Religions, a seventeen-day-long assembly held in September 1893 that was one of the accompanying events.

The Parliament was a liberal, American quest for religious unity which failed. Delegates presented 216 papers and, though the vast majority were American protestants, represented nineteenth-century versions of many of the major religions of the world. Attempts to articulate a common ground were fraught with difficulties, for "the ground under discussion . . . was constantly shifting" (50). Seager argues that, however noble its goals, the Parliament was "tainted by the same parochialism, ethnocentrism, imperial pretensions, and hegemonic intentions as the entire Exposition" (xxviii-xxix).

Seager presents his ideas through the speeches of the personalities involved, such as John Henry Barrows, minister of the prestigious First Presbyterian Church in Chicago;

Charles C. Bonney, a Chicago lawyer and layleader Swedenborgian layman; Jenkin Lloyd Jones, a liberal Chicago Unitarian; and George Dana Boardman, an American Baptist. Other Western papers included those of some of the earliest writers on things Eastern: Unitarian J. Estlin Carpenter and Oxford's F. Max Muller. Since the author's interest is the East-West encounter, the speeches of the Asian delegates such as the young Hindu reformer Vivekananda, Confucian modernist Pung Kwang Yu, Indian Jain Association representative Virchand Gandhi, Theosophist and Theravada Buddhist reformer Anagarika Dharmapala, and Zoroastrian businessman, J. J. Modi, are mined for their assumptions. They sought to halt Christian missionary evangelism, counter Western aggression, defend the integrity of their own traditions, and rally public support.

Seager ends with discussions of relevant activities of the delegates after the Parliament. While the Columbian year itself ended in financial panic, labor uprisings, popular rebellions, and the calling up of the military to put down riots in Chicago streets, liberal theologians continued to hope for Christian fulfillment, incorporation, and assimilation of other religions. Conservative observers understood the Parliament as a danger signal for America/Christianity. Asian delegates spread out across America to further their agenda and to found missions to the West.

How important was the Parliament itself? For Seager it was a watershed event for the emergence of a more pluralistic America, the formal debut of Asian missions to the West, the encouragement of modern religious movements of Asia, and the realignment of religious forces in the American mainstream. This may overstate the importance of this rare event somewhat, for this was an event of a specific elite. But as Carl Jackson has noted before (*The Oriental Religions and American Thought*, 1981), the parliament did represent the closing of one era and the opening of another. A more significant turning point would come in the 1960s when these filter down to a more popular level.

The University of Kansas

Robert N. Minor

FUNDAMENTALISM AND GENDER: 1875 to the Present. By Margaret L. Bendroth. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press. 1993.

APOCALYPSE: On the Psychology of Fundamentalism. By Charles B. Strozier. Boston, MA.: Beacon. 1994.

RELIGION AND THE RACIST RIGHT: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement. By Michael Barkun. Chapel Hill, NC.: University of North Carolina Press. 1994.

Are fundamentalists “us” or “them”? This question animates scholars in the academy who write about these “conservative” Christians. Since most academics are not only pretty secular but thoroughly modernist—notwithstanding academic antimodernism, which, after all, is a dead modernist giveaway—we tend to view fundamentalists with something like horror, in the literal sense. If evangelicals seem to belong to some “other America,” fundamentalists are the other-est of all.

Thus, the latter group presents a splendid test of the scholarly community's secular humanism. Is there room at the inn for these folks? Can we include them in our narratives, and assimilate them to the normal “rules” of historical development—or must they remain an inexplicable, alien presence?

Much recent work on both evangelicals and fundamentalists attempts to normalize these groups, explaining how, beneath the sound and fury, they're like the rest of us, caught up in the same problems and historical developments. Historians of fundamentalism share

with scholars of the American left the inclination to normalize by arguing for a truism—that certain Americans actually are “Americans.”

Margaret Bendroth’s book on *Fundamentalism and Gender*, the most important of those reviewed here, is another normalization text, implicating of fundamentalists in the cultural conflicts over gender that have gripped industrial America generally. She convincingly argues that the rise of fundamentalist church culture was a male initiative intended to reduce the authority of women within the “feminized” evangelical culture that persisted into the late nineteenth century. This normalization will do little to reduce the enmity that cultural modernists feel toward fundamentalists, but it sure makes her subjects look familiar.

Bendroth’s study is a model of concision. Sometimes it even is—heaven help me for ever saying this—too concise. For instance, a bit more explanation of the theological foundations of antifeminism in chapter two would be helpful. It also starts stronger than it finishes. Still, its brevity, along with its clarity, makes it suitable for courses on both American religion and gender studies. Drawing on both primary research and secondary literature, it points the way to future research, and immediately becomes the essential book on its topic, joining the short list of required reading on American fundamentalism.

At first glance it seems that Charles Strozier is determined not to normalize his subjects, that he is committed to an older tradition descended from *The Authoritarian Personality*, through the left-pacifist version offered by Strozier’s colleague, Robert Jay Lifton. Like Communists or other “true believers,” fundamentalists apparently have a distinctive and consistent “psychology.” What that means, Strozier never explains. What insights he proffers concerning this “psychology” are banal. He tells us that fundamentalist vision of the apocalypse tend to feature a lot of violence. So maybe, he says, fundamentalists are prone to violence themselves. (Strozier heads a “Center on Violence and Human Survival”; hence such baseless comments, which prove the “relevance” of his product.) The people he interviewed also tell “broken narratives” of their own lives, and these narratives hinge on their experiences of religious rebirth. This is more interesting. Yet Strozier still confuses elements of religious doctrine and experience with aspects of a “psychology.”

Yet, overall, the real difference between Strozier’s book and Bendroth’s is the lack of clarity and cohesion in *Apocalypse*. Strozier alternates between his “psychology of fundamentalism” argument and an equally strong normalizing tendency. He relates his subjects’ narratives empathetically, and he sometimes states that the “psychology of fundamentalism” is in some (unexplained) way a reflection of us all. He betrays no realization of how this suggestion undermines his “psychology” argument. Furthermore, the book’s second half is a hodgepodge of chapters on disparate topics. Why these chapters belong between the same two covers is a mystery exceeded in magnitude only by the question of why a fine press like Beacon would publish this book.

Recent events insure that no such question arises in the case of Michael Barkun’s strongly antisensationalist account of the Christian Identity movement. For those who avert their gaze from the far right: Aryan Nations, and other white supremacist groups that associate with the “militia movement” and extremist politicians like David Duke, adhere to the belief system known as Christian Identity. These groups descend from the British Israel movement, which was more philosemitic than antisemitic. Christian Identity holds that the “serpent” of the Garden of Eden was actually a humanoid, a Satanic delegate, who seduced Eve sexually and impregnated her with Cain, forerunner of the Jews—and, perhaps, all darker peoples. Christian Identity believers are racist in the commonest sense, but Jews are the central group in the Satanic threat they perceive.

Barkun, a political scientist, does not peddle a historical interpretation of this movement. He just tracks its origins and development. Despite the allure of the material (at least to readers, like this one, who evince a perverse fascination with rightist trash), *Religion and the Racist Right* does not make gripping reading. Barkun might discriminate more finely in the attention he pays to each “thinker” and organizer in his dreary story.

He points out that Christian Identity and fundamentalist Christianity are not the same thing, doctrinally, or in general politically. There is a difference between right-wing voting patterns and survivalist terrorism; of course, the two might complement each other. A given fundamentalist certainly might be a racist, but his religious beliefs do not demand it. The conflation of these two categories by secularists, I assume, is responsible for the inclusion of Barkun’s book in this review assignment. We all live and learn. If Christian Identity makes the fundamentalists of Bendroth’s and Strozier’s studies seems almost like welcome company in comparison, though, does this not simply switch one other for another? Is this what it takes to bring outsiders into the fold? Perhaps each of us has his limits.

University of California at San Diego

Doug Rossinow

DANCING TO A BLACK MAN’S TUNE: A Biography of Scott Joplin. By Susan Curtis. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press. 1994.

Particular to the study of American musical culture is the identification of the “King.” Our fascination with titles in popular music perhaps stems from its outsider position amongst the musicologists and critics who throughout the twentieth century have reminded us that conductors direct symphonies made up of serious musicians interpreting compositions, while “professors,” dukes, counts, and kings, who lack the academic credibility, front improvisational entertainment bands. One has the taste of culture, class and refinement, while the other is satisfying, but leaves an aftertaste. Scott Joplin’s story is very much about this dichotomy in musical culture, and in *Dancing to a Black Man’s Tune* Susan Curtis does an excellent job exposing both his genius and tragedy.

Curtis seeks to use Joplin as a guide to understand the politics of “artistic creation, unequal social power, racial discrimination and advancement and the formation of American culture” (18). Her appreciation of ragtime and Joplin trace back to her childhood piano lessons and her ongoing inquiry into the nature of Victorian culture, of which, she argues, Joplin and rag helped to weaken. The theoretical underpinning for the work comes from what she labels “conversation” (xiv), where the social groups are engaged in a give and take relationship, each trying to understand the other according to their terms, and each trying to get on with the business of living. This method works well in *Dancing*, as she works not only to present the world in which Joplin operated as a black man, but also goes a long way toward describing the dominant white world and its reception to ragtime music. More significantly, she connects the entrance of the African-European ragtime music into the larger cultural and historical framework, examining the popularity and wane of the music as not only a commodity marketed and then stripped of its oppositional value, but a relevant social force that allowed for the introduction of African Americans into the cultural mix of Americana.

Curtis does quite a bit with the scant primary sources available to understand Joplin. He left no papers, letters, or diaries, and upon his death very few took the time to chronicle his life. What she accomplishes then is a historical study where the cultural forces that shaped most African Americans in the late nineteenth century are discussed. The portrait

that Curtis paints is full of color and variety and does well to inform the reader on a wide variety of topics. It is this quality that endears *Dancing*, for it paints with broad strokes to better capture not only the times, but a reading audience. She follows the story of the Joplin family through their early Texas and Arkansas days, into the times of his wandering and perhaps participation at the Colombian Exposition, through his Sedalia star-making years, and into his decline in first St. Louis, and later, New York City. The King of Ragtime died in less than royal fashion in 1917 with little or no fanfare.

Curtis's description of Joplin in St. Louis and New York City, where he was denied the glamour of being the King of anything, is the most telling part of the book. The earlier sections are interesting and informative, but these latter sections develop the complexity of being an African American in America during the turn of the century, and being the King of Ragtime. Curtis outlines his relative obscurity in the New York African-American community, and earlier in St. Louis, by pointing out that he was still living under the Victorian ethos while the modern was developing. In other words, he was out of step with his time. While this analysis rings true, it is but a part of the story. The one flaw with Curtis's analysis of Joplin and ragtime is that she does not place it within the greater cultural debate of vernacular versus cultivated music. Throughout the book she leads the reader into a situation where an analysis of the fine line between what makes one music serious and another popular and why one is seen as good and the other bad awaits, but is never discussed. When discussing Joplin and the midway at the Exposition in 1893, Curtis explains that white Americans were bored by the serious music being offered by Thomas and Damrosch and chose the vernacular musical shows along the midway, many of which offered early versions of ragtime. Then, when Curtis is analyzing Joplin and the development of ragtime while in Sedalia, she argues that Joplin began to have "aspiration to write serious music" (81). And again when he is in St. Louis and later New York, Curtis tells how Joplin became consumed with the desire to write "serious" music and distance himself from the common rags (133-135). So while many in the African American community were embracing the opportunities afforded in the dominant society's attraction and consumption of things African-American, "Joplin was moving toward serious, dramatic art" (157). Curtis follows this section with quotes from observers who call ragtime unique, American, and well-respected, but she fails to analyze all that she has exposed. Why was it so important for Joplin, already the King of Ragtime, a music that combined the best elements of European chromatic scale with African and American elements, to be accepted as a composer of serious music? What is serious music? Is it only those forms that conform to established European standards? Is it only those pieces accepted by the canon as serious? And why would Joplin want this type of acceptance other than his desire to become a role model to other African Americans?

*Dancing to a Black Man's Tune* is a book already chock full of analysis, and certainly I am not criticizing Curtis for a book she did not write. Hers is an excellent journey into the late nineteenth and twentieth century mindset that encouraged and accepted ragtime as an American musical form. Her sourcework is exemplary and her writing style engaging. This book, and others like it, should help scholars of America's musical culture investigate the meaning behind the tune or words and how these help to define and identify social groups and structures, power and identity, and the continued influence of culture on our lives. Ultimately, the story that *Dancing to a Black Man's Tune* describes is one in which a man achieved fame and status as an outsider, but spent the remainder of his years trying to convince the dominant culture of his genius and therefore became alienated from his music, other musicians, and finally, himself.

Kent State University, Trumbull

Kenneth J. Bindas

FLOYD DELL: The Life and Times of an American Rebel. By Douglas Clayton. Ivan R. Dee, Chicago. 1994.

Douglas Clayton's book *Floyd Dell: The Life and Times of an American Rebel* accomplishes more than readers usually expect or get. It introduces us to a rarely remembered literary critic, novelist, playwright, social commentator, historian, bohemian radical, and government administrator. Ranging through Dell's long life, Clayton reveals Dell's complications and ambivalences, the inevitable changes, Dell's significant and subtle alterations in direction as an intellectual and as a social influence. This biography engages us in a considerable number of ways. It reveals the development of a man's feelings, ideas, personal interactions, literary labors, and political awareness and decision making, all interwoven and fascinating because of their sophistication and profundity. We come to wonder why Dell is not better known, considering the elegance of his mind, the quality of his writing and editing, and the fame and importance of his many friends and acquaintances.

The cast that fills this life is extraordinary: Sherwood Anderson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Max Eastman, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Drieser, Michael Gold, John Reed, and John Farrar, to name a few whose names are now better known than Dell's. Clayton provided us with a sense of the intellectual tensions from the early days of Chicago and New York bohemianism to the strident time of Joseph R. McCarthy. Most remarkable is how this book registers the inner and the outer life, Dell's struggle to find the balance between his idealism and his personal needs, between his theoretical conclusions and the requirements everyday realities bring into his life. All the while the same struggles go on in the cultural and political worlds. Clayton's book is as much a contribution to American intellectual history as it is a biography of a fascinating and too-little-known figure.

Dell's perspective is from the left, gracefully adjusting toward the right but without over-reacting, i.e., he rejects Communism early on but finds McCarthy repugnant and authoritarian. Passage after articulate passage in this book does what political discourse rarely does anymore: Clayton draws distinctions, demonstrates the workings of a mind trying to find grace without oversimplification. At times one wishes this were a novel with Floyd Dell as its central character. Repeatedly it points us toward scenes of rich potentiality: Dell and Edna St. Vincent Millay as friends and tormented lovers; Dell on trial for printing anti-war essays (with Max Eastman, Art Young, etc.); Dell working all night on a fiction manuscript that is largely autobiographical; Dell in a spirited argument about modernism or Socialism or free love.

Many of the great arguments of the century are reflected here. Dell, in speech and writing, participated in almost all of them: Communism, Capitalism, Socialism, Fascism, Feminism, Freudianism, modernism, progressive education, literary innovation, the welfare state, the relationship between art and politics, the direction of the family, and so on. Floyd Dell lived 82 years thoroughly engaged. Douglas Clayton has registered this life admirably. He fulfills the academic requirements without academic stuffiness. He presents the life within the contexts of the life. There is a sense of the real past here. More important, there is a sense of the present revealed to us in that past.

University of Missouri, Kansas City

Dan Jaffe

NORTH WEBSTER: A Photographic History of a Black Community. By Ann Morris and Henrietta Ambrose. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1993.

The history of the residents, past and present, of *North Webster* represents an able and successful attempt to inject a greater sense of humanity into both American and African-American history. This black St. Louis suburban community's nearly two centuries of existence is effectively illustrated through the use of photographs, which is combined with the exploratory power of clear narrative. Aimed at presenting a positive portrait of life as it evolved, *North Webster* successfully "disprove[d] past, present, and future notions that America's black population [could] not effectively embrace love, family commitment, religious fervor, industriousness, career advancement and academic achievement."

The book's biggest strength is that it dares to make a claim that it can and does prove. North Webster's recorded past, which was reconstructed through the careful use of the written record along with oral accounts, has been strongly corroborated through photographic documentation. The authors asserted that from slave days to emancipation to the civil rights era, "the story of North Webster is the story of every black community in America [in its being] a tale of segregation and discrimination." Unequivocally, this argument holds true. Yet, their greatest challenge was to support their contention that "North Webster [wa]s a special community where excellence was the antidote to discrimination." In reconstructing this community history, they found that the major factors for making life in North Webster not only bearable but nurturing rested in its institutions, whether family, church, school, or commercial undertaking.

In the nineteenth century North Webster enjoyed strong family ties and the religious leadership provided by the First Baptist and the Blackwell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Zion churches. Whether the churches coexisted in harmony was left unexplored. Doctrinal differences obviously appeared during the twentieth century with the addition of at least two new Baptist churches along with an African Methodist Episcopal church and a Church of God in Christ. Moreover, First Baptist had its share of troubles as it resisted externally white efforts to appropriate its name as well as overcoming the internal danger of schism.

Significantly, the turbulence of the 1920s accelerated positive social change. Institutional proliferation occurred as businesses increased, the Douglass School expanded its services, and social life intensified. Further, professionalization was evidenced by the arrival of two physicians as well as the publisher of the *St. Louis Argus* newspaper. The Second World War also produced change in North Webster, motivating its postwar citizenry to equal the heavy sacrifice and commitment of its returning servicemen. In the following three decades, restlessness over the racial status quo led to many improvements in the quality of community life.

If this work has a major fault, it rests in its format. Forty-eight pages of interesting narrative are cumbersomely separated from another 140 pages containing 141 illuminating photographs. One early example of this detachment involves the Brown family which settled in North Webster in 1866. While the readership is initially introduced narratively to the Browns on pages four and five, we are not fully connected with them visually until pages 55 through 61. One very successful attempt at combining narrative and photographs is Mayer and Wade's *Chicago: Growth of A Metropolis* (1967). Rarely is a photograph more than a page away from relevant narrative except in those cases in which photographs are purposefully grouped together thematically.

Along with similar local histories such as Hillsboro, Ohio's *All in The Same Spaceship* (1974), this book joins other studies in affirming the achievements of African Americans to be as real as the stereotypes about their group were false.

Roosevelt University

Christopher R. Reed

THE UNDERGROUND STREAM: The Life and Art of Caroline Gordon. By Nancy Lee Novell Jonza. Athens: University of Georgia Press. 1995.

The fact that Caroline Gordon's by-then-ex-husband Allen Tate dies "off-stage" near the end of Jonza's new biography of Gordon is representative of the author's method and purpose: to bring Caroline Gordon out from under the shadow of Tate and treat her as a woman and writer in her own right. The task—in which Jonza succeeds admirably—was made a formidable one by Gordon's personal myth-making, in which Tate was her mentor and their marriage the central fact of her life, and by previous biographies of either writer that have viewed Gordon as an appendage to the male players in not only the Fugitive-Agrarian literary movement but also relationships among some of the major writers of the twentieth century, including Katherine Anne Porter, Robert Lowell, and Ford Madox Ford. Jonza, in contrast, devotes considerable attention to Gordon's classical education and her career as a journalist before she met Tate in 1924, when she was writing the first of her many novels, and to her lifelong dedication to her art. Rather than depending upon Allen Tate for literary nurturance, Gordon enjoyed the support and guidance of not only female peers, such as Katherine Anne Porter, but also Ford Madox Ford and the influential Scribners editor Maxwell Perkins.

Indeed, despite Gordon's public protestations to the contrary, Tate was in many ways a hindrance to Gordon's career. She was forced to suspend her writing time after time as the family moved from one city to another for the sake of Tate's teaching and research. This peripatetic existence was not only disruptive to Gordon's creative process; it also deprived her of sustained contact with the soil in which she loved to plant flowers and vegetables and more particularly with Merry Mont, the family home in Kentucky that was the well-spring of much of her fiction. The "underground stream" of Jonza's title refers both to Gordon's Meriwether relatives and to the strong female subtext in her otherwise "masculine" fiction. That such a stream was forced to run "underground" testifies to Gordon's awareness—reinforced by Tate and his friends—that serious writing was considered a male preserve.

In addition to providing a respectful, compassionate portrait of Caroline Gordon, *The Underground Stream* also appeals to readers interested in the history of Southern literature in the twentieth century. Although, like most young writers of the early decades of the century, Gordon and Tate were initially drawn to New York City as a literary center, they and others like them were eventually nourished by the South and by a network of regional authors. Andrew Lytle's Monteagle, Tennessee, home provided a hospitable work environment for a succession of writers; Caroline Gordon nourished the talent of the young Flannery O'Connor; and it was the storytelling of Gordon's relatives that initially propelled her toward a career as a writer—and one whose rediscovery seems long overdue.

Vanderbilt University

Nancy A. Walker



DANCE MARATHONS: Performing American Culture in the 1920s and 1930s. By Carol Martin. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press. 1994.

Focusing on an ephemeral if intriguing fad, Carol Martin's *Dance Marathons* risks dismissal from scholars accustomed to more weighty fare and skeptical of the historical significance of popular culture. In addition, Martin labors under the limitations of a sketchy historical record. Marathons left their mark in the columns of *Billboard*, a trade magazine of entertainment, in a few newspaper reports, and in municipal ordinances of the cities that ultimately prohibited them, but few first hand accounts survive. It is a tribute to Martin, then, that she overcomes these limitations to render an engaging and provocative account of the craze for dance marathons.

Though the first marathons occurred in the 1920s, Martin argues that the mature form of these events was an expression of Depression-era culture. Beginning as straightforward endurance contests of non-stop dancing, the marathons became more elaborate spectacles that went on for weeks, managed by promoters and masters of ceremonies. By the 1940s these spectacles were disappearing. Many towns and cities passed ordinances against marathons (an appendix provides some sample legislation), the result of campaigns organized by movie picture theater owners anxious to restrain the competition for audiences.

Martin interprets the marathons as "complex performance events" (xxv)—"gritty, repetitious, and grueling" (135)—that drew audiences because they re-enacted the struggle for survival and the message of endurance for Depression audiences. She argues persuasively that the contests embodied uneasy negotiations about changing women's roles. Female dancers exercised agency in using their bodies as instruments as endurance, and contemporary commentary made much of the fact that they often outlasted male partners. Interestingly, Martin argues that sexual display was not a major element of the marathons, despite the physicality of dance and the sexual encounters (paid and unpaid) that accompanied many marathons. Still, she notes, the events were organized and controlled by male promoters, and female marathoners often drew derisive or critical commentary from observers who saw them as parasitic (supported by male partners who then dropped from exhaustion) or immoral. In a nuanced argument about performance and theatricality, Martin proposes that the marathons engaged audiences in a critique of realism. They played on their own carnivalesque aspects by openly conning the audience, positioning spectators as "marks" but at the same time inviting them to collaborate in the con as they watched such events as the staged weddings or the mock fights that took place during the marathons.

Some of Martin's interpretations seem overdrawn, as when she puts the audience on the couch to conclude, "Spectators came to see the contestants hurt . . . They felt a vicarious pleasure, bordering on sadism" (xxi). If true, this is not distinctive to marathons; from ballet to professional football, many performances display the body pushed to its limits. Some of her footnotes lead to dead ends, citations of secondary sources that have incidental relevance to the material. Overall, though, *Dance Marathons* is a valuable contribution to the cultural history of the 1930s, and especially notable for its deft and imaginative arguments about performance and audience.

George Mason University

Barbara Melosh

ROOTED IN DUST: Surviving Drought and Depression in Southwestern Kansas. By Pamela Riney-Kehrberg. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. 1994.

As the dust-bowl received considerable contemporary attention and has also been intensively studied by historians, one is tempted to ask what can another book tell us that we do not already know? Unlike other scholars, Riney-Kehrberg concentrates not on those who moved but on those persistent souls who remained in southwest Kansas during this tortuous decade. Who stayed, she asks, why did they stay and how did they manage to survive?

Two aspects of this book stand out. Firstly, through the responses from questionnaires, and interviews with seventy-one individuals who lived through the depression, the author is able to convey some of the experiences of ordinary people during this harsh decade. Secondly, census data collected by the Kansas State Board of Agriculture is used to examine five townships in order to shed light on differing levels of persistence. She has found that owners were more likely to remain than renters, that large farms were more likely to survive than the small, and that farmers in the heart of the dust bowl were most likely to go under. Other factors such as ethnicity and family networks, to which one might have attached importance, were found to be marginal. On the whole, urban counties had an easier time than the rural. Though the results were not surprising, the analysis is a valuable reminder of the great differences, even within a single county, of farm practice and reaction to crisis. It is a good use of local data.

One reason why residents remained was that they were assisted by a plethora of New Deal agencies, yet there is no attempt to examine their efficiency. For example, in 1934 FERA field representatives believed that Kansas had one of the best relief organizations in the country and they were full of praise for the quality of relief officials. Were the recipients happy with the circumstances in which relief was given and, in particular, with the investigations of their personal circumstances by case workers? There should also be, I think, a greater emphasis on the role of wheat allotment payments and the reaction of farmers to the program. In 1930, for example, the wheat crop of Haskell County was valued at \$1.1 million but in 1936 the harvest was worth a mere \$180,000. Fortunately participating wheat farmers received an additional \$584,000 in allotment payments. The southwest region received millions of dollars in cash through this scheme but wheat acreage did not decline. Why did the wheat allotment fail to operate in the way in which the AAA intended? Other topics which deserve emphasis include the level of farm and non farm wages and the effects of the savage 1937-38 depression which must have dealt a severe psychological blow.

This book is imaginative in handling Kansas agricultural data and is able to convey, by means of a clear and sympathetic style, the feeling of helplessness experienced by most of the population. In addition, well chosen illustrations assist the reader. The research is extensive, especially at the county, state, and secondary level with, perhaps, the only gaps being some National Archives sources. There are, however, several areas crucial to the inhabitants of southwest Kansas which have not been investigated in depth. This study is less impressive because of these omissions.

University of Leicester

Peter Fearon

EISENHOWER: A Centenary Assessment. Edited by Gunter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press. 1995.

Eisenhower revisionism suggests that the Eisenhower years were pretty good. The same can be said of this collection of lectures delivered as part of the centenary observance of the general's birth which the Eisenhower Center at the University of New Orleans mounted in 1990.

There are fourteen essays. Two (by Forrest C. Pogue and M. R. D. Foot) are in the nature of memoirs by historians assigned to work with (and on) Eisenhower. Discussion of domestic policy include Stanley I. Kutler's examination of the role of Ike's judicial appointments in the desegregation controversy and William L. O'Neill's of social and economic developments during his watch. Other essays treat Eisenhower's service as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, at NATO (Thomas M. Sisk), and a series of "Eisenhower and . . ." studies covering the NSC (Anna K. Nelson); "The Problems of Loose Ends"—that is, imprecision and irresolution on some issues (H. W. Brands); the 1955 Austrian treaty (Gunter Bischof); NATO and Nuclear Weapons (Robert A. Wampler); Mao and China (Gordon H. Chang); Germany (Thomas A. Schwartz); and Cuba (Steven F. Grover). Fred Greenstein examines Ike's leadership style, and Stephen E. Ambrose's epilogue assesses "Eisenhower's Legacy." Some essays revisit familiar arguments, but others offer close analyses of sections less traveled by Eisenhower scholars. There is occasional (and often useful) topical overlap between some essays.

In most cases, the tone falls short of encomiastic. This is, as the Introduction states, the age of Eisenhower post-revisionism. While some essays are revisionist, a good many, by younger scholars, tend to reflect the more recent interpretive turn. (The Introduction affords an excellent review of the Eisenhower literature.) The Ike depicted here is still the revisionists' shrewd, knowing activist. He is not the doddering links addict of pre-revisionism, but neither is he the architect of a string of unbroken triumphs. In these essays his Administration's policy toward Cuba during Castro's rise emerges as imbecilic. The end of Austria's occupation is a tribute to adept diplomacy by Austrians, not Americans. Chinese and American mutual brinkmanship over the Taiwan Straits did not lead to disaster, but for reasons obscure on both sides.

The Ike portrayed here remains a leader with a powerful inclination toward positive thinking on the one hand and a salutary sense of limits on action on the other. A further impression is left—explicitly stated in some essays—that Ike was often the beneficiary of good fortune. That seems an appropriate finding for a set of essays whose vector sum lies between revisionism and post-revisionism.

The University of Illinois, Chicago

Richard M. Fried

ABBIE HOFFMAN: American Rebel. By Marty Jezer. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press. 1992.

Marty Jezer has written an outstanding, multi-dimensional biography of Abbie Hoffman, the radical activist best known as co-founder of the Yippies. While focusing on Hoffman's activities during the 1960s and early 1970s, Jezer gives a complete portrait of Hoffman's life. His account of Hoffman's later years as an environmental activist and sufferer of bipolar disorder (commonly known as manic depression) is as rich as his treatment of Hoffman's more colorful exploits as a Yippie. Interwoven throughout his

sympathetic but critical portrait of Hoffman, Jezer also offers a keen analysis of radical activism in the Sixties era.

Jezer makes a cogent argument about the political practice of radical activists in the late 1960s. He writes: "... Abbie and others in the movement would use the word *organize* to describe all kinds of political activity. Yet after 1967 there was a whole lot of agitating going on, but very little organizing. Instead of relating to individuals one on one, 'organizers' like Abbie began dealing only with what they called 'the people'" (110-11). Jezer understands Hoffman's theory of politicizing people "wholesale" through mass media performances and does a fine job relating them to his readers. But Jezer also argues that such performances undercut the durability of the movement by not better educating and involving real-life people in the process of social change.

Hoffman, too, Jezer reveals, had second thoughts about his '60s era organizing techniques. In his second career as an environmental activist (during and then after the period when Hoffman went underground to avoid arrest on narcotic charges), Hoffman became more concerned with building up a solid, grass-roots movement. Eventually, Hoffman was to argue—half-jokingly—that *Robert's Rules of Order* should be every organizer's bible. Not that Hoffman stopped his attention-getting, message-spreading political pranks. He had just learned by the 1980s that media attention was a tool that had to be carefully used in service to grass roots organizing and political lobbying.

Jezer is himself a '60s veteran—a onetime editor of the pacifist, anti-war papers, *WIN*, and a Yippie fellow traveler. But Jezer, unlike others, is able to use his own experiences to better understand both the strengths and the weaknesses of radical protest in the 1960s. While sympathetic to Hoffman and to the Movement, Jezer offers a balanced portrait of both that any student or veteran of the era would greatly benefit from reading.

Barnard College

David Farber