

Book Reviews

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Reviews

LOVE & THEFT: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class. By Eric Lott. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

In an editorial published in *Billboard* magazine just after the Los Angeles rebellion, folk singer Michelle Schocked asserted that the popular musical style called gangsta rap was nothing more than a late-twentieth century version of blackface minstrelsy.¹ Eric Lott's innovative investigation of America's most popular theatrical and musical entertainment form in the nineteenth century suggests that gangsta rap should aspire to be nothing less—nothing less powerful and nothing less important to the American imaginary than its equally contradictory and provocative ancestor. If Lott is correct, blackface minstrelsy formed the contest ground on which dominant representations of American identity were constructed. In so doing, blackface minstrelsy placed white interpretations of black life at the heart of the national popular culture, where they have remained ever since.

The standard historical interpretation of blackface minstrelsy has been that its introduction and reinforcement of the pernicious stereotypes of “happy darkies” and “urban dandies”—“Jim Crows” and “Zip Coons”—established the terms through which white racism figured African-Americans. As such, it has been appropriately vilified.² A few recent studies have begun to investigate how blackface was implicated in the construction of the white working class, particularly as a means of incorporating Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century and Jewish immigrants in the twentieth century into that vexed racialized identity called “white.”³ In *Love & Theft*, Lott intensifies the interrogation of blackface, raising difficult questions about the popular pleasures produced through minstrelsy, refusing to dismiss those pleasures solely on the basis of their evident racism, and insisting, rather, on the importance of unpacking those pleasures—of recognizing their simultaneous yet contradictory moments of desire and revulsion, identification and demonization—in order to gain “some sense of how preciously nineteenth-century white working people lived their whiteness.”⁴

In order to support this investigation, Lott turns to the theoretical and methodological innovations associated with the burgeoning field of cultural studies. Sharing an interdisciplinary focus with American Studies, cultural studies provides Lott with an analytical apparatus that insists on the centrality of the political in cultural production, yet which refuses to reduce any consideration of this politics to a monolithically positive or negative evaluation.⁵ Viewed in terms of the contradictory cultural politics it enacted, blackface can be recognized as the overcoded performance of “a structured relationship between the races—racial difference itself as much as black cultural forms.” (48)

From this perspective, Lott is able to focus on the contradictions displayed in key minstrelsy events and narratives. As he puts it, “blackness provided the inspiration as well as the occasion for preposterously sexual, violent, or otherwise prohibited theatrical material—material that could result in a somewhat unsettling spectacle of black power, but which, in this social climate went a great distance toward the subjection of ‘blackness.’” (141) For instance, a playbill announcing an upcoming performance by an African-American dancer asserts that “Mast. Juba . . . will give correct Imitation Dances of all the principal Ethiopian dances in the United States. After which he will give an imitation of himself. . .” (115) For Lott, this placement of the origin as the imitation indicates the seriousness of the effort mustered through blackface performance “to maintain control over a potentially subversive act,” the intense need to “‘master’ the power and interest of black cultural practices.” (113) In Lott’s analysis, T. D. Rice’s (the white singer who first popularized the dance known as “Jump Jim Crow”) legendary “borrowing” of black clothing (and, metonymically, black culture) for a porter named Cuff becomes not simply the narrative authentication of Rice’s performance but an allegory revealing deeply felt white anxieties regarding the market for black labor. A review of Rice’s performance that delightedly describes it as “the best representative of our American negro that we ever saw” becomes a testimony to the “affective origins of racist pleasure.” (142)

It is precisely at this point—at the attempt to understand the origins of racist pleasure—that Lott’s analysis might disturb more traditionally minded American Studies scholars. For here, Lott’s rich readings of the densely compact and overdetermined meanings of blackface rely on a psychoanalytic framework, particularly on the application of key psychoanalytic terms such as condensation, displacement, transference and projection. The use of this framework enables Lott to place the cultural production of racial difference within the class context of increasing industrialization and rationalization, viewed together through the prism of the resultant repression of bodily pleasure. Lott argues that insofar as the condition of being a white worker was defined as becoming more rational and more complicit with the industrial order (therefore, and ironically, free) the popular pleasure of whites began to be “expressed in their fascination with the Other”(148)—those whose lives and whose identities were believed to be not wholly constrained by the emerging forms of industrial capitalism. Feeling themselves caught in this tightening historical trap, white workers used blackface as a form of displaced protest. Through the projection of repressed desires onto blackened bodies, “white pleasure in minstrelsy . . . was also a willed attempt to rise above the stultifying effects of capitalist boredom and rationalization”(149)—basically utopian in its affect.

This utopian element to blackface minstrelsy accounts for its incredible wide-ranging popularity in the nineteenth century. Presidents from Polk to Lincoln as well as both abolitionists and anti-abolitionists enjoyed the performance of residual pleasures that blackface embodied. While there can be no denying the horrifying legacy of the racist stereotypes constructed in minstrelsy (and who would want to?), Lott's patient analysis of the contradictory pleasure produced in that form provides us with some of the historical context necessary to understanding the complex racial politics performed in the popular culture of the nineteenth as well as the late twentieth century.

1. Michelle Shocked and Bart Bull, "L.A. Riots: Cartoon vs. Reality," *Billboard* (June 20, 1992) p. 6.

2. See Nathan Huggins, *Harlem Renaissance* New York: Oxford University Press (1971) and Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, London: Verso (1990).

3. See Saxton, op. cit; David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* London: Verso (1991); and Michael Rogin, "Blackface, White Noise: The Jewish Jazz Singer Finds His Voice," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1992) 417-53.

4. Lott, p. 4. All further page numbers cited in the text.

5. The major theoretical assertions of the political complexity of popular culture can be found in Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'," in Raphael Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul (1981) 227-40; and Fredric Jameson, "Reification and Utopia in mass Culture," *Social Text* 1 (1979) 130-48.

University of Kansas

Barry Shank

TUMULT AND SILENCE AT SECOND CREEK: An Inquiry into a Civil War Slave Conspiracy. By Winthrop D. Jordan. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press. 1993.

In his latest work, Winthrop D. Jordan focuses on the unanswerable questions behind the slave uprising near Natchez, Mississippi in May 1861. In as much as he acknowledges that his craft is and is not story, *Tumult and Silence at Second Creek* is nonetheless a venture in attempting to solve or at least explain the unsolvable. Jordan's work is an ideal examination of constructing history from the bottom up. Perhaps what is most useful about his analysis is that in providing a window of how blacks and whites confronted the implications of the Civil War through slave insurrection, he explores the nature of historical investigation and reminds us all that the past and present are merely negotiations of details.

Jordan's work reveals, in novel-like prose, the intriguing tension within the history of the American Civil War. Traditionally, historians have been fascinated by the specificities of time and place which have shaped and defined the events, issues and personalities of the middle period. And by and large this approach has produced the most useful analyses. But in trying to recreate the resemblance of what happened at Second creek Jordan shows his usual keen ability to recreate the

particulars of time and place, and provides a vivid picture of the Natchez district and Adams County, Mississippi in 1861, and the plantation slave community—a community controlled by some of the wealthiest and most powerful families of the nation—he helps us realize that regardless of how carefully historians can recreate the particulars of actuality, they are still confronted with unanswerable questions. For Winthrop Jordan, the silent flow of the muddy waters of second Creek reflect the murky details of a slave conspiracy.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, according to Jordan, a group of slaves conspired together to define freedom “in their own terms” by overthrowing and murdering their white masters. The conspiracy was in a sense a collaborative effort, “with people on both the white and black sides cooperating collectively amongst themselves and, without fully knowing it, with each other because both shared assumptions about what was possible, what was likely, and what was right (p. 4).” The “plan” began shortly after the war broke out when a certain group of slaves heard of feuding between groups of white people and learned about political and ideological differences between them. These slaves perhaps hoped they could exploit the differences to the benefit of their own situation as slaves. The Civil War provided notions of freedom for the first time on the horizon in southwestern Mississippi and the slaves there communicated across neighboring plantations and organized a planned insurrection to seize the opportunity. Jordan argues that before May 1861, the Adams County Planters had no special reason to discuss the mood of their bondsmen. But from September through November panic spread into Natchez itself. The conspiracy was discovered by a youthful overseer’s son who was apparently present during the slaves’ discussions. The conspirators were arrested and fearful whites conducted an informal interrogation of implicated slaves. By November at least forty slaves in and around Natchez had been hanged for what was said to have occurred. In the end the planters of the district united to bury the event in grave silence.

In his detective-like assessment of the particulars of the case, Jordan essentially does not challenge the core plot—that an actual slave conspiracy existed—and instead bases his examination on the written testimony of a slave planter named Lemuel Parker Connor who recorded the slave testimony verbatim. This interpretation will loom large for those seeking definite answers about the conspiracy and about the authenticity of Connor’s testimony. Scholars will surely not argue about what happened as a result of the conspiracy, but they will debate about the particulars of truth—something Jordan has wrestled with and tried to pin down.

Those not satisfied with Jordan’s historical inference of the particularities of the truth in this case will criticize him for basing his interpretation on the written testimony of a frightened white planter who perhaps recorded what he expected to hear rather than what was actually said. Others will praise him for reconstructing the fragmented pieces of a difficult puzzle of detective work and bringing to light a dark and muddled series of events that culminated in the death of over forty slaves. Whether or not either will be fully satisfied essentially resides in readers’ willingness to use their imagination more convincingly than comfortably of what happened along the muddy waters of Second Creek.

Florida Atlantic University

Stephen D. Engle

BLACK BALTIMORE: A New Theory of Community. By Harold A. McDougall. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1993.

In the nineteenth century, Baltimore was a thriving seaport, a key player in the slave trade, and a rising industrial center. It was one of the south's major cities. By 1980, it was a declining industrial city suffering from white flight, poverty, crime, and neglect. It is in this context Harold McDougall places his case study of black empowerment and urban revitalization.

With the lengthy transitional history of the city as a backdrop, *Black Baltimore* weaves a telling story of a proud African American community. Extending his thesis of community and self-help to the early nineteenth century, McDougall concludes that African Americans did best when they took care of their own. He pinpoints the creation of institutions, particularly the church and the black press, as the bulwark of emerging Black Baltimore.

The image of community changes over time, but it is the central framework of the text. A "new theory of community," however, hinges on the past. The turn of the century influences of Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois enhance the visions of community development. Black leadership in Baltimore, McDougall asserts, utilizes both models and this sets the stage for rest of the text. The Washington and DuBoisian models, and combinations of the two, continue to provide the pathways to progress.

Focusing on several communities on the city's west side, McDougall dissects the role of grass roots organization and its interplay with local politics to effect meaningful change. This examination proceeds from the New Deal to the second term of Kurt Schmoke, the city's first black mayor.

As a study of a changing city, *Black Baltimore* is illuminating. The use of oral histories and personal accounts breathes life into the rejuvenation of the west side. Real people, ordinary folk, are the actors in this account. It is truly their story, as we are introduced to problems through their perspectives and equally are allowed to witness the successes as well as the failures in this lengthy process through their eyes.

The work is wide reaching, effectively cutting across disciplines mixing history, sociology, and political science. However, the critical center of the book is the city's strong black vernacular culture. While McDougall's portrays Baltimore as unique, featuring aspects of urban living that can be found only in isolation in other cities of the eastern seaboard and the Midwest, he implies that other cities with historically black communities also have similar legacies and bonds. As a result, he believes strategies employed in West Baltimore could work in other decaying neighborhoods or even whole declining municipalities.

Although the presentation is nearly flawless, the book does have some minor deficiencies. With the vast coverage of numerous organizations, some in particular neighborhoods and others that transverse the whole city, the reader can often lose track of the parties without recording them. And while there are twenty-one photographs, there are no maps leaving those who do not know the city clueless.

However, these issues do not weaken the strength of the thesis. *Black Baltimore* is a significant book. It serves as a model for change as well s a historical reference. As it is not grounded in any particular discipline it should attract a

wide audience. It is thought-provoking and will make an important contribution to our analysis of community activism and the politics of reform.

Montclair State College

Leslie Wilson

STREETWISE: Race, Class and Change in an Urban Community. By Elijah Anderson. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1990.

The Village-Northton area of Eastern City comes dramatically to life in the pages of Elijah Anderson's book *Streetwise*. While the sights, sounds, smells, and emotions of this urban neighborhood are specific to this American city facing racial and class transition, for those who have lived through this period of urban change, as I and many others have, this is a journey back through familiar territory, and into earlier social events.

Anderson takes us through the events, conversations, and observations that are unique to the Village and Northton in such a way that there is an immediate identification with anywhere and everywhere in America. Anderson skillfully crafts his observation, from the summer of 1975 through the summer of 1987, into a classic piece of community analysis and social history. For myself, *Streetwise* forced me to return to an earlier social era. While my experiences and recollections are of two very different communities, with different social climates, different political structures, and very different populations in terms of racial, religious, and class profiles, than the Village-Northton area, Anderson drew me back to relive many earlier events and tensions. In hindsight, this was an era that can be described, in its initial stages, as softer, gentler world than today. But the era gives way, as Anderson describes, to a community and social era filled with its own deep strains, open conflicts, and amazing optimism. In this community, faced with rapid social change, Anderson introduces us to the world of culture and countercultures.

Anderson presents to us the numerous subtleties of the Village-Northton area, in which there are "the appearances of co-existing in relative peace" (p. 237) of two overlapping cultures. But as the research unfolds, we recognize that the Village is made up of middle-class whites, along with a relatively few middle-class blacks, and others, who are constantly challenged by the existence and urban warfare of the "second" culture of the large black ghetto of Northton. Anderson alerts us to the uncertainty and open hostility on the local streets and in the public spaces. Anderson paints a picture of the civility of the Village, challenged by the emerging social tension of the "urban jungle" of Northton. For me, Anderson captures the tension and energy of these forces, as he documents the winners and losers in a social environment faced with gentrification, black upward mobility in Northton, black male culture, and the destructive impact of drugs.

In the 1950s, and throughout the 1980s, the middle-class, the anti-war advocates, and the countercultures discovered in the Village the spacious Victorian houses, and the old apartment buildings with their fireplaces, oak floors, and sixteen-foot ceilings. As well-off newcomers moved into the Village, they refurbished the area to conditions approaching their original quality. In time, this meant the increasing exclusion of many black residents, for the Village became "wealthier, whiter, and thus more attractive to middle-income whites in search of decent hous-

ing, close to local institutions and the centre of the city" (p. 23). Beyond the process of physical rehabilitation, the newcomers "invest themselves, infusing a certain aura" throughout the whole of the Village-Northton area. This process impacts not only on the housing stock, but also on the social-class composition, and social relationships of these communities.

According to Anderson, the greatest indicator of class change took place in the highly cohesive social structures of Northton for the 1940s and 1950s. In this era, the blacks of various social classes lived side-by-side in Northton. Anderson argues that the consequences of the civil rights movement, the urban riots, and the various governments programs against racial exclusion and the wider opportunities in the larger society, have created "an outflow of middle- and upper-income people" (p. 59). Lost to Northton was the capacity for healthy, black-support organizations, such as schools, churches, manufacturing, local businesses, and professional associations. Lost for the youth of Northton were "effective, meaningful role-models, lending the community a certain moral integrity" (p. 59).

There is a widespread belief that Northton "has changed for the worse" (p. 59). This view is held by those within the Village and Northton. For both communities, this deterioration is linked to the destructive impact of drugs on the class structure, economic opportunities and the public profile of black males. To many of the young blacks of Northton, the underground economy of drugs and vice became increasingly attractive, and in many ways replaced the regular economy. But the drug culture not only disrupted the economy, it had even greater impact, as it "undermines the interpersonal trust and moral cohesion that once prevailed" (p. 57). New social role models were created with the influx of the drug culture, as the "old heads", an important institution of traditional black community, lost out to new "old heads". These new "old heads" were not those individuals who were the product of hard work and earned social position, but "the product of a street gang, making money fast, and scorning the law and traditional values" (p. 103). The price that young males pay, in both the Village and Northton, is high. In time, all black male strangers were seen, by white and black residents alike, as potentially antagonistic, violent drug users and/or muggers. For those black men who are determined to break this bad image, their self-presentation must confront and allay the fears of others. While those who are "streetwise" are not nearly as concerned for the majority of the population, the black male had to provide people with extra public space, friendly eye contact, and/or a welcoming greeting. It is this world of self-presentation, "streetwisdom" and private/public space that provides the reader with the most enduring sense of the racial conflict and tensions.

How will all these changes in housing quality, black/white relations, social class, economic disruption, and drug culture affect the residents of the Village-Northton area? For me, the one disappointment in Anderson's analysis was his assumption that the future of Eastern City, as with many American cities, would eventually come from the future "effective leadership from Washington" (p. 253). His prediction is that the federal government will enact those policies to provide the quality of life, the educational programs, and the private sector economic initiatives to turn appearances of order, comity and racial tolerance into more than just an image, but into a deep reality. While the process of gentrification has brought a white middle-class into daily contact with a black impoverished ghetto, surely it will be the longer, more difficult process of blacks and whites learning

about each other, building against the economy of the drug culture, the 'teen pregnancy, the welfare and crime that will provide any hope for the future of the Village-Northton area. It was the vision and the spirit of its former and current residents that has brought them this far, and I cannot help but believe that they will bring them into the next phase of urban change.

In conclusion, *Streetwise* is a book for everyone. It is a book for young men and women who have forgotten the social history of the American city. It is a book for those academics who are continuing on the journey of community studies, and are in need of a benchmark for understanding the social analysis of the 1990s. But beyond these two audiences, this is a book for the informed citizen, the politician and the urban planner, who want to understand the complexity and dynamics of human interaction in urban areas faced with renewal. Anderson captures, in readable terms, the process of "invasion-succession" in *Streetwise*, and reminds us again that urban communities are living, changing, decaying, and maturing social entities.

Wilfred Laurier University

Richard Christy

INDI'N HUMOR: Bicultural Play in Native America. By Kenneth Lincoln. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

After recounting the myriad of pejorative reflections of North American "Indians" which appeared in films, advertising, television shows, mascots and logos, Kenneth Lincoln poses the critical question: "Why—better, how—have Native Americans outlasted half a millennium of assault on two thousand indigenous cultures in the West?" (4) His reply is the crux of this critical work, and erudite, informative and vigorous study that fills a startling gap in cultural and ethnic history, namely the folk and literary humor of Native Americans. This complex work is, and will remain, the defining treatise to which other studies will refer when treating ethnic and cultural humor.

As with all societies, humor informed the personal and worldly views of the multiplicity of tribes in North America. Lincoln, in fact, quotes from Native American author N. Scott Momaday, who pointedly counselled that humor "is one of the strongest elements of language within Indian cultures. . . . Humor is really where is really where the language lives, you know. It's very close to the center, and very important." (280) But for these cultures, their humor was literally and symbolically obscured by those carved Wooden Indian figurines which started fixedly from store front porches for years in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Except for an occasional popular book, most notably within the past half century Vine Deloria, Jr.'s *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1969), and a variety of luminous analytic articles, tidbits in essays, and related studies, a sweeping assessment of Indian humor was nonexistent. This text redresses the situation, and by formulating a picture as complex as it is enlightening, refines the boundaries of humor studies and expands comprehension of North American tribal language and life.

Drawing upon literary theory, textual analysis and sociocultural schema, as well as personal experiences—Lincoln was raised in Nebraska and adopted into the Oglala Sioux tribe—the author offers a sweeping analysis of oral and scripted

laughter that infused tribal cultures. Not only have Indi'ns bonded and revitalized, scapegoated and survived through laughter, but they extracted power from millennia-old traditions of Trickster gods and holy fools, comic romances and epic boasts. "There is, and always has been, humor among Indians—and some five hundred tribal variants in the contiguous United States, locally indigenous to climate and geography, genetics and history." (22)

Lincoln's own approach to the topic derives from the legacies of the Trickster, "an antiheroic comic and holy fool." Despite its differing versions, Lincoln opts for a tribal comic vision originating in *heyoka*, or sacred clown alive within the Lakotas of Lincoln's childhood, a concept embracing "the power to make live" and "the power to destroy." (5) Included within its polarities are the shamanesque powers to heal and to hurt, to bond and to exorcise, to renew and to purge.

Lincoln's methodology is clearly a composite, an admixture of approaches that is both vexing and productive. Because he fuses and overlaps the vernacular with the literary, the associative, phenomenological with the specific investigation, he has constructed a work, as he himself acknowledges, that is "a breed of its own." (7-8) This is partly the consequence of a mission which he declares that is intended not to exhaust the subject or to mute the reader but rather "to startle, or to disturb, or otherwise to trigger interactive dialogues." (8) Even the works' title, *Indi'n*, is both associative and specific, the result of conjoining the earliest boundary between native tribal peoples and immigrant Euroamericans: "America is not India, we all know that, and these tribal aborigines are nominally not In-di-ans." (10) Lincoln, in short, has adopted the role of academic Trickster.

And the results are as bountiful as they are uplifting. Lincoln illumines the stories, novels, poetry, sayings, wit, satire, jokes, barbs, visual offerings among men and women, in short the variety of "voices" of laughter in tribal cultures. His book not only fills a significant void, it will take its place as a seminal interpretation of ethnic and humor behavior.

Boston University

Joseph Boskin

THE ORDEAL OF THE LONGHOUSE: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization. By Daniel K. Richter. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press (Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture). 1992.

A common popular misconception is that Native Americans were the passive victims of the Columbian encounter. In *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, Daniel Richter, member of Dickinson College's Departments of History and American Studies, seeks to set the record straight.

Richter offers little not already known to specialists in the study of the peoples of the Longhouse, in particular, or to scholars of the Native American experience, in general, during the era of European colonization of North America. He presents the now well supported thesis that the Native American response to the Columbian encounter consisted of a reshaping of their economics, politics and diplomacy, and ethnic composition, as well as cultural adaptations which were effective in securing for their posterity central elements of their tribal cultural, if not their political and economic autonomy. His primary audience, then, is the

nonspecialist, or, as Richter suggests, those historians, students, and interested readers who still too often exclude native peoples from the narrative mainstream of North American development.

In *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, Richter provides a view of the European colonization of North America from the Native American side, or, more specifically, of the British, French, and Dutch conquest and settlement of Iroquoia (what is now the portion of Upstate New York between the Mohawk and Genesee River Valleys) from the perspective of by the people of the Iroquois League (the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras).

Richter is clearly sympathetic to the plight of the Iroquois. In the concluding chapter he talks with considerable compassion of their recurring and continuing ordeals, living on a continent dominated by European Americans. By-and-large, however, he refrains from encouraging popular perceptions of the Iroquois as either entirely noble or as all conquering militarists who kept their native neighbors "groaning under the hobnailed moccasin." Instead, he shows them as a people who, much like those who came to colonize North America from Europe or Africa, were subject to economic, political, and demographic forces over which they had little control.

Richter groups those series of ordeals that the Iroquois faced, which stemmed from the European invasion of North America, under four broad successive headings: their massive depopulation from imported disease; their slide into economic dependence on trade with Europeans; their ensnarement into the imperial struggles of France and England; and the direct incursions of Europeans and Euro-Americans into Iroquois territory and sovereignty.

Richter attributes the ability of the people of the Iroquois League to adapt to those ordeals to "a double trio of geographic and cultural advantages." First among the three geographical advantages was their being situated athwart the major trade routes of the native Northeast, thereby having access both to multiple European markets and to the resources Euro-American traders demanded. A second, apparently contradictory, geographical advantage was their inland location, placing the Iroquois at a sufficient distance from centers of European expansion to allow them to adapt to changed circumstances before being assailed by epidemics and overrun by colonists. Their third geographical advantage was that they stood between at least two competing colonial centers: the French on the St. Lawrence and the Dutch on the Hudson, later replaced by the English of New York and Pennsylvania. Access to alternative markets and imperial centers gave the Five Nations room to keep Europeans at a safe distance and to preserve their independence in ways many of their native neighbors could not.

Culturally, Richter points out, the Iroquois had the advantage of being horticultural villagers, whose traditional methods of subsistence were not immediately overturned by the altered hunting patterns inspired by the European fur trade. Second, Iroquois families adopted war captives, thereby, in the seventeenth century, delaying depopulation due to disease. And, finally, they had the advantage of the Great League of Peace and Power, which fostered their acceptance of diverse peoples of varying speech and customs, while retaining traditional rituals to which the people of the Longhouse could cling as they adapted to new ways of life. Few of these six factors, Richter points out, were unique to the Five Nations, but, in northeastern North America, only the Iroquois appear to have possessed all six for such a long period of time.

Though these advantages served to protect them for over a century, Richter concludes, the Iroquois could not escape the dominant power of the Euro-Americans. By the 1730s, economic, political, and ethnic adaptations notwithstanding, and though they still retained most of their homeland and their day-to-day political autonomy, the Iroquois became a colonized people, living in a world no longer entirely their own. What they managed to retain, however, were the core traditional values embodied in the rituals of the League, which survived to sustain Iroquois spiritual and cultural independence from the colonizers.

Creighton University

Bryan F. Le Beau

ANCHOR OF MY LIFE: Middle-class American Mothers and Daughters, 1880-1920. By Linda Rosenzweig. New York: New York University Press. 1993.

Linda Rosenzweig has written an important, but overly ambitious book. *Anchor of My Life* is important because Rosenzweig focuses on the often neglected history of mothers and daughters in the white, American middle-class between 1880 and 1920. Historians have focused on other aspects of women's lives, and recent feminist theorists have treated this relationship ahistorically. Rosenzweig examines an era when options for education and careers gave daughters options for lives that differed radically from their mothers. Also important are Rosenzweig's findings that, despite publications expressing concern about the fate of mother-daughter closeness, women's own narratives reveal that close women's bonds endured and empowered daughters moving out of domestic spaces.

The strongest sections of Rosenzweig's book are those dealing with the relationships of mothers and adolescent, college age, and adult daughters as they are depicted in autobiographies and in the personal writings of women from the period. As her title hints, and as my own research has confirmed, these documents tell of mothers and daughters who were central and positive in each other's lives and stories. Daughters describe mothers who nurtured their dreams and encouraged them through college. Adult mothers and daughters describe providing and receiving vital support. These findings challenge the universality of the negative, conflict-ridden patterns which some twentieth-century psychologists and some feminists have claimed are inevitably present between mothers and daughters.

Rosenzweig strengthens her claims by recognizing the complexity of the ties between mothers and daughters. She points out that the existence of conflict does not destroy individual relationships that are generally harmonious and supportive. Balancing the particularity and the continuities she sees in mother-daughter bonds, she describes a delicate equilibrium which enabled mothers to empower their daughters between 1880 and 1920. The possibility of new autonomy for daughters emerged alongside continuing restrictions on expressing anger and expectations of mother-daughter closeness. But Rosenzweig also sees some degree of both inter-generational conflict and support in the decades before 1880 and after 1920. Agreeing with scholars who have emphasized closeness between nineteenth-century middle-class mothers and daughters, she refuses to view those years as a "golden age" during which no hostility was present between women. While pointing out the post-1920 patterns of mother-blaming, she acknowledges an on-going possibility for positive ties.

Sometimes, however, Rosenzweig's complex and sophisticated understanding of her topic gets in the way of her ability to clearly communicate her findings and their importance. Complications, qualifications, and changes of direction make it difficult for the reader to be sure of her conclusions. Such problems are especially troubling because Rosenzweig's book lacks overall unity. Chapters seem to be meant to stand alone or pull in conflicting directions. After opening the book with a review of the limited scholarship relevant to the history of mothers and daughters' relations, she plunges into conventional examinations of prescriptive literature and novels with little hint of the ground-breaking material that lies ahead. She ranges over two centuries, English and American women's differences, and innumerable theoretical models in a provocative, but distracting manner. In her concluding chapter, Rosenzweig throws the reader a succession of brilliant insights, some of which attempt to reconcile the differences and divisions of earlier sections. I was left wishing she had dealt with some of the issues she raises here in more depth instead of attempting such remarkable breadth.

Methodologies and conceptual frameworks also shift from chapter to chapter. In discussing advice literature, Rosenzweig relies on "emotionology," a focus on the history of emotional expectations developed by Peter Stern, one of the editors of the series in which this book appears. Novels are examined through the lens of "cultural discourse," with heavy reliance on the approach of literary critic Jane Tompkins. Various psychological theories serve as underpinnings for other sections. Rosenzweig relies on Carol Gilligan and other developmental theorists to provide the psychological mechanism which allowed mothers to empower daughters. Such theorists claim that women value relationships and establish their identity through them rather than through the separation and individualization more typical of men and the theories of male psychologists. Like Rosenzweig's work, these theorists challenge claims that relationships between mothers and daughters are characterized primarily by hostility, but Rosenzweig's use of their ahistorical framework seem to counter her claim that the years between 1880 and 1920 were in any way unique for mothers and daughters. In addition Rosenzweig does little to place mothers and daughters in the context of shifting power relationships of the Progressive era, a context that could have helped her center her findings in the politics of gender.

In fact none of Rosenzweig's various theoretical approaches to validate her findings ultimately succeeds. The strength of her book is her attention to the actual experiences and perspectives of real women. Ironically, Gilligan and some feminist theorists claim to have started their conceptualizing from the patterns they actually observed in women's lives rather than the theorizing of others. Rosenzweig might have done well to follow their example.

Yet whatever its weaknesses, Rosenzweig's book makes a valuable contribution to all those concerned with women's history or feminist theory by establishing that mother-daughter relationships have been positive and empowering. Her findings challenge claims about women's inter-generational hostility which have typified both psychology and popular thinking since Freud. In addition, she has laid the groundwork for scholars in various disciplines to look at mothers and daughters in new ways.

Virginia Wesleyan

Marilyn Dell Brady

NEW WOMAN OF THE NEW SOUTH: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States. By Marjorie Spruill Wheeler. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

The southern white suffrage movement, led by eleven influential women—Kate and Jean Gordon, Belle Kearney, Laura Clay, Nellie Nugent Somerville, Rebecca Latimer Felton, Madeline McDowell Breckinridge, Mary Johnston, Lila Meade Valentine, Pattie Ruffner Jacobs and Sue Shelton White—sought to balance the quest for gender equity with an “ancestral mission” to preserve southern traditions and civilization. Armed with few male allies, they calmed critics on the return of “Black Reconstruction,” on the alienation of state sovereignty, and on the destruction of true motherhood and domestic bliss. Instead, they argued that the franchise would strengthen state sovereignty, preserve white supremacy, and systematically discriminate against all blacks.

Southern suffragists evolved out of the larger progressive reform movements. Such activism only further illustrated how restricted women were. Hence, the quest became full recognition as equal to and independent of male domination under the law.

Southern women were present in the national leadership of the women’s movement. Antisuffragists had charged that such activism was destroying the traditional values of the region for these women were manipulated by outside forces. As the NAWSA endorsed a federal suffrage amendment, portions of the southern leadership created the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC), convinced that it was essential that southern legislatures grant the ballot, for it would signify full recognition of women as political equals. The numbers (white female voters) would ensure the preservation of white supremacy. Yet, NAWSA still had a base in the South, as younger women saw the ballot, versus regional loyalty, as a key priority. Older members like Laura Clay felt betrayed and rejected by these actions on the part of actual members she and others had introduced into the suffrage movement. When the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, few southern states allowed women to vote: rejection petitions were numerous. Most women had to wait on the right to actually vote.

The crux of Wheeler’s study, one of its strengths, centers on race and women. While these reformers worked on educational and health care reform in black communities, they were not free of racial attitudes and stereotypes. This female generation had lived through “Black Reconstruction” and believed in the “redemptive Democrats” who returned southern civilization. Enfranchising this class of intelligent white women, they argued, would ensure a better class of whites for long term leadership, eliminate a great body of illiterate and controllable voters who could ruin reform, while maintaining white solidarity. Educated white women could protect the interest of blacks, thus solving the “Negro Problem.” For those who were afraid of congressional intolerance or northern liberal interference, Clay stated that educational and property qualifications would discriminate equally. Besides, northern women were overcome with xenophobia, and would probably now understand the logic of southern ways in handling this problem.

Wheeler shows us how these elite women really believed that their positions as southern ladies would assist in converting southern men to support female suffrage. These women believed themselves to be no threats. Maybe they were really

naive or overly confident in the views of southern men about women regardless of class. Maybe they felt power would be shared, especially when relying on racial solidarity. Yet, the second generation of these women did not concentrate on southern men; they joined Alice Paul and the National Women Party and moved towards an Equal Rights Amendment.

Wheeler's work breaks new ground in southern and suffrage studies. She reconstructs one group of southerners who sought to empower themselves as they stayed true to certain southern staples: the "Lost Cause," motherhood, God, and country. Volunteering to serve as the needed buffer, the elite attempted to sway power by the most expedient and assured means: white supremacy. Wheeler shows how this class was not really a threat to cherished ideas of southern motherhood, but sought to revise the definitions of chivalry and womanhood. Even with moderate demands that should have appealed to the rational sides of white men, these southern suffragists were defined as radicals. But for some, their traditionalism was all too familiar: the arrogance of their noblesse oblige, the unending diatribes of racist garbage, and their deafening silence on justice and real reform.

Lastly, Wheeler tells the reader that this is a study of white, elite, southern women in the southern suffrage movement. Such honesty is refreshing. Far too often such works have been arrogant enough to proclaim themselves real studies of ALL southern women—classes, races, ages—notwithstanding.

Georgia State University

Jacqueline Rouse

LIBERTY AND SEXUALITY: The Right to Privacy and the Making of Roe v. Wade. By David V. Garrow. New York: Macmillan Publishers. 1994.

David J. Garrow's *Liberty and Sexuality* is a lengthy chronicle of the modern birth control and pro-choice movements in which Garrow provides what Taylor Branch's *Parting the Waters* provided for civil rights; namely, a grandiose, sympathetic history focusing on the grass-roots endeavors of lawyers, judges, litigants and political activists.

Garrow argued that the pro-choice movement could not be understood without an examination of the birth control movement which preceded it. He therefore opened his story in the 1930s, describing the efforts of Margaret Sanger, Kit Hepburn, Estelle Griswold and others to win repeal of Connecticut's repressive anticontraception statute. They succeeded in 1965, when the Supreme Court ruled, in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, that contraception was a personal matter beyond state control and protected under a broad constitutional "right to privacy."

Griswold's right to privacy was the legal foundation for the right to an abortion recognized seven years later in *Roe v. Wade*. Garrow provided a detailed history of the events surrounding that famous court case, focusing particularly in the life stories of the litigants and their attorneys, as well as an almost day-to-day account of how the nine Supreme Court justices arrived at their decisions. Garrow also addressed related events occurring after *Roe v. Wade*, describing the pro-choice/pro-life battles of the 1980s and 1990s, and briefly touching upon issues of gay rights and sexual freedom which have arisen under the right to privacy.

Liberty and Sexuality is in many ways a fine book. It is a lively and interesting story, based upon thorough, painstaking research. Garrow wonderfully

evoked the highs and lows, the sometimes maddeningly slow progress and above all the groping uncertainty which beset birth control and abortion advocates. The reader comes away from his narrative with a powerful feeling of what it was like to view the birth control and pro-choice movements from the inside out.

Garrow leaves no doubt that, for him, such an inside-out perspective is morally correct. It is not hard to tell who the good guys and bad guys are in his story. Pro-choice attorneys and their clients are almost invariably described as “skillful,” “courageous” and “perceptive,” while their opponents usually rate words like “insolent,” “illogical,” “splenetic” or “curmudgeonly.” This is hardly surprising, given Garrow’s belief that *Griswold* and *Roe* are “enshrined beside *Brown* for all time in America’s constitutional pantheon.”

Such sympathies are not inherently wrong. We historians have surely by now abandoned the practice of criticizing an author’s bias merely for the bias’s sake. But Garrow’s rather one-sided viewpoint created problems which diminish the overall quality of his book.

One such problem is the odd fact that *Liberty and Sexuality* contains little substantive analysis of either liberty or sexuality. Garrow did not grapple with the jurisprudential problems raised by the liberty of a “right to privacy” and the Court’s methods of articulating such a right. Nor did he avail himself of the growing historical and theoretical literature currently available on social and cultural constructions of sexuality. Many questions about these matters go unanswered. Because from his ardently pro-birth control, pro-choice perspective, Garrow probably didn’t see the need. He concluded an overview of legal literature critical of *Griswold*, for example, by simply stating that “the vast majority of experts who sought to pronounce judgement on *Griswold* knew nothing of the real life experiences” of the plaintiffs, and “had not the slightest idea who ‘Griswold’ was.” This suggests that Garrow assumed all he needed to do was simply tell the story behind the case, without wrestling with the complex questions posed by its “liberty” or “sexuality” components, and any reasonable reader would agree that *Griswold* was a good decision.

Those “unreasonable” people who opposed *Griswold*, *Roe*, contraception and abortion received short shrift in *Liberty and Sexuality*. Garrow rarely addressed their motivations at all, and when he did he genuinely seemed unable to distinguish between a bible-thumping antiabortion zealot like Catholic priest Robert Byrn, who shouted that contraception and abortion were against “God’s law,” and more thoughtful critics of *Griswold* and *Roe* such as legal scholars John Hart Ely and Ruth Bader-Ginsburg. For Garrow, they are all part of what he portrayed as an almost monocausal assault on the birth control and pro-choice movements and the court decisions they engendered.

For Garrow, the proper metaphor for *Griswold* and *Roe* is not an ongoing conversation or debate over troubling and complex issues, but rather a grand edifice of justice at which ignorant commentators have often lobbed cheap shots. His purpose in writing *Liberty and Sexuality* was to correct this supposed ignorance. If *Griswold v. Connecticut* and *Roe v. Wade* have been “enshrined,” then Garrow’s book is not so much a history as a tourist’s guide for those who wish merely to marvel at these cases and the wonders they produced. Such a work is not without merit. But in the end Garrow’s method of approaching these issues seems incomplete.

WALT WHITMAN AND THE VISUAL ARTS. Edited by Geoffrey M. Sill and Roberta K. Tarbell. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1992.

In an incisive postscript to this collection of essays drawn from a 1989 symposium, Wanda Corn encourages us to challenge the twentieth-century's preferred conception of Walt Whitman as a social outsider and *sui generis* iconoclast. Although, she remarks, we remain "hostage to the Whitman-mania of the past century," this volume provides "good ammunition in deconstructing the idolatry of Whitman that has been such a central tenet of modernist theology" (167-68). While some of the individual essays retain "strong vestiges of the legend" (168), the ultimate effect of the book is to demystify the nationalist-modernist deification of Whitman by demonstrating the extent to which he was in fact neither a nationalist nor a modernist.

America's early twentieth-century avant-garde, Matthew Baigell shows, settled upon the poet as their creative *paterfamilias* for a variety of reasons, among them that the rolling energy and uninhibited candor of his verse coincided with the general mood of anti-Puritanism. Whitman's unabashed celebration of sexual energy and personal vitality seemed liberating to a generation enamored with the newly imported teachings of Freud and Bergson. Meanwhile, stirred by the nationalistic impetuses of the era, art critics "were searching and calling for artists who could picture the nation's identity, personality, and character, that is, to do for American art what Whitman had done for American literature" (130). Various vanguard artists were thus breathlessly compared to Whitman—or, indeed, made the comparison themselves. The now-standard conception of Whitman as both nationalist and modernist derives less from his own era than from that of his later admirers.

Other pieces in the collection ponder artistic analogies between Whitman and certain proto-modernists (Thomas Eakins and Louis Sullivan) and one quasi-modernist (the sculptor Mahonri Sharp Young), but the meatiest essays are those that examine, in turn, the poet's career as a journalistic art critic, his lifelong admiration for the Barbizon painter Jean-François Millet, and his similarity, both in his life and his art, to the French realist Gustave Courbet. The first of these essays, by Ruth L. Bohan, shows that Whitman's appreciation of contemporary art was surprisingly mainstream. Particularly intriguing is her observation that Whitman was fascinated with the exhibition practices of his time and may have been inspired toward his famous inventorying or warehousing style of poetry by what he admired as "many pictures hanging suspended" (19) in the art galleries and exhibition halls of the day.

If Whitman's appreciation of contemporary art was conventional, nowhere is this more clear than in his zeal for Millet, whom Americans of the period lauded more than any other current artist. Laura Meixner cogently historicizes the nineteenth-century critical admiration for Millet, and even though she makes the point that Whitman was out of step in regarding the painter of peasants to be a class-conscious radical rather than a sentimental humanist, nevertheless this preference for a non-U.S. artist who was innovative only in subject matter but not in form clearly indicates that neither nationalism nor modernism were among his highest values.

The centerpiece of the book is Albert Boime's powerful comparison of Whitman and Courbet. Written with humor, passion, and intellectual precision, the essay transcends a mere listing of similarities and differences to identify the transatlantic historical forces that made these two artists and their democratic projects so alike. Boime shows that both Courbet and Whitman were heirs to the French Revolution. The insistent egalitarianism of their work as well as the flamboyant autodidacticism of their respective personae resulted from a pressing need to re-stage the spirit of 1789 in the conservative, counterrevolutionary world of post-1848.

The essays in this collection compel a rehistoricizing of Whitman as poet, making apparent how much he drew upon French and American visual arts, and the degree to which the latter drew upon him.

Colby College

David Lubi

WILLIAM FAULKNER AND SOUTHERN HISTORY. By Joel Williamson. Oxford University Press. 1993.

Reading Williamson on Faulkner reminds me of the scene in *Sleepless in Seattle* where Meg Ryan and her fiance are about to enter her parents' home for Christmas dinner. As Meg Ryan quizzes him one last time on who's who, we recognize that her fiance is lost, that he will never master the set of people and relationships that contribute to Meg's sense of who she is and, by implication, that he will never understand her. Williamson, in his effort to demonstrate the entanglement of Faulkner's family history, adult life, and literary career with the broader forces of the American "crucible of race," displays a commendable mastery over more than the usual roster of relationships informing Faulkner's life, yet one comes away from this impressive work feeling that Williamson nonetheless allowed crucial relationships to fall out of his view and therefore never came to know Faulkner well enough. As a distinguished historian of race relations and racial ideology in the American South, Williamson brought to his study precisely the sort of perspective that could advance our understanding of Faulkner. Furthermore, he applied to this work methods of research, standard for the historian, that were formerly unexplored, and unearthed significant information, particularly concerning Faulkner's ancestry. The principal disappointments of this book devolve, I think, from Williamson's unthematized assumptions about literature, history, and personal identity.

Of the work's three principal sections—"Ancestry," "Biography," and "The Writing"—the first section constitutes the most significant and original contribution to Faulkner studies. On the basis of census data and other traditional sources of historical evidence, Williamson persuasively speculates that Faulkner's great-grandfather William C. Faulkner, with whom all narratives of Faulkner begin, had a daughter Fannie Forrest Faulkner (ca. 1865-1929) and perhaps another daughter, Lena, as well (ca. 1867-?) with his slave Emeline Faulkner, who died in 1898. The biracial historical and cultural legacy suggested in the seven pages devoted to "The Other Mississippi Faulkners," which briefly trace the fates of these Faulkners and their descendants, point toward the need for biracial readings of Faulkner's life and writing (64-71). Similarly, in the 80-odd pages devoted to Faulkner's maternal grandfather Charlie Butler, the one-time sheriff of Oxford,

Mississippi, who abandoned his family, absconded with public monies, and reputedly ran off with an "octoroon," Williamson suggests that this forefather too may have had a "shadow family." Although Williamson does not fail to note the kinship or resonance between the material he has unearthed and Faulkner's fiction, he leaves this crucial area largely unexplored, foundering perhaps on his inability to prove, except by way of the fiction, that Faulkner knew about the crimes and passions of his fathers. Williamson suggests the broad significance that could be attributed to Faulkner's biracial ancestry but confines himself to only its broad outlines. He states, for example, that if Faulkner was aware of the "amazing story—actually the saga of a slave woman and her children, fathered by the white men who owned her, and how they passed out of slavery and beyond into the broad stream of black life in America," then it would follow that he was intimate with a "real event" or "historical happening." Unable to establish Faulkner's consciousness of this amazing story, which becomes a synecdoche of African-American history and life, Williams relegates it to the margins of Faulkner's life and writings and allows it to remain sadly distant from his own view of southern history, in spite of his astute insights into white southern racial ideology.

More broadly speaking, Williamson's book, apart from the material discussed above, generally reproduces the standard narrative of Faulkner's background by foregrounding the patriarchs. Williamson's primary sources, most fruitful with respect to income-earners and property-owners, reinforce this emphasis on Faulkner's male ancestors, yielding only slight evidence about the women and African Americans whose importance to Faulkner is amply documented in the fiction. We still await biographical and critical narratives about Faulkner that, drawing upon the methods developed by social historians for learning about the lives of marginalized people, devotes adequate attention to the impact of such dispossessed figures on Faulkner. It is gratifying to know more, for example, about Faulkner's maternal grandfather Charlie Butler, whom Faulkner never met, but it is frustrating that so many key figures, such as Faulkner's mother Maud, his mammie Caroline Barr, his great-grandmother Emeline, his wife Estelle, and his daughter Jill, remain in the shadows.

In Williamson's depiction of Faulkner's life, race is less fundamental than the well-rehearsed history of Faulkner's shifting presentation of self, for example—as a war hero, a dandy, a farmer, a horseman, a writer, etc.—and his romantic attachments to women. To explain these aspects of the life, which demonstrate the difficulties Faulkner had in arriving at a stable definition or construction of himself, Williamson does look beyond Faulkner's personal life, principally to gender ideology in the (white) South. It is curious that Williamson, who has investigated the psychosexual dimension of racialism, does not consider the impact of racial ideology on Faulkner's ambivalence and lack of ease with regard to his construction as a white male southerner. Again, further exploration of the impact of these intersecting ideologies would have required Williamson to turn to less conventional forms of historical evidence, which would include Faulkner's fiction.

Drawn more from his study of race relations in the South than from an adequate engagement with Faulkner's writings, Williamson's sweeping representation of the writings along one axis that runs from idealism to realism and another that runs from premodernism to industrialism simply cannot stand up to the testimony

or the challenges of the writings. Noting that the abundance of bachelors and unhappily married (white) couples in these writings signifies the troubled construction of gender, Williamson also argues that Faulkner's writings proposed broad solutions to the social (i.e., racial) problems of the South. Defining a trajectory that leads from *Light in August* through *Go Down, Moses* to the Snopes trilogy, Williamson asserts that Faulkner lost faith in the capacity of the "organic society" of the South (see *A Rage for Order*) to restore itself and sought refuge from society first in nature and then in an all-white community guided to salvation by strong individuals. At the outset of this discussion of the writings, Williamson notes that it will be difficult to say anything at all about Faulkner's writings without bringing the experts down on his head. Yet the debate over how to understand the meaning and trajectory of Faulkner's writings should not be construed as a battle about expertise. More significant is how readings of Faulkner participate in broader current debates about, for example, how history is constructed, what counts as evidence, whose perspective on the past history represents, how other perspectives on the past might be represented, what form such representation might assume, etc. Such questions, moreover, are passionately and explicitly addressed in Faulkner's writings, which challenge those definitions and boundaries of self whose rigid enforcement maintained an oppressive social order that justified itself with one-sided cultural narratives. Had Williamson reconsidered his assumptions about identity, history, fiction, and historical evidence, for example, he might have been able to draw more conclusions from his discoveries of Faulkner's biracial ancestry and of Faulkner's ceaseless efforts to reconstruct his identity. Similarly, he might have been more conscious of the need to disrupt the standard univocal narrative of Faulkner's life and of the reasons behind Faulkner's own disruptive narrative techniques. Williamson's inattention to narrative, as the invidious conveyor of hegemony and as the common denominator of historiography and fiction, leads him to characterize Faulkner's narrative techniques, in a brief aside on the topic, as "almost suicidal." Indeed, Faulkner's entire writing career might be seen as an attempted suicide, seeking to disrupt if not undo the personal and cultural narratives that troubled Faulkner's sense of who he was.

University of Kansas

Cheryl Lester

THE NEW ENGLAND MILTON: Literary Reception and Cultural Authority in the New Republic. By Kevin Van Anglen. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993.

Cultural authority is really the key phrase in the title of Kevin Van Anglen's book. The importance of Milton's example—literary and personal—for American writers of the early nineteenth century was, according to Van Anglen's persuasive claim, his own struggle with the question of authority within the context of Puritanism's complex revolutionary legacy. This is less a study of literary influences than it is a sophisticated and thought-provoking analysis of American intellectual and cultural history.

Some years ago I reviewed Keith Stavelly's work on a closely related topic—*Puritan Legacies: Paradise Lost and the New England Tradition* (1987)—and it is this text that offers the most obvious point of comparison with Kevin Van

Anglen's new contribution to this area of enquiry. In the earlier book, Stavely focused his attention on the towns of Westborough and Marlborough Massachusetts in order to bring together the abstractions of Puritan ideology and the reality of the everyday lived experience of New England citizens. What Stavely identified in this relationship between ideology and cultural reality was a complex parallel between the fiction representation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and American history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a parallel enacted through the ideological determinants (set out by Milton) that shape cultural relationships. As a counter-balance to this seeking after patterns and points of consonance, Stavely uses the system he has set up in order to uncover the conflicts and points of rupture that are all too often neglected in accounts of New England society. Kevin Van Anglen assumes this context of dissonance and conflict as he seeks to uncover the reasons why it was Milton, rather than any other prominent literary or public figure, who captured the imaginations of nineteenth-century Unitarians and Transcendentalists such as Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, William Ellery Channing, Jones Very and Theodore Parker.

Although Van Anglen and Stavely have both produced books that contribute in important ways to the "new historical" approach to early American literary culture, their efforts lead them in quite distinct directions. Van Anglen is, above all, concerned with what it is that the use of Milton by influential antebellum writers can tell us about the nature of American Romanticism. In the preface he is at pains to distinguish his work from the earlier book and it is on this basis that he does so, by claiming for *The New England Milton* that it is the first extended account of "Milton's influence on American romanticism [which] until now has not received full critical treatment . . . [despite] his obvious importance to such authors as Emerson, Thoreau, Brockden Brown, Cooper, Stowe, Fuller, Hawthorne, Melville, and Whitman" (p. vii). Accordingly, in the chapters that follow Van Anglen begins with the Puritan and eighteenth-century background but moves quickly to consider the ways in which Milton's exemplary treatment of the contradictions within Puritanism continued to be of relevance to the dominant class of Americans who were also affected by these contradictions. The portrait of John Milton represented in Unitarian writings is followed by Channing's reconstruction of Milton; this is followed by a lengthy discussion of Emerson's use of Milton to focus his growing discontent with Unitarianism and to reformulate his own transcendentalist ideas. Emerson is at the heart of this book and the two substantial chapters devoted to his maturing relationship with Milton's work are complemented by the discussion of Thoreau's engagement with Milton which was much more bleak and pessimistic than was Emerson's. Van Anglen promises, in the preface, that this analysis of Milton's place with Unitarianism and Transcendentalism will be extended in a second volume, as yet to appear, which will address the general influence of Milton's work in America in the years up to the Civil War. This is to be welcomed, for in the present volume Kevin Van Anglen offers a scholarly and detailed account of key intellectual relationships that enlighten aspects of transAtlantic literary and cultural contacts. This book should be of interest to Americanists if only because it reminds us so powerfully of the complexity of Anglo-American inheritance.

University of Leicester

Deborah L. Madsen

WHITE COLLAR FICTIONS: Class and Social Representation in American Literature, 1885-1925. By Christopher P. Wilson. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press. 1992.

Given the apparent ambition of the subtitle, one may wonder at Christopher Wilson's exclusion, except in brief passing, of such figures as Howells, Norris, and Dreiser, or even James, in this study. His rationale for giving extended treatment, on the other hand, to Edna Ferber, Robert Grant, and Elmer Rice is clear enough as his argument develops, if one is willing to be a little patient with his "idiom"—a term he uses often: "I am interested in how authors and texts fashion commonsensicality and marshal typification, gather authority and engage their readers, make the 'literary' look like a livable fiction."

Wilson seems to have immersed himself commendably in both documentary detail, some of it quite exotic, and the theory of cultural scholarship. He traces the genetic and formative influences on his subjects—also including O. Henry, Sherwood Anderson, and Sinclair Lewis—which in part explain their own orientation in the white-collar experience as well as their subtle and often changing sense of their audiences and the not always identical marketplace. His focus, in other words, is less on literary evaluation than on the total cultural process of literary production, especially its economic and political features. One curious point that his analysis brings out is that each of his authors, despite the frequently satirical or even mildly subversive intent, appears finally, if in part unconsciously, to come to a grudging accommodation with the white-collar ethos.

The point is not always clear; the language of Wilson's disciplines is sometimes unnecessarily heavy traffic: "In a sense Ferber created tutorial fables of authority by mythologizing matters of social deference, the currency in which power is often invisibly circulated." And despite the legitimate value of reviewing the representative impact of recently or long neglected figures, Wilson seems revealingly testy at the thought that critical interest in them is "practically moribund." The culprit he singles out is the New Critics, who attacked with "counter-Progressive" intent "some of these writers who were once canonized." In everyone's varying canon, Anderson may still hang in—and Lewis, though he teeters—but it seems doubtful that Ransom's or Tate's *political* impact could have done in the others. In various places, Wilson seems wary of formalist insights and judgments, as if a resurgence, neo-New, might lurk in Munich or Argentina.

And this defensiveness is unnecessary, because the comparative adventures of American writers of such various generations and work experiences that Wilson capably establishes seem well worth studying, and he himself has fresh insights about formal critical matters, engendered by his cultural approach. Aside from some nods to the Fabians and some pages gauging the impact of H. G. Wells on Lewis' thinking, Wilson, as an Americanist, hardly touches on international white-collar developments. In these same years, *The Forsyte Saga* and *Buddenbrooks* are brewing in Europe, and the capitalist yeast is working, for good and ill, in Shanghai, Sydney, and Buenos Aires as well, doubtless with analogous literary consequences. Christopher Wilson, for one, would seem well qualified to pursue some useful comparisons.

Wichita State University

Gerald Hoag

THE SPECTATOR AND THE CITY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE. By Dana Brand. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1991.

This study examines the figure of the *flâneur*—"a detached, casual, yet powerful urban spectator who regards the metropolis as an entertaining spectacle and text"—in antebellum American literature and culture. Discussing the presence of this figure in the works of Poe, Hawthorne, and Whitman, Brand has not only achieved convincing new readings of well-known texts, he also offers valuable insights about the discourse of modernity in America. Brand's work is equally compelling in its revisionist approach to the rhetorics of urbanism and anti-urbanism in American culture.

Deriving his definition of the figure from Walter Benjamin, and from Baudelaire's essay "The Painter of Modern Life," Brand presents the *flâneur* as "a historically significant accommodation of the bourgeoisie to the urban, cosmopolitan world they were creating." A major achievement of Brand's work, however, is to revise the history of the *flâneur* suggested by Benjamin. Where Benjamin had seen the *flâneur* as a development of the *feuilletons* of Paris in the 1830s, Brand documents a lineage that goes back to seventeenth-century London. From the "coney-catching" pamphlets and Theophrastian character books of that period, through the works of Addison and Steele, to the nineteenth-century urban sketches of Hunt, Lamb, and Dickens, Brand describes a British tradition of the urban spectator that, by the time of Poe, was familiar to the American literary imagination.

Brand sees Poe as addressing himself to the limitations within the European tradition of the *flâneur*—its imposition of order and coherency upon the increasingly discontinuous and opaque surfaces of the modern city. Poe responds to these limitations through the construction of a spectatorial figure—C. Auguste Dupin—who can interpret the irrational and violent aspects of the urban panorama. Poe's detective stories, then, constitute for Brand the first important American adaptation of the tradition of the *flâneur*. Brand's readings of the detective fiction draw upon the development of the cheap urban press, and illuminate Poe's doctrine of artistic "effect" with particular clarity.

Brand's remarks on the *flâneur* in Hawthorne's fiction are the most persuasive in the book. Surveying such sketches as "Wakefield," "Sights from a Steeple," and "The Old Apple Dealer," Brand identifies a facet of Hawthorne's imagination little noticed by previous scholars: his fascination with cities and with the culture of image-consumption that had begun to take root in them during Hawthorne's major years. Brand's analysis of *The Blithedale Romance* explains the spread of this culture through the lyceum, and examines the novel's narrator, Miles Coverdale, as Hawthorne's most elaborate and critical portrayal of the *flâneur*. In a vocabulary derived from Foucault, Brand reads *Blithedale* as exposing in urban spectatorship a means of social control and the consolidation of established power structures. The analysis is as convincing as it is novel, and deserves attention from readers of Hawthorne's most baffling novel.

Brand's discussion of Whitman, however, is too diffuse to be fully successful. The objectives of the chapter are the interpretation of Whitman's use of the *flâneur* in his poetry of the urban crowd and, audaciously, an explanation of Whitman's

famous “transformation” in the early 1850s. Brand marshals impressive resources in this chapter. Whitman’s early journalism and his theories of phrenology are discussed. There is a rich Barthean discussion of Whitman and photography, and a very useful collation of “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” with Wordsworth’s “Immortality Ode.” Yet the chapter lacks an informing cohesiveness and, to this reader, leaves Whitman’s “transformation” still very much a mystery.

Implicit in the whole of Brand’s analysis is a vivid revisionist impulse. Brand makes the case that critics of American literature have been so committed to the anti-urban values and voices within that literature as to ignore the centrality of the city in American life and writing. In this sense, *The Spectator and the City* indicates valuable new directions for American literary scholarship.

Lake Forest College

Benjamin Golubof

SACRED ESTRANGEMENT: The Rhetoric of Conversion in Modern American Autobiography. By Peter A. Dorsey. University Park: Penn State University Press. 1993.

The title and subtitle tell nearly all that this sensible, somewhat old-fashioned book aims at and achieves. Peter Dorsey’s *Sacred Estrangement* authorizes traditional spiritual autobiography and conversion narratives, secular and sacred. Both overlapping forms were written first by Europeans (from Paul and Augustine to Rousseau and Romantic and Victorian autobiographers in Britain) and later by Americans, treated briefly here as Puritans, Quakers, ex-slaves, Evangelicals, and Transcendentalists before 1890, then more fully in early twentieth-century autobiographies of William and Henry James, Henry Adams, Edith Wharton, Ellen Glasgow, Zora Neale Hurston, and Richard Wright. “Estrangement” signifies Dorsey’s main ideological theme: that most American spiritual autobiographers record conversion experiences that simultaneously *identify* and *separate* their written selves from the community. The “rhetoric of conversion” aptly announces Dorsey’s literary theories and strategies of analysis of these—to him—“canonical” texts. His theoretical approach derives from Hayden White’s anatomy of discourse modes—narratives are necessarily structured by either metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, or irony. Finally, “Modern American Autobiography,” as this summary suggests, is only partially accurate. For Dorsey discusses no conversion stories written since Wright’s, and confines analysis of earlier texts to those written by an elite cadre of literary artists and thinkers. Readers, therefore, expecting broad coverage of modern American spiritual autobiography may be disappointed, though others should be enlightened by shrewd discussions of works and lives within the narrow purview of Dorsey’s chosen subject.

“Narrow Purview” does not, however, describe Dorsey’s historical sweep backward and across the Atlantic. In fact, the first 85 pages of this 196-page discussion are devoted chiefly to European autobiographies. “Since spiritual autobiography occupied such a visible position in the European tradition of self-writing, I believe that any analysis of the form by twentieth-century Americans needs to be grounded on its secularization here and abroad.” (44) “Abroad” for Dorsey thus means Europe, not the Orient, Africa, nor Native America. Hence possible African roots of Olaudah Equiano, Oriental philosophy inspiring Thoreau, Whitman,

Ginsberg, or Gary Snyder, or conversion stories like Black Elk's, lie beyond this critic's horizon.

Nor is Dorsey—I think, properly—much concerned with genre. Questions about autobiographical fact and fiction, or distinctions and interactions of confession with such other autobiographical modes as memoir, testament, apology, reminiscence, are elided in favor of close rhetorical analysis of specific conversion narratives. “I will focus only on texts that respond to conversion rhetoric directly. Freed from the task of genre-definition, I hope I can be more attentive to the specific biographical, social and historical contexts under which these texts were written.” (8) Yet it's ironic that Dorsey's canonical tests (canon formation being another autobiographical issue taken for granted) re-create lives often passed in isolation from major social and historical milieus; “all of these figures felt excluded from a mainstream culture they do not take pains to identify. The America they feel separated from is almost without a center.” (12) The books and authors thus chosen form a self-conscious marginal group (chiefly males until the present century) or European and American writers very much aware of their elite tradition. For the Americans, “writers such as Rousseau, Wordsworth, De Quincy, Carlyle, and Mill would have been perceived as canonical to them as well as to us.” (13) Some raised eyebrows will greet that phrase “as well as to us.” It really depends, doesn't it?

There are, then, dangers and limitations as well as rewards and delights in Dorsey's conventionally circumscribed discussion. For me, his treatment of William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* as “the first ‘modern’ study of self-writing” (94) is fresh and convincing. So, too, are his discussions of the conversion imaginations of Edith Wharton and Ellen Glasgow. But when, in the ardor of intertextuality, he titles the chapter on Hurston and Wright “The Varieties of Black Experience” I am far from convinced. In his conclusion he apologizes for avoiding issues of the multiplicity of voices in a midcentury American caught in the “conflicting tugs of bi- and multiculturalism.” (196) Given his Eurocentric, canonical, and elitist construct, this may have been expedient. Still, I would have welcomed at least passing mentions of other modern American spiritual autobiographies—e.g. Thomas Merton's, Malcolm X's, Annie Dillard's—as such familiar texts diverge from or converge toward the older tradition Peter Dorsey celebrates.

University of Iowa
Albert E. Stone

THE PROBLEM OF AMERICAN REALISM: Studies in the Cultural History of a Literary Idea. By Michael Davitt Bell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1993.

Rather than attempting to describe a formal tradition in the notoriously eclectic texts that are usually categorized as realist and naturalist novels, Michael Davitt Bell studies the idea of American literary realism as an ideological construct riddled with contradictions and gender anxiety. In a series of exceptionally lucid readings Bell outlines the complex individual engagements of Mark Twain, Henry James, Frank Norris, Theodore Drieser, and Sarah Orne Jewett, with a Howellsian vision of literature that denigrates feminized “art” in favor of the “real” world of men's activities in which properly realist novels participate. Bell finds that the

closer these writers move toward attempting to enact the lie at the heart of realist thinking—that literature should not be literary—the more crippled and distorted their fiction becomes.

In the first half of his book, Bell focuses on the “realists” Howells, Twain, and James. His subtle reading of Twain reveals that in spite of its mockery of sentimental art, *Huckleberry Finn* is not ultimately driven by Howellsian realist thinking. However, in *Connecticut Yankee* Twain seems to appropriate Howells’s opposition between a tyrannical literary romanticism, and a violent masculinist realism marked as democratic. The result is a stylistically “unfortunate” and “strange mixture of violence and sentiment that manically displays the incoherence at the heart of realist thinking,” and produces a deadening of Twain’s language. Henry James also experimented with realism, positing an opposition between “art” and “life” in *The Bostonians*, and linking *The Princess Casamassima* to naturalism through a focus on the violent and seamy side of political life, and invoking “blood” as a determiner of fate. However, Bell argues that the realist thinking in both of these texts is “not only doomed to failure, but *designed* to fail,” demonstrating James’s suspicion towards Howellsian realism rather than a commitment to it.

Bell argues in the second section of his study that naturalist thinking, because of its focus on “brutal” characters and scientific explanations for behavior, could function like realist thinking as a way for a writer to suppress his “artistic” identity, and claim membership in the “real world of men’s activities.” Thus in spite of many naturalist writers’ criticism of Howells and his vision of realism, naturalism was neither an escape from nor a resolution of the contradictions in Howellsian realist thinking. However, Bell argues that in spite of their stylistic affiliation with naturalism, naturalist thinking is ultimately irrelevant to Dreiser and that Crane’s appropriations of naturalist conventions serve only to undermine them. Norris, on the other hand, endorses naturalism to his own detriment; later novels decline in power as he becomes more dismissive of “style” and more committed to “the world of big things.”

In a final chapter devoted to Sarah Orne Jewett, Bell complicates current critical thought on Jewett by demonstrating that she both affirms a women’s community and critiques the lack of freedom that cloisters them. Here and throughout the study, Bell’s use of biographical material is nuanced and effective, and he persuasively revises the readings of new historicist and feminist critics such as June Howard and Marjorie Pryse. However, Bell’s project is limited by equating Howells’s ideas with realist thinking in America. Bell explains his choice as an expression of his desire to take American thought seriously and resist the primacy of French theory in discussions of American realism. Certainly Howells, as editor of *Harpers* and the author of a regular column where he promoted realism, was an influential institutional voice. But equating Howells with realist thinking seals off and vacates literary thought in America, a conspicuously artificial exclusion since Bell later draws comparisons to Emile Zola and acknowledges the trans-Atlantic movement of popular culture ideas such as the cult of masculinity. Nevertheless, within the terms of his study, Bell offers astute readings in engaging and witty prose both accessible to undergraduates and useful to professional scholars.

University of California, Santa Cruz

Becky Roberts

REVOLT OF THE PROVINCES: The Regionalist Movement in America. 1920-1945. By Robert L. Dorman. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1993.

For the past several decades, the history and significance of regionalism has been the subject of intense scrutiny by writers trying to get a handle on what the movement-or style-was all about, and why it failed to sustain itself after the 1930s. In *Revolt of the Provinces: The Regionalist Movement in America. 1929-1945*. Robert L. Dorman recognizes regionalism as one of the outstanding cultural movements of the twentieth century, and argues that its demise stemmed especially from its inability to develop an effective political ideology that could counter, or at least in some way transform, mainstream corporatism and mass culture.

Dorman posits regionalism as an antimodernist critique which argued for the revamping of American values via close attention to the culture of the hinterlands. He begins by focusing on Willa Cather, utilizing her biography and her novels as a vehicle to explore the manner in which regionalism attempted a return to "the emotive, aesthetic, and spiritual power of folkways intertwined with natural environment" (30). Searching for an antidote to modern malaise, the regionalist movement was spearheaded by such diverse personalities as writers like Cather and Mary Austin, critics and historians ranging from Lewis Mumford and Vernon Parrington to Henry Nash Smith and Constance Rourke, painter Thomas Hart Benton, photographer Dorothea Lange, regional planner and sociologist Howard Odum, and the poet-prophets of the Southern Agrarian circle, all intent on "the exploration, cultivation, and preservation" (34) of America's regional cultures. Dorman's second chapter, for example, provides an excellent account of the regionalist romance with Native American culture, idealized as an inspirational model of social, cultural, and environmental harmony for interwar whites. From the buffalo and thunderbirds motifs that architect Bertram Goodhue incorporated into the Nebraska State Capitol (1922-1932) to John Neihardt's 1932 book *Black Elk Speaks*, regionalist seized on Native American culture as an "aesthetic to heal the breaches of modernity" (61). In the process of such celebration and appropriation, they largely ignored the diversity and complexity of Indian culture. American culture, particularly modern culture, is about transformation and change and the regionalist insistence on capturing and somehow keeping the culture of the folk static (and hence, stagnant) belies their own inability to reconcile cultural reconstruction with the realities of modern life.

In the second and third parts of the book, Dorman considers how regionalism, a spontaneous movement with no real center, failed to convince most Americans of the "persuasiveness" of a more democratic folk culture. Led by intellectuals largely removed from the folk, thwarted by the financial exigencies of the Great Depression which allowed, for instance, few venues in the world of publishing, and finally, easily coopted by a New Deal emphasis on national pluralism, Dorman argues that regionalism was unable to counter the ideology of American exceptionalism. Regionalism could never quite account for the "hidden history" of regional race and class diversity, the subject of Dorman's fifth chapter, nor could it resolve the conflict between pervasive corporatism and rampant individualism. While New Deal culture spoke to regional American diversity-Dorman discusses

the *American Guide* series of the Federal Writers Project, and other authors have discussed the hundreds of post office murals painted under the Works Progress Administration-Dorman argues that these forms of regionalist culture diluted “any and all political content” (301) and therefore “tended to encourage complacency and undercut the very public pressure for basic reform that New Dealers and regionalist alike desired” (302). Still, a regionalist aesthetic did make significant inroads in film, novels, and art during the 1930s-as King Vidor’s *Our Daily Bread* (1934), John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and the numerous pictures by regionalist painters Benton and Grant Wood attest. The widespread popularity of the regionalist style during the years of the Great Depression reveals the significant cultural power that it held at this time; a larger question is its failure to sustain itself during the 1940s.

In the Epilogue to *Revolt of the Provinces*, Dorman provides an intriguing analogy between interwar regionalism and American environmentalism of the late 1960s and 1970s. Both, Dorman argues, because of the lack of a coherent political ideology, failed to become effective reformist movements. Both, by dealing with single issues-regional folkways, regional ecologies-failed to address the problems of whole systems, cultural, environmental, and political. Today, a growing cadre of what has been called “new regionalist,” including environmentalists, urban planners, and public artists, are perhaps more aware of the necessity of addressing the whole sphere of the American scene, including both its cities and its provinces. For them, this book will provide a good overview of the pitfalls to avoid and the possibilities that still exist in the transformation and reconstruction of American culture.

University of Colorado, Boulder

Erika Doss

PERFORMING THE PILGRIMS. By Stephen Eddy Snow. Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi. 1993.

Stephen Eddy Snow deals with perhaps the most exciting of developments in the last twenty years in presenting history to a broad popular audience. *Performing the Pilgrims* discusses “the new genre” of dramatic representation of historical characters to conjure up a sense of contact with the past among audiences or visitors to site such as the reconstructed Plymouth Plantation, which is the locus of Snow’s analysis.

Snow brings to this account personal experience with enacting characters in this setting, as well as an anthropological-dramatic perspective. Perhaps most valuable are the personal and anecdotal aspects of the book that give a gracefully perceptive behind-the-scenes picture of the people and processes involved in the impersonating. Snow relies on Victor Turner’s “liminal” or “liminoid” and Mircea Eliade’s “*illus tempus*” in suggesting that these performances are part of “a reactualization of ‘tribal history.’” The parallels between the structuring of a usable past in all societies are clear enough, but such easy anthropological truisms deflect some attention from the peculiarly intellectual, whimsical, and transitory modern sense of history found in the interplay of modern tourists and informants pretending to live in an earlier world.

Snow's book is much more informative about the paid pretenders than the paying ones, who also must play a role in this ritual which depends as much on the willing suspension of belief as of disbelief on both sides. The performers' handling of their workaday seventeenth-century identities and their off-job twentieth-century sensibility is well brought out, as are the varieties of drama presented: highly planned and half-scripted formal scenes, spontaneous incidents that one or more performers plot, and the steady improvised dialogue as tourists and pretended Pilgrims meet and interact. Snow discusses the tourists, too, though primarily from the interpreters' view or as a group to be segregated into categories on the basis of involvement. What these tourists want and get from the encounters, and what is learned concerns Snow little. Yet a setting where one meets embodiments of one's predecessors, asks questions of them, and is surprised, irritated, amused or dubious about the answers suggests an involvement quite distant from "a ritual of ancestor worship." In fact it resembles a process of "ancestor interrogation," which all recognize is a combination of truth-telling *and* pretending that forces the participant audience toward critical skepticism.

Snow's relative unconcern for the process of historical learning in the dramas causes him to be puzzled by those impersonators who balk at being called actors. He argues quite rightly that acting is always going on, but doesn't fully recognize how fundamentally this is educational theater with the goal of amusing yoked but subordinated to that of informing and deepening historical understanding. This contributes to what is the dubious tying of the living history movement, by Snow and in most other related studies, to the counterculture. Snow sees Jim Deetz's work at Plimouth beginning in 1969 as inaugurating the new approach. Deetz's influence was one of self-conscious debunking, but historical impersonation began more than a half-decade later, at the end of the Nixon and the beginning of the Carter administration when the nation moved toward the restoration of a more quizzical respect for traditionalism.

Snow's generally smooth and intelligent presentation gives a richer human face to the living history movement than it has previously had, especially to the paid performer's role in it. That the reader wishes to know more about its effects on the paying performers can be seen, in part, as an aspect of the book's success.

University of Maryland David Grimsted

DECLARING INDEPENDENCE: Jefferson, Natural Language and the Culture of Performance. By Jay Fliegelman. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. 1993.

At a time when literary scholarship has become increasingly inaccessible to scholars not familiar with the most recent theoretical vocabulary, Jay Fliegelman's *Declaring Independence* serves as a useful reminder that critical "reading against the grain" need not be a painful experience for audiences' not steeped in post-structuralist thought. This volume is distinguished by its originality, erudition, and graceful prose. Although Fliegelman's work is informed by the new historicist turn in literary study, theory is deftly integrated into analysis without distracting the reader. His work provides an excellent illustration of the interpretive power of recent theory and a reminder of some of the more controversial aspects of new historicist techniques.

Fliegelman sets out to recover the lost world of eighteenth-century rhetorical theory and practice. He views the new culture of performance as an indispensable background against which Jefferson's Declaration and virtually all American political rhetoric must be placed. Fliegelman's other goal is to rethink and expand the range of facts that might legitimately be construed as relevant to understanding historical documents from this period. In addition to the more familiar discourses of law, political theory, and moral philosophy, Fliegelman focuses on the distinctive discourses embodied in the musical fugue, the Windsor chair, authorship, facial expression, and Jefferson's penmanship.

It would be impossible in a short review to do justice to the nuances of Fliegelman's reading of these diverse texts. Two examples will have to serve as illustrations of his method. Fliegelman explores the Declaration as an artifact illustrative of a new approach to communication. He builds his argument on a clever reading of one of the surviving rough drafts of the Declaration which contained a cryptic set of markings. In Fliegelman's view these marks were intended to help readers achieve a rhythmic delivery when reciting the words of the Declaration aloud. For Fliegelman, these marks provide clues to an aspect of Jeffersonian discourse that has been ignored by previous scholarly accounts. The new science of rhetoric that Fliegelman elucidates was part of a culture of performance that valued a "natural style of speech." Of course the very idea of a natural style contradicted the idea of true naturalness. According to Fliegelman this new style argued that when properly guided artifice might actually achieve a more perfect form of naturalness. This insight into the discursive construction of American culture provides a new way of conceptualizing one of the central paradoxes of early American politics: how could a gentry elite affirm the idea that representatives ought to be a mirror of their constituents? The new science of rhetoric provided a justification for the idea that it was possible to artificially recreate nature in a more perfect form. The voice of the people would be refined and improved and actually made more natural by gentry politicians schooled in the new science of rhetoric.

Fliegelman is no less dazzling, but much less persuasive, when he reads a Windsor Chair as a political text. The Windsor chair was distinguished by its utilitarian design: more comfortable than slat back chairs and less cumbersome than heavy baroque furniture. Each of the parts of the Windsor was constructed from a different wood that not only allowed the chairs to be produced at a more reasonable price but also allowed the furniture maker to take advantage of the different characteristics of various materials. The piece was made visually harmonious by being painted in a single color, uniting the different parts of the chair into a single whole. The Windsor was therefore a symbolic incarnation of America itself. It was a construct imported from Britain that was perfected in America, a "material culture version of *e pluribus unum*, it was a whole not only greater than the sum of its parts but one whose heterogeneous materials and connections . . . could often no longer be discerned in that whole." (71) Light and easily moved, Windsor's chairs symbolized the openness of American society. When contrasted with the heavy more ornate furniture favored by European aristocrats, the Windsor was a model of republican simplicity. Fliegelman notes that Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson each owned Windsors. The members of the Continental Congress sat in Windsor's as they deliberated on American Independence. Fliegelman's

intertextual reading of the connections between Windsor chairs and American political discourse is a fascinating example of new historicist technique. From the point of view of an older historicist tradition, however, there is a problem with Fliegelman's analysis. Fliegelman never provides any evidence that his extremely clever reading was shared by a single participant in the events he describes. This particular type of new historicist reading differs from Fliegelman's discussion of the culture of performance in one important respect. In the former case Fliegelman can provide evidence that the historical actors he discusses were conscious of the new approach to rhetoric. In the case of the Windsor chair, Fliegelman had no evidence that contemporaries ever read the text in the manner he describes. The former hermeneutic strategy is grounded in the actual response of historical readers, while the latter is grounded in the modern critic's reading. Historians are likely to be quite comfortable with reader-oriented new historicist interpretations. Fliegelman, a literary critic, can hardly be faulted for transgressing the interpretive rules governing another scholarly discourse. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a truly innovative inter-disciplinary work that would not challenge these sorts of divisions. Fliegelman's book will certainly impress literary scholars comfortable with its methods and ought to inspire historians to think hard about the creative challenge posed by the new historicism.

Ohio State University

Saul Cornell

AMERICA'S BRITISH CULTURE. By Russell Kirk. New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers. 1993.

It is important to understand both what this book is and what it is not. It is not a scholarly treatise on America's cultural debt to Britain and Ireland. Rather (at 100 pp. or text), it is clearly an essay written by the late Russell Kirk for a general readership in defense of America's heritage and institutions against those whom he characterizes as the "haters of inherited high culture . . . within the Academy—embittered ideologues, their character warped in the turbulent 'sixties, whose ambition it is to pull down whatever has long been regarded as true and noble" (p. 7).

As this suggests, Kirk's targets include all who in his view have debased high culture or fostered a more general cultural disintegration in our day; in particular, he seeks to discredit the proponents of multiculturalism, who in his words "ratlike . . . gnaw at the foundations of society—quite as Karl Marx admonished intellectuals to do" (p. 8). Whether he manages to do so by the end of *America's British Culture*, however, many may doubt. For one thing, leaving aside the objections that could be made from the Left against his defense here (drawn principally from Burke and Eliot) of aristocracies and cultural elites, his invective against the forces of cultural darkness (whom he literally demonizes as partisans of "the operations of Chaos and old Night" [p. 6]) is such that Kirk often comes across merely as an unthinking reactionary raging "to keep the past upon its throne." Even if some of his opponents deserve this (since they themselves engage in similar accusatory hyperbole), he would have been better advised to take their arguments' serious claims—and then refute them with telling civility. Likewise, even in a work aimed at the general reader, Kirk would have been more effective had his scholarship

been better in advancing each of his “four major fashions . . . [in which] the British mind and British experience . . . have shaped the American culture”: the English language and literature; the common law; English traditions of representative government; and Anglo-Saxon mores (p. 11). For it does his cause little good to discover that his discussion of English literature is the expression of its collective soul; or to find that he traces American republicanism and adherence to the common law almost exclusively to Blackstone (without reference to Locke, the Common Sense philosophers, or the radical Whig and Country party traditions). Similarly, students of American social and cultural history (even those on the Right) will find much here that is, at the very least, oversimplified or colored by the author’s reaction to his adversaries.

Yet having said this, let it also be said that in writing this, his last book, Russell Kirk has also done his readers a service—paradoxically, especially for those most likely to disagree with him. For in a world in which the dangers of balkanization are manifest, and in a culture in which decay (if not decadence) is palpable on almost every urban street corner, the Left above all needs the corrective of some intelligent criticism, as much of group interest and victimization politics as of the more naive and ahistorical brands of multiculturalism. Such an alternative view ought to come not only from moderates but from conservatives as well, for whom social cohesion and the avoidance of disjunction from the past are primary values. This book will undoubtedly be a starting point for such an effort on the Right, one which would (one suspects) in essence rewrite much of *America’s British Culture* in a more responsible way. And so, in so far as it furthers this prospect, we are all (whatever our personal beliefs) indebted to the author for this “mean and ribald scolding” of the Salmasiuses of our age. For if in doing so he perhaps gives too little ground to the party of the future, he also provides evidence for the importance of having an American party of the past as well.

Harvard University

K. P. Van Anglen

CULTURES OF UNITED STATES IMPERIALISM. Editors Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993.

In this extraordinary new collection of essays on imperialist discourse and practice in the U.S., editors Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease bring together some of the most provocative, path-breaking work being done in American literary and cultural studies today. The volume significantly reformulates the terrain of the field by questioning the dominant paradigms of exceptionalism and nationalism which for so long have defined the study of American literature and culture. In his introductory essay, Pease challenges these earlier paradigms by formulating a methodological approach which combines anti-imperialist criticism with what he terms “global-localism.” Together, these approaches preserve the former’s critique of exploitative and coercive relations while internationalizing the often limited geopolitical fields within which such relations are typically situated. This revisionist approach, Pease argues, enables the contributors to the volume to stage “an uncovering” of imperialist tactics often “covered up” and “unrecognized” in U.S. cultural and literary history. At the same time, it allows the “restoration” (23) of

alternative and heterogeneous histories “formerly submerged” (22) by Cold War ideology and Cold War-era cultural criticism.

Amy Kaplan’s introductory essay performs precisely such gestures of disclosure and restoration through a reading of Perry Miller’s founding American studies text, *Errand into the Wilderness*. Kaplan argues that Miller’s articulation of American exceptionalism displaces “repressed alternatives” from America onto Africa, thus concealing “an imperial unconscious” (4) that has remained obscured not only within the academic discipline which Miller inaugurates, but within U.S. political history. Thus Kaplan and Pease both employ rhetorics of discovery and exposure while positioning their book against earlier definitions of American studies. When read in conjunction with the twenty-four subsequent essays analyzing American empire, those rhetorics begin to bear an uncanny resemblance to the discourse of imperialism itself. On the cover of the volume, for example, is an image of Hercules pushing apart a mountainous cleft to create a passage for the newly opened Panama Canal. The illustration is taken from the poster for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, and also appears in Bill Brown’s remarkable essay on science fiction, technology, and “the prosthetics of empire.” As Brown argues, the image represents the magnificence of imperial power while masking its exploitative effects. When Kaplan wrests apart Perry Miller’s exceptionalist text in order to prepare the way for the study of American imperialism, her critical excavation mirrors the muscular action of Hercules. This potentially discomfiting alliance between the strategies of its critique, suggests the kinds of substantial critical issues which will be raised by the always fascinating and often brilliant contributions to this collection.

Essays in the first section of the volume—by Myra Jehlen, Priscilla Wald, Gauri Viswanathan, Eric Cheyfitz, Bill Brown, and Richard Slotkin—further the thesis offered by Kaplan and Pease by uncovering imperialist subtexts within nationalist discourse. These studies investigate subjects as varied as fifteenth-century Mexico and Cortez, nineteenth-century jurisprudence and James Fenimore Cooper, Yale University and the Orient, science fiction and prosthetic limbs, and Buffalo Bill’s “wild west.” Together, these studies raise an initial spectre of an omnipotent and inescapable American empire, a spectre which the following section both extends and complicates. Essays by Vicente Rafael, Amy Kaplan, Donna Haraway, José David Saldívar, Vicente Diaz, and Christopher Wilson suggest the critical value and political importance of situating American studies within a global context. Their analyses of U.S. penetrations into and contests with the Phillipines, Spain, Africa, and Mexico, explore the ways in which domestic spectacles of empire and of nation are subtended and sometimes subverted by exchanges across racial, gendered, and national boundaries.

Contributors to the third section—on colonization and its resistance—include Walter Benn Michaels, Kenneth Warren, Doris Sommer, Kevin Gaines, William Cain and Eric Lott. These critics’ discussions treat Southern plantation fiction, Langston Hughes’ representation of Africa, readerly incompetence in Rigoberta Menchú and Toni Morrison, pan-Africanism in Pauline Hopkins, W.E.B. DuBois and communism, and the homosociality of blackface performances. These essays raise and engage crucial questions about the shifting place of racial identities within constructions of nation and empire. The final section, on “imperial spectacles,” includes cultural critiques of the Gulf War and its media representations by

Michael Rogin, Susan Jeffords, Donald Pease, and Lynda Boose; of Tokyo Disneyland by Mary Yoko Brannen; and of ethnographic discourse on the "primitive" by Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington.

Together these essays cover immense historical and geographical terrain, employ a wide range of critical methodologies, investigate an impressive spectrum of cultural materials, and practice interdisciplinary cultural studies at its best. Aside from Jehlen's study of the Americas in the colonial era, however, all of the essays investigate a "postcolonial" United States. The absence of studies of pre-nineteenth-century America leaves unexamined a crucial dimension to the set of provocative questions which Kaplan poses in her introduction: "How would th[e] Eurocentric notion of postcoloniality apply to the history of American imperialism, which often does not fit this model? What would postcolonial culture mean in relation to U.S. imperialism, . . .? Is it possible yet to speak of 'postimperial' culture, and how might it differ from the postcolonial?" (17). If this collection does not always provide answers to such questions, its consistently excellent essays present insightful case studies which begin to explore and to open up the vast subject of American imperialism (even if such an accomplishment has its own critically imperialist resonances). *Cultures of United States Imperialism* should prove an invaluable tool, as well as a fascinating read, for Americanists, postcolonialists, and scholars interested in the cultural and racial politics of empire. The book makes its mark not only by emphasizing the centrality of imperialism in U.S. cultural history, but by tracing out some of the complex transcultural and transnational dimensions of U.S. literary and cultural formations. As such, this collection indicates an emergent field of critical issues within American studies, and should do much to facilitate new interdisciplinary dialogues.

Auburn University

Michelle Burnham

POLITICS, CULTURE, AND THE WAR OF IDEOLOGY. By Gary Dorrien. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1993.

The group of thinkers who won the often unwelcome label "neoconservatives" constitute the subject of this book. Arguably, they were the most influential intellectual movement of the 1970s and 1980s. They found their way into positions of power in government, they dominated key journals of opinion, and they occupied seats in the policy-oriented "think tanks" to which liberals ascribed much sinister influence in the business-government nexus that runs American politics. As such, they had plenty of enemies—their liberal ideological rivals, of course, but other conservative intellectuals in the United States, too.

Gary Dorrien's study will confirm many of the prejudices of the "paleoconservatives," older voices of the right who had carried the fight against liberal politics and modern culture for several decades before the arrival of the "upstart" neocons. The paleoconservatives, who so conveniently overlooked the former communists and radicals that fueled the American intellectual right in the 1950s and 1960s, asked how this group, heavily Jewish and ex-leftist, could inherit the mantle of conservative leadership. For the radical background is the key to the neoconservative genealogy, Dorrien believes. Therefore, the first sections of this book rehearse the intramural quarrels of the American left in the 1930s and 1940s,

with particular focus on the followers of Max Shachtman. This part of radicalism never joined in worship of the Soviet Union and always resented the sentimental and often middle-class intellectuals who did. These prejudices define for Dorrien the unifying animus of neoconservatism, its abiding disdain for the "New Class." As products of city streets and ghettos, or of ethnic enclaves removed from WASP centers of social privilege, the neoconservatives have seen themselves as outsiders at war against the liberal elite of academe, the media, and the government bureaucracies.

Dorrien illustrates this continuity with the Old Left persuasively, but a reader of this book may be left to wonder, along with the paleoconservatives, just what is authentically conservative in neoconservatism. The reader will, however, gain an informative and expansive look at the neoconservative movement and its affiliates. Analytical depth derives from the author's composite portraits of four neoconservative thinkers—Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, Michael Novak, and Peter Berger. Each of these chapters provides an intellectual odyssey that ends in neoconservatism, and in these cases they illustrate Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant identities that inform the progressions. The depth provided by these histories also demonstrates, the uniformity suggested in the book's title notwithstanding, the considerable variety of opinion that flourishes in neoconservative ranks.

Individuals interested in the continuing history of intellectual conservatism in the United States will find the last two chapters especially informative. Here one meets the larger cast of neoconservative partisans—Elliott Abrams, Ben Wattenberg, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Joshua Muravchik, and others—and also enters the internecine warfare between the two conservative camps. The peevish and petty prejudices of the paleoconservative against the neocons have hurt the conservative movement and deprived it of the greater unity that underscores it.

Dorrien respects the neoconservatives without sharing their views. He deigns not to quarrel with them on all issues, but feels compelled on occasions to intervene with liberal pieties that correct neoconservative misunderstandings. But he has read and digested the expansive literature of neoconservatism and in its breadth of coverage has produced a most useful book.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

J. David Hoeveler, Jr.

THE SATURATED SELF: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life. By Kenneth Gergen. New York: Basic Books. 1991.

Gergen, a professor of psychology, brings to the massive literature on postmodernism a therapeutic focus on the self. He succeeds in presenting the essentials of the postmodern critique in direct, sometimes elegant prose free that is thoughtful and jargon free. This skillful undertaking makes the book useful for both undergraduate and graduate classrooms and for the curious public wishing an introduction to the study of the postmodern period. In the concluding chapters, however, Gergen's analysis becomes more problematic. His discussion of postmodern communitarianism necessarily lacks clarity, for this subject, has not received adequate attention. Addressing the subject of his vision requires the self-consciousness of that community. The irony of creating a consensus among un-

stable consciousnesses constantly reshaped by what he describes as “technoculture” is beyond the ability of a single book to resolve.

Gergen argues that “what is generally characterized as the postmodern condition within the culture is largely a by-product of the century’s technologies of social saturation” (xi). This technologically intrusive culture has produced “multiphrenia,” a fragmentation of the self, (16) manifested in the multiple, partial identities (49) that are maintained, largely through electronic means. In his effective description of the dismantlement of the self that has been constructed by periods of romanticism and modernism, Gergen unconsciously evokes a weirdly postmodern, mediated de Tocqueville: “In an important sense, as social saturation proceeds we become pastiches, imitative assemblages of each other” (71). This is the fate of the poet in a world of FAX machines and Internet connections.

From the self Gergen continues outward to a useful but not original rehearsal of postmodern culture, in which “The traditional categories of cultural life become blurred” (118) and systems of knowledge and structures of power are intertwined (123-125). Playfulness and devotion to irony as critique overtake traditional modes of analysis that were based on modernist faith in rationality or romantic searches for essences.

Then Gergen attempts some social reconstruction, even personal healing. As he proceeds, his argument becomes increasingly problematic and, at the same time, important to consider. Once again, he starts with the self. Consider the possibility, he offers, that we are entering a new stage in which the self “is redefined as no longer an essence in itself, but relational” (146). Accept, in short, a pastiche personality in place of the autonomous self of the modernist period from which we have emerged. This would salve the wound created by multiphrenia, which would now be a fundamental condition rather than a malady. Accept the fact that inner conviction has become a matter of performance (186) and listen to a “forgotten theme in the melody of postmodern play: the theme of social interdependence” (194).

Gergen tentatively moves out into this community of interdependence. Invoking chaos theory, Gergen presents the case that progress has already proven itself to be a myth (236). With the autonomous self demystified, individual will disappear into group dynamics. Now all discourses can be heard, in effect, from the inside out, through the “heteroglossia of being” (247) at the core of the fragmented self. Here Gergen invokes Bakhtin, but he also feels significantly alone: “These insights are unsteady and imperfectly developed, because the discourse of relationship has scarcely been unfolded” (243).

He is right, and all of us need elaboration of the communitarian possibilities of the postmodern critique. Gergen’s final chapter suffers from the expansiveness of a theory that is suggestive rather than systematic. To a reader studying the problems of the contemporary city, for example, to construct postmodernism as a form of social tolerance seems a bit off the mark. “To silence, incarcerate, or kill adherents of different political, religious, economic, or ethical discourses (and their related practices) would cease to make sense” (254) is not a satisfying conclusion.

But what sort of conclusion could one expect from an analysis of unfinished cultural work? Gergen has excluded a lot to bring us to this point of communal discussion. He acknowledges that his argument centers on the experience of the technologically advanced. All of his examples comes from the privileged classes

and are scarcely inflected by gender, not to mention race or ethnicity. The rest of us, Gergen asserts, will be saturated through an inexorable cultural osmosis.
University of Wyoming Eric J. Sandeen

CRITICAL ISSUES IN PUBLIC ART. Edited by Harriet Senie and Sally Webster. New York: Harper Collins. 1992.

Unwittingly, Senie and Webster have provided the reader with a deft review of their co-edited project *Critical Issues in Public Art*. Tucked away, nearly buried in the center of the book, Rosylan Deutsche's essay "Public Art and Its Uses" appears tenth in a series of twenty-two entries. Deutsche's essay, here dramatically abbreviated, was published initially in 1988 and has enjoyed numerous reprinting. Hers was the first study to survey the terrain of public art as a volatile discourse, the first to notice that "traditional art-historical paradigms cannot explicate the social function of public art," and the first to argue that public art is never simply a reflection of social realities. Deutsche trudged across the topography of the spatial politics of redevelopment programs in New York City looking for public art, and waded right into the difficult contradictions posed by spatial praxis, artistic production, and urban public. Deutsche was the first to expose and indict the complicities in public art: Public art can and often does extend and support the processes of urban gentrification. These processes are further reinforced by discursive practices. Historical writing especially, fails as a discursive strategy for spatial practice, Deutsche observes, because of its tendency to preserve, contextualize, and revive. As a result we have become sensitive to the limitations of traditional investigations of public art that habitually rely on history for case studies, political theory, and conventional social theory.

In the Senie/Webster project Deutsche's calls for "accountability" on the part of artists and historians are silenced, or rather, surrounded by good intention, good information, and good evidence history. This study does not return to formalism; reproductions of the works discussed are rare and descriptions rarer. Here, the aura of historical significance—self-sufficient, archeological, normative—replaces the auratic object.

The essays selected by Senie and Webster to address nationalism, patronage, and public outcry in America's history of public art may have been contributed by a cross-section of scholars—art historians and studio artists, curators, a philosopher, social historian, and professors of English and American Studies. Yet, they share the same intellectual imperative, "recover" public art's history. Webster's essay "Writing History/Painting History" sets the tone for the book calling for a "open-ended," "non-judgmental," and "evenhanded" interpretation of the past. Whatever that is. The inherent value of empirical, positivist writing (art writing, that is) is the real subject of the book and public art a vehicle, albeit a fashionable one, for recovering the History in art, we assume, from the theory bullies.

In *Critical Issues* recovery is a gesture meant to impress us with history's diligence and its concern for hard subjects: Aids, sexual politics, race relations. It is a history that draws from those deliberately suppressed and repressed in the past in the form of stories, stories of identity mostly: national, American, gay, veteran, Jew, public. Recovery is always a gesture of urgency but rarely one of critical

interpretation. These (his) stories must be told for their meanings are self-evident. Disponzio's essay, for example, on the sexual politics of public art recreates the intrigue and injustice surrounding the hearings in 1980 on George Segal's plan to install *Gay Liberation* in Christopher Park in Manhattan. Disponzio writes to make us feel harassed, to raise our blood pressure. Yet his account is a surface tremor, an aftershock. Critical questions (those regarding the initial selection of Segal to the project, the gay on gay violence sponsored by the controversy, and the final installation of the piece in 1992) are flatly neglected.

Recovery is a gesture simultaneously of rescue and of containment. Stories like Griswold's on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial must be in themselves transformative. They are not obliged to examine their own discourse or language, or to interrogate their structure. Their purpose is to heal. Even when tracking across the terrain of "myth" and of "ruin" Pomeroy does not dare cite his sources as Barthes and Benjamin in his discussion of Mt. Rushmore. The terms of these histories—public, community, stereotype, memory—problematic concepts at best, are here as our reassuring guides. Hayden's essay is the most troubling for it suffers most at the hands of historicist assumptions. Concerned that planners and architects work together to develop of common language, Hayden calls for a fresh approach to public space that considers race, gender, class, and ethnicity in such a way as to establish new networks of public spaces. She desires to go from history to practice and beyond to education. Yet her Power of Place projects in Los Angeles, dedicated to the economic contribution of city's ethnic and racial groups, confuse historical experience with lived experience. Is this why it is so difficult to rethink how we do historical work?

University of Kansas

Marie Jeannine Aquillino

MARGARET FULLER: An American Romantic Life. Volume I: The Private Years. By Charles Capper. New York: Oxford University Press. 1992.

Through extensive use of the voluminous correspondence and journals of Margaret Fuller, her family, and friends, Charles Capper explores the frequently troubled development of Fuller as an American female avant-garde intellectual and cultural critic. *The Private Years*, first of a two volume biography, analyzes Timothy Fuller's influence on his daughter's intellectual precocity and the later impact of European Romanticism and American Transcendentalism on her identity between 1810-1840. Capper focuses on Fuller's struggle to reconcile her "masculine" mind and ambition with her feminine sensitivities and restrictive sociopolitical circumstances.

To untangle Fuller's paradigmatic life, Capper relies on intellectual history, women's history of the social construction of gender through education and female relationships, and psychoanalysis of Fuller's mental and physical health. In his bibliographic notes, which are extensive, Capper acknowledges the centrality of feminist-oriented psychoanalysis in his methodology; however, he seems more directly drawing on traditional Freudianism—an approach that jars occasionally with the women's history analyses he incorporates in the biography. The tension is most apparent in his discussion of the intense homosocial, perhaps homoerotic, relationships Fuller developed primarily with her women students. It is also key to

Capper's understanding of Fuller's frustrated and painful attempts to reconcile her "bi-gender" identity for herself.

Margaret Fuller's membership in the intellectual avant-garde arose in part from her father's tutoring and her problematic place as his intellectual "companion" (27). Timothy Fuller fostered his daughter's "relentless intellectual labor" (11). That she also developed an ambition for public recognition at the expense of traditional accepted feminine behavior did not initially trouble him. By mid-twenties, Fuller broke free of her father's direction and began a self-selected curriculum of European Romanticism—an "avant-garde achievement" (90). From this reading, she would eventually connect with the nascent American Transcendentalist movement, although she did not immediately espouse all its ideas. Her intellectual individuality at this point was evident in her "presciently 'modern'" (178) literary analyses of Wordsworth and Coleridge and in her insightful defense of Goethe, and later of Balzac and George Sand.

From her voracious reading, Fuller came to see herself as an intellectual with a mission—more completely aligning herself with Transcendental ideals. This self-concept was further reinforced in her teaching, initially shaped by her association with Bronson Alcott. In her own schools in Providence and Boston, Fuller practiced a method that stressed independent thinking and imaginative responses. These avant-garde tenets, especially as applied to women's education, were most fully developed in her series of "Conversations" for Boston women and opened up opportunities for their intellectual growth far beyond what was normally expected in female seminaries. In her stress on the intellectual life as a moral and aesthetic imperative that applied equally to women as to men, Fuller also provided a forum and a critical method in the Conversations that made Transcendentalism's latest concepts accessible to women previously excluded by lack of collegiate training. According to Capper, the legacy of these Conversations was the beginning of Fuller's career as a Transcendental leader and of the growth of organized American feminism for which the Conversations, "culturally subversive," would serve as the "central precedent and model" for nurturing "women's intellectual autonomy and self-emancipation" (306).

Capper's intent, however, is not to reconstruct Margaret Fuller's identity solely as a member of the intellectual avant-garde since gender clearly problematized both that role and social relationships for Fuller. Critical of her "masculine mind", she recognized that she had no avenue other than self-education or outlet other than writing or teaching for that identity. Initially Fuller rejected writing out of self-doubt and lack of role models. Like many other women, she turned to the second profession—teaching—out of economic necessity. However, Fuller's reconciliation of her divided self began to appear in her teaching of other women. It was further bolstered through the welcomed advice and correspondence of Emerson, who consistently encouraged her in self-reliance and in the belief that the private writings of the "common"—like conversations—were as valuable as those of the public culture.

At the close of Capper's first volume of his biography, Margaret Fuller has emerged from the private world, in part, by carrying it into the public through her position as editor of the *Dial*. Although plagued by self-doubt arising out of her gendered alienation from "public roles and, therefore, all traditional public literary forms" (338), Fuller was positioned for this turning point by her ambition for a

professional career, her skill as a literary critic and as a social mediator, and her commitment to Transcendentalism as a means of revolutionizing American cultural taste. Capper's rich biography invites one into conversation with a complex personality and shifting intellectual and social currents that surely will continue in the second volume, *The Public Years*.

Wartburg College

Cheryl Rose Jacobsen

MASTERS & LORDS: Mid-19th Century U.S. Planters and Prussian Junkers. By Shearer Davis Bowman. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

Shearer Davis Bowman's *Masters & Lords* represents an ambitious and largely successful effort to do a genuinely comparative, scholarly analysis of two mid-nineteenth century landed elites. Thoroughly researched, well written and carefully argued, Professor Bowman's study highlights the important similarities as well as the striking differences between the planters of the antebellum South and the owners of "knights' estates" (*Rittergüter*) in East Elbian Prussia. Bowman resists the temptation to view either elite as monolithic and convincingly stresses the "significant differences between their historical milieus." Bowman maintains that the majority of planters and Junkers were conservative agrarian capitalist entrepreneurs. He argues that "planters and Junkers each became the font of an authentic and powerful conservatism within the context of the nineteenth-century Western world, even if measured against the standards set by Edmund Burke and his seminal *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790)." Indeed, Bowman's subtle and complex analysis of the similarities between Old Prussian and antebellum planter thought as conservative ideologies stands as perhaps his most impressive achievement.

In a statement which typifies both his modesty and clarity of expression, Bowman admits at the outset that whereas his sources on planters "include manuscripts found in a number of archives located south of the Mason-Dixon Line, my research on Junkers extends to published documents only." I would venture to say that most specialists in American Studies or United States history will be favorably impressed with both the amount and the quality of the evidence which Bowman draws from manuscript sources on antebellum Southern planters, while finding the information he provides from Prussian and German sources of comparable quality and abundance. In fact, what this reviewer found most notable about the sources was the way in which they repeatedly drove the author and the reader to acknowledge the importance of race and race prejudice as the most striking difference between the thinking and historical milieu of planters, on the one hand, and Junkers, on the other. From the point of view of those of us who teach United States history, the distinctiveness and crucial importance of racism should be one of the most important lessons we learn from this comparative study.

From the beginning of his book, Bowman highlights the "dramatic impact of the black/white dichotomy and anti-Negro racism on the Old South" as a recurring theme (18). "The plantation gentry's position," he insists, "depended upon a rigid caste distinction between black slavery and white freedom that was foreign to Prussia's traditions of hierarchical corporatism" (116). Building upon an argument made by Edmund Morgan in *American Slavery, American Freedom*, Bowman

stresses this crucial difference between planters and Junkers by pointing to the similarity between Morgan's analysis and arguments offered by pro-slavery ideologues John C. Calhoun and Thomas R. Dew in the 1830s. "Antebellum planters could preach and even practice democratic republicanism among whites," he concludes, "first and foremost because their labor force was excluded by racial enslavement from the political process, and because nonslaveholding whites could and did share in the planters' racist contempt for the deprived and depraved Negro" (161).

Though some may wish to quarrel with Bowman's desire to label planters and Junkers "agrarian capitalists" or his insistence that neither East Elbian serfdom nor Southern slavery were legacies of medieval feudalism, my greatest disappointment with this otherwise exemplary study was the brevity of the author's treatment of the actual relationship between members of the two elites and their respective labor forces. Although it would be unfair to criticize Bowman unduly for failing to discuss in detail an area he had no intention of emphasizing, this reviewer would argue that his book would have been significantly enriched by such an undertaking. In particular, readers less interested in ideology than in actual behavior will regret that Bowman waits until the epilogue before devoting much attention to post-emancipation labor relations. More detailed consideration of the comparison between the plight of Prussian agricultural workers in the aftermath of the abolition of serfdom and the freedmen in the wake of the abolition of slavery would have reinforced the recurrent theme of the importance of racism while permitting the author to draw additional conclusions concerning relations between agrarian capitalists and their labor force. When all is said and done, however, that reservation is a relatively minor quibble with an otherwise impressively executed analysis.

Pembroke Hill School

Carl R. Schulkin

LIFE AT FOUR CORNERS: Religion, Gender and Education in a German-Lutheran Community, 1868-1945. By Carol K. Coburn. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. 1992.

When German-Lutheran immigrants settled around Block Corners, Kansas, they sought to transfer, virtually intact, the cultural belief systems of their homeland. In *Four Corners*, Coburn analyzes the social structures that re-established those cherished values and successfully perpetuated them through four subsequent generations. The author focuses on the church, family, and school as the central educational and cultural influences in that socialization process. Especially because of the rural isolation and size of this religious, ethnic community, with a peak membership in their Trinity Lutheran Church of 485 people in 1920, these three influences wielded unusual authority in eliciting expected gender and generational behaviors. Coburn begins with the community's mid nineteenth century settlement. She ends with the 1940s, when modernization and mobility finally affected Block's previous cultural insulation and when the United States' involvement in World War II called this German community's resistance to "Americanization" into serious question.

This book is the social history of a patriarchy that includes gender roles as one main focus, but Coburn rejected approaching her topic through the construct

of sex specific "separate spheres," a perspective relied upon by many historians since the 1970s. Like other recent scholars, Coburn sees the construct as more suitable for defining standards of elite urban behavior than for describing the lived experiences of ordinary rural people. She does analyze the patriarchal structure of authority in the Kansas community, the place of women and children within such a society, and the consequences of establishing gendered social institutions. While her analysis is sound, her depictions of the German-Lutheran culture would have benefitted from further mention and examination of selected corresponding elements of "outsider" society, in order to clarify the threat that the Block community felt from the mainstream world of the day.

A study such as this one requires creative and extensive research, as is evidenced in Coburn's attention to varied sources in her effort to document the interdependent lives, the "networks of association," among this group of German-Lutherans. She used church and township records, oral histories, photographs and other items of evocative material culture, and personal papers in this thoroughly interdisciplinary project. The resulting work is a well documented, significant contribution to the historical literature on discrete ethnic communities and to the under-researched area of rural social history. In addition to the value of the specific case under examination, Coburn's identification of the critical factors that enabled this population to resist assimilation for an extended period is a potentially useful point of comparison for other rural culture studies.

Wichita State University

Gayle R. Davis

HITS, RUNS, AND AN ERA: The Pacific Coast League, 1903-58. By Paul J. Zingg and Mark D. Medeiros. Champaign IL: University of Illinois Press. 1994.

Baseball's Pacific Coast League (PCL) has had an especially interesting role in the organized professional version of the sport, much of which is recounted in *Hits, Runs, and an Era*, an attractively laid out and well illustrated popular history. Based on work for an exhibition on the PCL at the Oakland Museum, where co-author Mark D. Medeiros is an associate director, the book concentrates on star athletes, championship competition, and humaninterest vignettes about individual players and their foibles. To this extent, *Hits, Runs, and an Era* will be of special interest to baseball fans. The book presupposes interest in baseball and responds to the appetite for celebration, entertainment, and nostalgia. But it can also serve those interested in local history of regular PCL cities such as Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, to name a few, as well as intermittent PCL towns such as Salt Lake City and Vancouver.

Medeiros and co-author Paul J. Zingg, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, refer to important regional, national, and world developments affecting the PCL. Examples include the military draft during the two world wars and racial desegregation. But these take up only a small share of the text of this work, which focuses much more on career statistics, pennant races, and other matters largely internal to the game.

Zingg and Medeiros refer briefly but clearly to the pertinent studies in the social history of sport by Melvin Adelman, Richard Crepeau, Steven Riess, Jules Tygiel, and others. But, true to the framework of a popular exhibition, they do not

venture as deeply into the PCL as a phenomenon in social history as do the other authors. All the likely critical issues, such as changes in transportation and communication and the unique antitrust exemption exploited by organized baseball, are mentioned but not generally developed. Even the matters of community identity and boosterism, which lurk beneath the surface throughout the PCL story, do not receive extended direct treatment here. Still the chapter endnotes and bibliographical listings will assist inquiring readers in pursuing such matters further.

In one sense, boosters' claims that the PCL should have been accepted as a third major league equal to the National and the American are compromised by one of the key means of proving the quality of PCL players—namely, their movement in and out of major league team rosters. In the end, the “big show” remained the criterion against which even the PCL—once given an anomalous AAAA designation when it sought official parity with the majors—was to be tested.

While *Hits, Runs and an Era* may justify special interest in the PCL among those who are fans of baseball, it may only tantalize those who are not. Playing to the fans tends to exclude those who are not among them. But for those interested in a compact PCL “hall of fame” in book form, this should be a highly satisfying work.

Kansas State University

Donald J. Mrozek

JELLY ROLL, BIX, AND HOAGY: Gennett Studios and the Birth of Recorded Jazz. By Rick Kennedy. Bloomington, ID.: Indiana University Press. 1994.

Gennett Studios was a subsidiary of the Starr Piano Company, Richmond, Indiana, founded in 1914. Starr, which also made phonographs, used its network of salesmen and music stores to hawk a wide array of recordings well into the 1930s. The enterprising family management brought in the jazz pioneers mentioned in the title of Rick Kennedy's stimulating book, as well as perhaps the first biracial jazz recording ensemble, such rural blues masters as Blind Lemon Jefferson and Charlie Patton, and a plethora of Appalachian singers and instrumentalists. The thousands of popular, classical, folk, blues, and “hillbilly” items which Gennett recorded before its demise after 1930 were evanescent; wax test disks were melted down for reuse and metal masters were often sold for scrap. Only a few products of Gennett's rude studios in Richmond and New York City survive in dim recordings transcribed from even dimmer shellac pressings.

Kennedy's book, despite a few factual errors and a nostalgic veneer, is illuminating as a case study of both a short-lived family business success and the creation of America's recorded music legacy. The company's situation within the economic, social, and cultural tendencies of east-central Indiana are keenly delineated. Furniture and piano companies such as Starr had the technical capability and an attentiveness to cultural trends which enabled them to compete in the phonograph and recording industries. Until the mid-1920s, records were novelties. Gennett recorded anyone who paid for the privilege and dispensed meager royalties to best-selling artists. The family thought of the studio as a trivial appendage to its instrument manufacturing business. Gennett's fame as an early jazz studio has obscured its role as a sounding-board for 1920s Indiana. Kennedy corrects this by

showing, for example, that both the Ku Klux Klan and African-American preachers visited Richmond to record their music. Gennett (which happened to employ Klan members but no blacks) even established a Klan music series which served midwestern kleagles for years. Kennedy explains elegantly how the large record companies—against whom Gennett had won patent victories before 1925—finally used the turmoil of the Depression to consolidate their hold on the world market, swallowing Gennett's share of a shrinking pie. Afterward, family feuding and a fling at making sound-effects records preceded the company's demise in the 1940s (and the sale of Starr Piano in 1952).

For historians of recording and music, the Gennett story Kennedy tells so well best illustrates the curious significance of recordings as artifacts, technically and socially flawed simulacra of the history we yearn to recover. As Kennedy notes, "Innovative, timeless jazz improvisation always sounds in the wrong context when it has been reproduced on primitive sound recording technology" (108). This book's many anecdotes illustrate how the contexts were made wrong by technical limitations and the failings of engineers and musicians to master the medium. Fortunately, Kennedy has assembled written and oral evidence in time to supply us with a record of meaning and achievement which Gennett's actual "records," ironically, could not capture.

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CITIES OF THE HEARTLAND: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Midwest. By Jon C. Teaford. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. 1993.

More than just historical narrative, Teaford's text functions also as moral allegory. While it lacks suspense—witness the "rise and fall" in the book's subtitle—it manages to build tension. The reader works through the book's first five chapters—with such optimistic, quintessential Middle-American titles as "Creating the urban Network," "The Emerging Center of Urban America," "In the Cultural Vanguard," and so forth—to the crucial sixth chapter about "After the Heyday," and then on to the anticipated final chapter concerning "The Making of the Rust Belt." Thus, "After Two Centuries" (the title of the book's afterword), David Potter's "People of Plenty" have lost their farms, factories, and even their cities. "Perhaps by the 1990s the notion of 'cities' of the heartland was a conceptual anachronism," Teaford suggests. "Certainly," he concludes, "the so-called cities did not conform to the notion of 'urban' prevailing in 1850 or 1900." What survived, instead, were "vast conurbations defying definition."

The structure of Teaford's account is, at once, chronological, thematic, and systematic. He draws upon classic devices in the writing of urban history to extend his narrative: group biographies of selected cities in the tradition of Constance McLaughlin Green, Richard Wade, and Asa Briggs; topical accounts of municipal reforms and miscellaneous urban movements as employed early by Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., and developed later by Blake McKelvey, among others; and, ever present, a unity transcending-but-encompassing any arbitrary grouping of cities—that of region, as employed by David Goldfield and Blaine Brownell for the urban South. None of this is to date Teaford's work or to confine it to any school

or movement within American urban history; instead, it is to suggest his wide-ranging familiarity with and competence within that subdiscipline.

Cities of the Heartland has much to recommend it: its narrative is straightforward, concise, and readable; its endnotes provide valuable local sources and accounts, supported by references to supplementary specialized studies when appropriate; and, finally, what might be called its pedagogical style—the introduction and analysis of key themes, with suitable later references to them, so as to insure that the particular never overwhelms the general—is consistent, but never intrusive. In sum, this book would serve admirably as a course text. But it would need bolstering: with maps, not only as locational devices, but also to give the reader a clearer sense of spaces, distances, and relationship within the heartland; as well as with statistical aggregates, demographic and economic both, for immediate reference and for comparisons across time.

In the final analysis, *Cities of the Heartland* is likely to attract more attention as metaphor than as text. The “decline and fall” in its subtitle—with its echoes of Gibbon, as well as Spengler and Tonybee—equips it with a resonance that transcends region. Planners, policy-makers, and social scientist nationwide should find it of special relevance. “What went wrong?” may seem self-evident; “why” it went wrong is more difficult to arrive at. This book provides an important starting point for addressing that crucial question with and without the Rust Belt—perhaps even for the shimmering Sun Belt.

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APARTHEID'S RELUCTANT UNCLE: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War. By Thomas Borstelmann. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993.

Borstelmann's book focuses on the circumstances under which the United States shaped its policy towards South Africa during the presidency of Harry S. Truman. Given America's strategic exigencies in the early Cold War years, the United States had hoped to continue collaboration with the South African regime forged during World War II when Jan C. Smuts was the prime minister. It was prepared to overlook Smuts's commitment to maintaining White minority rule in the hope that things would improve after the war. But the defeat of Smuts by D.F. Malan in 1948 posed a moral dilemma for the United States because the new prime minister's Nationalist party introduced a stricter form of White supremacy under apartheid.

Given the exaggerated fears of Soviet-inspired expansionism on a global scale, the United States chose to collaborate with the apartheid regime. The agreement signed in November 1950 ensured a continued supply of uranium for the United States, in return for which South Africa was to receive weapons, and loans from U.S.-dominated financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Export-Import Bank. South Africa played the Red-baiting game well, even to the point of supporting the war in Korea. The U.S. in effect provided the means by which the Nationalist party rulers could more effectively keep Black South Africans in subjugation. It was consistent with the belief of Washington policy-makers, as articulated by Assistant Secretary of State Henry A. Byroade, that premature liberation

of Third World peoples everywhere could make them vulnerable to the Soviet "wolf". This possibility posed greater security risk than the "potential consequence" of delaying their liberation. Western Europe was the first line of defense, and towards this end the United States was prepared to secure the help of nations like Britain and Portugal through their colonial empires, and, of course, repressive regimes like that of South Africa.

What is perhaps new in the book is the extent to which the prevailing racial attitudes among U.S. policy-makers made the moral dilemma less consequential. They were used to a world dominated by White nations, and their racial attitudes prevented them from seriously questioning the old order. Indeed, they often justified their policies on racial grounds. For example, George F. Kennan, well known for developing the policy of containment, described Africans, Arabs, Asians, and Latinos as "impulsive, fanatical, ignorant, lazy, unhappy, and prone to mental disorders and other biological deficiencies." (p. 40) State Department officers in South Africa were well placed to give accurate reports, and indeed many did. While they generally had reservations about the long-term viability of White minority rule, they were nevertheless sympathetic to Whites. Sidney Redecker, the American consul in Johannesburg, believed that the African case was weak because they were "completely lacking in any cultural or religious background or any intellectual or spiritual resources of their own." (p. 159) Ambassador Waldemar Gallman pointed to the "common heritage" between South African Whites and Euro-Americans. They appeared to have had no significant contact with Black South Africans; and they did not question at all the need to work closely with the Union government.

This is a well-researched book, whose findings would have been enhanced if the author had provided an appropriate context of U.S. foreign policy before and after the period under discussion. As it stands, the reader is left to determine for himself whether the policy of Constructive Engagement formulated during the Reagan administration was the logical outcome of collaboration begun in the early Cold War years. I certainly would have liked to know more about the activities of consular personnel and CIA operatives in South Africa as they went about their business of collecting information to supply policy-makers in Washington. In one other way, the book could have been more illuminating. Strategic considerations aside, American corporate businesses played an important role in shaping the policy towards South Africa. American investments in South Africa quadrupled in the years between 1945 and 1953. By 1952, General Motors, IBM, Ford, Chrysler, Firestone, Goodyear, Bethlehem Steel, and Frigidaire had already given their stamp of approval by doing business in South Africa. The book really does not explore their influence in America's foreign policy-making towards South Africa.

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