

Book Reviews

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

Reviews

Nancy A. Walker 1942–2000

Nancy A. Walker, Professor of English and Women's Studies at Vanderbilt University, died December 12, 2000, of complications from lung cancer. She was 58. Nancy was Professor of English at Stephens College until 1989, when she was hired at Vanderbilt to direct its Women's Studies Program. When she returned to full-time teaching in 1996, she had built the Women's Studies Program from a single course to a fully approved minor. She was a superb teacher and an outstanding mentor for undergraduate and graduate students alike. Nancy had achieved a national reputation for her studies of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American women writers and for her studies of women's humor, in particular. She was the author or editor of twelve books, among them A Very Serious Thing: Women's Humor and American Culture (1988), Feminist Alternatives: Irony and Fantasy in the Contemporary Novel by Women (1990), Fanny Fern (1993), Disobedient Writer: Women and Narrative Tradition (1995), and her most recent work, Shaping Our Mothers' World: American Women's Magazines, which was published a month before her death and is reviewed by Patricia Gregory below. Nancy was for many years an active member of MAASA, and she served as an extremely valued member of the Editorial Board of American Studies for more than a decade. Her final contribution to American Studies, a review of The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850-1872 is published below. We will indeed miss her warmth, humor, and exceptionally good judgment.

SHAPING OUR MOTHERS' WORLD: American Women's Magazines. By Nancy A. Walker. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2000.

This work from the late Nancy Walker follows up on her earlier 1998 collection of articles from mid-century magazines, *Women's Magazines 1940-1960: Gender Roles and the Popular Press*. These excerpts and many other articles and visual images provided the primary source materials for this study in which Walker focuses on the mass-circulation women's magazines themselves, especially the big four "service magazines," *Woman's Home Companion*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *McCall's*, and their influence on American culture in the 1940s and 1950s, especially their depiction of the domestic scene. Walker contends that these magazines, read by white middle-class women, many of whom were suburban housewives, had greater influence on American culture in that era than they have today with more age-segregated publications and competition from computer and other media purveyors of mass culture.

Throughout the Depression, World War II, the development of new products and consumerism of the 1950s, growth of the suburbs, and threat of Cold War, women's magazines offered advice and the image of the happy homemaker. Critics of women's magazines contend that they perpetuated a separate woman's sphere like that of the nineteenth century, yet Walker contends that the concern with American home and family permeated American culture, and the magazines reflected the overall culture. Rather than isolating women, Walker argues that the magazines involved them in the total culture of the mid-twentieth century. Walker acknowledges critics of women's magazines like Betty Friedan who objected to the magazines' prescriptive images for women that contributed to the "feminine mystique" by glorifying domestic life and ignoring intellectual needs. On the other hand, Walker points out that many women's magazines did include prize-winning fiction and politically and socially conscious articles. The magazines reflected the ongoing debate about how domesticity could and should be defined.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the magazines' concept of domesticity broadened from a focus on recipes, household products, and beauty tips to include issues like childrearing and marriage. Judging from the plethora of "how-to" articles, the editors sought the ideal woman reader who consumed "products and advice, instruction, enlightenment, and reassurance" (59). *Good Housekeeping* established their seal of approval for products that were scientifically tested and found reliable in their Institute. "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" has been running in *Ladies' Home Journal* for more than sixty years. *Ladies' Home Journal* launched its "How America Lives" series in 1940 in order to make America seem like one big neighborhood. After December 1941, the series adapted its theme to war problems and every citizen's obligation to serve the war effort.

The magazines presented mixed messages on women's employment during World War II, and product advertisements "echoed the dual nature of women's wartime work, serving the country and preserving the family" (93). The majority of American women were not employed during the war, and the arguments of marriage and motherhood were used against such employment. Without adequate childcare facilities, it was difficult for mothers to work for the war effort when they were being exhorted to care for their families and to cook fresh vegetables daily.

Walker makes it clear that magazines are business enterprises that depend on advertising revenue and selling products. Advertisers, more than editors, have helped create the iconography of middle-class suburban life since the 1940s. We cannot assume that women were just pawns of advertisers and editors. All the readers of women's periodicals shared "an abiding faith in the possibility of improvement" (48). Nancy Walker

succeeds admirably in demonstrating how, through this faith, women were not only shaped by, but also influenced the mid-twentieth-century mass-circulation magazines and general mass culture.

Saint Louis University

Patricia L. Gregory

THE POLITICAL WORK OF NORTHERN WOMEN WRITERS AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1850-1872. By Lyde Cullen Sizer. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2000.

In this impressively researched and clearly written study, Sizer analyzes the ways in which northern women writers used their writing (primarily fiction, but also essays and poetry) to respond to and potentially affect the public understanding of the national crisis of the Civil War. The word “political” in the title is construed broadly; as Sizer incisively demonstrates, the concerns of these writers included issues of morality and gender inequality as well as the more narrowly political concepts of legislation, human rights, and national disunity. One of Sizer’s central arguments is that the war—and the decades immediately preceding and following it—was a defining period for these writers, allowing them to express their views not only on the circumstances of slavery and reconstruction, but also on women’s participation in the war effort and the potential of such participation to challenge traditional gender roles.

The nine women who are the central focus of this study are Lydia Maria Child, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Fanny Fern, Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Gail Hamilton (Mary Abigail Dodge), Louisa May Alcott, Rebecca Harding Davis, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. All were widely-read professional writers, and while they were far from homogeneous in the views of the meaning of the war, the nature of the African-American, and the proper role of women in the political life of the nation, all supported the cause of abolition, and all found the war and the post-war period as presenting an opportunity to explore issues of gender, class, and power that presaged the “New Woman” of the 1880s and 1890s. Sizer’s study is, however, not limited to these nine authors; she refers to the work of dozens of other writers of the period—most of them less well-known—and this proves to be simultaneously a drawback and a strength of the book: sometimes the book seems to lose sight of the nine women it is supposed to feature, but extending the range of voices also lends depth to the book as social history.

The first part of the first chapter tends to rehearse material already widely available elsewhere: women’s domestic constraints hindering their literary production, especially in the pre-war years; the growth of the American publishing industry by mid-century and increased literacy opening more publishing opportunities for women writers; the empowering effects of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. The rest of the chapter provides brief biographical sketches of the nine major authors in the study, which may be useful for those readers new to the study of nineteenth-century women writers, but which again adds little to the scholarship in this area. The rest of the book is organized chronologically rather than by author or issue, and this choice serves Sizer well in her attempt to show that the concerns of women writers shifted between 1850 and 1872, first focusing on the evils of slavery and the cause of abolition, and then exploring women’s actual participation in the war effort—from the “domestic” activities of providing clothing and food for the troops to working as nurses and even soldiers and spies. As the war drew to a close and in subsequent years, many writers turned their attention to the integration of freed slaves into American society, some going so far as to view the intermarriage of blacks and whites in a positive light. By the late 1860s and early 1870s, class became for

some writers as important an issue as race. The investigation of the plight of factory workers in Rebecca Harding Davis' 1861 *Life in the Iron Mills* was echoed a decade later in fiction that attempted to cross social class lines by drawing attention to the lives of the laboring classes, both black and white.

Throughout Sizer's study, however, gender is the central concern. The authors she considers were consistently conscious that as women speaking out on a variety of socio-political issues they were entering a public arena, and they created female characters who tended both to take an active role in America's public life and to consider themselves more or less free of the constraints of domestic piety. The chief strength of Sizer's book is its detailed analysis of how one of the most cataclysmic events of American history affected the lives and careers of women writers as well as other American women—both black and white—as the nation attempted to come to terms with widespread cultural changes.

Vanderbilt University

Nancy A. Walker

AMERICAN CULTURE, AMERICAN TASTES: Social Change and the 20th Century.
By Michael Kammen. New York: Alfred Knopf. 1999.

Because Michael Kammen writes a more descriptive kind of cultural history than Warren Susman, Jackson Lears, or Lawrence Levine, his contribution to the study of popular culture/mass culture can sometimes be harder to appreciate. There is no striking paradigm shift here that explains the meaning and significance of widely diverse materials, no analytical concept that the next generation of graduate students will mine for their dissertations. But what Kammen presents here is also quite valuable, a broad overview of major debates over popular culture/mass culture in the United States in the last hundred years, placed within a context of mass media history. Individual chapters are organized thematically and address such issues as the differing meanings of popular culture and mass culture, the relationship between popular culture and democracy, the problem of the commercialization of culture, the changing hierarchies of taste cultures, the critical debate over mass culture in the 1950s, and the more recent conflicts between academic historians and popular history. *American Culture, American Tastes* is an intelligent introduction to these issues and an excellent starting point for anyone interested in the field.

Kammen surveys large amounts of material, and if he does not get involved in any in-depth reading of individual critics or critical problems, that is clearly not his intent. Writing for both academic and general audiences (and worrying at least once in print about keeping the attention of his nonspecialist reader), he means this book as a first attempt to order an unwieldy and important aspect of American intellectual and cultural history. In his earlier work, *The Lively Arts: Gilbert Seldes and the Transformation of Cultural Criticism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), Kammen wrote that "the history of cultural criticism in the United States is not now ready for a meta-narrative because we do not, as yet, have a basic descriptive narrative—as we do in so many other sub-fields. I will feel content if the chapters that follow make a contribution to the essential narrative of cultural criticism in modern American life. A broader overview, perhaps one verging upon meta-narrative, will follow in due course" (13). *American Culture, American Tastes* is the descriptive overview that Kammen had promised us in 1996, and while there are some moments when it verges on meta-narrative and becomes higher order analysis, its real value is as a more basic survey. Scholars

of mass culture and popular culture may be disappointed in the lack of more complex and detailed analyses, but they are not really Kammen's primary audience here.

Any author who is as prolific as Kammen faces the criticism that he could have spent more time and care on an individual project, and there are certainly places in *American Culture, American Tastes* that are disappointingly thin. His quarrel with critics who use mass culture and popular culture interchangeably, for example, doesn't finally seem very important, while his introduction of the art of Reginald Marsh and Thomas Hart Benton is never developed with any care.

Kammen tells us that the book has its origins in a course he has taught for a number of years at Cornell on culture in a democratic society, and anyone reading this book may get a sense of the pleasure his students must feel listening to a distinguished intellectual historian lead them through an important subject. Culture in a democratic society is really Kammen's great subject here, and it would have made a far better title than the one he finally selected, for it explains what materials he selects out for attention, and why.

California Polytechnic State University

Richard Keller Simon

BECOMING AMERICA: The Revolution Before 1776. By Jon Butler. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2000.

In *Becoming America*, Jon Butler, Coe Professor of American Studies and History at Yale University, seeks answers to two questions. The first, posed to him by a friend, asks: "How do you synthesize colonial history after the Puritans?" The second, offered by Hector St. John de Crevecoeur over two centuries ago, reads: "What then is the American, this new man?" (7). In his search for answers, Butler reexamines the history of the British colonies of mainland North America from 1680 to 1770 and finds that this period witnessed the birth of a modern society, a "new order" that anticipated the American Revolution.

Butler characterizes the modern society he finds as featuring a polyglot population of European peoples plus Africans and Indians; greater religious pluralism than elsewhere in the Western world; small but complex cities; prosperous farmers, increasingly dependent on an international market for their produce; the development of new patterns of production and consumption among non-farmers; and the appearance of a stratification of wealth involving a burgeoning middle class and a growing number of rich and poor. He also argues that it was in this period that the colonial population engaged in the pursuit of more sophisticated politics that ultimately sparked the American Revolution and the creation of a new nation.

Butler writes that in the period from 1680 to 1770, Americans developed "the modern penchant for power, control, and authority over both humanity and nature that brooked few limitations or questions about their propriety" (2) and that reflected their determination "to make the world anew in yet untested images" (3). They determined to control their own destiny—individually and collectively—and that included the establishment of an institution of exceptional power that exemplified modernity's capacity and inclination to control human lives, namely the institution of slavery. The result, he writes, was a new culture, "simultaneously aggressive and willful, materialistic as well as idealistic, driven toward authority and mastery" (3).

Butler's study runs counter to the main currents of colonial historiography. Early studies focused almost entirely on the culture of the first generation of colonists (pre-1650), especially in New England and Virginia, at the expense of the middle period and other colonies, which, they argued, made no significant contribution to the development

of the new nation. Beginning in the 1970s, scholars began to publish useful economic, social, and political histories of the Chesapeake region of Maryland and Virginia and the Carolinas, which in turn led to revisionist studies of New England.

Butler stresses the middle and southern colonies, as well as New England, in the middle and later decades of the colonial period. He rebuffs the interpretation that eighteenth-century American colonists became increasingly Europeanized; that they exhibited a growing fascination with, and dependence on, European society and material goods; and that, as a result of that fascination, they developed a deferential, monarchical society marked by an increased emphasis on the privilege of class, the power of a developing colonial aristocracy, and a sense of obligation and dependence on superiors. Instead, he finds a society not at all like Europe—a society not wholly refashioned, but less European than that of the earlier period. He shows that it may have been somewhat deferential, but not dominantly so, in that it allowed for a more complex web of personal relations, social and political, than other studies have allowed, including a pronounced anti-authoritarianism.

Creighton University

Bryan F. Le Beau

THE POSSESSIVE INVESTMENT IN WHITENESS: How White People Profit from Identity Politics. By George Lipsitz. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1998.

George Lipsitz's scholarship has always had a political edge to it. His move several years ago to the University of California, San Diego, however, took him where the action is, as a number of California's voter initiatives (and University of California Regents' actions) over the past few years have come to signify for the nation the 1990s backlash against immigration, affirmative action, and multiculturalism in general. The present book responds thoughtfully and powerfully to these developments, saying to white Americans that one need not engage in overtly racist acts in order to collaborate with and benefit from social and economic structures that privilege whiteness in largely invisible ways. White readers have a largely unacknowledged "possessive investment in whiteness," and Lipsitz's aim in this book is to make this investment clear and unacceptable to white people.

A great virtue of Lipsitz's writing is that he manages to present sophisticated ideas in prose easily accessible to the average intelligent reader. Lipsitz draws on a broad range of work in cultural studies, and he moves easily between readings of cultural texts and inquiry into the statistics about income distribution, penalties for different sorts of crimes, and so on. Both base and superstructure are the topics for this Marxian critic, a balance often missing in American cultural studies.

Lipsitz builds a solid case for the "investment" white people have in the current arrangements, noting (for example) how seemingly diverse practices combine to provide the middle class with wealth through the preferential practices of the housing market. The largely invisible preferences lead the whites who succeed with the view that people without wealth "suffer deservedly" (19), thereby transforming an economic justice issue into a moral one. Lipsitz blames liberalism's commitment to the rights of the individual as a major cause of our inability to see the "collective dimensions of our experience" (20). Ironically, civil rights laws have "augmented" the possessive investment in whiteness because "these particular laws were structured to be ineffective and largely unenforceable" (25). Lipsitz carefully argues and documents each such claim, as he works first through the history of civil rights law and enforcement, then immigrant labor laws

and practices, narratives connecting whiteness and masculinity in the decades following the Vietnam war, the national discourses about O.J. Simpson, the romantic appropriation of African American experience by white consumer audiences, and the ironic reproduction of destructive racism in films like *Lean on Me* (1989). He returns, finally, to California: “The Mississippi of the 1990s.” One of my favorite chapters along the way looks closely at Dizzy Gillespie’s 1959 composition, “Swing Low, Sweet Cadillac,” as a model of the folk’s “popular way of knowing” racism and imagining alternatives. Lipsitz also points to some unifying threads in these separate discourses, such as the emerging new “unifying national narratives” linking patriotism, white masculinity, narcissism, and consumer desire.

Lipsitz’s intended audience pretty clearly is white. People of color will find much of interest in this excellent book, but Lipsitz’s intention is to make visible to white readers—including (and maybe especially) to liberal white academic readers—their own possessive investment in whiteness and the necessity for them to join an “explicitly antiracist interethnic movement that acknowledges the existence and power of whiteness” (22) toward making fundamental changes in the society. Thus, despite a rather bleak portrait of race relations in California and the nation, Lipsitz hangs onto the utopian hope and project, but the fact that he chooses a passage from James Baldwin’s writing for each and every chapter epigraph also hints that Lipsitz shares Baldwin’s simultaneous hope for the best and worry that too many people will choose not to do the right thing.

University of California, Davis

Jay Mechling

HOG TIES: Pigs, Manure, and Mortality in American Culture. By Richard P. Horwitz. New York: St. Martin’s Press. 1998.

Richard Horwitz, a nice Jewish boy from Iowa, knows about farming and most specifically about hogs. His entry into this disappearing American life style is as unusual, liberal art academic cum hired hand, as his ethnic background. How many Jewish hog farmers or Jewish farmers do you know?

But stereotypes aside, Horwitz does know his pigs and the problems that surround their care within the global economy world that farmers, a last bastion of individuality, must deal with. He writes his book from the point of view that it isn’t just hogs that are the problem but something much greater, like the culture that we live in, that has tied into the pig problems. Remember the book is called: *Hog Ties*. For example his opening sentence:

This is a book about farming, pigs, and disease in American culture.

Here he is telling us that the disease is in who we are not just in the pigs. Until we change the way we think and deal with the issues we are faced with, the pig problem is not going to change. Horwitz is one of the few who can see that the problems of rural America (and unfortunately most people are unaware of what is happening there) reach well beyond the barnyard, and into the entire American corporate structure that has as its leitmotif: Bigger is better.

The bigger the operation, the smaller the percentage of its income that reaches businesses within a twenty-minute drive.

Pigs are only a part of that particular equation, but the latest and certainly the stinkiest part. The stink, environmental problems and the rapid devolution of traditional farming have left the few remaining farmers complaining big time. And in hog farming that means Iowa, the number one hog producing state for over a hundred years. This book offers the reasons why this is so, written in a chatty and informed style that belies all the information that is offered.

Hog Ties not only relates pigs to many American cultural mores but it also ties to that other stinky problem, politics. *Hog Ties* accesses those who are victims to the lack of humanity so many politicians and corporate protagonists feel it is necessary to display in order to make the numbers come out right instead of families coming out right. Horwitz is not playing that game though. He tells it from the many angles that it can be told. There is good and bad to everything, and Horwitz wants to hear and tell all. But this is not easily done. His academic credentials hinder him as much as his hired hand status does.

If he [the hired hand] knows what to do, if he really were convinced of the agricultural covenant, he would be an owner rather than a hired man. Right? At least that is the insinuation.

He finds good and bad among the politicians who are involved in the new pork money and among parachute journalist academics who play for the side their grant money supports, while being portrayed as disinterested scientists, an all too common occurrence in today's world. But Horwitz does not stop with the doctor knows all scientists, but finds most of his information in a place that sadly, few respect any more, the little people who do the work, own the farms, work in the barns. They seldom are heard any more.

[The academic] let me know that he did not think much of me, or at least what I had learned and the pig people who taught me. Hard data rather than limp, mere psychology will set us free.

This book is not a book on pigs as much as it uses pigs to tell an American studies story, a cross disciplinary study that shows just how tight we weave our web. It is an excellent study into the diverse fields of pig specifics (manure, disease and the current threat to what remains of traditional farm life) as well as a different view of American culture but one critical to what most Americans still consider their roots. You will not walk away disappointed. You will learn about pig info from every perspective you never thought possible or understand how it relates to what is happening in so many other parts of American life, academia, corporate boardroom or any aspect of rural animal life. Horwitz is real in his own infallibility and his quest for objectivity, questioning himself and his views, but in the end bringing a great deal of humanity to difficult issues before both rural and urban America.

Eastern Michigan University

Chris Mayda

PERFORMING AMERICA: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater. Edited by Jeffrey D. Mason and J. Ellen Gainor. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1999.

Performing America argues that nationhood is a construct, and that drama/theater contributed to the construction of American identity. Six of the essays center on aspects of traditional "hegemony," and six on how various subgroups have challenged that control by oppositional "national" cultures. Editors Jeffrey Mason and J. Ellen Gainor con-

tend that such themes should rescue theater history from its “marginalization” in academia. Gainor suggests that around World War I American hegemony became “increasingly a question rather than an assumption,” while Mason—and most others—argue that only recently has a “multicultural or pluralistic paradigm” broken free “of a monoculture, smugly and comfortably homogenous” featuring undisputed “white majority hegemony” (83).

Books, of course, are constructs, too, determined to impose their hegemony or convictions on readers, and *Performing America* works within a currently popular scholarly melodrama. In these essays a heroic pluralism struggles against the power of a dastardly “Other,” this villain defined variously as white, Christian, Anglo-Saxon, upper/middle class, capitalist, male and/or heterosexual. The essays are competently intelligent but most suffer limitations tied to their rather easy moral-political “postmodern” didacticism. There is loss, too, in the book’s idea that drama is all politics and hence has little to do with art.

Hegemony, the influence of the more powerful in any country or conversation, is always with us, but can, as in Charlotte Canning’s rich essay on Chautauqua and Ann Larabee’s on the Lewisohn sisters’ New York Neighborhood Playhouse, truncate explanations of what was done and what it meant to audiences. Canning presents some moving testimonies to the aesthetic and intellectual involvement Chautauqua brought to isolated lives, but concludes it encouraged only complacency with “perceived monolithic values of the nation,” associated with “white Protestants of British descent” (102). Larabee chronicles the considerable cultural pluralism of her Playhouse, but concludes its offerings represented merely a “text of mass consumption and exploitation” aiding “the hegemonic interests of the powerful” (134-5). Josephine Lee and Tiffany Ann López explore sensitively the tensions between feminism and the glorification of male assertion in Asian American and Chicano cultures respectively, but their political stress somewhat foreshortens their discussions of interesting playwrights Diana Son and Cherie Moraga.

Most extreme in their political emphases are the vigorous essays of Kim Marra and David Savran. Marra is wholly uninterested in Augustin Daly’s contribution to directorial unity of production, but sees his work as “the aggrandizement of self and nation by imperialist capitalist means” (53). The director’s long collaboration with Ada Rehan illustrated, Marra argues, his “conquest of savagery embodied in actresses” which allowed the Irish-born and Catholic Daly to “repress and overcome the most denigrated aspects of himself to ascend the phyletic ladder,” on which tottered “Anglo-Saxon patriarchy’s imperial ambitions” (61-3). Savran says some interesting things about *Angels in America* and Queer Nation in relation to post-Cold War cultural politics, but gives more time to his political answers than theirs because neither questions “the linkages between homophobia and economic exploitation.” Savran’s advocacy of “a queer internationalism,” somehow to incorporate the ideas of Frantz Fanon and Mikhail Gorbachev, is intriguingly odd, but less interesting than *Angels’* genial and Queer Nation’s in-your-face theatricality (225-7).

Performing America hopes to win American theater history status in the academy by subordinating it to the hegemony of current identity politics. But this status-seeking involves determinedly denying its own heritage. Anyone deeply interested in American “cultural nationalism” tied to theater would learn more from William Dunlap or Arthur Hobson Quinn, George C. D. Odell or Constance Rourke, none acknowledged by these, their postmodern assimilationist descendants.

University of Maryland, College Park

David Grimsted

THE POWER OF RELIGIOUS PUBLICS: Staking Claims in American Society. Edited by William H. Swatos, Jr. and James K. Wellman, Jr. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers. 1999.

Most of the articles collected here were presented at the 1997 meeting of the Society for the Social Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association. They represent a cross-section of thinking about religion, politics, and society among leading scholars who frequent such meetings, on the border between sociology and religious studies. Enhancing the diversity of this predominantly sociological group are historian Martin Marty, Judaic scholars Jacob Neusner and William Scott Green (who defend the public value of religious studies), and people who blend academic expertise with experience in Christian ministry, including Peggy Shriver of the National Council of Churches and co-editor James Wellman, formerly of Chicago's prestigious Fourth Presbyterian Church.

Although the loudest recent practitioners of public religion from the Christian right are frequently discussed, most contributors approach conservative religion from a centrist to left-liberal place on the religious-political spectrum. James Wood upholds the virtues of prophetic liberal Christianity. James Richardson defends the rights of religious minorities. Phillip Hammond scratches the perennial legal itch about how to reconcile the sociopolitical dimensions of free exercise with the separation of church and state; he argues that the state should uphold the rights of conscience and that religious groups should translate their public arguments into a commonly accessible idiom, rather than appeal to a separate religious authority. Others worry about how conservatives and liberals can work together. Shriver suggests ground rules for "table manners" when a spectrum of Christians wins seats at a table of policy-making, and James Kelley champions Roman Catholic "common ground" approaches (exemplified by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin) as long as they do not require a surrender of Catholic moral teachings to liberal relativism.

The collection's biggest names, Marty and Robert Bellah, call on multiculturalists not to obscure what Bellah calls the "common culture" nor underplay the contributions that mainstream Christians can make to this culture. Marty covers similar ground as his 1997 book *The One and the Many*, suggesting a "community of communities" model of pluralism (here conceptualized as one "the public" incorporating "the public's publics"). He presents this as a middle ground between consensus approaches and "tribalist" identity politics that underplay harmonious cultural hybridity. Bellah returns to themes of *Habits of the Heart* in an important chapter which was first an American Academy of Religion plenary address and later an article in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. He defends himself against misunderstandings of his position and revises the analysis of religion in *Habits*, placing more stress on the Protestant roots of individualism and pluralism. Roger Williams replaces John Winthrop as his exemplar of Protestantism. In one sense this makes Bellah's already bleak vision of individualism run rampant appear even more deeply rooted. However, it allows Bellah to articulate more clearly how the religious communities he champions can operate on a smaller scale commensurate with Marty's approach, rather than as a society-wide Durkheimian consensus. Complementing Bellah's concern about how religious communities might (although they often do not) countervail against capitalist individualism, James Davidson and Ralph Pyle discuss how churches address economic inequality on a spectrum between "good fortune" and "social justice" approaches, weighted toward the conservative end of this scale.

For better or worse, most contributors touch relatively lightly on social and cultural theories that have formed much of the *lingua franca* of American studies in recent years. However, three articles offer noteworthy bridges to some of these discussions. First, Rhys Williams argues clearly and effectively how public religions can at the same time reflect hegemonic values, and provide contested space potentially useful for counter-hegemonic movements. Second, Wellman employs Jose Casanova's framework to explain how secularization—understood as the differentiation of religion from law, science, and so on—does not necessarily imply religious decline, and often co-exists with religious deprivatization rather than privatization. In one of the book's few sustained engagements with gender and sexuality, Wellman flags Casanova's comparison between religious deprivatization and feminist interventions which redefine the boundaries between public and private spheres; he goes on to discuss various religious approaches to sexuality. Finally, co-editor William Swatos conceptualizes the "new public religion" within a Habermasian distinction between system and lifeworld. He focuses not on safeguarding private realms from religion understood as part of the system. Rather, he sees religion increasingly allied with a lifeworld upon which the system (conceptualized in relation to globalization) encroaches. Insofar as the state intervenes within the lifeworld, efforts to defend private spaces may redefine the personal as political—often in relation to "family values" which make many liberals nervous—and move formerly "private" religion into a public register.

Overall, this is a valuable collection because of the importance of its subjects, the generally strong quality of its essays, and its potential (notwithstanding its distinctive emphases) for offering a rough overview of recent thinking by sociologists of religion on these perennial themes.

University of Tennessee

Mark Hulsether

INDIANS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA: A Comparative History. By Roger L. Nichols. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1998.

Roger L. Nichols, in this book, makes an ambitious attempt to address the relationship between Native peoples and the national governments of both Canada and the United States. More remarkably, Nichols includes in his discussions the colonial periods of each country as well.

Such a perspective is imperative for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of North American Indian issues. Even though no line separated Canadian Natives and American Indians until recently, that division is undeniable. Many American Indian people, under the threat of western expansion, sought refuge in "Grandmother's Land." Yet, the traditional studies of the history of the Americas typically focus on the United States federal Indian policy to the absence of Canadian Indian interests.

Nichols does an excellent job tracing the evolution of the government administration of Indian affairs in both Canada and the United States. While each have similar antecedents, Nichols asserts that the Royal Proclamation of 1763 represents a parting of ways between Canada and the United States as each took different paths in dealing with Indian land cessions. The difference, he suggests, is that the "British colonial authorities based their policy and actions on the theory of tribal title stated in the Proclamation of 1763, whereas the Americans often acted as though earlier British policies and legislation concerning Indian affairs could be disregarded because of national independence"(143).

The organization of the text follows what Nichols perceives as a distinct pattern that occurs in both Canada and the United States. He suggests five stages of common chronology: “tribal independence, or even supremacy over the Europeans; a gradual shift to Indian-white equality; the reduction of the tribes to a position of dependency on the colonial or national government in each region; the further descent of Indian people to marginality at the fringes of the majority society; and for some, a resurgence of cultural nationalism, economic recovery, and political awareness and influence” (xiv).

As a potential text in Native American studies or history, this work will prove valuable to those wishing to expand course perspectives to all of North America. As a comparative history, Nichols provides a greater context for the derivation of Indian-white contact and conflict, one which recognizes that such events do not take place in isolation.

Montana State University

Walter C. Fleming

STAGING TOURISM: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World. By Jane C. Desmond. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1999.

One of the best things about the field of American studies is that it helps to make possible books like Jane Desmond’s *Staging Tourism*. Desmond’s project is thoroughly interdisciplinary and intellectually adventurous, based in a leap of the imagination that pushes us to think more broadly about notions of difference and identity.

Desmond, in *Staging Tourism*, looks at bodies—the bodies of the iconic “hula girls” that signify Hawai’i and the bodies of the animals who are presented to human spectators in the zoos and aquariums and theme parks that draw such huge audiences each year. Joining the human “other” with an animal (the book’s cover juxtaposes photos of an early-20th century hula dancer and a dolphin) seems a risky move, but Desmond makes a strong case that both “people tourism” and “animal tourism” are based in the display and performance of “bodily anchored differences.” In both practices, she argues, “bodily differences are marked, calibrated, measured, and mobilized politically to naturalize various social relations.”

The significance of tourism, Desmond argues, lies primarily in the tourist’s experience of difference. The spectator confirms his or her own identity in contrast to the performer—I am human, not animal; I am self, not other. At the same time, s/he finds access to a utopian fantasy, a “safe sublime,” crossing boundaries that are simultaneously reinscribed by the performance of difference.

Whether the performer is Shamu the Whale or young women dancers at a tourist lu’au [should be a-over the “u” in lu’au], Desmond argues, the performance serves to naturalize difference by “transmuting history into spectacle and anchoring it in the display of the most natural of all entities, the body” (265-66). Here, “bodies function as the material signs for categories of social difference” such as race and gender, and serve to naturalize both the categories themselves and the systems of hierarchy and power relations that fundamentally shape their construction (xiv). Such “physical foundationalism” serves as a critical ideological underpinning for massively profitable tourist industries and, in turn, the public display of bodies in touristic settings is “profoundly important in structuring identity categories and notions of subjectivity.” (Sometimes it seems that Desmond lapses into this physical fundamentalism, or an essentializing equation of race and culture, herself, as when she simply assumes that African Americans and Asian Americans would see Hawai’i differently than do “Caucasian mainlander” tourists.)

Obviously, Desmond’s argument is heavily theorized. Yet the bulk of this book is careful history and engaging ethnography. Part 1, “Staging ‘The Cultural,’” traces the

emergence of the “hula girl” as the key symbol of tourist Hawai’i. Desmond joins this history of representational practices to a larger analysis of constructions of race, gender, and nation, and to the specifics of political and social relations between the Hawai’ian islands and the mainland United States. Part II, “Staging ‘The Natural,’” offers multi-sited ethnographic explorations of the consumption of “radical bodily difference” in animal tourism, including the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Marine World Africa U.S.A., and Sea World (146). Her ethnographic analysis is fascinating, and Desmond moves gracefully between discussions of authority and subjectivity in animal performers and her own (as she notes, sometimes embarrassingly enthusiastic) engagement with the spectacle offered.

Desmond’s awareness of the complexities of political, social, and ethnic/racial relations in contemporary Hawai’i, as well as her own background in modern dance and experience with hula in its varied practice, greatly strengthen the first section of this work. I wonder, though, about her decision to end her historical analysis at the eve of World War II. Though the representational practice she analyzes had been institutionalized by the end of the 1930s, the major reformations of American society (especially in relation to race and to cultural difference) during and after WWII almost certainly changed the set of meanings available to a mainland audience viewing the images and performances Desmond presents.

Jane Desmond has written a thought-provoking book that deserves to be widely read and discussed.

University of New Mexico

Beth Bailey

FROM FIREPLACE TO COOKSTOVE: Technology and the Domestic Ideal in America. By Priscilla J. Brewer. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 2000.

During one of his many walks through the countryside of New England documented in *The American Notebooks*, Nathaniel Hawthorne “came to where had once stood a farm-house, which appeared to have been recently torn down.” The year was 1841, the month October, the weather warm, the author weary yet curious: most assuredly a moment ripe with nostalgia. What he found in that building’s cellar “uncovered” by demolition was more than the physical artifacts of a once-vibrant household. The revealed “base and middle height of the chimney” offered Hawthorne a moment for domestic reverie: “The oven, in which household bread had been baked for daily food, and puddings, and cake, and jolly pumpkin pies, for festivals, opened its mouth, being deprived of its iron door. The fire-place was close at hand” (*The American Notebooks* [1972], 216).

Yet, as Priscilla J. Brewer points out in her excellent work, *From Fireplace to Cookstove*, Hawthorne’s attitude to the fireplace’s replacement was less sentimental. Once married and settled in Concord, Hawthorne confided to his notebook, “We have had three stoves put up and henceforth no light of a cheerful fire will gladden us at even tide. Stoves are detestable in every respect, except that they keep us perfectly comfortable” (102). Brewer explores this dichotomy—between nostalgic yearning and the seemingly ineluctable march of technological invention, between domestic ideals and material realities—as she chronicles the many facets of cookstove design and use. Readers may be surprised to learn that the cookstove was the material marker of progress in the nineteenth-century United States, much as the automobile is for American economic and cultural robustness today. Cookstoves, however, were used, and used mightily, and these artifacts of women’s daily lives have been overlooked because of their ubiquity, because

they were used up and thrown out. Too, historians who measure the past by public men, deeds, and events have overlooked the daily activities of the household, deemed “women’s sphere” and “women’s work,” even as they recognize that the household forms the basis of national policy and politics.

Brewer’s reach and research are impressive; her writing lively and thoughtful. She surveyed letters, diaries, probate inventories, census records, business records, advertisements, novels, periodical fiction and advice literature to chronicle the rise and fall of the iron cookstove as a cultural symbol. Ten chapters chronologically order the argument about the cookstove, from the first New England settlers’ predilections for open fires (burning even more with the abundance of wood in North America) and their “cultural baggage” about fire. Nevertheless, the American colonists soon despaired rising wood prices, and throughout the eighteenth century devoted themselves to the tasks of controlling their domestic environments and inventions dedicated to improving heating and cooking technology. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the American economy continued to boom, anthracite coal because available via improved transportation systems, and these factors hastened the acceptance of heating and cookstoves. This consumer revolution was met by “a chorus of antistove rhetoric” (95), a directed and spirited response to the capitalist transformation—mostly by men and not by their wives, although some women did object to the installation of heating stoves in churches. Despite this chorus, and despite the difficulty in usage, cookstoves were popular, and Brewer discusses how women coped with such designs as the Stanley rotary and other innovations that may have, to borrow from historian Ruth Schwartz Cowan, made “more work for mother.” By the twentieth century, however, the cookstove began to disappear from American homes, replaced by gas and electric ranges. Brewer concludes her work with a most interesting discussion of the contemporary role of nostalgia in Americans’ continuing relationship with the cookstove. Profusely illustrated, *From Fireplace To Cookstove* should be required reading in any survey of American material culture and women’s history.

Kent State University

Shirley Teresa Wajda

A PLACE TO REMEMBER: Using History to Build Community. By Robert R. Archibald. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press. 1999.

This personal book by a leading practitioner in the field of public history considers the philosophy by which historical organizations exhibit, interpret and involve “the community” in their operation. Robert Archibald has been a state museum curator in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Director of the Montana State Historical Society, and currently chief operating officer of the private Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, an entity that also receives public funds. He draws on these varied experiences as well as his home in Ishpeming in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to expound on the past, present and future of public history.

When Robert Archibald left the iron mining area of his youth to attend Northern Michigan University, he gravitated toward history during the tumultuous decade of the 1960s. He completed a doctoral degree in history at the U. of New Mexico with the intention of pursuing a career in academia. However, then as now, the job market for historians was crowded with potential candidates. Archibald found employment in a public institution that led him to re-examine his academic training. After almost thirty years in the field of public history, he sets out an ambitious role for institutions and their employees. In addition to examining the meaning of history in the public sphere, he

recounts his biography through the people and places that shaped his career choices. "History is the conversation through which we construct narratives incorporating multiple perspectives to explain the past," he states.

Not only does the author endeavor to explain the past by involving the community, he believes historians should look at "persistent issues" with a set "core of values" to provide a framework for public history. Archibald details many experiences that shaped his views and offers examples of his work as varied as Native American narratives in New Mexico, exhibits in the western state of Montana and in the urban setting of St. Louis, Missouri. But not until near the end of his 10 chapters of essays does he define community. His concept of community is "those who compromise a community." This "community" may encompass geographical boundaries and shared "interests." While he has worked diligently to involve African American advisors, staff, and contractors, as well as other groups not usually represented, he reveals only a bit about how such representatives are chosen or recruited. But Archibald's intent in this work is not to list "how to" but to present a philosophy of public history that is different from "academic" history. He envisions the role of public "history" as spotlighting enduring issues for "the community" and using the past to connect present and future concerns. On the personal level he seeks to explain how memory and history interact.

As historical organizations, such as the Organization of American Historians, reach out to involve more teachers of history at the secondary level and those working in public institutions, this book presents a wealth of ideas and examples by an impassioned leader in the public history field.

Independent Historian and Consultant, Lawrence, KS

Katie H. Armitage

A MATTER OF TASTE: How Names, Fashions, and Culture Change. By Stanley Lieberman. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2000.

A few years ago, I became curious about naming trends I was observing in young adults. For several weeks in June and July, I recorded the frequencies of first names of men and women listed in marriage announcements in two urban newspapers, one in the Northeast and one in the Midwest. Little did I know, however, that at that very time one of the country's most eminent sociologists was undertaking a similar study, only one based in much more sophisticated methodology and theory.

Stanley Lieberman's *A Matter of Taste* not only analyzes American naming practices but also uses these practices as a window into a means of discerning how cultural tastes shift over time. While noting that most people assume that changes in naming practices reflect, and are affected by, societal factors—what he calls "external changes"—Lieberman makes a strong corrective argument that, instead, important "internal" factors are what really count for these changes. That is, broad social shifts such as democratization, industrialization, technological change, the decline of formality, and changes in race and gender relations provide important contexts for the ways that tastes in names have changed; but factors such as class imitation and aversion, the phonemic quality (whether a girl's name ends in "a" or "ah," for example), and the popularity of Biblical names can be decisive. (Popularly assumed influences such as movies, television, and other mass media, Lieberman finds, have little effect.) These factors make for what Lieberman calls his "multilayered, asymmetrical, and probabilistic approach" to both naming practices and cultural change in general (19). The model is multilayered because it includes interlocking sets of broad and narrow influences; probabilistic because it abjures simple causation; asymmetrical because the processes of change move slowly in one direction before reversing. New tastes in phe-

nomena such as names, says Lieberman, build on existing tastes through an “incremental replacement mechanism” whereby new tastes incorporate elements of existing tastes but eventually erase most remnants of older tastes (115). This is how various names achieve popularity.

For his data, Lieberman uses a broad variety of namefrequency lists for males and females compiled by other researchers from both Europe and the United States. Primarily, he measures the popularity of a name in terms of its frequency and durability among the twenty-five most popular names of a certain place. Most of his American data, central to the bulk of his analysis, come from tabulations already collected for California and Illinois, a factor that raises a minor question because Lieberman seems to overlook regional influences. He considers the data from California and Illinois as if they were influenced by the same internal forces and representative of the national situation. My amateurish research, however, suggested some significant differences between the Northeast and the Midwest. For example, for females the names Cheryl, Dawn, and variations of Christina (Kristin, Christine, etc.) were favored in New England but seldom found in the Midwest, while among males several names that were popular in the Midwest—Dennis, Raymond, Jerry—rarely appeared in the Northeast.

Lieberman’s model, of course, is retrospective and explanatory; it cannot predict future changes or directions of change. Nevertheless, he presents it in a thorough, readable fashion that ought to provoke others to test its application to other facets of taste such as hair style, clothing, food, and popular music.

Brown University

Howard P. Chudacoff

LIGHT WRITING AND LIFE WRITING: Photography in Autobiography. By Timothy Dow Adams. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2000.

Light Writing and Life Writing embraces the complexities of autobiographical forms that have been exhaustively studied over the past few decades: “text and image complement, rather than supplement, each other; since reference is not secure in either, neither can compensate for lack of stability in the other. Because both media are located on the border between fact and fiction, they often undercut just as easily as they reinforce each other”(xxi). The intricate modern and postmodern works Adams selects situate themselves on the border between world and representation, carrying with them a “natural relationship to the worlds they depict, which always seems more direct than it really is” (xxi). On a bookshelf crowded with autobiographical and photographic criticism, this book is one worth picking up.

Adams’s approach explores the territory of multivalence and multiple variables inhabited by life writing (most prominently autobiographies and memoirs) and light writing (photography, including its darkroom and digital manipulations). In order to bring understanding of the complex forms of representation embodied in these genres without forcing an artificial clarity on this shared, necessarily blurred terrain, Adams develops nuanced analytical techniques. He works by purposeful triangulations to map the intersecting uncertainties and epiphanies of the two genres. He also defines layers of meaning by formulating systems of analogies—“painting is to fiction as photography is to non-fiction” (11), for example.

Adams has chosen hybrid texts that explore a critical self-consciousness, an intertwining of purposefully exploratory, even therapeutic intentions and evasions that articulate contingent, bordering positions: between generations, ethnic, racial or sexual identities, modes of expression, and historical, national, and class affiliations. The author

shows his mastery of this territory by not imposing a rigidly generic taxonomy on his material; instead, he allows authors to direct him to sites where they have themselves “deliberately blurred such distinctions” (21). As additional guides into this border country he brings with him an impressive array of critics of both life writing and light writing, whom he deploys judiciously as guides and as witnesses.

Key images lead us from texts that use visual metaphors (books by Paul Auster, Maxine Hong Kingston, Sheila and Sandra Ortiz Taylor are represented here), to autobiographies with photographic illustrations (N. Scott Momaday, Michael Ondaatje, Reynolds Price), to works that acknowledge the intertextuality of photographs and text. This third section features a chapter on the work of Wright Morris that is the highlight of his study. Adams engages Morris’s enticing yet enigmatic life’s work, a discussion that presents a sophisticated understanding of this Great Plains author, meticulously tracing Morris’s attempts to conceal and reveal through fictionalizing photographs, associating different facts with images transported from text to text, and conflating personal and family history. Morris, Adams demonstrates, was “attracted to revelation rather than exposure” (187), a congeries of autobiographical intentions that guide us through a discussion of works by Eudora Welty and Edward Weston.

This is a well-structured book that discusses both critical and aesthetic theory and introduces many challenging, twentieth century works, both familiar and worthy of discovery. In its organization and clarity, the book presents a syllabus for a seminar on hybrid autobiographical forms, which, in fact, may be the origin of this text. One boundary area is not as well-mapped as I would have liked. Adams acknowledges the dichotomy between academic and popular conceptions of the factuality, the evidentiary power of life writing and light writing. He comments that even critics-turned-autobiographers are attracted by the seemingly unassailable verification of eyewitness accounts or family snapshots. How to portray the complexities of these art forms to generally-educated readers who are also practitioners may be the biggest border yet to be crossed.

University of Wyoming

Eric J. Sandeen

IMAGINING BASEBALL: America’s Pastime and Popular Culture. By David McGimpsey. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2000.

More than almost any other sport in the United States, baseball is the one that writers seem to love the most. Baseball is to the study of sports what westerns are to the study of film genres. David McGimpsey adds yet another volume to this growing library. However, his book, *Imagining Baseball: America’s Pastime and Popular Culture*, provides a unique angle in that he treats baseball’s special status as the core problem of his analysis. McGimpsey critically focuses upon how writers, and a commercial culture industry more generally, represent baseball within the framework of important cultural conventions that have significantly conservative ideological and political implications.

Like Deanne Westbrook’s *Ground Rules: Baseball and Myth*, McGimpsey’s book covers a core body of baseball novels: W.P. Kinsella’s novels *Shoeless Joe* and *The Iowa Baseball Confederacy*, Mark Harris’ *Bang the Drum Slowly*, Bernard Malamud’s *The Natural*, and Robert Coover’s *The Universal Baseball Association, Inc.: J. Henry Waugh, Prop.*, Eric Rolfe Greeberg’s *The Celebrant*. Yet, he also connects these more canonical works to more popular and “low brow” portrayals of baseball in print, film, and television—from the short stories of Ring Lardner and the raunchy prose of Jim Bouton, to films like *A League of Their Own* and *The Bad News Bears*; from Ken Burns’ epic PBS documentary *Baseball*, to episodes of *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* and *Northern Expo-*

sure. Unlike Westbrook, he is not looking to identify universal myths or essential meanings, but instead is always careful to characterize representations of baseball within the contexts of its social function as commercial entertainment.

At the outset, he writes that his book is “a discussion of the tropes in baseball’s cultural products” (2). Yet he also quickly distances himself from writing about baseball that nostalgically idealizes the game, setting his writing up as a critique of such interpretations of baseball. He writes that “Superlative attestations of baseball as perfect, near-perfect, better than other ‘pure products of America,’ better than most, Godlike, churchlike, Homeric, Aristotean, Cartesian, Emersonian, writerly, scholarly, transcendental, timeless, mythical all have their own nuances but they are all expressions of the same cultural ascendancy: *baseball is good; baseball is special*” (5).

The author divides the book into chapters which each deal with particular conventions employed within baseball texts, and how such conventions evoke significant ironies. For example, after his introduction, he juxtaposes understandings of baseball as an inherently fair, just, and perfect game, expressed in the writing of Kinsella, with the gritty realities of baseball as a form of commercial entertainment, revealed in Bouton’s *Ball Four*, a player’s tell-all memoir considered shockingly graphic at the time it was published in 1970. McGimpsey provides similar treatment of pastoral conventions within baseball literature, attempts of baseball fiction to deal with issues of difference related to gender, race, and sexuality, and the attractiveness of nostalgic conventions to “baseball’s graying fan base” (129).

McGimpsey notes that “the pastoral vision of baseball is good for baseball’s business” (62), acknowledging an important, but rarely recognized, function of baseball writing: those who wax nostalgically about the game provide those who market it with a hook that they have used to sell it to the public. As an example of this, he cites the architectural design of Baltimore’s Camden Yards stadium, the first “retro” ballpark created that couched high-tech amenities, luxury boxes, and high-finance season ticket holders within the warm facade of an old-style urban ballpark. At the same time, his last chapter raises the irony that it is precisely such a nostalgic imagery that has alienated young audiences and minorities from the game. He notes how the revival of baseball nostalgia during the 1980s, with its celebration of the paternal image of fathers playing catch with sons, was part of a larger set of conservative cultural images to emerge from that era that addressed divisions in American society left over from the Vietnam era. Implicit in the warmth of baseball nostalgia is the idea that such divisions were created by those who deviated from core patriotic and paternal values. Baseball was one of many “conforming rhetorics” which “front their own political objectives by questioning the patriotism of those who profess dissent” (150).

McGimpsey provides a rare and important analysis of the ways that baseball has been represented within popular culture texts. He makes important insights into the politics of baseball’s pastoral, nostalgic conventions that are a core aspect of widely recognized narratives like Ken Burns’ *Baseball* documentary. In addition, his writing is lively, often humorous, and accessible. This book serves as a useful text for scholars interested in the cultural analysis of sports, and would serve well as a supplementary text in courses that address sports literature.

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

John Bloom

Not so many decades ago, scholars in the American field spent much of their time looking for common trends in the history of American attitudes and ideas. With such a rich heritage, and with the signs of our subsequent achievement everywhere visible, the argument went, how could we not share a value system that could be variously described as the "The Democratic Experience," "The National Experience," or an equally broad designation of national purpose, as Daniel J. Boorstein describes. To some extent, this explains why the murals that decorate the rotunda of the United States Capitol, including the *Embarkation of the Pilgrims* by Robert W. Weir and the *Baptism of Pocahontas* by John Gadsby Chapman, have for many years been seen as representing the values and beliefs that united Americans during the first half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, one can think of these two murals, and the six that surround them, as a band that serves to complement visually the circular form of the rotunda. Ann Abrams' new book brings to mind another, less innocent, relationship between the murals and the rotunda architecture. *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin* makes one realize that the images, presented in the form of an uncontested monumental national narrative, were the wishful thinking of those who hoped to create a strong and purposeful union. Today that narrative seems all too transparent; sectional rivalries, Abrams argues, are as apparent in the rotunda mural cycle as the myth of a nation undivided by geographical, social, and political issues.

These rivalries, Abrams explains, were built around independent origin myths—that of a humble, pious Pilgrim New England, and an aristocratic, pleasure-loving Cavalier Virginia. Most readers will be familiar with the New England version of the myth, but in the closely researched chapters of this book, Abrams brings to light a consistent and enduring Virginia counterpart, featuring Pocahontas as an Indian princess and, ironically, the progenitor of Virginia colonial society. These sectional views (Massachusetts often stood for New England; Virginia for the South), and the debate over which should preside, go as far back as the late eighteenth century. They were, as one might anticipate, hotly contested in the years before and during the Civil War; after that the New Englanders more or less had it their way. Still, one should note that less than twenty years after the completion of Hammatt Billings' *National Monument to the Forefathers* (1889) in Plymouth, the federal government erected an imposing obelisk at Jamestown, ensuring that Virginia's contributions to the national past would also be remembered.

Abrams is at her best when exposing layer upon layer of the discord, as well as the consensus, that supports each of the sectional views. In her own words, "the antebellum United States was a crazy quilt of localized interests. . . . Many Virginians . . . opposed succession that defended slavery or, conversely, detested slavery but championed states rights. The same . . . was true in Massachusetts, where abolitionists were idolized, despised, tolerated, or ridiculed depending on the mood of individual communities or households" (203-4). But neither side, Abrams contends, was indifferent to its regional history, nor were images and monuments the only form in which it was revealed. Literature, historical scholarship, political speeches, sermons, and a wide range of mass-market publications are examined in turn, to tell the story in its most complex form. Thus, when Abrams quotes from James Russell Lowell's poem, "Conversations with Miles Standish" (1848), one is thrust headfirst into the debate over slavery that obsessed New Englanders at mid century. A spectral Standish, recently witness of the pious cant of contemporary

“Pilgrims” at a Forefather’s Day celebration in Plymouth, becomes the surrogate through whom the poet speaks:

I come from Plymouth, deadly bored
With toasts, and songs, and speeches,
As long as flat as my old sword
As threadbare as my breeches...
These loud ancestral boasts of yours,
How only they else than vex us?
Where were your dinner orators
When slavery grasped at Texas? (xviii)

Pilgrims changed from decade to decade, of course; and what disturbs Lowell, and the equally determined advocates of slavery in pre-Civil War Virginia, was not the concern of post-war writers, anxious to defuse sectional rivalries. What is surprising, however, is that Pilgrims and Cavaliers, and their respective narratives, never quite disappear from the national stage. No matter how much these narratives have been downplayed or ignored by later scholars, Abrams makes it clear that they have been there all along, a vital part of our national historical dialogue.

National Museum of American Art

William H. Truettner

BY NATURE AND BY CUSTOM CURSED: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660. By Phillip H. Round. Hanover: University Press of New England. 1999.

Phillip Round opens his argument by declaring that despite the texts and authors he discusses, his book is not about Puritanism. Rather, he deals with the first generation of New England culture as a whole. In the rather dense terms that characterize Round’s style, he describes his subject as: “the social dimensions of New England utterance, investigating how various colonial ideologies were promoted and packaged and how social performance served as the engine for the cultural ‘work’ these ideologies accomplished in the broader, transatlantic field of English cultural production” (p. xi).

Round’s approach is always transatlantic, looking to the complex relationships between the metropolis and the fledgling colony. The conflict that characterized many of these relationships were shaped by the perceived need of the colonists to persuade those who remained in England of the justice and correctness of their mission. In an effort to shape the then uncertain future of English history, Puritans such as Anne Hutchinson, Henry Dunster, Thomas Morton, William Bradford, and John Winthrop, “cajoled, slandered, and persuaded both metropolitan and local audiences, who not only didn’t always agree with them but who proffered calumny, proof, and performances in return” (p. xi). Round’s term for this transatlantic exchange is “civil conversation” and he focuses upon the systemic qualities of this discursive conflict in order to identify the points of origin within seventeenth-century English culture. It is here that Round finds the terms out of which New England’s earliest culture was formed. He acknowledges the geographical constraint placed upon his argument, which deals solely with New England and Boston in particular. But Round is also quite rightly aware of the wider implication of his study or the formation of a national “American” culture from the New England roots that, as he writes, attempted “to dominate American cultural politics in the nineteenth century” (p. xii). This perception is important for the coherence of Round’s argument, for the texts he

goes on to discuss and highlight achieved renewed prominence among the prominent New England writers of the nineteenth century “Renaissance.”

The title of Round’s book is taken from Anne Bradstreet’s poem “Contemplations” in which she describes humanity’s fallen state as “by nature and by custom cursed”. The two terms or concepts—human nature and national custom provided the common discursive parameters for debates all issues, according to Round, “from church doctrine to village order” (p. 1). In this way, these terms invoke discourses of both Reformed Protestantism and English civil society. This serves Round’s purpose admirably as he sets out to analyze the quality of everyday language usage in New England as well as the formal expressions that represented the colonists as they wished to appear. Round’s treatment of the contexts informing the colonial texts he analyzes is then subtle and open to the nuance of complex social inflection. This is nowhere more evident than in his comparison of Anne Bradstreet with Anne Hutchinson. The differences of social milieu that separated the women are discussed as factors that determined the shape of their lives as well as their writing. In my reading of this study, the sensitivity to nuance is Round’s greatest gift and his treatment of the discourse of gender within the transatlantic matrix is fascinating and informative. Similarly, his discussion of race in relation to colonial white-Indian exchanges is stimulating, arguing as he does that “first-generation colonists in New England needed much more than Indian land; they needed Indian conversation to prove to metropolitans once and for all that they were indeed a civil people” (p. 254). The interdisciplinary nature of Round’s work which uses town records, pamphlets, and tracts alongside literary texts opens up the field of colonial textuality to his transatlantic analyses in challenging and stimulating ways. This is a book for scholars, however. The density of the prose requires a more experienced eye than that of most students.

South Bank University, London

Deborah L. Madsen

CAPTAIN AHAB HAD A WIFE: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870. By Lisa Norling. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2000.

Yes, Captain Ahab does have a wife. Though we never see her in *Moby-Dick*, she waits for him on Nantucket while he pursues the white whale. His wife is much younger than he, and the only description, an approving one, says she is “sweet” and “resigned.” Resigned she would have to be. From the eighteenth century on, whalers’ wives spent from months to years without their husbands, the absences growing longer and longer as whaling moved from the Atlantic to the Pacific and as other changes occurred in the whaling industry. Ahab admits to the force of those absences only once; many other captains expressed themselves more openly.

Since this country was the world’s premier whaling nation for some time, it should be no surprise to learn that the diverse, extended activities of whaling had much to do with general developments in American history. And though American maritime history is currently out of favor, recent social historical study of American seafaring has shown the importance of maritime activities to the developing United States before the late-nineteenth century. In that connection, Lisa Norling “aims to show how the particular interplay between economic, social, and cultural shifts in the whaling communities of southeastern New England throws into striking relief not only the conflicted development of liberal individualism for men (explored by Melville) but also the development of its female corollary, Victorian domesticity” (3). She succeeds admirably, in an engaging style bolstered with evidence that she reads with skill and imagination.

Norling begins with the industry's development in the eighteenth century among the Quakers of Nantucket Island, the center of American whaling for many years. She proceeds through the mid-nineteenth century shift of whaling's hub to New Bedford, and ends before the late-century collapse of whaling under the pressure of petroleum and other factors. Eighteenth-century Nantucket saw complementary patterns of gender-divided work, in which women stayed at home attending to the children and the family accounts while the men pursued whales and brought their products to market. "Quaker belief and discipline; understandings of love, marriage and family; and the organization of social life on the island accommodated the rhythms and stresses of the fishery" (14). But these arrangements began eroding even before colonial days were over, and in the nineteenth century, though the center of whaling became New Bedford, the older patterns of gender-separated work remained in the face of new ideas—about love, marriage, and the differences between men and women. Often referred to now under the general heading of "domesticity," this congeries of concepts speeded change; it even brought "Ahab's wife" to live aboard ship.

Most of us today, upon learning that hundreds of New England women in the nineteenth century accompanied their husbands on whaling voyages that lasted for years, sometimes bringing along their children too, probably think first of the courage and independence of these "sister sailors." Retrospectively it seems as if they were breaking with tradition and (often against the urgings of parents and others), making brave, admirable choices as strong-minded women who put love and adventure at the top of their agendas. This book calls for revising that picture, though not scrapping it.

Expanding on and extending what she had earlier written in articles that, in revised form make up about twenty percent of the whole, Norling uses diverse sources of information: letters, diaries and personal journals; industry records such as account books, business correspondence, log books, seaman's shipping papers and crew lists; newspapers (both local and industry-specific); the records of courts, religious organizations, charitable groups; genealogies; censuses and tax lists.

Captain Ahab Had a Wife concludes that the movement of women from land to sea, away from daily contact with church, larger family and community, is evidence of the power and the failure of nineteenth-century domesticity. For many women in New England connected to the whalefishery, whose lives changed in accord with the powerful cultural dictates of a domestic ideology, that vision of domesticity produced a no-win condition. From the antebellum period through the serious decline of the industry after the 1870s, the life choices for most were either to stay at home (with family and/or community while their men spent years on the sea per whaling voyage), longing for fulfillment of their vision of domestic bliss, or, for the sake of hoped—for domesticity, accompanying their captain—husbands around the world in a lonesome isolation from family, church and town, and from other women. The bold but actually conservative move of wives to sail with their husbands, the breaking up "of nuclear families as many children were left behind" (261), the retreat from meaningful work ashore for enforced leisure in an often hostile, all-male environment, all suggest the paradoxicality of developments in whaling. They point to the tolls paid at the intersections of economics, social ideology, and historical change.

Norling's title has a narrow focus: one American industry and one gender (the one most readers think of as having had little or nothing to do with producing the whale oil feeding the candles, lamps, and machinery of this country and others), but "way leads on to way," as the poet said. Though the men are not as well studied here, that's no surprise; the book still gives a larger, more nuanced picture of whaling behind the scenes than anywhere else I know of. The intersecting lives and roles of these women and men suggest the

interconnectedness within and among other American endeavors of the time, and, further, hint at patterns still affecting us all—some of them highlighted, for example, by the recent change of administration in Washington.

University of Kansas

Haskell Springer

HOW SHALL WE SING IN A FOREIGN LAND? Music of Irish Catholic Immigrants in the Antebellum United States. By Robert R. Grimes. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 1996.

Faced with an inundation of Irish emigrants, the Roman Catholic Church in antebellum America had to create an entire infrastructure of churches, schools and charitable organizations almost from scratch. Less obvious is the musical challenge that confronted the Church. At the time of the Irish Famine the Catholic Church in Ireland was still in the process of expanding its presence in the rural parishes where there were not enough churches to support the population. As a consequence, many Irish immigrants arrived in America having had little experience with liturgical music. While there are some beautiful religious songs in the *sean nós* singing tradition, Gaelic culture seems to have had little influence on Catholic music in America. Therefore, as with all other aspects of getting established in America, the Catholic Church also had to struggle to find music suitable for its rapidly growing body of immigrant communicants.

This task was not made easier by competition from the rapidly growing body of Protestant hymns (not to mention popular secular music) during this period. Therefore, as Robert R. Grimes points out in this well-documented and clearly-written study, “the canonical music of American Catholic ritual . . . spoke a message of separatism and difference; separateness from Protestant Americana and differentiation from secular culture.” While Mozart and Hayden masses were acceptable, as the American musical mainstream embraced German music (much of it composed by Protestants), American Catholics looked to their co-religionists in Italy for inspiration. Italian opera echoes unexpectedly in the music written for the antebellum American Church.

However, it was not only the quality of the Catholic liturgy that was at stake but Catholic culture as well. Thus the search for suitable music went beyond strictly liturgical requirements. It also encompassed what Grimes calls the “popular music of ritual” (songs and hymns to be sung during religious services), and the “music of popular ritual” (songs sung at various Irish-Catholic gatherings). Therefore, in addition to his analysis of American Catholic music collections published between 1774 and 1860, Grimes looks at the broad range of music Irish Catholics would have encountered in their parishes. Drawing on Catholic newspapers and music journals published primarily in Boston and New York, he gives the reader examples of concert programs ranging from large-scale productions of Mozart Masses to parish entertainments, as well as meetings of temperance societies and Repeal Associations. While traditional Irish tunes appeared in the more secular programs, they were usually mediated through the works of popular Irish poets and song writers such as Thomas Moore and Samuel Lover or Irish-American poetasters such as Thomas Mooney. The lively jigs, reels and hornpipes of the numerous fiddlers and pipers among the Irish immigrants do not seem to have received much of a hearing within this emerging self-consciously Irish-Catholic middle-class culture. On the other hand, as Grimes points out, the musical repertory the Irish-Catholic immigrants encountered within parish culture was highly eclectic, mixing a wide variety of popular secular and religious music with European high art, as well new American compositions.

Robert Grimes has given us a unique study that focuses on the confluence of popular and liturgical music with ethnicity, providing a most welcome contribution to study of Irish-American popular culture.

The Union Institute, Cincinnati

William H. A. Williams

AFROTOPIA: The Roots of African American Popular History. By Wilson Jeremiah Moses. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1998.

Wilson Jeremiah Moses rescues a venerable American tradition of Afrocentric thought from the heated 1990s debate over the racial origins of the Egyptian pharaohs. The term Afrocentrism emerged only in 1962 when W.E.B. Du Bois described the geographical scope of his *Encyclopedia Africana*, but black polemicists, clergymen, editors and intellectuals had long touted African civilizations of antiquity and predicted the restored glory of their ancestral lands. Ironically, these nationalist positions served a broader integrationist argument in the nineteenth century. David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, and a host of lesser-known writers drew upon Biblical exegesis, Enlightenment rationalism, and racial romanticism to certify African Americans' credentials for citizenship and inclusion. For Moses, this older, intellectual, and civilized defense of black humanity proves superior to what he sees as the therapeutic sentimentalism, dubious scholarship, and bigoted politics of much present-day Afrocentrism.

Nineteenth-century black writers invoked a utopian past and a millennial future to repudiate American racism. "Contributionists" celebrated the monuments of ancient Egypt, but faced the hefty task of accounting for the demise of Nile civilizations and the abject poverty of nineteenth-century Africa. The "curse of Ham" provided one explanation for regression in African history, but little consensus existed on biblical genealogy or geography among writers like Hosea Easton and J.W.C. Pennington. William Wells Brown and Alexander Crummell espoused a "redemptionist" version of history in which Africans could expect a return to civilization. The ancient Europeans had taken generations to emerge from caves, gain literacy, and develop culture; African peoples had an esteemed past to guide their re-ascent up the ladder of civilization. For contributionists and progressives alike, Egypt loomed large—but as the site of both civilization and barbarism. "Black Americans wanted to be children of Pharaoh as well as children of Israel" (47). It became easier to cast one's lot with the enslaving Egyptians once American slavery ended in 1865.

Most African-American writers understood history as a forward-moving trajectory that Moses calls "civilizationism." Europeans had blazed the one trail that led to civilization and culture, and black Americans were obliged to emulate the morals and manners of the Victorian bourgeoisie. Frederick Douglass served as the key exponent of this "Eurocentric cultural universalism" (123). The cultural relativism of the early-twentieth century opened the possibility that African-American culture was different rather than inferior. Indeed, Europe marked not the apex of culture, but rather the tyranny of industrial society. Black writers adopted a "primitivism" that celebrated Africa's rejection of modern capitalism and atomized individualism. Recent Afrocentrists have struggled to reconcile the notion of a unique African humanity with the idea that all Western civilization derives from Africa.

While Moses genuinely appreciates the supple mind of W.E.B. Du Bois, the intellectual gymnastics necessary to sustain modern Afrocentrism seem to exasperate him. The only positions more problematic are those of Afrocentrism's opponents like Mary Lefkowitz, whose vitriolic *Not Out of Africa* (1996) served only to embolden "true be-

lievers” and “guarantee the survival of extravagant Egyptocentric mythologies” (230). Moses is equally critical of African American Studies scholars who celebrate low-brow popular culture as political expression. Even a delusional connection to Egypt marks an improvement over the “social pathology” of gangster rap and the bawdiness of television programming. For all its flaws, Afrocentrism at least “focuses young minds on pyramids and temples rather than on priapic displays and foulmouthed monkeys” (35). It is not surprising then that Moses’s book centers on the nineteenth-century civilizationists and their affection for a universal high culture. In illuminating the distinguished origins of Afrocentrism, Moses makes an erudite contribution to what might elsewhere devolve into a shouting match.

Occidental College

Seth Rockman

WHISPERED CONSOLATION: Law and Narrative in African American Life. By Jon-Christian Suggs. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 2000.

In *Whispered Consolation*, Suggs describes the relationship between American law and African American narrative as a palimpsest, “in which one text is written over another” (11). Offering a provocative thesis, Suggs argues that African American literature has concerned itself almost exclusively with the legal status of African Americans. To establish this claim, Suggs posits a “classical African American narrative, whose boundaries are roughly 1820 to 1954” (16). This structure leads Suggs to focus primarily on the shift from romance to realism in African American literature and culture through a wide range of works, including many less well-known novels and short stories. Towards the end of his analysis, Suggs examines how Ellison’s modernism signals the end of the classical narrative and points to several recent explorations of the legal status of African Americans. Through this structure, Suggs offers a thorough and well-argued literary history of law’s appearance in African American fiction.

Despite the word “narrative” in the title, Suggs predominately analyzes novels and short stories, privileging literature over law and other narrative forms. The relative absence of autobiographical writings is particularly surprising, given its importance in African American culture. As a result, the book speaks most directly to those readers who study African American literature or those interested in an account of how literature has criticized American law. Only the epilogue points to the rich potential of using the lens of narrative, rather than literature, to examine the diversity of rhetorical modes that can critique American law. The literary focus does little to connect the texts to how African Americans readers may have used or understood these texts when they were written and published. Instead, Suggs offers insightful readings that demonstrate the legal context of the examined texts and provides ample proof that legal status was a central concern of African American literature during this period.

The literary focus leads Suggs to valorize literary discourse and literary interventions as the best possible way to contest the status of African Americans in American culture. For the greater part of his text, Suggs does not examine how the literary genres of romance and realism may have buttressed and furthered the assumptions of legal discourse and the oppression of African Americans. In Suggs’s account, law seems to operate outside of American culture as a monolith without ambiguity or contradiction. With this oversimplified approach to law in place, Suggs seems content to rely on a fairly simple relationship between law and literature in which law oppresses and literature criticizes that oppression. In addition, Suggs’s narrative of law and literature stops at and seems unable to explain how or why law became one of the most efficacious avenues for

social and cultural reform during the 1960s and 1970s after the demise of his “classical narrative” and why the categories of legal discourse continue to have such rhetorical force in contemporary African American life. While the book may not realize its ambitious goal of examining the role of **both** law and narrative in African American life, Suggs successfully illuminates the legal context of much African American fiction. This book is necessary reading for anyone who is doing research in or teaching a survey course of African American literature.

University of Kansas

Richard Schur

STRIKE THROUGH THE MASK: Herman Melville and the Scene of Writing. By Elizabeth Renker. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1996.

CORRESPONDENT COLORINGS: Melville in the Marketplace. By Sheila Post-Lauria. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press. 1996.

FATHERING THE NATION: American Genealogies of Slavery and Freedom. By Russ Castronovo. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1995.

Words in Sylvia Plath’s poem of the same name are “Axes / After whose stroke the wood rings,” though it is the echoes “traveling / Off from the centre like horses” that truly horrify the poet. Encountered later on the road, these words are not only “dry and riderless,” but have assumed a facial quality, haunting the poet as a “white skull.” In Elizabeth Renker’s highly provocative study, *Strike Through the Mask: Herman Melville and the Scene of Writing*, the production of words and the act of writing have a similarly terrifying resonance for Melville. Focusing our attention on the repeated irruption of impenetrable faces that appear throughout Melville’s writings, from *Typee* to the late poem “John Marr,” Renker argues that these disturbing faces result from Melville’s struggle with the process of writing. Drawing on biographical and historical materials of his career, as well as a fascinatingly microscopic scrutiny of extant manuscripts, Renker focuses her investigation on Melville’s frustrated encounter with the page—marred by notoriously illegible handwriting, chronically bad spelling and the violent axing of text—as well as other aspects of textual production, such as his dependence on his wife and sisters as copyists and his ever-increasing frustrations with the publication and reception of his work. The chronic frustrations that characterize Melville’s engagements with the page are not simply what we might know as “writer’s block,” but rather, Renker argues, Melville’s experiencing of the page as “an obscuring, frustrating, resistant force against whose powers of blankness he battled as he wrote” (xviii).

Although Melville’s plundering of sources in *Typee* is well known among Melville scholars, criticism of the novel has concentrated on the conflict among European, American and Polynesian cultures to which Melville was an eyewitness. The discomfort Melville scholars have felt in the face of the specter of plagiarism has forced them to find ways to justify Melville’s use of sources and dismiss the importance of the sources to Melville’s final product. This is unfortunate, as Renker demonstrates in the first chapter entitled “Melville’s Spell in *Typee*,” because in doing so scholars also dismiss a crucial component of Melville’s relation to his own text and to its production. We cannot dismiss, ignore or otherwise justify away Melville’s copying from open books in front of him without “distorting his relation both to his writing practice and to the text that practice produced” (4). For example, Renker puts special emphasis on the way the novel localizes Melville’s anxieties about writing in the threat of facial tattooing, and argues that the “fearful tattooed faces in *Typee* delineate the disfiguration by his own hand of the disavowed printed pages open before him, a disfiguration that grotesquely conflates the

copying activity of his hand and the printed source-page” (22). According to this line of arguing, to diminish or otherwise misrepresent Melville’s use of sources in composing his first novel is to close off from analysis and understanding such crucial elements of *Typee* as tattooing.

Why do faces frighten Pierre? Renker raises this question at the beginning of chapter two, entitled “Fear of Faces: From *Moby-Dick* to *Pierre*,” and then offers a range of vital, original possible explanations. The most compelling and complicated of these explanations is that the haunting and persistent faces of *Pierre* are provoked by “competing modes of vision,” or competing conceptions of the written page associated with Pierre and the narrator: the one is “a realm of invisible depth,” or of vertical space, and the other, a horizontal space, is “of visible and superficial marks” (25). The conception of the page as a horizontal space that has become for Melville increasingly oppressive and visible, carries with it destructive domestic and family scenarios that invoke the scene of textual production in the Melville household during this time.

This line of thinking leads to what is certainly the most controversial aspect of the book, that is, Renker’s argument that Melville physically and emotionally abused his wife. Reconstructing what she herself calls the “largely anecdotal” evidence, and ranging over the significant silences, the startling statements, the innuendos and rumors of various Melville relatives and scholars, Renker’s startling claim focuses primarily on two letters discovered in the mid-1970s. Addressed in May 1867 to Dr. Henry Whitney Bellows, minister of All Souls Unitarian Church in New York City, where Melville and his wife were members of his congregation, the first letter is from Elizabeth Melville’s half-brother, the second is from Elizabeth herself. Though raising more questions than existing evidence permits us to answer with any certainty, both letters strongly suggest the extent of Melville’s marital and psychological troubles at this time. I do not want to give it away too readily, for interested readers owe it to themselves to turn to Renker’s skilled and controversial analysis. It is truly stirring stuff. Whatever verdict readers issue on the charge of wife beating, Renker ought to be commended for her deep engagement in available evidence and the unflinching grittiness of her analysis. Among other things, her book deepens our understanding of Melville’s complex relationship with women, and offers a fascinating glimpse of Melville’s dramatic engagements with the page. This is a fine book—one that creates at once new areas for understanding and debating Melville.

The wonderful title of Sheila Post-Lauria’s new book, *Correspondent Colorings: Melville in the Marketplace*—borrowed from Melville’s 1850 review of Hawthorne’s *Mosses*—lays bare the worthy project of this intriguing study: to explore the reciprocal lines of influence between individual creativity and cultural practice, or more particularly, between Herman Melville and the mid-nineteenth-century literary marketplace. Drawing widely on nineteenth-century popular and print culture, and her own extensive knowledge of the history of the period, Post-Lauria investigates the major challenges facing Melville and other writers of the period “to cater simultaneously to British and American tastes, to write for divergent readerships in America, to negotiate the critical debates over genre and style, and to ‘make literary’ social, political, and personal views” (xi-xii). Demonstrating Melville’s persistent practice of borrowing, and working against, cultural forms, styles, and themes popular among different groups of readers and editors in nineteenth-century culture, Post-Lauria advances not so much a new line of inquiry into Melville studies, but rather, locates a new area of study. Clearly stated, her goals are to explore the ways in which “Melville planned his works and based them on existing popular narrative forms now largely forgotten; that he aimed specific works for particular readerships that included (to borrow antebellum terminology) elite, literary, culti-

vated, general, and mass audiences; that he enjoyed a considerable popularity among his contemporaries; and finally, that Melville considered his reliance on antebellum forms as fundamental both to his writing and to his creativity" (xiii).

In the helpful chapter one, entitled "Cultural Contexts," Post-Lauria delineates the major trends and attributes of the literary marketplace in mid-nineteenth-century America and Britain. This leads her to claim in chapter two, entitled "Typee: (Re) Making the Best-Seller," that "the most extraordinary aspect" of Melville's first novel is "how closely *Typee* reflects transatlantic literary trends and styles" (27). It is the new, rapidly expanding middle-class reader—the "fireside people" of the preface to *Typee*—to whom Melville directly addresses his works, shaping them with keen awareness of his readers' expectations and demands. This argument clearly runs against a critical tendency to see Melville as defying and subverting literary conventions. Melville's reliance on popular forms and themes leads to an understanding of Melville as a thinker who promotes not saying NO in thunder, but embracing the warmth of the hearth, home, and community—ultimately the self's acceptance of and integration into communal beliefs and social hierarchies. It is precisely Melville's adaptation to, and appropriation of, popular forms that constitutes the "essential basis to his literary creativity" (xii).

This literary creativity resulting from the enabling constraints of the literary marketplace was enhanced, Post-Lauria argues, by the heterogeneity of literary production and reception that marked the culture in which Melville wrote. This pluralistic literary culture forced Melville to shape his works in ways that adhered not only to the expectations of readers, but as Post-Lauria reveals in the highly instructive and persuasive section of the book entitled "The Periodic Marketplace," to the publishing policies of magazine editors as well. For example, Post-Lauria quite persuasively describes the ways Melville adapted his short fiction for the "sentimental" taste of *Harper's* middleclass readership, whereas for *Putnam's*, a venue for writing that offered readers social and political critique, Melville crafted his work accordingly.

The conditions for understanding Melville and his relationship to nineteenth-century culture have changed dramatically, even over the last ten years. Since the 1991 centennial celebration of Melville's death, an abundance of illuminating material—some of it, as Renker has demonstrated, quite startling—has come to light. And much of it, especially in the hands of a critic as skilled and knowledgeable as Post-Lauria, is eminently useful for what it reveals about the relationship between Melville and the literary marketplace in nineteenth-century America and Britain. Nonetheless, while it demonstrates the ways Melville's works were shaped principally by the various reading communities within the nineteenth-century, Post-Lauria's book stops short of deeper engagement with theoretical discourses on the relationship between literary production and the sociopolitical context of nineteenth-century life. *Correspondent Colorings* is suggestive and instructive, evinces extensive knowledge in nineteenth-century popular literature, and deserves praise as a solid instance of the insights literary analysis, grounded in material contexts, can afford.

In his compelling study *Fathering the Nation: American Genealogies of Slavery and Freedom*, Russ Castronovo traces competing narratives of national identity, from the Bunker Hill Monument to *Moby-Dick*. Examining the ways counter-memories and unauthorized narratives of national identity disrupt the dominant, ordered narration of America, thus creating a "confused legacy" or a "miscegenation of stories" in which narratives of the nation compete with and interrogate one another, Castronovo posits a national identity that rests not on rituals of consensus but on repressed legacies of parricide and rebellion. Drawing on a wide range of cultural artifacts, including slave autobi-

ography, classic American fiction, monumental architecture, myths of the Revolution, proslavery writing, and landscape painting, Castronovo delineates a genealogy that recovers those texts, artifacts, or “members of the national family” whose status challenges the body politic and its history, thus assembling disjunctive narratives of national identity, ambivalent in both content and form. Castronovo is careful to note that the aim in recognizing memories cast aside by authorized paths of history is not to unify them within a single narrative. Beyond recovering “obscured, illegitimate bodies and memories” (24) and in turn, the important work of rewriting “the single history of the nation as a more diverse, contradictory, and conflicted set of experiences” (25), the higher purpose in expanding and revising the narrative of national identity is that it can “effect a significant change in our understanding of what exactly amounts to freedom within America” (25)—ultimately, a reassessment of our national narrative leads to “a differentiated description of freedom as originating out of slavery, amnesia, and incompleteness” (25).

“See the power of national emblems,” Emerson urges in “The Poet.” Castronovo has indeed done just that in an original and striking book—one that deserves high praise for bringing clarity and focus to a narrative of national history that is comprised of “stories shakily founded on dissonance, contradiction, and disruption” (12). While it engages, for example, Bhabha’s insights into the disruptions inherent in colonial discourse or Foucault’s examinations of “differential knowledges” or subjugated narratives, the most intriguing and admirable quality of this book is its ability to interweave and draw out connections among a wide range of texts and cultural artifacts; Castronovo has the learning and rhetoric grace to pull it off.

Tunghai University

Kenneth Speirs

ON THE RIM: Looking for the Grand Canyon. By Mark Neumann. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1999.

Mark Neumann’s *On the Rim: Looking for the Grand Canyon* is a sophisticated guide to the sedimented cultural history and experience of Grand Canyon. Years of visiting and studying the canyon produced Neumann’s thoughtful account of where the canyon’s meanings come from, and how individual visitors participate in and create them.

The historical sections of the book explore nineteenth-century landscape conventions, the significance of the Grand Canyon as a monument to national identity, and promoters’ work in sculpting tourists’ experience to conform to these ideals. Neumann extensively documents the history of Grand Canyon travel and tourist accommodations—railroad routes, Fred Harvey’s hotel, the park architecture of Mary Jane Colter—all constructing specific entrees to canyon experience privileging the scenic and the awe-inspiring. For over a century canyon visitors have encountered an interpreted landscape that anticipates and contains whatever spontaneous response they might feel there. Neumann skillfully reads the canyon as an opportunity for generations of visitors to confront chasms in their own lives: between what they feel and what they “ought” to feel at the canyon, work and leisure, the frenetic present and a timeless past, secular life and the divine.

One of the nation’s most overwhelming natural features has become culturally overwhelming as well, not just in the didactic role park rangers play, but in the scope of canyon tourism itself. Crowds and automobiles at every turn mitigate against the solitary encounter with the canyon promoters have held up as ideal. The most interesting chapters of the book, as a result, are ethnographic. Neumann describes contemporary tourists’ and park employees’ impressions of the place and each other, highlighting ways in which

individual and collective experience challenge the official park script. Popular culture has added new landmarks at the canyon, including “Brady Bunch Trail” and “Thelma and Louise Point.” The canyon is a New Age vortex, informal stage for rock-and-roll boys, scene for personal reflection and punctuation in romantic relationships. It is a place where time runs out for some in suicide. It is also where experience can be unexpectedly heightened when a prisoner escapes into the park, eluding police and FBI agents, kidnapping visitors, upending park and visitor routine decisively.

Fugitive Danny Ray Horning’s 1992 high-stakes adventure in the park closes Neumann’s book, and serves as an opportunity to test the imperfect strength of the canyon’s elaborate construction: “everyone at the park could, perhaps, somehow feel a little more authentic because the canyon had become a real place where something of TV news proportion unfolded before their eyes” (321). Horning was “constructed” himself as an outlaw hero juxtaposed with the rigidity of law enforcement officials. “Authentic” experience of any kind is hard to come by at the canyon, but it is possible. Indeed, that is what Neumann quietly digs up all along. Mixed with the canned awe of scripted visits and performances are individual moments of clarity and real experience as idiosyncratic as the legions of visitors themselves.

Anyone hoping for something “real” to happen at the canyon is up against fellow travelers and a deep cultural past structuring every move and response. Neumann, equipped with *his* “canyon guidebooks, translated from the works of French and German critics” (337), along with a discerning eye for how people make meaning on the fly, reopens the canyon as a place of mystery rather than paving it over as meaninglessly overinterpreted. Admirably without cynicism, Neumann invites readers into the stratified depths of cultural construction of nature and place, but climbing out again, leaves us at the rim with the possibility of uncertainty and wonder.

University of Wyoming

Frieda Knobloch

CREATING COLORADO: The Making of a Western American Landscape, 1860-1940.
By William Wyckoff. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1999.

William Wyckoff’s *Creating Colorado* falls squarely into the arena of human geography. From the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century human geography revolved around the twin perspectives of an environmental determinism that set the stage for human action, and the lyrically appealing but simplistic identification-and-description of traditional regionalism. Reacting to the limitations of these two views, many post-World War Two geographers turned to the rigor of quantitative analysis. Historiographers argue that the shift in perspective from qualitative to quantitative analysis mirrors the impact of larger national and international processes that destroyed an older established sense of region. As a reaction to this rather single-minded quantitative reductionism, the 1970s saw the development of five contrasting approaches: historical materialism, humanism, structuration (the effort to resolve the tension between materialism and humanism), realism, and finally postmodernism. Combining the approaches of historical materialism and traditional regional description, Wyckoff traces the decline of regionalism in Colorado, in a pithy analysis of the Centennial State.

Beginning with a brief, one chapter overview of the pre-1860s Colorado landscape, Wyckoff focuses his five main chapters on Colorado’s five geographical regions: mountain, piedmont heartland, hinterland (eastern plains), southern periphery and the western slope, between 1860 and 1920. The author concludes with a brief discussion of the decline of Colorado’s regionalism between 1920 and 1940.

What Wyckoff does best is to bring together a spatial and materialist analysis of human-environment interactions, drawing on a keen sense of the boom-and-bust economic landscape of commodity capitalism. His rich discussion of the movement of capital and the access to knowledge provides a rewarding read. In addition, his keen sense of the early rise of middle-class tourism, and the impact of federal land management, will be much appreciated by his readers.

However, this regional narrative contains several important limitations, in particular the author's narrative style, and a too brief discussion of the decline of regionalism. In a narrative style shared by many historical geographers, Wyckoff layers his landscape narrative in a manner reminiscent of geological history. Beginning by describing the physical landscape, which acts as a base layer, Wyckoff adds Native American geographies (hunting, agriculture, architecture, shifting demographics, and the rise of the horse), European geographies (politics and trade), and finally American geographies (exploration, expansion, politics, and trade). This "geological" layering creates an authorial power that the environmental historian William Cronon has described as "making the contingent seem determined, and the artificial seem natural." This unquestioned layering is particularly powerful when the subject of the narrative is the natural environment, and the naturalizing effect of the geological layering makes the contingency and artificiality of narrative seem particularly determined and natural.

Regionalism is a wonderfully fertile geographical and cultural concept to play with. But geographies like Wyckoff's face complex limitations when they rely on the supposition that there is an unquestioning physical basis to a region (environmental determinism), on top of which, like subsequent geological layers, space gains an identity. Indeed, those interested in landscape, environment, and cultural theory, could indeed, bring a postmodern play to this arena as a useful tonic to the persistence of the geological narrative.

A second limitation can be found in the off-handed way Wyckoff argues that come the 1920s, with the homogenizing effects of the war, mass consumption, the rise of a "loosely shared national popular culture," and urbanization, Colorado suddenly became a different place. He spends the vast majority of his text describing the ways in which the capitalism of production and space shape five distinct regions. The state, like the nation, Wyckoff argues, becomes homogenized by consumption. Yet, he devotes only one chapter to the impact of consumption in wiping away those regions. The sheer weight of the five chapters exploring regionalism verses and a single chapter on regional decline undercuts the effectiveness of his argument.

Until recently, American studies practitioners had thrown the baby out with the bathwater by shunning the study of landscape. Equating it with the now discredited myth-and-symbol inspired works of Henry Nash Smith, Leo Marx, and Alan Trachtenberg, this field of study was long left fallow. In Wyckoff's thought-provoking combination of materialism and regionalism, American studies practitioners will find the possibility of a new intellectual space for a critique of environmental narratives that opens up some exciting possibilities for landscape study.

University of Missouri-Kansas City

Amanda Rees

SELLING SUFFRAGE: Consumer Culture and Votes for Women. By Margaret Finnegan. New York: Columbia University Press. 1999.

In *Selling Suffrage*, Margaret Finnegan mines a wealth of sources—from placards to Kewpie dolls, from valentines to films and periodicals—to present a sophisticated

analysis of the role of American consumer culture in the suffrage movement. The mainstream, nonradical segment of the movement grew increasingly conservative just as consumer capitalism came to dominate the American landscape from the end of the Civil War to the early decades of the twentieth century. The interplay between these two historical developments serves as the focus of the book, and the main force of the narrative is the cost of suffragists' accommodations to consumerism. The suffragists' platform became one of political expediency, arguing that women's ballots would cure the social ills of a rapidly industrializing nation. In part reinforcing traditional roles for women, this platform presented a less threatening vision of women voters. "By narrowing the possibilities for imagining American womanhood," Finnegan writes, "consumerism helped shape a conservative vision of women's citizenship" (113). Assumptions about the universality of white, middle-class values stood at the center of this vision. As white, middle-class suffragists began to tap into consumerist ideas and strategies to gain support, they codified these values and effectively erased racial and class conflict in the movement's public presentation.

Finnegan examines these developments in chapters organized according to her sources: she demonstrates the growing "consumerist streak" in suffragists' ideology, self-representations and public pageants, as well as their use of commodities, such as buttons and banners, to publicize their cause (27). A chapter on *The Woman's Journal*—a periodical that ran from 1870 to 1931—offers perhaps the most compelling framework for understanding how each generation drew increasingly from consumer culture. Founded by suffragists Lucy Stone and her husband Henry Blackwell as a political organ of the movement, the *Journal* grew out of a balance between political goals and financial and commercial realities. By 1910 the founders' daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell, was overwhelmed by the *Journal's* financial troubles and allowed it to become the official paper of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), with herself as editor. The dramatic debates between Blackwell and the NAWSA board over commercializing the style of the paper and promoting its circulation and advertising shed light on the tensions in the movement's adaptation to modern consumerism. Gradually, a "market-based definition of publishing success . . . triumphed over the *Journal's* historic reformist objectives" (166). To Lucy Stone, Finnegan pointedly remarks, "such distinctions would have seemed meaningless" (158).

The book's organization detracts somewhat from its effectiveness. First, it lends itself to redundancy. Debates over fashion fall into several of Finnegan's chapter categories, and so they are repeatedly recounted as evidence of increasing consumerism. Living in an era saturated with corporate endorsements, contemporary readers might be surprised to learn that Macy's served as the headquarters for suffrage supplies—mainly the "parade marching outfit"—as early as 1912, for the New York State referendum (69). But this fine example is also cited in multiple chapters: one on fashion and one on commodities. The book also occasionally offers a short view of a historical development when a longer one is necessary. The legacy of republican motherhood, for example, is included all too briefly in a discussion of women's civic familial obligations. The rise of social science is mentioned only tangentially to the development of Progressive-era women's roles in municipal housekeeping. Such shortcomings, however, do not detract from Finnegan's nuanced readings of how suffragists "blessed commercial forays into their world" (126).

In her conclusion, Finnegan follows the thread of consumerist ideology in the lives of women activists to challenge scholars' assertions of a definitive break in pre- and post-suffrage women's political culture. Consumerism presented women with a new

vocabulary and a new sense of their collective identity, and it continued to provide an “internal logic” to their worldviews even after 1920. This is an important point, and it would have been stronger had Finnegan carried her analysis of the racial and class components of this worldview through to the book’s completion, and renewed her emphasis on how this “logic” narrowed the choices for women who did most of their “reading” in the mainstream culture. Yet Finnegan’s overall contribution to scholarship on woman suffrage and the beginnings of our capitalist consumer culture through her analysis of such compelling new sources proves invaluable.

Brandeis University

Marjorie N. Feld

BUFFALO SOLDIERS AND OFFICERS OF THE NINTH CAVALRY, 1867-1898: Black and White Together. By Charles L. Kenner. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1999.

This latest contribution to a growing body of literature on buffalo soldiers illustrates how thoroughly the topic continues to resist efforts to transcend the “saddles and boots” approach which New Western Historians abandoned long ago. Kenner’s book examines the Ninth Cavalry—one of six African-American army regiments that served in the West—from its formation after the Civil War to the United States’ intervention in Cuba. Kenner aims for an audience of military history buffs, especially those with keen interest in the frontier army, through a collection of intimate profiles of select officers and enlisted men. His work will prove useful and enjoyable to readers who relish good adventure stories and who like their history told through personal, up-close narratives. Scholars of western history and of race relations, who may be expecting a more analytical study, will have to continue their hoping.

Kenner corrects much of the imbalance on knowledge about the buffalo soldiers simply through his focus on the Ninth, a regiment usually overshadowed by the Tenth Cavalry. Readers learn more about familiar characters such as the Ninth’s commander, Colonel Edward Hatch, and are introduced to lesser-known figures such as Lieutenant Matthias Day and Sergeant Emanuel Stance. The lives of white officers predominate in this volume, while those of the black soldiers themselves are recreated mostly through anecdotal information found in court-martial proceedings. The thick description with which he portrays these characters gives color and depth to their stories, but unfortunately the minutiae distracts from a smooth unfolding of the regiment’s activities. Individuals are sometimes introduced at the beginning of a chapter, disappear for several pages during a discussion of battles and troop assignments, and then return later in somewhat abrupt fashion. Kenner occasionally resorts to amateur psychologizing of his subjects, such as in his description of racist killer John “Humpy” Jackson as “possessed of a mind as warped as his back.” (92)

What unfolds through nearly two dozen chapters is Kenner’s thesis: that black soldiers and white officers developed a degree of camaraderie that bridged the racial divide, until the 1890s when a national resurgence of racism undid most of the earlier positive efforts of the Reconstruction era. With nostalgic tones, Kenner romanticizes the period of the Indian wars as a hope-filled time when blacks and whites worked together in common cause, but like many narrative-centered works, his book ignores serious issues. For instance, his patriotic rhetoric obscures the consequences of black-white collaboration on the Native Americans and Hispanics who resisted the United States’ military aggression. If African Americans did indeed “prove their gallantry” and showed that Blacks could be “all that soldiers should be” (314), then they did so at the expense of

other dark-skinned groups who did not cooperate so easily with the army's activities. To be fair, Kenner has no intent of addressing such complexity and stays focused on black-white relations. Even within that scope, however, he makes no use of works by George Fredrickson, Leon Litwack, and many others whose efforts have produced a wealth of literature on national anti-black sentiments, any of which might illuminate his frequent use of the catch-all term "racism." As a result, Kenner's description of the bigotry that surrounded black soldiers' lives seems both exaggerated and simplistic.

These limitations aside, it should be said that any book on the buffalo soldiers deserves attention. Kenner sums up the goal of social history when he claims that "historians need to broaden their scope to include more than the favored individuals who have monopolized the limelight" (191). A stronger consideration of the secondary literature than what Kenner has shown reveals that many historians of the frontier army already have accomplished this. The past two decades have seen works by scholars like Sherry Smith and Patricia Stallard that expand our knowledge about the racial attitudes of officers and of the family and social lives of soldiers and their dependents. In what appears to be an eagerness to write exciting personal stories, Kenner takes no example from, or even any account of, these recent contributions. This book does advance our understanding of the black military experience. However, readers who are accustomed to interpretation in scholarly works, or who lack prior familiarity with the black regiments, will likely find it tedious and disappointing.

St. Cloud State University

James Leiker

ON BECOMING CUBAN: Identity, Nationality, and Culture. By Louis A. Pérez, Jr. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1999.

On Becoming Cuban Identity, Nationality, & Culture, by Louis A. Pérez Jr. is a thorough history of the far-reaching impact of the United States on Cuban culture from the mid-nineteenth century until the 1959 revolution. The scope of this hefty 579-page study is broad indeed, ranging from baseball to dance music to education to appliances to clothing fashions to ideals of beauty. In a myriad of ways, Pérez documents how elements of U.S. culture became so inextricably a part of Cuban everyday life that they were seen as the normal state of affairs. The author's thesis is that Cuban national identity increasingly was defined by things American, until the 1950s when Cuban disillusionment with the promises held forth by the "American way of life" eventually led to a counter-definition of "Cuban" as "anti-American."

While Pérez's account of the development of a Cuban nationalist sentiment opposed to U.S. influence in the years immediately preceding the 1959 revolution is compelling, his central argument, that "Cuban" national identity up to then had become virtually synonymous with "American" (Pérez prefers the inaccurate "North American," although he is not referring to either Canada or Mexico), seems deeply flawed. To say that U.S. influence on Cuba was pervasive does not necessarily mean that what Cubans themselves *understood* as *Cubanidad* ("Cubanness") coincided with things American. Pérez's own evidence illustrating the ubiquitousness of U.S. presence in Cuba also demonstrates quite powerfully that it virtually always continued to be identified by Cubans themselves as *American*, rather than Cuban. What is fascinating about Pérez's accumulation of examples is that they illustrate, at one and the same time, both the ways in which U.S. culture had become inextricable from Cuban culture and the continuing insistence among Cubans on identifying certain things as "American" in *opposition* to "Cuban." Some of the commentators cited by Pérez even worry over the *loss* of Cuban national

identity occasioned by U.S. influence. Yet the author himself ignores the fascinating implications of such statements for his own thesis. A more careful (and theoretically informed) analysis of the ways in which myths of purity with regard to national identity persist despite the obvious evidence of hybridity and cross-pollination might have held more appeal for the scholarly reader.

Although the catchwords “identity” and “nationality” in the subtitle of *On Becoming Cuban* would seem to position it in the footsteps of such landmark works as Homi Bhabha’s *Nation and Narration* or Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, suggesting a theoretical treatment of the development of a “Cuban” national identity that draws on their collective insight that all national identities are in fact constructed, narrated, “imagined,” rather than given, Pérez never so much as mentions Bhabha, Anderson, or any other theorist of “nation,” nor does he explicitly invoke any sort of theoretical framework. Blurbs on the dustjacket from Latino/a novelists Oscar Hijuelos and Julia Alvarez suggest that the book is being marketed as a readable “popular” cultural history along the lines of David Halberstam’s *The Fifties*, appealing to a general readership (or at least the segment of it interested in Latino/a issues), rather than a strictly academic one. But it is hard to see how *On Becoming Cuban* will appeal to a such a readership; Pérez’s obsessive documentation of even the most mundane points makes the going tedious indeed for the reader who is interested in the broad strokes of a developing Cuban national identity, rather than the minutiae of historical evidence.

On Becoming Cuban certainly contains some pleasant surprises, such as Pérez’s analysis of Cubans’ preference for baseball over bullfighting in reaction against its Spanish colonial past, or his suggestion that Cuban economic conditions in the 1950s were such that a massive exile would have happened *regardless* of Castro’s revolution. But these moments are ultimately not enough to fulfill the expectations of academics interested in the sorts of nuanced, theoretically informed discussions of national identity that constitute such a significant development within current cultural studies.

University of Kansas

Marta Caminero-Santangelo

MARK TWAIN: A Literary Life. By Everett Emerson. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2000.

There is a long, long shelf of Mark Twain biographies, but Everett Emerson’s is a standout with uncommon staying power. Sam Clemens died in 1910; every fifteen years since then, the public has been offered a Mark Twain recalibrated to the prevailing taste and the historical moment. A Freudian Twain; a Populist-New Deal Twain; a liberal Twain; a Victorian bourgeois Twain (and various refutations); a media-generated Twain, sentimental Twain, gay Twain—you can take your pick, as these are all available in cogently-argued volumes which make lively if sometimes selective use of an enormous, chaotic body of evidence. In the midst of all this, what Everett Emerson does is take us back to a fundamental recognition: Mark Twain endures as a writer, and *Mark Twain: A Literary Life* is a poised, meticulous record of a professional life in writing. Though many of the facts assembled here are available scattered through other accounts, there is power, as well as great usefulness, in having them gathered, vetted, sequenced, and evaluated by a scholar who has been a leader in Mark Twain studies for many decades.

If the biography seems defensive in any way, that defensiveness seems warranted. In his preface, Emerson notes that some of the recent biographies pay surprisingly unsteady attention to what Sam Clemens wrote, and veer off into speculations which are supported (to put it gently) on freewheeling surmise and flimsy evidence. Though there

is nothing contentious in Emerson's voice, his is an effort at correction, a patient laying-down of what can actually be known, and a winnowing-out of almost anything that finds no basis in either historical fact or Clemens's own published discourse about coming of age as a writer and about a career in reporting, humor, literature, and publishing. The book opens with a burst of quotations from Clemens's autobiographical writings and newspaper accounts from the years of his childhood—no cadenzas of imagining here, but instead a record that any reader or scholar can rely on. The forward motion through the childhood is therefore swift: the account leaps from one firm fact to another, and within a few pages we are in Joe Ament's offices of the *Hannibal Courier* and Clemens's teenage years as an apprentice printer, wandering jour printer, and amateur reporter for local papers. The steamboat-pilot years are handled crisply and quickly; when Sam turns to writing in earnest again, the pace slows, and the progression from journal to journal, project to project, is patiently detailed. There are invaluable accounts of the evolution of *The Innocents Abroad*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*—a chronicle of brainstorming, negotiations, contracts, misunderstandings and false starts and arguments—with thorough attention given to the economics of publishing, the sketchiness and effectiveness of the new subscription trade, and the effect that writing for such a market, and such a marketing strategy, had on Sam's essential idea of a book.

At this point in a brief review, the ritual is to express hesitations or at least minor disappointments. I have none to offer. When *Mark Twain: A Literary Life* moves into Clemens's later years, I feared that the narrative would take a familiar turn towards lamentation of his losses as a husband and a father and the debatable departure of his muse. Emerson wisely understands that readers who want such accounts have no shortage of places to find them; and his own review keeps the focus tight on the effect on Clemens as a writer: his output, his formal and informal editors, the friends and relationships which directly reflected what he published. Nonetheless, Emerson does turn up one fact about Clemens's family life which in a strict sense has no connection to the professional career, but which is a notable contribution to our understanding of his domestic relations. Taking seriously the evidence, and the personal accounts, which indicate that Clemens could smoke as many as three hundred cigars a month, and reviewing the extant records of Olivia's ailments and the eventual restriction, by attending doctors, of Sam's encounters with his own wife to only a few minutes per day, Emerson concludes—with iron logic, it would seem—that Olivia was a chronic victim of his second-hand smoke, and that Sam's mythified habit contributed to her death. But this recognition is only a small feature of a book which sets so many things straight, grounds us once again in what we know, and situates Sam Clemens as a writer in the midst of a print revolution—an artist, in other words, who can help us negotiate our own way through a noisy turmoil of new technology, new media, and new dimensions for the printed word.

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Bruce Michelson

NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERARY REALISM: Through the Looking Glass. By Katherine Kearns. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996.

Kearns' analysis of nineteenth-century British and American realism follows deconstructionist principles, namely a belief in the duplicity and multiplicity of language, a belief that one cannot establish a stable essential meaning for a text and that all literary texts and literary criticism are unstable. She argues that literary realism is a fallacy, that realistic novels contain elements of romance, the surreal, the mysterious, and the unspeakable. Despite the intention of realists to be truthful to life and to the details of

a particular time and environment, Kearns feels that realists cannot give a true rendering of people or situations. Moreover, she suggests that the process of literary realism is inherently unstable, fluid, and subliminally nihilistic.

Kearns perceives literary realism as a paternal genre and notices a high level of marital discord and cruelty within families and notes how often authors excise, marginalize, kill off, or drown females, especially mothers. In Chopin's *The Awakening* Edna Pontellier fails, literally drowns, in her quest for selfhood and independence beyond her marriage. Kearns identifies Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* as a sadistic paternally driven tale and focuses on Heathcliff's obsessive control and punishment of women and children. Kearns sees the monster's desire for a friend in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as a metaphor for the excluded, voiceless woman, who longs for inclusion. Using Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* as evidence of the author's dis-ease with feminism and socialist utopias, Kearns comments on the author's creation of the assertive, erotic, unbridled Zenobia and his dismissal of her through drowning and his reestablishment of the sanctity of marriage and paternal authority at the end of the novel. Clearly Kearns prefers the romance to literary realism. Her broad observations about literary realism are based on the analysis of five texts, one of which, *The Blithedale Romance*, is a romance. Moreover, Kearns' interpretations are limited by her rigid use of deconstructionist and feminist perspectives to see only what she wants to see in the texts.

Independent Scholar, Okemos, MI

Jean Mullin Yonke

AMERICAN LITERARY REALISM AND THE FAILED PROMISE OF CONTRACT.
By Brook Thomas. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1997

Thomas notices that the rise of contract law in America coincided with the rise of realist literature in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. He argues that contract law offered the promise of economic opportunity for Americans, but contract law failed to deliver its promise and instead legitimized existing social and economic inequities and existing hierarchies of race, class, and gender. Thomas tries to connect the study of literature to developments within legal thought and practice by examining realist texts that evoke the failed promise of contract. Thomas refers to the "fiction of republican virtue," literature that assumes the "existence of a moral order that should govern the republic." Such novels include John Hay's *The Bread-Winners* (1883), a defense of economic individualism and an attack on labor, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps' *The Silent Partner* (1871), a sympathetic portrait of labor and women's quest for contractual equality, and Charles Chesnut's *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) and Albion W. Tourgée's *Pactolus Prime* (1905), two novels of passing. Because no moral order governs realistic works, realism challenges the "fiction of republican virtue." Thomas sees a distinguishing feature of realism as its willingness to explore the promise and failure of contract in American culture.

While the author thoroughly discusses legal theory and important legal cases, his analysis of literary texts relies on traditional analysis rather than insights gained from legal thought. One does not need a framework of legal analysis to learn that Bartley Hubbard in Howells' *Modern Instance* makes narrow and self-serving use of contracts and ignores his personal obligations to employers and to his spouse. In like manner, Thomas focuses on two specific scenes in James' *The Bostonians* and *The Aspern Papers* in which a male and female character shake hands as a symbol of making a contract regarding future actions. Without Thomas' overlay of legal theory, one can decipher Jeffery Aspern's duplicitous actions in *The Aspern Papers*. In *The Bostonians* one does

not need a discourse on the legal meaning of marriage and privacy in the late nineteenth century to learn that Verena Tarrant, a close friend of a committed feminist, who agrees to marry and submit to Basil Ransom, a conservative Southerner, may not expect marital happiness. Thomas thoroughly explores the scholarship on specific novels of Henry James, William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, and Kate Chopin and adds significantly new interpretations to these works; however, there is a disconnect between Thomas' survey of legal and political theory and practice in the late nineteenth century and his discussion of literary representations of corporate culture. With the exception of the lawyer writer Albion W. Tourgée, Thomas does not argue that the realists that he discusses were aware of important legal cases and/or political theory. Thomas believes that the Supreme Court's responses to the rise of corporate power and to the withdrawal of government support for the civil and political rights of freedmen and the limitations of the Progressive movement explain the historical context within which realism develops. Thomas provides a juxtaposition of specific historical developments and the rise of realism. What Thomas does not demonstrate is that this history influences realist writers.

University

Jean Mullin Yonke

THE AGE OF THE BACHELOR: Creating an American Subculture. By Howard P. Chudacoff. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1999.

In *The Age of the Bachelor*, Howard Chudacoff provides the first historical survey of America's bachelor subculture. He identifies the period between 1880 and 1930 as the "peak years" for America's community of unmarried men, and argues that in this formative period bachelors created new and refurbished old urban institutions, reshaped American manhood generally, and set a new course for America's consumer culture.

Statistics justify Chudacoff's designating the period from 1880-1930 "the age of the bachelor." In 1890 bachelors accounted for 41.7% of all adult men, their greatest recorded representation in U.S. history. The percentage of unmarried adult men in the population remained high until 1920, when it began a fairly steady decline that continued until 1960, at which time only 23.2% of adult men were unmarried. Moreover, in 1890 the median age at first marriage for men reached 26.1, an ancientness at the altar unmatched until the 1990s.

Chudacoff makes a good case for arguing that bachelors helped to refashion the city at the turn of the century. They prompted the creation of many institutions specifically for unmarried men—gangs, boarding houses, taxi-dance halls, and YMCAs, for instance—and came to dominate many pre-existing institutions—saloons, clubs, and pool halls, to name a few—as married men were urged toward "domestic masculinity" and greater heterosociality.

The interpretation weakens, however, when Chudacoff argues that bachelors' subculture served as a resource of values and practices for refashioning manhood in general during the early twentieth century. After rehearsing the forces that threatened the dominant nineteenth-century ideal of manhood, Chudacoff argues that bachelors' "particular subculture of autonomy and male-centered sociability offered a model for those wishing to remake manhood" (218). But, autonomy and male-centered sociability were hallmarks of nineteenth-century American manhood, not the characteristics of some newer version. Marriage had not been interpreted in the nineteenth century as lost autonomy for men: married men were supposed freely to make decisions for their families as well as themselves and thus to have greater scope for their autonomous powers than unmarried men. The changes wrought by the twentieth century required that men relinquish some of their

cherished autonomy as corporate enterprises and giant institutions replaced smaller businesses and more intimate associations and as women articulated a set of interests independent of men in their families. Moreover, as Chudacoff acknowledges at some points, attenuation of the nineteenth century's male bonds was also urged on newer men. Thus, bachelors might better be construed as the practitioners of an older version of American manhood than models for a new one.

Chudacoff's evidence also raises doubts about the emergence of a bachelors' subculture at the turn of the century. While some evidence suggests the possibility of a distinct culture among unmarried men, the weight of data points to a version of male culture shared by many married and unmarried men. The central activities of bachelor culture, for instance, gambling, drinking, and exploiting women, were hardly confined to unmarried men, and Chudacoff finds that magazines aimed at both married and unmarried men (like the *National Police Gazette*) thrived at the turn of the century, while magazines aimed exclusively for bachelors (like Chicago's *Bachelor Book*) could not long survive. In addition, the overwhelming majority of organizations with which Chudacoff associates bachelor culture embraced married men as well as singles. Perhaps, in the end, bachelors were not different enough from married men to sustain a distinguishable subculture.

Nevertheless, *The Age of the Bachelor* raises fascinating questions, presents interesting information, and makes engaging arguments. It is clearly written and deeply generous to the scholarship on which it relies. In those ways, it is a model of historical writing.

University of Maryland, College Park

Robyn Muncy

BURNING THE FLAG: The Great 1989-1990 American Flag Desecration Controversy. By Robert Justin Goldstein. Kent: Kent State University Press. 1996.
TO DIE FOR: The Paradox of American Patriotism. By Cecelia Elizabeth O'Leary. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1999.

The methodologies of semiotics, political science, cultural history, and comparative civil religion intersect in the intriguing field of vexillology, the scholarly study of flag significance and usage in different societies. Over the past half century historians and social scientists working in this topic area have gradually banded together into academic associations scattered around the globe, convening biannually for international summits. These scholars, as well as academicians working in American Studies—who all need at some point to grapple with the meaning and manipulation of our most powerful symbols—have in this pair of recent works examples of two extremes of focus, as the former explores exhaustively the cases, multilayered context, and deeper meaning of flag desecration legislation and Supreme Court rulings in one crucial year at the end of the 1980s, while the other ponders the incredibly broad question of how nationalism in the United States was evoked, sustained, and defined from the period of the Civil War through World War I. One looks into the microscope of cultural analysis and the other through the telescope, if you will. Certainly both perspectives are needed in our ongoing evaluation of the American experience, and taken together these works present an interesting coupling to remind us of our need to balance our command of detail with our ability to see the big picture. Both scholars are to be commended for the meticulousness of their research, the clarity of the communication of their purpose and approach in the opening chapters, and the logic of their analytical structures. Both will be pivotal in ongoing academic discussions in this topic area. If you're not willing to get these books for your

persona libraries, gentle readers, make sure that your institutions secure them, for the enrichment of the students and communities around you.

Goldstein's *Burning the Flag* represents the synthesis and integration of insights gained from over one hundred interviews, from a wide reading of varying journalistic accounts, and from a masterly command of the legislative actions, legal and illegal arrests, and judicial interpretations connected to the issue of flag burning. Students of the law and political science will particularly appreciate the specificity Goldstein brings to this study. After establishing the origins and rise of what he calls the "Flag Protection Movement" in the period 1890-1920, this work concentrates on the flag desecration incident at the Republican National Convention in 1984 that led up to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Texas v. Johnson* (1989), the Congress's subsequent debate over how best to react, which ultimately led to the Flag Protection Act of 1989, and the Supreme Court's rejection of that law in *U.S. v. Eichman* (1990). The ongoing call for a constitutional amendment to protect the flag, which goes through cycles of frenzied support and virtual disregard, but which will continue to resurface, particularly in periods of cultural dislocation and national challenge, is much better understood and appreciated after reading this book. Although a corollary, the philosophical context of the debate over the use of the Battle Flag of the Confederacy will be better understood as well.

Goldstein includes an epilogue and addendum, covering material from 1990 through publication, that reinforce this issue is not going away. The debate will continue, and students of American culture will need *Burning the Flag's* insights in the future. This volume should be valued as just one component of his oeuvre related to flag desecration; scholars should be aware of the range of texts he has created to more easily find the source best fitted to their needs. *Burning the Flag* is the book to help us understand the flag desecration controversy in the Reagan-Bush years, but for historical background encompassing the entire twentieth century, readers should turn to Goldstein's *Saving "Old Glory"* (Westview Press, 1995), while for helping students engage relevant primary sources they should see his *Desecrating the American Flag: Key Documents of the Controversy from the Civil War to 1995* (Syracuse, 1996). Slated for publication by the end of 2000 from the University Press of Kansas, Goldstein will offer *Flag Burning and Free Speech* another consideration of the *Texas v. Johnson* case, designed for students use in courses dealing with constitutional rights and civil liberty issues. He is clearly the leading scholarly authority on legal and judicial interpretations of flag desecration in the United States; he achieves that position through arduous research, painstaking accuracy, and careful, clear writing.

O'Leary's *To Die For* is also the product of years of careful and thorough research of primary sources. She is not the first to explore the creation and dissemination of patriotic traditions during the rise and flourishing of American imperialism; although not always acknowledged here, scholars have been engaged in his conversation for the past fifteen years. Her studies of the influence of the Grand Army of the Republic, the origin and use of the Pledge of Allegiance, and the subsequent strategies to spread "Americanization" in the public schools all cover familiar themes, but with a richness of evidence that heretofore has not been seen. Her most striking contribution, however, is the way she has broadened the discourse.

By setting American patriotism up as an unresolved paradox, a variant in some ways of Gunnar Myrdal's classic approach to racism in this society, she brings wonderful range to analyzing the shifting and debated meaning of the flag, and ultimately, the nation. Of particular strength in this regard are her chapters that emphasize the impact of race and gender in the historical construction of nationalist identity. She makes a con-

vincing case for seeing racialization of nationalism, at great cost for African Americans, as the key element in the restoration of harmony following the Civil War. Data on the impact of the Women's Relief Corps of the Grand Army of the Republic gives new depth to understanding the complex role of women in both democratic and imperialistic comprehensions of American identity. And while Goldstein's work offered corollary appreciation of the social forces at work in the current struggle over contemporary use of the Battle Flag of the Confederacy, O'Leary's chapter entitled "'One Country, One Flag, One People, One Destiny': Regions, Race and Nationhood" should be required reading for anyone and everyone that wishes to participate in this debate.

Following World War I, O'Leary argues that progressive democratic, visionary patriotism—a perspective called for by those marginalized due to class, race, and gender—ultimately lost out to a dominant hegemonic interpretation favoring conformity, conservatism, and military might. Goldstein, as a civil libertarian, laments how many Americans today would tamper with basic freedom of speech by advocating a constitutional amendment to protect the flag. The amendment has not yet succeeded. In that representative fact, at least, endures but one of the many legacies of the progressive ideal O'Leary champions.

San Jose State University

Scot M. Guenter

THEODORE DREISER AND AMERICAN CULTURE: New Readings. Edited by Yoshinobu Hakutani. Newark: University of Delaware Press. 2000.

Sister Carrie, Theodore Dreiser's first novel, an epochal account of power and desire, choice and fatality in the new American century, was published in 1900. Famously under-valued at first, the novel, and Dreiser's subsequent books, have exerted a continuing and decisive influence on American literary history. Richard Wright said that "[i]t would have been impossible for me to have told anyone what I derived from these novels, for it was nothing less than life itself." Wright spoke for several generations of American novelists who found themselves to one degree or another deriving inspiration or example or ideology from Dreiser. The list includes many of the central figures in modern American fiction, from Sherwood Anderson, Willa Cather, and Sinclair Lewis, to James T. Farrell, Saul Bellow, and Norman Mailer. Whoever summons the modern American city, its concatenation of pleasures and disasters, its glamour and brutality, does so in the shadow of Dreiser.

To mark *Sister Carrie*'s centennial, Yoshinobu Hakutani has commissioned sixteen new essays on Dreiser and his work. Among them, the articles in *Theodore Dreiser and American Culture: New Readings* explore a wide range of subjects and exemplify a number of diverse methodologies. Several of the authors make instructive use of the Dreiser archives, housed in the University of Pennsylvania library.

Hakutani has arranged these pieces under two broad headings. Part One is called "Essays in Criticism and History," and includes re-estimations of several Dreiser novels. *Sister Carrie* is the focus of most of these essays, although *The Financier* and *Jennie Gerhardt* also receive some attention. James West speculates usefully on Dreiser's motives in deleting several passages about alcohol from the original manuscript of *Sister Carrie*, and the implications of the changes. Laura Hapke's well-informed discussion of the separate spheres of male and female labor provides a solid context for Dreiser's representations of work. Perhaps the most entertaining essay in this first group is Philip Gerber's "Jolly Mrs. Yerkes is Home from Abroad," a wonderfully detailed and readable recovery of the career of Charles Yerkes's second wife, Philadelphian Mollie Moore.

Gerber's narrative makes clear why Dreiser was so attracted to Mrs. Yerkes, a doomed but swashbuckling figure in her own right.

Part Two of the book is called "Essays of Intertextuality and Interauthoriality." The first two articles in this section make good use of manuscript material to address the evolution of Dreiser's intentions in *Jennie Gerhardt* and *A Traveler at Forty*, respectively. In the next essay, Miriam Gogol, shrewdly incorporating a cache of newly-discovered letters, traces the relationship between fifty-nine-year-old Dreiser and seventeen-year-old Yvette Eastman. Gogol's narrative is properly and even studiously dispassionate, but the resulting portrait of the aging lecher is sad and ultimately repulsive.

Following these careful investigations, most of the remaining essays in Part Two connect Dreiser with other writers in the several traditions of twentieth-century American realism. Thomas Riggio, supplementing the work of Maxwell Geismar and others, persuasively documents the pervasive influence that Dreiser's writing had on Fitzgerald's fiction, and specifically on *The Great Gatsby*. In the volume's final essay, Robert Butler compares the description and the divergent significance of urban settings in Dreiser, Farrell, and Wright.

Theodore Dreiser and American Culture is a worthwhile addition to the growing shelf of Dreiser studies.

University of Pennsylvania

Peter Conn

PRODUCING AMERICAN RACES: Henry James, William Faulkner, Toni Morrison. By Patricia McKee. Durham: Duke University Press. 1999.

The title of Patricia McKee's *Producing American Races* suggests that she will examine how racial identity is produced within the United States. The title, however, proves deceptive as the text examines race through the limited lens of the black-white binary (which excludes a discussion of the full complexity of race in America) and with close textual readings of six novels rather than any examination of how people get produced racially. The introduction informs the reader that McKee will deploy a wide range of theories, including Habermas's conception of the public sphere and Lacanian psychoanalysis. She uses these theories to demonstrate her thesis that white racial identity is an abstraction produced through visual media, while African American racial identity is communal produced through oral and aural means. For evidence, McKee examines two novels each by James, Faulkner, and Morrison.

Despite the general soundness of her contention about how visual and oral media produce white and African American racial identity, the author fails to realize the rich potential of her project. McKee, in a telling moment, admits that "my [McKee] own juxtaposition of six novels by James, Faulkner, and Morrison . . . is one that I have some difficulty locating among more recent studies of race" (2). The reasons why McKee chose the novels or the theoretical approaches that she did in order to prove her thesis about the production of racial identity are hard to discern despite her attempt to explain it in a theoretically-orientated introduction. Why engage in close readings of *four* novels by two white, male writers and only *two* works by one African American, female writer? Obviously relying on such a limited sample with little reference to cultural, historical, or social context will make it difficult for McKee to illustrate the complexity of racial hierarchy in the United States. Also, why stress the work of Habermas and Lacan when dealing with race when neither is generally regarded as a theorist of racial production? Her citation to Michael Warner's critique of Habermas (in which he argues that the meaning of print requires the existence of a particular type of print culture and that print

culture is not inherently democratic) seems particularly problematic because she does little, if anything, to examine the visual or oral cultures that surround the particular literary representations of visibility or orality that she examines. *Producing American Races*, as a result, suggests that the visual and oral texts that she analyzes have some sort of inherent meaning and that visual and oral culture have essential qualities. Her use of Lacan to base much of her discussion on visual culture proves troubling because she, as a result, neglects the burgeoning discussions about black visual culture. Further, McKee does not seem to offer any illustrations of resistance to this racialized binary, let alone acknowledge that race in the United States goes beyond the black/white binary. McKee does little to explore the way the term, race, may have changed in meaning throughout the twentieth century, despite a singular citation to Omi and Winant. Neither does she examine the eugenics movement, scientific racism, or contemporary discussions about the meaning of race.

At best, this research feels unfinished because too many basic questions regarding the enterprise seem unasked and unanswered. First, McKee cites to Morrison's *Playing in the Dark*, acknowledging its importance in the study of race, but neglects to follow the critical project Morrison outlines in it with respect to James without any explanation! She neglects those stories or novels with African American characters or work, such as "The Real Thing" that explicitly addresses the production of visual images. Second, McKee would like her close readings of canonical novels to reveal something more general about race and social relations, yet her readings of the novels fail to connect the texts to any particular context. As a result, she fails to explain how a literary text can produce race without linking those texts to particular historical readers, contemporary readers, or the institutions and disciplines that have canonized these texts. By not examining any of these questions, McKee's main thesis cannot be supported because she is limited to discussing how race is produced in particular literary texts, rather than within specific social, cultural, and historical relations. Third, McKee would like her close readings to say something about the ways in which James, Faulkner, and Morrison thought and think about race. However, without any examination of the other works or the writing styles in which they work and worked, her analysis seems incomplete. In her consideration of *Sula* and *Jazz*, McKee does little to connect these two novels to the rest of Morrison's work. The result is that Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*, which even in the title evokes the role of visual culture in producing racial identity and seeks to *contest the dominant gaze*, is neglected in this study perhaps because it did not fit into McKee's overarching theory. Unfortunately, *Producing American Races* does not produce an adequate description or sustained critique of the production of racial identity in the United States over the last one hundred or so years.

University of Kansas

Richard Schur

WORKER-WRITER IN AMERICA: Jack Conroy and the Tradition of Midwestern Literary Radicalism, 1898-1990. By Douglas Wixson. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1994.

Douglas Wixson's superb biography of Jack Conroy (1898-1990), itinerant laborer, industrial folklorist, poet, novelist, and editor during the 1920s and '30s of the literary magazines *Rebel Poet* and *Anvil*, devotes most of its discussion to the interwar years, and continues the project of retrieving those radical voices from the Depression era whose legacy was buried during the revisionism of the Cold War. As the co-ordinator of the "Rebel Poets"—a loose and heterogeneous grouping of leftist writers who included in

their number Philip Rahv and Langston Hughes, as well as a multitude of less celebrated figures such as Meridel Le Sueur, Joe Kalar, and HH Lewis—Conroy worked at the centre of the “little magazine” culture that functioned as a communication network for working-class writers and activists during the arid ‘20s, and which came to the fore following the Crash of 1929. Though his editorials mouthed allegiance to the cultural programs of the Communist Party, Conroy’s activities at the *Rebel Poet* and the *Anvil* helped nurture a grass-roots activism that was implacably at odds with the kind of top-down ‘vanguard’ politics endorsed by the CP. But in his sponsoring of unknown radical writers, and in the voluntarist ethic he brought to these (and a host of other) “little magazines,” Wixson argues that Conroy, in collaboration with the many fellow travellers discussed in this book, was instrumental in keeping alive a democratic working-class culture that promised an alternative to the commodity relations of mainstream publishing.

In this regard the really outstanding quality of Wixson’s book is its own aesthetic fidelity to the politics of Conroy’s life and work. In *Worker-Writer in America* the bourgeois conventions of traditional biography, where the life-story of the ‘private’ subject is foregrounded, and the History of which s/he is a part becomes of secondary importance, dissolve away. Wixson’s book tells the story of a working life, an activist life, and a family life, but these stories are always fully embedded in the broader social and political contexts of Conroy’s time. One might read the book as biography, but in its painfully elegant descriptions of the ground-level effects of overproduction, and the systematic de-skilling and degrading of labor, one might equally read it as a powerful critique of what monopoly capitalism actually meant for working-class communities in the early decades of the twentieth century. At the same time the book also offers a compelling account of the shifting fortunes (and factionalisms) of the cultural Left, from the Great Railroad Strike of 1922, through the tumultuous 1930s and, latterly here, the witch-hunts of the early Cold War and McCarthy eras. Throughout this book there is a real Lukacsian richness to Wixson’s style, in his blending of the particular and the general, in his melding of Conroy’s story with the much wider narrative of class struggle and cultural activism in which his life and work were situated. And in an age when the politics of the academy remain focused on a privileging of marginality and difference, with the issue of class all but effaced from the study of literature, this book’s most important contribution is its reminder that class politics are not the byproduct of abstract debates about ‘power’ or ‘identity,’ but the very lifeblood of the world in which we live.

University of Derby

David Holloway

THE INVASION OF INDIAN COUNTRY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: American Capitalism and Tribal Natural Resources. By Donald L. Fixico. Niwot: University Press of Colorado. 1998.

In the wake of rapidly rising oil and gas prices, and electrical shortages in California, Donald Fixico’s book, *The Invasion of Indian Country in the Twentieth Century*, is a timely contribution. Throughout this century, resources taken from Indian land, legally and illegally have been a boon for economic growth in the United States. Oil and gas from Oklahoma, much of it from Indian land, fueled the American economy in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the latter part of the century, the 1973 Arab oil embargo caused the United States to look again at Indian lands for energy resources, especially for fuels such as coal, uranium, and geothermal. In addition to energy re-

sources, Indian lands have been an abundant source for water in the arid West, and for lumber in the Northwest and Midwest.

Fixico's book is a series of case studies about what happens when Americans covet the resources found on American Indian land, and the lengths they will go to secure those resources for their own benefit. Fraud, mayhem, and even murder are familiar themes.

The first part of Fixico's book recounts several episodes that epitomize the malfeasance regularly used in the early decades of twentieth century to obtain the wealth from natural resources belonging to American Indians. In Chapter One, Fixico writes about the life of Jackson Burnett, a Muscogee Creek man. Burnett grew wealthy when oil was discovered on land allotted to him by the federal government. Instead of enjoying his affluence, Burnett was beset by swindlers and con artists. The magnitude of fraud was so egregious that news of Burnett's case even became the subject of congressional concern. Fraudulent claims and counter-claims to his wealth continued for fifteen years after Burnett's death.

Although Burnett's plight was tragic, Fixico also writes about an even more appalling series of events—the systematic murder of Osage Indians in Oklahoma. Like Burnett, the Osage occupied land covering large deposits of oil. In the early 1920s, more than a dozen murders of Osage Indians were committed for the sole purpose of obtaining the royalties they received from oil leases on their land. After several years of investigation, the federal government uncovered a complex conspiracy led by a white man seeking to become rich with Osage money. This chapter is especially important because relatively little has ever been written about this sordid affair.

The next several chapters are devoted to equally dismal stories. Fixico writes about Congress' attempt to deprive the Pueblos of their water rights, the long-standing efforts of the Sioux to reclaim their sacred land in the Black Hills, the loss of the Klamath timberlands in the 1950s, and the more recent bitter struggles of the Great Lakes Ojibway (Chippewa) to assert their off-reservation hunting and fishing treaty rights. Reading these cases, it might be tempting to reach the usual conclusion that Indians are once again the witless victims of white greed. However, Fixico balances this perspective with a concluding set of chapters showing how American Indians have resisted the expropriation of natural resources from their land. The last chapters in this book focus on tribal strategies including court challenges to enforce treaty rights, the formation of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) to monitor leasing agreements and provide technical advice, and how environmental quality concerns complicate the management of tribal resources.

As for my complaints about this book, I will mention only two. One is that the book lacks an overarching theoretical framework. The chapters are connected mostly by their common subject matter: systemic malfeasance and efforts to stem this wrongdoing. As such, the book reads more like an edited collection and lacks a carefully developed argument. Fixico offers the outline for such an argument in his introduction but it largely disappears in the pages that follow. My other objection is that there is a tendency in the book to over-simplify and over-generalize the diverse and highly complex values that American Indians have about their physical environment. At points, the book slips into the caricature of American Indians as natural conservationists who live only to protect the land about them.

Apart from these complaints, Donald Fixico has written an important and valuable book. For anyone interested in American Indian issues, especially economic development and resource management, they will find Fixico's work an invaluable resource.

Stanford University

C. Matthew Snipp

As a former girl, I can attest to the challenges faced by marketers of consumer goods targeted at girls. When young, I disliked nearly everything that was aimed at girls, from Nancy Drew to Girl Scouts to Barbie Dolls. But I adored Charlies' Angels, the Incredible Hulk, and playing "frontier." My own experience of a nearly wholesale rejection of mass-produced "girl" culture and the embracing of adult characters and themes illustrates the challenges that face scholars who enter the emerging field of the cultural studies of girls. It's easy to measure a "girl culture" as it is created by manufacturers; the struggle is to gauge the actions of girls themselves.

In her introduction, editor Sherrie Inness promises thirteen essays that examine "the different ways that cultural discourse shapes both the young girl and the teenager" (2). Spanning the twentieth century, the authors do indeed focus most attention on the production of a girls' culture for girls, rather than the kinds of cultures girls produce for themselves. The first two sections of the book examine the institutional structures of girlhood and the girl as consumer. The third section, according to Inness, focuses on "actual girls." The arrangement of essays is misleading, however. Some of the best examples of girls' resistance to structural constraints appear in the first two sections of the book. Miriam Formanek-Brunnell's essay on post-World War II girls' babysitting unions is an unexpected example of girls' resistance. In another strong essay, Kelly Schrum discusses the marketing of the teenage girl consumer in *Seventeen* magazine. Schrum notes the highly critical letters the magazine published from readers, and the fact that the magazine destroyed letters after they were received. It is therefore impossible to measure girls' responses to the magazine in its early years. However, most essays in the first two sections focus on a girls' culture that others prescribe for girls, from Girl Scouting, dating "rules," and definitions of delinquency, to 1920s girls' clothing, 1980s board games, and the American Girl doll series.

The third section attempts to address the question, "what do girls really want"? Vicki Ruiz's essay on Mexican American chaperonage in the 1920s to 1940s uses interviews to great effect. The girls' responses to chaperonage were usually rebellion, but Ruiz is careful to note that such rebellion left the young women ambivalent. They took pride in relaying their resistance to adult supervision, but even decades later felt guilty over their refusal to follow their parents' wishes. The other essays in this section employ reader-response techniques to literary presentations of girlhood (such as an essay on ethnic representations in Nancy Drew and one on the parodic lesbian Nancy Clue).

In the final essay, Mary Celeste Kearney provides a useful overview of the subfield, critiques the premise of the book's arrangement of essays and the paucity of study of "real girls." Given Kearney's comments and those of Inness in her introductory essay, the cover graphic of the book surprises. Depicting a Riot-Grrrl in all her nose-and-tongue-pierced rebellion, one might expect a volume of girls' revolution. However, this same girl sports, if you examine her image closely, heavily mascaraed eyes and lipsticked lips. The dissonance between the anti-beauty message of the piercing and the conventional reliance on makeup is fitting for this collection. Yearning to discuss the ways girls resist cultural definitions of themselves, most of the essays' authors demonstrate the structural constraints inherent in being a girl in twentieth-century America, and consequently, of engaging in a cultural study of girlhood.

University of Houston, Honors College

Helen Sheumaker

A COUNTRY IN THE MIND: Wallace Stegner, Bernard DeVoto, History, and the American Land. By John L. Thomas. New York: Routledge. 2000.

John L. Thomas sees, as DeVoto and Stegner both did, that a dialectic between greed and respect for the land pulses through American history. Stewardship of land and water and wildlife inspired both men to speak and write in service of a populist and Jeffersonian vision and against the ever-present special interests seeking control of the public land and water and minerals for private profit. With a new administration in Washington, we who would be vigilant can learn much from the history this book presents and take heart from the writings and lives of these two models of engaged resistance to “predators” who come “‘bellyaching about bureaucratic tyranny’ and bent on ‘taking back’ what they mistakenly [consider] their land” (11).

Thomas identifies himself with “a whole host of independent intellectuals” and activists who shared “a vision of a democratic participatory ethic as the source of a renewed civic spirit” (5). He sees Stegner and DeVoto as lively and persistent contributors to an “adversarial tradition” (5). In service to this calling, both men struggled to enliven and democratize the genres they worked in, history, biography, fiction, and essay.

In the first chapter, “Legacy,” Thomas argues that both men struggled with a paradox which their birth and early years in the West had left them, a legacy “composed of paired opposites: endless space and confining place; openings and barriers; belonging and rootlessness, opportunity and limits; freedom and constraints; dream and fact” (59). The second chapter, “History,” presents both the story of the histories they wrote about the arid west, the fur traders, the Morons, John Wesley Powell, and Joe Hill, and the personal history of each man as he grew into his profession and struggled to find his voice and audience. Chapter Three, “Land,” provides a lively and telling account of the struggles between conservation and exploitation too long and detailed to summarize here, but a story that those of us who lived through the struggles over exploitation and conservation can profit from revisiting and background which younger scholars and activists must absorb to ground their present critiques.

DeVoto and Stegner wrote what some have dismissed as regional history or literature. They were of the West. But just as New England stood in for America in some early American studies scholarship, it is the West that serves DeVoto and Stegner as synecdoche of a national drama. Thomas finds it “a curious fact that neither DeVoto nor Stegner ever attempted a full account of the rise of the modern West but contented themselves with fragments and outlines in their histories, essays, and articles, which sketched but never completed the story of spoliation they both knew by heart” (227). But what post-modernists have taught us is that a “master narrative” can never be created and be forever “definitive.” There are too many realities, swirls of personal interest, regional conditions, and vested viewpoints for such a “full account” to be created or to satisfy. The genius of American studies has been its easiness with fragments, synecdoches, “post holes” of investigation and synthesis. And for that reason Stegner and DeVoto merit our critical but receptive attention.

University of California, Davis

David Scofield Wilson

THE DRIVE-IN, THE SUPERMARKET, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF COMMERCIAL SPACE IN LOS ANGELES, 1914-1941. By Richard Longstreth. MIT Press. 1999.

This distinctive and most informative book, written in the idiom of architectural history, offers much to its readers about automobiles as a cultural force in the commercial recasting of the metropolis. Richard Longstreth's self-described purpose started modestly with the intent to recapture drive-in food markets as a "long forgotten phenomenon." Early investigation of this space turned the author's head increasingly, and plausibly, to Southern California. The outcome is his more expansive analysis, framing the built environments within which food products are merchandized for retail consumption in the context of the phenomenal growth and development spawned by early-twentieth-century Los Angeles. An atypical horizontal city, in the eyes of Sam Bass Warner, Jr., it was the "amorphous metropolis."

At the beginning of the time span encompassing Longstreth's book, in 1910, Los Angeles ranked seventeenth among the nation's cities with a population of 319,198 (ahead of Minneapolis but behind Washington, D.C.) In the throes of Southern California becoming a national region, by 1920 it had claimed its crown as the nation's largest western city, surpassing San Francisco. Los Angeles exceeded the one-million mark, plus a second million in its suburbs, for the first time in 1930. And by 1940, the city ranked fifth—behind Detroit, ahead of Cleveland—with 1.5-million inhabitants. During the interwar decades, to cite a single instance of the powerful economic forces propelling its advance, Los Angeles became the national center for the oil equipment and service industry, the second largest manufacturer of tires after Akron, and a regional center for such industries as aeronautics, cars, trucks, and chemicals. Los Angeles County was first worldwide on the basis of cars per person as of 1930. Tellingly, in 1943 smog afflicted the city for the first time, or at least this was the first instance when it was officially documented. Asa Briggs, the English historian, rendered Los Angeles as the industrial world's *shock city* of the mid-twentieth century, an ignominious citation he previously had bestowed upon Manchester (as he found it in the 1840s) and Chicago (in the 1890s).

Retail merchandizing of food took a cue, according to Longstreth's narrative, from the evolution of the gasoline filling station on the eve of the First World War. By the early-1920s the gas station expanded and proliferated, accurately sensing market demands, into super service stations. What we know today as supermarkets—another by-product of the car culture—evolved just after the war from modestly-scaled drive-in neighborhood markets. Reflecting a private-sector response endemic to the political economy of Southern California, they supplanted the public market tradition associated with older American cities. Initially concentrating on food-related consumables, quickly these enterprises diversified (e.g., flowers, pharmacy, cafes, and laundry). By the middle of the decade this commercial phenomenon attracted the attention of the avant-garde emigre architect Richard Neutra, credited with devising the modernist form known as the *Los Angeles Drive-in Market*. By the start of the 1930s, we learn from Longstreth, it burgeoned into a multiplicity of strategically-selected locations (affluent settings such as Beverly Hills, middle-class places like Glendale, working-class communities such as Montebello, but *not* low-income communities).

By the mid-1930s, after the Great Depression halted further construction, drive-in markets gave way to the newly-conceived physically more expansive and visually more elegant supermarket. Exercising a key role was the altered sources of capital: drive-ins, we learn from Longstreth, were underwritten by real estate investors and supermarket

construction by the food industry itself. Ralphs Grocery Company, since 1873 a downtown operation, led the switch as early as 1931. Also a pioneer in decentralizing its business into middle-class neighborhoods, dating to 1911, by the eve of World War II it operated several 10,000 square foot supermarkets costing \$200,000 apiece to construct and furnish. Aside from its calculated interior design, Ralphs also appreciated the importance of providing abundant on-site customer parking as well as architecturally-distinctive exteriors. While some 350 supermarkets operated in and around the city in 1939, Longstreth clarifies that only 40 percent of them enjoyed high margins of profit and 10 percent of them failed entirely. Attentive to the national reverberations of this commercial innovation, readers also learn about their diffusion: Houston (Weingarten's); Indianapolis (Standard); Elizabeth, New Jersey (Big Bear); and New York City (King Kullen). Longstreth concludes his book, to the benefit of his readers, by reaching ten years or so beyond 1941. He traces the progression from supermarkets to other forms of self-service retailers—drug stores, variety stores, and then diversified shopping centers—by the early-1950s.

A few observations about this fine book warrant brief elaboration. At a time when technology has heightened expectations about book production, the resolution of the 165 illustrations left something to be desired. This book also would have been improved by a series of maps—also easy to produce, using digital technology—providing readers with essential geographic orientation. I also found the author absorbed, to my distraction, with his fascination about design (a fault that some will not wish to grant). And for those less familiar with the singular history of Los Angeles as an urban form, Professor Longstreth should have offered somewhat more. These caveats, however, do not diminish the fact that students of the American metropolis stand in this author's debt for writing an imaginative, instructive, and well-researched volume.

Lake Forest College

Michael H. Ebner

IMAGINING LOS ANGELES: A City in Fiction. By David Fine. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2000.

Imagining Los Angeles: A City in Fiction covers important though somewhat familiar terrain. As David Fine points out in the preface, his is the first full-length literary history of the region in at least fifty years (ix). After a skillful introduction, in which Fine categorizes the material, he proceeds chronologically. He documents the romanticization of the Mission era in Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*; the development of boosterism and promotional literature in the early-twentieth century; the gradual change from a utopian to a dystopic perspective in the 1930s and afterward, as imagined in noir; the evolution of the Hollywood novel, a genre that critiques the pursuit of success in the illusory Promised Land; the marginalization of less privileged and visible parts of Los Angeles, and minority writers who explore those parts of the city; and the appearance of an apocalyptic literature that parallels an obsession with race and class conflict, the threat of nuclear crisis, and general postmodern anxiety.

Readers acquainted with the works of Kevin Starr and Mike Davis will recognize many of these literary categories. Unlike Starr or Davis, however, Fine favors neither the celebratory nor the gloomy and cynical view that influences so much of Southern California's regional literature. Instead, he analyzes both utopic and dystopic narratives, interweaving the two in the final chapter's discussion of contemporary writers such as Cynthia Kadohata and Carolyn See.

Although many of these authors have been examined by other scholars in greater detail, some forgotten and lesser-known writers have been rediscovered by Fine and included within the scope of his wide-ranging study. This reviewer enjoyed reading about an obscure 1920s Hollywood novel by Carl Van Vechten called *Spider Boy* (65-67), and about a 1930s absurdist parody of California by the author of *Lassie Come Home* (90-92). In addition, by placing the fiction “in the contexts of Los Angeles’s social and cultural history” (ix), as Fine states in the preface, he offers new ways to interpret perennially popular works. In Chapter 3, for example, he argues that the career and personal life of evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson provided detective writers with material for one of noir’s archetypal plots, involving the kidnapping and search for a missing woman, the invention of a new identity, and the theme of deception (54-58).

Like most surveys, the focus here is on breadth of inclusion rather than depth of analysis. Perhaps the two chapters devoted to “hard-boiled” and “tough-guy” fiction, however, could have been collapsed into one, leaving room to showcase more works by recent regional writers. And although Fine has made a serious effort to incorporate ethnic literature into the canon, one sometimes gets the impression that these works have been added as an appendix at the end of particular chapters rather than fully integrated into the argument. Still, these are minor complaints about a work that should delight lay readers and scholars alike.

University of California, Los Angeles

Blake Allmendinger

CELLULOID INDIANS: Native Americans and Film. By Jacquelyn Kirkpatrick. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1999.

Jacquelyn Kirkpatrick promises readers a new study of the myriad ways in which Native Americans have been represented in film as metaphor. She also offers readers an outline of a Native American “aesthetic.” In pursuit of these goals, Kirkpatrick marches through the twentieth century, beginning with D.W. Griffith’s films, continuing through the 1930s, ‘40s, and ‘50s, looking carefully at the post-Civil Rights Era of the 1960s and ‘70s, and winding up with a quick run through the 1980s and ‘90s. She concludes with “The American Indian Aesthetic” where she discusses the work of several Native filmmakers (including the seminal films of Victor Masayesva). She ends by comparing two “Indian-made” films, one a successful example of the aesthetic, one not.

There is much information here, including names and dates of many films overlooked in surveys of Hollywood. Because Dr. Kirkpatrick carefully limns the plots of many films, some might find this a useful introduction to vexed questions of the ways in which Hollywood has created “the Indian,” both for non-Native audiences and, often, for Native people themselves. At the same time, it must be said that much of the “factual” information is either wrong or so misstated as to shake the reader’s confidence. There is room to note only one of many “howlers.” Of *The Indian Wars*, made by Buffalo Bill Cody in 1914, Kirkpatrick writes, “The film was presumably given such overwhelming support [by the War Department] because it was to be used for war department records and to enlist recruits. As the United States prepared to enter the First World War, it was important to bolster morale . . .” (20). Well, if the War Department was already preparing for the U.S. entry into a war that did not begin in Europe until August, and then without much realization even amongst the combatants that this was going to be a “world” war, then those movie-loving officials must have been prescient indeed. (Similar problems with history mar her use of the Second World War and Vietnam.)

Glib generalizations about particular historical events serve to explain plots. The discussion of *The Searchers* lines up these cliches: “most films from the early fifties showed an underlying anxiety about the solidity of American national identity and a need to protect that identity. The anxiety was caused in part by the McCarthy era’s witch hunt atmosphere, which made belonging a virtue and difference a disgrace” (63). *Broken Arrow*, set in this same period, “was prompted in part by resistance to McCarthyism” (58). Thus in Kirkpatrick’s strange new world, a film with a “positive” depiction of an Indian—Cochise—is “resistance” to McCarthyism, while a film with a negative view toward Indians demonstrates the power of McCarthyism to coerce conformity.

But what of her definition of an Indian aesthetic? She ties her argument to two “Indian” films, *Harold of Orange*, (1984) which received little public notice, and *Smoke Signals*, received with abundant acclaim in *Hollywood*. Kirkpatrick admires *Harold*, and feels it necessary to explain its failure by quoting the “victim” space offered as explanation by the film’s author. *Harold*, the writer told her, failed because it offended whites. It offended them because it was a “real Indian film,” beloved by Indian audiences everywhere. *Smoke Signals*, on the other hand, did not offend white audiences. In fact, white audiences praised the film. Does this mean it is not a “real Indian film”? Kirkpatrick explains with the following. First, she quotes a critic: “the first dramatic film directed and written by Native Americans. . . . is blessed with inspiration” (230). This makes her wonder: “Is that ‘inspiration’ American Indian?” She knows the answer: “Partly. Partly not.” Why not? Because, it turns out, Alexie has admitted to wanting a “mass audience” for his work. So “the audience for this film is not a Native American audience but ‘everybody in the world.’ However,” she continues, “it is doubtful that [Chris] Eyre or [Sherman] Alexie will be overly criticized for it. For one thing, American Indian audiences are used to that [to what?] and for another, it is a very funny story told in a way that is at least partially recognizable as ‘Indian.’ But,” she concludes, “they probably should be ‘taken to the rug’ for letting the opportunity [*sic*] to make a high-profile film with a truly American Indian aesthetic pass them by” (230). So there we have it. *Harold of Orange* is “authentic” (though made and directed by non-Natives) because it is a failure with “the masses” though Kirkpatrick (and all her Indian friends?), loves the film. *Smoke Signals* failed to meet this high standard because it is not a failure. There you have it: the Indian aesthetic in a nutshell. Simple. Straightforward. Like all sorts of other potential complications, any nuances here are simply missing, as are any contradictory questions. Maybe most viewers, including Indians, found *Harold of Orange* to be a bad film. Maybe lots of Indians Kirkpatrick doesn’t know found *Smoke Signals* a well-written, well-acted, well-directed film? No such possibilities impinge here to complicate Kirkpatrick’s straightforward aesthetic: “If I like it, it’s real Indian. If I don’t, it isn’t.”

Clearly, this is a dissertation rushed into print without any editing whatever. This is too bad for the young author and a shame for the press.

University of California, Berkeley

Patricia Penn Hilken

ALONG ROUTE 66. By Quinta Scott. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 2000.

This is a strange book—part unabashed nostalgia for a bygone era of blue highways and part hard-headed analysis of the evolution of roadside commercial architecture, all held together by a series of unsentimental black-and-white photographs of these buildings, mainly taken in the 1980s for another study on the road and its people. Route 66, for those who missed the 1960 TV series of the same name (or the song by Bobby Troup), once ran from Chicago to Los Angeles, via St. Louis. It was one of the great

national highways cobbled together in the 1920s out of segments of older roads to answer a growing need for well-marked transcontinental routes. To novelist John Steinbeck, Route 66 was “the mother road” that carried the Joads westward during the great hegira of the Dust Bowl era. To moviemakers and vacationers ever since, it has been a slice of Americana bypassed by the faceless interstates and so preserved in backwater communities turned into evocative ghost towns by the four-lane strips of limited access speedway that now rocket the driver from sea to shining sea, without a single traffic light or a cozy ma-and-pa motel promising free TV and steam heat.

Scott has interviewed a substantial number of those innkeepers, owners or children of owners of establishments called the Cherokee Motel and Wedding Chapel, the Cotton Boll Motel, the English Court, the Blue Spruce Lodge, the Tourist Haven, and the Gascozark Cafe and Gas Station (on the Gasconade River in the Ozarks of Missouri). Her picture captions make it clear that, while Route 66 may have borrowed some ideas from the interstate—the giant free-standing neon signs of the Holiday Inns, for example—the mas and the pas made these structures themselves, with the help of local builders, in a variety of regional styles that seemed to them beautiful and eye-catching. South and west of St. Louis, this meant a vernacular motel style based on domestic architecture, or little houses with steep gables faced in a multicolored local sandstone. The natives called it “rocking” a building and the process sometimes included sharp, irregular stones set along the roofline like teeth, or thick mortared joints that emphasized the mosaic-like surface. In the desert West, adobe or pueblo architecture was the vernacular style, already converted to commercial usage in the Fred Harvey railroad restaurants and hotels. Almost everywhere, the functional, easy-to-build box lent itself to sleek, moderne decoration: add a curving corner or a wall of glass brick, and the humble diner became a futuristic spaceport straight out of a Buck Rogers serial.

Along Route 66 dares to take the commercial detritus of the highway seriously, through painstaking local research. As such, it offers a model for scholars of architecture and popular culture. Although everybody seems to know something about Frank Lloyd Wright and Frank Geary—and buildings which most of us have seen only in books—what do we know about the kinds of landmarks we see on a daily basis? The commercial strip; the mall; the Comfort Inn down the road: who designed and built them and why do they look the way they do? What influence does the placement of a new road have on the visible character of a community? At the very least, Scott’s stories of brave beginnings, hard work, and ultimate failure speak volumes about the eternally hopeful risk-takers who set up shop along the side of the highway. At best, they provide eloquent testimony to the aesthetic spirit alive in the farthest recesses of the hinterlands.

University of Minnesota

Karal Ann Marling

MASKING SELVES, MAKING SUBJECTS: Japanese American Women, Identity and the Body. By Traise Yamamoto. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1999.

Traise Yamamoto in *Masking Selves, Making Subjects* seeks to negotiate a broad pair of aims that at once energize and to a certain extent problematize her text: to move Japanese American women’s writing from margin to mainstream and to demonstrate the experiential and textual uniqueness of the autobiographies, works of fiction and poetry she analyzes. Deploying a variety of current literary and feminist theory to accomplish the former aim, she is for me more successful in demonstrating the latter, which is centrally located in dominant-culture imaging of the Japanese and Japanese women and the experience of internment in the United States during World War II.

The fragmentation of the subject that is an important theme in Yamamoto's discussion of the Japanese American women writers has its origins in the bifurcated objectification of the Japanese woman as both racially other and sexually accessible. The Asian's hypervisibility in the dominant view has been accompanied by an "invisibility as subjects [which] has been the social and discursive condition of Asian American women" (65), against which many have written. The sexual saturation of the Asian American female body leads to a disavowal of this body and a fragmenting of subjectivity. The main technique through which both are reclaimed, according to the author, is masking. Masking serves multiple defensive and recuperative purposes: it "foregrounds the racial markedness of the body/face," protects the sense of self, and is a resistant strategy that assists in the reclamation of body and therefore self.

In important ways Nisei women's autobiography works against the conventions of the genre as practiced in the United States. In witnessing a group wrong, the internment, it downplays the individual self and rejects "the confessional mode" of mainstream autobiography for a community perspective. Tonal and narrative masking is related to the pervasive sense of a divided self among the Nisei, what Monica Sone characterized as the feeling of having been born with two heads, as well as that generation's silence about the war years. Yamamoto's discussion of the fiction produced by Japanese American women examines the ways these writers have confronted the complex interrelated issues of silence/speech, agency, absence/presence, all of which are expressed through "the trope of maternal absence," the erasure of the mother. The fiction of Hisaye Yamamoto and Joy Kogawa provide ways to understand and break through maternal silences, to retrieve real presence out of perceived absence through a more positively valued, strategic silence which helps sustain order and a sense of self. How this willed silence functions to maintain identity in mother and daughter is elaborated in the detailed reading of Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981), a text which crystalizes the thematics of absence/presence pervasive in Japanese American women's writing across the genres.

This active silence can provide, for the poets, an opening in the ideological container of language and culture. For Mitsuye Yamada, for example, documenting the camp experience from the victim's point of view involves the emergence of a language of recovery and empowerment, a speaking of the community and self on their own terms. And the issues and project of Yamamoto's own text seem to be epitomized for her in Kimiko Hahn's writing: the poet's grounding in the long Japanese female literary tradition, her interest in the process of memory, her attempt to break through silence and achieve a language to give subjectivity a voice, and her belief that this voice might enable the escape from orientalist constructions of women.

One of the many virtues of Yamamoto's comprehensive and insightful discussion of these writers is her foregrounding of the complexities and sophistication of their response to the particularity of their racial and sexual positioning within the cultural dominant. One may argue with her interpretation on occasion, as for me, when she all but condemns autobiographers Sone and Yoshiko Uchida for in the end falling back on "better-for-having-suffered platitudes" and (referring to Sone) turning "the internment into a hands-on civics lesson" (139), ignoring what I regard as these writers' pivotal role in the early framing of a Japanese American (female) historical narrative. And there is throughout a blurring of generational change and debate among the writers in pursuit of a recuperative agenda that prefers the counter-ideological text and subject-position. Yet *Masking Selves, Making Subjects* offers a richly textured, often convincing, always interesting examination of an important body of twentieth-century women's writing in the

United States and illuminates the community expressed in and the subjectivity created through these literary and cultural productions.

Temple University Japan

William J. Clark

WESTERN AMERYKAŃSKI: Polish Poster Art and the Western. Edited by Kevin Mulroy. Los Angeles: Autry Museum of Western Heritage in association with University of Washington Press. 1999.

This beautifully edited and highly informative book, though primarily addressed to the American reader, would most certainly be very well received also in Poland. The excellent reproductions of over 150 imaginative film posters would, no doubt, put many Polish readers in a nostalgic frame of mind, reminding them of the times when artistic film posters were ubiquitous and could be admired in the streets of all Polish cities. Unfortunately these masterpieces of graphic art have disappeared from the streets within the last ten years, only to be replaced by banal, mostly "realistic" posters provided by private film distributors, the very same ones which are used to advertise new movies in the USA, England or Japan. Truly a standardized and transglobal commercial aesthetic has displaced and replaced Central/East European graphic traditions whose modern roots go back to cubism and surrealism.

Viewing Mulroy's album Polish readers would feel nostalgic also because the book might remind them of the times when American westerns enjoyed an unprecedented popularity among Polish moviegoers, many of whom considered it their duty to see such movies as *High Noon*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *3.10 to Yuma* or *Stagecoach*, and more than once. Polish film posters have disappeared along with both "classic" and "revisionist" westerns, and they are still missed by all those who remember the '50s, '60s or '70s.

For the American reader the book basically has an aesthetic and informative value. Studying this collection of posters many will discover a kind of art that is little known in the USA. For example, the posters in the album, unlike most of their American counterparts, do not include scenes from the westerns they were supposed to advertise, nor do they display photographs of John Wayne, Henry Fonda or Burt Lancaster in cowboy attire. Their aim was not to suggest even the plot or narrative structure of the films. Instead they presented in an intricately symbolic way the message of the film they illustrated. They were not to sell the film but rather to comment on it, the artistic commentary being in a way an artistic extension of the movie. Looking for connections between the symbolic intricacies, hidden meanings or political allusions and the actual content of westerns can certainly be an interesting intellectual exercise for anyone familiar with major American westerns.

But the book offers much more than visual delights or intellectual exercises in commercial decoding. It also includes three highly informative essays whose authors discuss various aspects of the western and poster art. Edward Buscombe's and Kevin Mulroy's introductory essay, "The Western Worldwide," informs the reader about the reception of Wild West shows, and—later—western movies in Europe. What is especially important, it includes little known details on the reception of Wild West shows and westerns in the Soviet Union and other countries of Eastern Europe. Frank Fox's "Poland and the American West," besides providing the reader with many interesting observations about Polish film posters and a brief history of graphic arts in Poland, addresses much larger questions and tries to explain, for example, why, of all European nations, it is Poles who show so much fascination with the American West. The Polish art critic, Mariusz Knorowski, in his article "Two Legends: The American Western and the Polish Poster

School,” concentrates on the history of the reception of westerns in Poland. He rightly observes that in his country “going to a Western was in a sense one’s natural duty” and adds that in Poland “[t]he Western as a genre was such a magnetic force that the poster itself was not needed to boost attendance.” Knorowski explains how Polish artists—relieved from the duty of *advertising*—concentrated on artistic commentary, creating a unique and much varied graphic genre.

The album closes with a reproduction of an excellent poster for *Dances with Wolves*, possibly the last important Polish poster of this genre. It displays a running wolf and three faces of Indian warriors. The blurry faces disappear in the background. The poster shows symbolically the vanishing of Native Americans chased out of their territory by the advancing American army. Admiring it one cannot miss the obvious parallel—the highly artistic and imaginative Polish film posters have, too, disappeared—unable to compete with the one-side-fits-all posters provided by the newly emerged film distributors. Fortunately, we have books which remind us of nearly vanished peoples, vanished arts and artists.

University of Lublin, Poland

Jerzy Durczak and Maria Curie-Sklodowska

AMERICAN LITERARY HUMOR DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION. By Robert A. Gates. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press. 1999.

In this encompassing, perceptively written work, Robert A. Gates has filled a discernible gap in the historical studies of twentieth-century American humor. As Gates notes, the Great Depression has clearly been the subject of a myriad of analyses but sans literary humor itself. Radio and film comedy have been the focus of many fine studies, yet this type of comedy was largely escapist in its confrontation with the fierce times.

It is Gates’ intent is to unravel the variegated themes of the literary humorists who, in contrast to radio and films, were lucid, transparent and straightforward. An imaginative textual format devised by Gates tackles love and marriage, racial and ethnic humor, the icons of the past, and workers and farmers. Those writers who scrutinized the turbulent events were “as varied as the events of that decade,” he writes, “and in the writings of Robert Benchley, Ogden Nash, E.B. White, James Thurber, Damon Runyon, and many others, the major social concerns underline the comic relief” (xv).

Gates’ thesis is that the writers offered the masses an alternative, if not a temporary cure, for the “creeping paralysis” of will that permeated American culture in the 1930s. Complementing President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s economic program for restructuring the economy, literary writers “busied themselves with the restructuring of America’s psychological platform, and their tool was humor” (2). In their essays, poetry, stories and plays, they offered a pulpit not at all too different from F.D.R.’s administration, and Gates contends that they largely succeeded in their creative zeal.

Yet, their literary impact was short-lived, and ultimately even short-changed. For one thing, as Gates laments, the biographers of literary history have ignored the principal writings that were produced during the decade, excluding them from the major anthologies and downplaying their significance in shaping a national consciousness. What could be worse than such invisibility? Worse was the McCarthyist repression of the 1950s that “called into question the implications of the [writers’] observations, as well as their political affiliations”(78). Clearly, a humorists’ lot is nothing to laugh at. As E.B.White wryly observed in his famous essay, “Some Remarks On Humor,” society “decorates its serious artists with laurel, and its wags with Brussels sprouts.”

Gates' literary analysis is sharp and smart, his narrative clear and engrossing. If there are shortcomings in his work, it is in the historical realm. Here and there, he plays too loose with his wording, and his reliance on hindsight distorts certain interpretations. He opens the chapter on "Racial and Ethnic Humor," for example, by noting that "Few, if any, ethnic or religious groups were totally immune from the occasional barbs of humor that were usually belittling and often vicious in content" (59). *Occasional??* Enslaved black males and females were persistently stereotyped on all levels of the popular and literary culture dating from the rise of chattel slavery in the seventeenth century. So, too, were Irish immigrants subjected to a constant barrage of negative imageries from the mid-nineteenth century well into the first half of the twentieth century. And, of course, Gates knows these stories. To cite another illustration, it is not the case that the post-World War II generation had "no inclination to return . . . to a stagnant economy that had plagued their parents and grandparents before. For the new generation the key word was prosperity" (177). Their *inclination* had little to do with the economic sphere any more than it had to do with older generations' plight, and the key word *prosperity* vaulted into national mentality only after it became certain that the economy was on the upswing because of the war itself. This quibbling aside, the work nicely complements the field of literary humor.

Boston University

Joseph Boskin

EATING FOR VICTORY: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity. By Amy Bentley. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1998.

Amy Bentley's *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* is an intriguing contribution to the burgeoning field of food history. As such it is a welcome effort to connect the cultural and anthropological aspects of food studies to questions of politics and public policy. Bentley explores the ways in which government wartime food policies used traditional gendered notions surrounding food and meals and at the same time allowed some space for women to challenge those traditions. She examines, in particular, food rationing, victory gardens, and famine relief in order to discuss the ways gender-structured relations of power and the ways access to food represented democratic ideals in a war-ravaged world.

Bentley is at her strongest when she analyzes the cultural significance of food in wartime America. She explores a series of wartime food campaigns aimed at symbolic characters (the "wartime homemaker," the "consumer," and even "Rosie the Riveter") to argue that language of food, "functioned to reinforce social roles and expectations, with their accompanying notions about power and authority, for women and men" (87). During a time of war, in particular, the preparation of food came to symbolize altered gender relations. Middle-class white families, she argues, used "food and the serving of food as a way of maintaining hierarchies of gender and race" (82). At the same time, as increasing numbers of women entered the workforce during the war and the distinction between men's and women's work faded, at least on the job, Bentley suggests that "the reassertion of the dominant role of the white family and the subordinate place of the black domestic preserved the illusion that American middle-class identity could withstand the vicissitudes of global conflagration . . ." (82).

One of the most intriguing threads in Bentley's book is her discussion of the changing notion of housewife and homemaker. These terms most specifically referred to white, middle-class women, but, during the war, at least, policy makers made some attempt, whether intentional or not, to broaden their scope. As black women quit domestic work

for more lucrative pay in industry, for example, white women embraced their role as homemaker ever more enthusiastically. At the same time, using a fascinating Langston Hughes's poem urging cooperation with meat rationing, Bentley argues that policy makers consciously tried to appeal to black women as well. She also argues that government policy occasionally and inadvertently politicized housewives as, for example, when women's organizations mobilized to pass product grade-labeling legislation or when Syracuse, New York, women organized against the rising price of milk. The "Wartime Homemaker's deployment on the kitchen front," she argues, opened a discussion about the "ultimate meaning and scope" of that role (56).

Bentley creatively uses a variety of sources both written and visual, and ranging from government documents and food industry advertisements to cookbooks. The sources are most helpful in deconstructing cultural images associated with food and food preparation. Her discussion of state-sponsored food policy is less convincing. She suggests that food rationing was designed not simply to ensure enough food supplies for the troops abroad, but also to reinforce the idea that in a democracy, shortages should be shared by the populace at large. Indeed, the whole notion of rationing in the midst of consumer abundance raises thorny questions about who made food policy, particularly about the strength of the agricultural lobby and the competing business and Congressional interests involved in commodity production and distribution. She mentions, for example, that sugar rationing favored commercial bakers over housewives and thus "helped accelerate" the growth of agriculture-related industries (107). But she does not elaborate on the significance of that development nor does she closely examine the forces behind the making of the food campaigns she describes. The strength of the book, however, lies in its very suggestion that the two areas of culture and politics are deeply related. This book will be valuable reading for anyone concerned with food, state policy, and the politics of race and gender in the twentieth century.

University of Illinois at Chicago

Susan Levine

DRESS CODES: Meanings and Messages in American Culture. By Ruth P. Rubinstein. Boulder: Westview Press. 1995.

A comprehensive historical analysis of American clothing that is able to balance numerous detailed examples with theoretical approaches has been elusive. Ruth P. Rubinstein, a professor of Sociology at the Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY, attempted to write just such a costume history with her book, *Dress Codes*. Her difficulties in this undertaking highlight issues within the field that have yet to be fully dealt with.

Rubinstein relies on an elaborate, modified structuralist approach that creates six categories of dress. Some of these categories are static, such as "clothing signs" where single-message uniforms are placed. Others are intended to account for fluidity of meaning and popularity, such as "clothing symbols" (where designer clothing is ensconced) and "personal dress" (where, somewhat dubiously, "accessories" such as bow ties reside). Rubinstein's framework does allow for more mobility than other structuralist approaches. Still, Rubinstein's approach is strongest when dealing with static categories of dress. Her analyses of "power uniforms" (think of Mussolini) and of gendered costume succeed with good reason. Efforts to convey unchanging authority or gender distinctions through clothing is nicely suited for Rubinstein's use of semiotic structured around stable categories of identity.

But it is that more pervasive and timely issue of fluidity that Rubinstein's approach does not excel at. Since the 1960s, couture designers have been copying (or, if one wishes to be more flattering, interpreting) street styles for the runways. With the rise of youth cultures, clothing designers are faced with having to keep up with the fashion rather than mandating the changes in fashion. Rubinstein relies on Thorstein Veblen's analysis of imitative class efforts to explain why the poor dress as they do. Veblen's unidirectional-influence model does not illuminate current fashion dynamics.

Indeed, for a book promising to be a study of American dress, there is little discussion of class issues at all, and what does appear is focused on early Christian or Medieval dress. For contemporary America, though, market stratification is one place issues of class play out. The only mention of a discount clothier is a tangential footnote about Walmart's generalized marketing successes. Ethnic and racialized patterns of fashion, such as American sari and punjabi manufacturers, hand-decorated hip-hop clothing, and others, are likewise ignored.

In addition, while nominally a history of American dress, Rubinstein appears most familiar with British and European dress. For example, her discussion of female prostitute costume relies on French courtesans, with no discussion of American prostitutes' clothing styles, which varied from the ostentatious to the demure.

Finally, there are some sloppy mishaps, particularly in the use of photographs. For example, on page 240 we are informed that Dior's New Look of 1947, with its tight waistline, ponderous hips and breasts, typified the post-war dress of suburban women. Yet the photographic illustration immediately above the text shows a slightly overweight woman who has not inflicted herself with said "tight waistline." Rather, the woman wears a more sensible shirtwaist-style dress of much looser cut. Similar mismatches between the argument presented in the text and the content of the photographic illustration, detract from Rubinstein's arguments.

While this volume contributes to costume history analyses, the reliance on structuralist and sociological frameworks hinders her ability to account for idiosyncrasy, social dynamics of conflict and accommodation, and issues of change. There is still a need for a compact, heavily illustrated examination of the unique tension of staticity and dynamism of costume in the United States.

University of Houston, Honors College

Helen Sheumaker

SHUL WITH A POOL: The "Synagogue-Center" in American Jewish History. By David Kaufman. Hanover: University Press of New England. 1999.

Beginning in the Colonial Period, the synagogue has served as a focal point of American Jewish life. At various times and places, it housed Jewish congregational worship, study, and community meetings; maintained cemeteries and administered informal charitable activities. In *Shul with a Pool*, David Kaufman traces the transformation of the synagogue (or "shul" in the Yiddish vernacular) from late-nineteenth century Reform Judaism's "temple" to the synagogue-center—the multipurpose institution that encompassed religious worship, social activity, and education within one unified "center"—which arose in the 1920s.

Following the civil emancipation of European Jewry in the nineteenth century, two distinct forms of Jewish identification emerged: Jews who saw themselves primarily as members of a religious faith; and Jews who identified themselves in sociopolitical terms as a nationality, as part of an ethnic group, or as a people. While America's Jews never had to undergo emancipation, their Jewish identity reflected this same duality. And these

divergent tendencies created tension and sometimes conflict within in the American Jewish community. The synagogue-center was an attempt to synthesize the two different trends and to heal the growing estrangement between America's Jews and Judaism. As such, the synagogue-center was a uniquely American Jewish creation. This volume is the first full-length study to examine the origins of the synagogue-center idea and the history of the synagogue-center movement.

But *Shul With a Pool* is more than just a historical study of a religious institution. The book also explores the development of Jewish communal life in the United States from 1875 to 1925. Separate chapters discuss the Reform, Orthodox and Conservative synagogues; social and educational institutions such as the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations (YMHA and YWHA), Jewish settlement houses (that Kaufman refers to as the "department stores of Jewish life"), and the Talmud Torah (the Jewish school). Kaufman explains how each of these elements contributed to a specific aspect of American Jewish history and each could have engendered the synagogue-center phenomenon. He then goes on to demonstrate, clearly and convincingly, I believe, that the synagogue-center was, instead, a unique synthesis of all these elements.

Originating as his doctoral dissertation, Kaufman's study incorporates social, religious, architectural, American and American Jewish history to depict the synagogue-center's many roles: as service agency, communal gathering place, unifying symbol and sectarian institution fostering Jewish culture and education. In composing his narrative, Kaufman marshals a variety of sources including the English-Jewish periodical press of the era, the published and unpublished writings of some of the period's leading figures, institutional records, and secondary historical works.

A word about the phrase, "a shul with a pool." As Kaufman acknowledges, the expression became current during the 1920s, and referred to this new fixture in the American Jewish community—a combination synagogue and Jewish community center (an institution whose swimming pool was frequently its major attraction). The synagogue-center did not gain the immediate approval of everyone, with one rabbinical critic allegedly deriding it as "a shul mit a pool." Later the term achieved popularity as a colloquialism which expressed both fond affection and mild sarcasm.

One criticism I have is that while the author makes a few references to Yiddish, he did not consult any Yiddish newspapers or periodicals. Since Yiddish-speaking immigrants made up the bulk of the Jewish community, it might have proven useful to see how they reacted to this new style synagogue. This, however, in no way detracts from what is an innovative, thoughtful and lucid account of an important aspect of the American Jewish experience.

Tel-Aviv University

Robert Rockaway

"TOO GOOD A TOWN": William Allen White, Community, and the Emerging Rhetoric of Middle America. By Edward Gale Agran. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press. 1999.

For those of us who live and work at Kansas history, it is hard to believe that many of our friends and neighbors know little or nothing about the sage of Emporia, William Allen White (1868-1944), and his *Emporia Gazette*. Sure, his work has been analyzed and his life chronicled by numerous scholars from Walter Johnson, *William Allen White's America* (1947), to Sally Foreman Griffith, *Home Town News* (1989); and perhaps, as another White scholar, Jean Lange Folkerts, wrote in a recent review for *Kansas History*, "there simply is no more to say about William Allen White." Nevertheless, what has

been said must be communicated to the current and future generations. This reviewer must admit that he knew nothing of the famous progressive era editor until he left home in 1969 to attend the Kansas State Teachers College, located at “The Home of William Allen White.” Of course, the reviewer had a few other things on his mind at the end of that turbulent decade, but this does not explain his public school education which seemingly ignored a Kansas character about whom all children, especially Kansas children, and adults, then and now, should know something.

William Allen White was “more than a small-town journalist, a novelist, or a back-room politician,” writes Edward Gale Agran. White “rose to fame as a spokesperson for an amorphous group of twentieth-century Americans, a minority growing in number who ultimately would stamp the nation with a majoritarian middle-class ideology. William Allen White spoke their language; he was intimately involved in the forging of an all-embracing Middle American ethos.” (172) Throughout this well-crafted, highly readable volume, Agran writes convincingly of the centrality of White’s role in this undertaking and “studies the successful contribution of a leading spokesperson who helped devise a language, an ethical paradigm, which spoke to and for the inhabitants of Middle America—the new urban-oriented middle class struggling to forge an identity within a convulsive social order” (32). White used the small town—more specifically his small town—as a conveyance for his progressive reform agenda and as an opportunity to discuss the meaning and importance of community in America. White’s Emporia had its faults, and he was not blind to these realities, but it was his idyllic Emporia that he believed should be the model for all of America—a perfected Middle Class America. On occasion, as Agran shows, White reflected the pervasive prejudices of his era, and he celebrated American homogeneity rather than diversity, but in his homogeneous Middle Class there was room for all kinds of people—his idealized Emporia (i.e., American community) was a “big tent”—assuming they accepted the majority society’s dominant values which were at heart Protestant, Anglo-Saxon.

At a time when the dialogue in America about the meaning of community is again coming to the fore, the questions raised by White and his contemporary social critics should be of interest. One can take exception with White’s celebration of small town values at the expense of anything “urban,” as did Heywood Brown in his *Collier’s* (July 1, 1922) response to White’s “What’s the Matter With America,” entitled “What’s the Matter with White” (135), but one should not dismiss him. Agran offers us a fresh look at the Emporia editor that is worth reading and for which we should be grateful.

Kansas State Historical Society

Virgil W. Dean

THE POWER OF DISPLAY: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art. By Mary Anne Staniszewski. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1998.

The modern history of art and the history of modern art constitute exercises in collective amnesia, caused in part by the power of ideology to occlude consideration of contingent forces at work in the production and reception of art. *The Power of Display* offers a welcome, alternative remembering of those forces by rejecting the assumed autonomy of the discrete work of art at the center of modern art historical analysis. Author Mary Anne Staniszewski explores the history of installation design “as an aesthetic medium and historical category” (xxi) and as “representations” (xxii) in the twentieth century, choosing as her case study the paradigmatic exhibitions at New York City’s Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). In so doing Staniszewski offers readers several studies: a history of twentieth-century international avant garde design and the rise of modernism,

the intersection of consumerism, aesthetics, and the role of the museum in American culture, an institutional history of MoMA through its installations, and a critique of current museum practices.

From its founding in 1929 through the 1960s, MoMA sought to legitimate modern art by rendering it timeless through innovative installation techniques that now seem standard museum practice. Its directors and curators were influenced by European avant garde installation art of the 1920s and 1930s, a practice based on the belief of the transformative power of mass communication, technological innovation, site specificity, and viewer interactivity. Alfred Barr, MoMA's first director, for example, designed the museum's first exhibition by eschewing the traditional techniques of "skying" paintings, treating the paintings not as decorative wall décor but, by hanging the paintings at eye level and on a background of natural color, created a "field of vision" through which a single artwork may be examined. Wall labels—another of Barr's ideas—defined the development of an aesthetic style for the viewer. By this method, Staniszewski asserts, "we see these aestheticized, autonomous, 'timeless' installations created for an ideal viewer as modernist representations in their own right" (66). Other influences on installation design in these years included Native American traditions, natural history museums, "primitive" art and objects of everyday life. What conjoined these influences was the theory of "affinity" that aligned artifacts across cultures and time based on design similarities and not use nor context.

This aestheticization of the commonplace continued in the late 1930s through the 1950s with MoMA's annual *Useful Objects* exhibitions. These shows, in which housewares were presented for physical handling and inspection by visitors, highlighted the role of the visitor as consumer, and was indeed, in the early 1950s, a joint effort of MoMA and the Chicago Merchandising Mart. Here, the permeability of art and commerce (via its symbiotic relationship to the department store) is most clearly delineated—and, for many readers, likely unknown. The relationship is explored further by MoMA's display of houses on the Museum's grounds—surely a celebration of postwar consumer culture, the spoils of war that MoMA had anticipated, through propagandistic displays such as *The Road To Victory* and culminating with the government-sponsored *The Family of Man*.

In the tumultuous politics of the 1960s and '70s, MoMA's directors and curators turned the institution's spaces over to artists, who had protested the politics imbedded in the "mausoleum of modern art" (265), citing in particular Nelson Rockefeller's role as Museum trustee and as a politician who supported the Nixon Administration's invasion of Cambodia in 1970. As artistic practice became more overtly political, MoMA's directors and curators disavowed the political, by offering its galleries to artists who assumed responsibility for their installations' stances. Like the seemingly neutral installation design of Barr and his contemporaries, the museum itself could appear as a neutral site. This dissembling strategy is furthered, since the 1980s, by the nearly invisible presence of corporate sponsorship. Yet the relationship is clear: "corporations that underwrite exhibitions are to have absolutely no involvement in producing the show; however, it is common knowledge that museum programs are shaped with an eye to the type of exhibitions that will receive corporate patronage" (285).

Profusely illustrated, *The Power of Display* offers American studies scholars a much-needed antidote to art historians' canonical interpretation of an artist's *oeuvre* or a singular artwork. Too often Modernism is represented by the now—traditional Modernist moment of the 1913 Armory Show and its aftermath. This study ties more closely the international avant garde and American culture and institutions. Museum studies spe-

cialists, who more often than not have considered the establishment and rise of museums and historical societies in the nineteenth century, will welcome this critical consideration of the relation of twentieth-century cultural institutions and the aesthetics of installation. As we enter a new century with economic prosperity, even our own homes bear the signs of a new aestheticism of the everyday, and Staniszewski's powerful work provocatively bids us to attend visually and analytically to the familiar.

Kent State University

Shirley Teresa Wajda

AMERICAN SCIENCE IN AN AGE OF ANXIETY: Scientists, Anticommunism, and the Cold War. By Jessica Wang. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1999.

Last December, ABC's "Nightline," featured a discussion of "science and paranoia: fallout at Los Alamos . . . in the aftermath of the Wen Ho Lee case, [a] security crackdown that threatens to turn this place into a crucible of fear." Lab employees faced periodic lie-detector testing, and the Energy Department worried lest "hysteria in Congress" drive away top scientists. Conflict between scientists and government over security needs is not, of course, new. In this well-argued history, Jessica Wang details the Cold War "age of anxiety," when anticommunist politics shaped the climate of American science.

Providing valuable context to the 1954 Oppenheimer case, Wang details earlier, less well-known instances of scientists whose loyalty was questioned. She writes, "Anticommunism and apprehension over the atom proved mutually reinforcing, as real and imagined anxieties about growing U.S.-Soviet tensions, Soviet-sponsored conspiracies, atom spies, and the possibility of a future nuclear holocaust pervaded the nation's consciousness. Together, the Cold War, domestic anticommunism, and nuclear fear merged in a way that placed scientists among the first victims of the post-World War II red scare" (2).

Wang describes how post-Hiroshima reaction mobilized scientists into a political force, which succeeded in ensuring civilian control over nuclear research. But in emphasizing the value of international scientific cooperation, progressive-left activists set themselves up for trouble. The House Committee on Un-American Activities grew suspicious of scientists' seemingly-casual attitude toward eventual loss of America's atomic monopoly. Fear of HUAC investigations and FBI surveillance led the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) to shy away from bold political action and purge radical elements.

By 1950, thousands of scientists and engineers employed in government, industry, and academia needed to pass political tests to obtain security clearances. Describing five episodes, Wang demonstrates that young professionals had few resources to defend themselves after the AEC and FBI questioned their support for left-wing unions or civil rights groups. Though appalled when such prominent leaders as Edward U. Condon came under attack, major scientific societies proved unwilling to challenge Cold War anticommunism directly. Revelation that one AEC graduate student belonged to the Communist Party led Congress to impose FBI investigations for all fellowship holders. Major scientific societies had failed to make the case for protecting civil liberties, for differentiating between classified and non-classified work.

After the Communist victory in China and the Soviet atom-bomb explosion, expanded pressure pushed dozens of scientists out of university or government jobs. After the Fuchs and Rosenberg cases, scientists became targets merely for supporting Henry Wallace's Progressive Party, addressing the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, or criticizing U.S. foreign policy. Disrupting international research collaboration, the State Department withheld passports from Linus Pauling and others not sufficiently anticommunist; leftists such as biochemist Jacques Monod were denied visas to enter the U.S. The

Veterans' Administration, Fulbright program, and the Public Health Service rejected or canceled grants due to political suspicions; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare maintained an unofficial blacklist into the 1960s.

Ironically, Wang stresses, national defense depended on expert knowledge, potentially giving scientists some capacity to influence postwar developments. Yet after their triumph in keeping the AEC out of military hands, scientific groups were forced to retreat. Wang concludes, "Political repression not only harmed individual scientists but . . . generated an atmosphere of fear that made all scientists question whether political activism was worth the personal risks. As a result, anticommunism narrowed scientists' political role, as well as the range of possibilities for science policy. . . . Americans forfeited an important avenue for serious discussion of ideas that challenged Cold War assumptions" (289). The powerful implications of such arguments make Wang's book essential reading for historians of science and for students of Cold War politics.

Iowa State University

Amy Sue Bix

THE COLD WAR AT HOME: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960. By Philip Jenkins. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1999.

The collapse of communism in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a decade ago occasioned a major renewal of the many conflicting claims and counter-claims relating to communism and anti-communism in American history. State and local approaches to complex national issues constitute a venerable genre of American historiography. Several recent studies—Beth Bailey's *Sex in the Heartland*, on the sexual revolution in Lawrence, Kansas, and John Howard's *Men Like That*, on gay life in Mississippi, stand out—have successfully applied this tradition to the post-World War II era. Philip Jenkins' *The Cold War at Home* now uses it to examine an especially difficult and controversial set of issues. Readers might be forgiven for wondering if yet another book on such an intensively studied subject could reveal much new. Happily, the answer is a largely unqualified yes.

Jenkins begins by arguing that anti-communism in Pennsylvania needs to be distinguished from McCarthyism. In fact, he suggests that the Wisconsin Senator was almost completely irrelevant to the "Red Scare" in Pennsylvania. He also challenges traditional liberal/conservative and Republican/Democrat interpretations of Cold War anti-communism. The Catholic Church was the strongest, most consistent force behind militant anti-communism in Pennsylvania, supplemented by veterans' organizations and East European ethnic groups. (Jenkins' portrayal of the visceral nature of Catholic and ethnic anti-communism has been highlighted by the strident emotions recently raised in Miami's Cuban-American community by the Elian Gonzalez case.) While both parties eagerly used anti-communism for political gain, Jenkins finds that the most vociferous anti-communists were frequently Democrats and labor leaders who had strongly anti-communist constituencies and felt themselves to be politically vulnerable on the issue.

The high point of Pennsylvania anti-communism came with a November 1953 House Un-American Activities Committee hearing in Philadelphia. Jenkins' chapter, "The Purge of the Teaching Profession," provides an excellent account of how the Red Scare worked at the local level, showing that the personal toll was both deep and widespread, as well as providing the best account that I have seen of the intricacies of testifying before HUAC. Simply being called before the committee was often enough to cost witnesses their jobs and destroy their reputations, no matter how they testified. (HUAC contributed to this travesty by publicly proclaiming that no "innocent" persons would be called as unfriendly

witnesses. In any case more than thirty Philadelphia school teachers called to testify before HUAC subsequently lost their jobs.)

The eventual collapse of the Red Scare in Pennsylvania also had little to do with McCarthy's sagging fortunes. One of the main mitigating factors was ironically the entry of federal courts into the issue. Federal jurisdiction overrode the more militant state courts in a number of high profile cases, and most of these eventually collapsed under the stringent civil liberties standards maintained by the federal courts. In addition, several prominent anti-communist witnesses were paid informants who gave increasingly inconsistent, unreliable, and occasionally fabricated testimony, and were involved in a variety of unsavory, not to say illegal, activities that discredited the broader movement.

One final comment specifically for readers of *American Studies: The Cold War at Home* has neither the interdisciplinary features nor the "cultural" focus that one generally associates with American studies. In both methodology and content it is traditional political history. With that as a qualification, this is an important book for anyone interested in American anti-communism and the domestic history of the Cold War. Jenkins' straightforward and non-ideological approach and his grass roots perspective will offer some comfort, but also some annoyance, to almost everyone interested in this topic.

Wayne State College

Kent Blaser

VAMPIRES, DRAGONS, AND EGYPTIAN KINGS: Youth Gangs in Postwar New York. By Eric C. Schneider. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1999.

Youth gangs are daily in the headlines. Prisons mushroom, filled with young, often Black or Hispanic, males, usually typed as willfully dangerous, perhaps genetically predisposed to deviant, violent behavior. Eric Schneider, Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania, concludes his sober, fascinating study with a chapter "Comparing Gangs" from the postwar years and today: "Where gangs once stood outside the market economy and offered an implicit critique of it, they now have become incorporated into the market, and gang members have moved from being potential rebels to become entrepreneurs. The economic marginalization of inner-city neighborhoods has forced gangs into becoming economic, rather than social, entities" (260). A challenging statement, and one based on the author's nuanced discussion of the development of gangs in the decades following World War II.

During the immediate postwar decades four factors shaped the growth of neighborhood youth gangs in New York City—and by extension, with slight variations, other cities: the transformation of the economy from blue-collar to service sector jobs; the influx of African Americans and Puerto Ricans; urban renewal, which increased crowding in the poorer neighborhoods; and accelerating suburbanization, which led policy makers to ignore inner-city social and economic problems, and focus instead on the "culture of poverty" and character deficiencies. Schneider believes that gangs were "discovered" following World War II with the rise of interethnic clashes, and they soon began to make the headlines. Drawing upon numerous interviews, autobiographies, contemporary articles, and various studies, the author focuses on particular gang developments and battles, as ethnic turf wars seemed to escalate into the 1950s. Gangs not only protected their neighborhoods, they also served as masculine testing grounds. "Through language, music, dress, and ritual, gang members created a social space for themselves that defined their world and invested it with meaning" (136).

Social service agencies, public and private, worked to deter gang violence and find other outlets for troubled young men, with some success. For various reasons, gang

activities began to decline temporarily in the 1960s. But their resurgence in the 1970s came about because of the return of Viet Nam vets with their drug habits, combined with the prevalence of guns and a shrinking job market. The crack scourge of the 1980s drew the gangs into the lucrative drug trade. Asian gangs have also proliferated.

Schneider's intelligent study makes clear that gangs in New York City, and by extension elsewhere, were a "legitimate" choice for some young males (he says little about females) on the margins of society, caught in an economic and ethnic squeeze, who searched to make sense of their lives, but often in violent ways. His sober analysis, however, prompts other questions to broaden our comprehension. For example, we need more understanding of why the minority of marginal young men joined gangs, while the majority avoided them. What of girl gangs, since Schneider refers to females only as girl friends and hangers on? His study begins in the mid-20th century, but what of the history of urban gangs in the 19th century, particularly among the Irish, which have been somewhat studied? How unique was the postwar experience? And to suggest even a broader comparative perspective, how did the attraction of joining a gang differ from the middle- and upper-classes joining other all-male organizations, such as boarding schools, sports teams, school clubs, ROTC, etc.? Is the penchant for overt violence the only major difference? And one last thought, why didn't Schneider refer to Emmet Grogan's *Ringolevio*, which opens with an exciting, frightening glimpse of gang violence in the Big Apple?
Indiana University Northwest Ronald D. Cohen

THE COLOR OF THE LAW: Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War II South. By Gail Williams O'Brien. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1999.

As C. Vann Woodward wrote so eloquently many years ago, the burden of southern history lies in the region's inability to come to terms with a past fraught with much injustice and violence. However as Gail Williams O'Brien aptly illustrates, at certain junctures in the history of the South, justice has been achieved. In *The Color of the Law*, O'Brien uses an averted lynching in Columbia, Tennessee, and a subsequent lengthy and involved trial, which ended surprisingly in a not-guilty verdict for the black men involved, to illustrate the change in attitudes regarding race relations that occurred in the South post-World War II. She notes that while the priorities of the white community were not altered, the consensus regarding violence against blacks had begun to unravel following the war. O'Brien argues that it was a confluence of events which eventually led to the twenty-five black men charged with criminal actions, including assault with intent to commit murder, being found not guilty.

She begins her story with a lengthy chapter which describes the events leading up to the "Columbia Tennessee Race Riot" and the court case which followed. Thereafter, the book is split into two parts. The first, "Racial Violence," discusses the relations between the white and black communities in Columbia as well as the post-war change in attitudes not only within the white community, but also among blacks, dating back to the Reconstruction Era. Here O'Brien argues for an increased sense of "personal efficacy and entitlement" on the part of blacks returning from the war as well as on the part of the black community at home. Indeed, the growth in black organizations such as the NAACP has been well-documented by many historians, however, one does not get a sense that this may have occurred in this area of the South or that it had any direct effect on the middle-class black Columbians in January 1946 who took up arms to defend their own. The last chapter in this section, "The Making and Unmaking of Mobocracy," is an insightful history of race relations and "folk justice" in Columbia, Tennessee, which, O'Brien be-

lieves is part and parcel of the “Lost Cause” mentality that existed in much of the South at that time. It is here that she explains the creation of white solidarity which, O’Brien argues, would meet its eventual demise in the post-war era.

The second section of the book, entitled, “Racial Justice,” is an attempt to discern the change within the political and economic structure of the Columbia, Tennessee, community. Here O’Brien argues that there is a shift from unequal protection of the law to unequal enforcement, as well as a shift from control of black Columbians, to protecting them. This is not only due, she believes, to a change in priorities by a white community who is more concerned with post-war material advancement than on exclusion and even aversion to the black community. O’Brien also states that there is a newly found “personal commitment to racial esteem, personal efficacy, and sense of entitlement” on the part of the black community following the war which contributed to an increased fluidity in race relations. Her most important chapter deals with the politics of exclusion and the attempt by the federal prosecutors, an “Old Boys Network” of sorts, inclusive of FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, to affect the path the investigation would take. Yet, it is not until the very end of the book that she discusses the structure of the NAACP’s counsel, particularly the fact that one of the head attorney was white and dedicated to the cause of civil rights, which quite possibly may have affected the outcome of the trial.

This is not the first time that an historian has attempted to use a particular historical event to show the larger picture of race relations in the South at a particular moment in time. What O’Brien has done is to illuminate the change in post-war race relations using Columbia, Tennessee, as a model for that change. However, I am not sure that she has accomplished the task of relating this small area of the upper South to the wider region. Moreover, I do not feel that she has proven that the change was related to the post-war era, or simply to the more congenial black-white community relations in that particular area of Tennessee. Still, this work is an important addition to the history of the post-war South and the system of justice which became an integral part of the ensuing modern Civil Rights Movement.

University of New Hampshire

Shannon L. Frystack

ROAD-BOOK AMERICA: Contemporary Culture and the New Picaresque. By Rowland A. Sherrill. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 2000.

Rowland A. Sherrill’s *Road-Book America* is a very mixed bag. Sherrill’s contention is that post-war American narratives of domestic travel, novels with road plots and non-fictional journeys roughly in the *Travels With Charley* tradition, constitute a “reappearance and significant transformation of the old literary form of the picaresque narrative” and that picaros on the road in American dress have achieved a critical stock-taking of the last half of the American Century. Sherrill credits this very large cohort of American texts with having performed salutary cultural work in their embrace of the objective surfaces of the nation, and their achieved civility with social others variously configured. He claims these road books model for the literate citizenry a rejection of the Culture of Narcissism as defined for the seventies by Christopher Lasch, an interrogation of media-managed experience, and a civil accommodation to post-war cultural pluralism. Winningly, Sherrill offers the road books as a departure from modernist alienation and an alternative to Barth’s Literature of Exhaustion.

Sherrill’s conclusions are sane and sensible and very likely correct; *Road-Book America* is for that reason a notable work for students of American culture. There is

enough imprecision and windiness, however, on the way to those conclusions, that Sherrill's text is ultimately a difficult and frustrating read.

One area of imprecision has to do with the variety of texts that Sherrill tags for inclusion in the new American picaresque. Including both novels and nonfictional travels of the last forty years muddies the paradigm somewhat, as does Sherrill's disposition to overlook substantive differences between texts that can be made to fit the paradigm. Novels of such diverse provenance and agenda as Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*, S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, Elizabeth Berg's *The Pull of the Moon*, and Edward Abbey's *The Monkeywrench Gang* are treated as roughly equivalent descriptors in Sherrill's account of the new picaresque.

As a stylist, Sherrill inclines to the Whitmanesque long line. His sentences are often accumulative and hyper-qualified, as in this remark on the defamiliarizing character of the new picaro's gaze. Picaros "view America from the edges or peripheries, they frequently see on unexpected horizons, from odd angles, through singular lenses, with unique slants on things, enabled by the narrative witness from these margins." The inclusive and qualified rhetoric of the book is consistent with Sherrill's resistance to essentialist claims for the Americanness of these picaros. In this resistance he is largely successful despite suggesting associations between the new picaros and the Transcendentalist project of living deliberately.

The very best things about the book are the many works of non-fiction travel discussed there and the expertise with which Sherrill knows his way around them. Some of the less well known of these include Harrison Salisbury's *Travels Around America*, Bill Bryson's *The Lost Continent*, Walt Harrington's *Crossings*, Lars Eighner's *Travels With Lizbeth*, and Eddy L. Harris's *South of Haunted Dreams*. These and the many others Sherrill surveys are remarkably rich texts, and very much worth the attention of literary scholars, historians, and cultural geographers.

Lake Forest College

Benjamin Goluboff

THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT: Faith, Fatalism, and Apocalypse in America. By Daniel Wojcik. New York University Press. 1997.

Wojcik's core argument is based on three converging themes: the threat of nuclear war, fatalistic pessimism about the human prospect, and religious teachings about the end of the world. Distracting somewhat from this focus, the book is premised on a common scholarly and journalistic claim of the 1990s: that the approaching new millennium provoked a flowering of apocalyptic religions. It is unclear how much Y2K actually increased apocalypticism compared to an earlier baseline, and how much it simply provided the occasion to notice a perennial phenomenon in U.S. culture. Wojcik does not provide enough data to clarify this matter, but he does offer ample evidence that apocalyptic interests are deep-rooted and multi-faceted. Certainly there is no end in sight to nuclear dangers, statistics such as a finding that 30% of youth expect the world to end during their lifetimes, and widespread interest in end-times prophecy.

Although Wojcik's core themes are independent variables, he succeeds admirably in showing how they often overlap. He showcases premillennial prophecy, the most pervasive form of end-times belief, through a chapter on Hal Lindsey's 28 million selling book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Another chapter treats a group in Bayside, New York, which formed around apparitions of the Virgin Mary by Veronica Leuken. In both cases, apocalyptic religion supports a conservative Cold War mentality. Wojcik stresses how religious forms of fatalism provide a narrative of meaning and a sense of order and

control. He contrasts this with hopeless and nihilistic forms of secular fatalism, for which his paradigmatic examples are Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* and the refrain of "no future" in the Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen."

Wojcik expands on these arguments in two ways. First, because not all of his examples fit his theme of fatalistic passivity, he vacillates between trying to force them into this mold and moving toward a more open typology: "conditional" versus "unconditional" fatalism, "cataclysmic forewarning" versus both these forms of fatalism, and various kinds of cataclysmic sensibility versus "progressive millennialism." A good deal of his evidence fits his less fatalistic categories; thus one group expects to do no less than avert nuclear war, "save every soul," and "transform planetary consciousness" (188). Even so, he may underplay the ways that the dawning of apocalyptic religions. It is unclear how much Y2K actually increased apocalypticism compared to an earlier baseline, and how much it simply provided the occasion to notice a perennial phenomenon in U.S. culture. Wojcik does not provide enough data to clarify this matter, but he does offer ample evidence that apocalyptic interests are deep-rooted and multi-faceted. Certainly there is no end in sight to nuclear dangers, statistics such as a finding that 30% of youth expect the world to end during their lifetimes, and widespread interest in end-times prophecy.

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Wojcik also expands from fear of nuclear war in a Cold War context, to fears of ecological collapse, technological totalitarianism, AIDS, collisions with asteroids between trying to force them into this mold and moving toward a more open typology: "conditional" versus "unconditional" fatalism, "cataclysmic forewarning" versus both these forms of fatalism, and various kinds of cataclysmic sensibility versus "progressive millennialism." A good deal of his evidence fits his less fatalistic categories; thus one group expects to do no less than avert nuclear war, "save every soul," and "transform planetary consciousness" (188). Even so, he may underplay the ways that apocalyptic religion may dovetail with individualistic hope or group empowerment based on the conviction of advancing God's will. Such dynamics may be compounded if apocalypticism is only one aspect of a larger religious practice. (What else was going on in the lives of those 28 million Hal Lindsey readers? Was it all fatalism all the time?)

Wojcik also expands from fear of nuclear war in a Cold War context, to fears of ecological collapse, technological totalitarianism, AIDS, collisions with asteroids, and alien invasions. Likewise, he moves from Lindsey and Leuken to a chapter on UFO religions such as Heaven's Gate that expected the earth to be "recycled" after devotees

were rescued by a spaceship. At times he gathers more data under his umbrella than fits comfortably there, as when he offers a long list of religious movements in U.S. history that relate in variable ways to his themes. Other times his examples are not representative enough, as when he narrows the meaning of punk music largely to nihilism in the face of nuclear war, then expands the list of music he treats as punk-like or related to punk to include new wave, grunge, and reggae. One can see how he moves from Dr. Strangelove to the X-Files or Independence Day. Still, by working on this huge canvas he raises questions about his limited attention to other aspects of punk, optimistic forms of secular millennialism commonly stressed in American Studies, discourses about aliens that are not focused on apocalypticism or nuclear war such as E.T., and so on. In this regard it matters that his bibliography is stronger in folklore and religious studies, than in American Studies literature by people such as Elaine May, Jodi Dean, and Tom Engelhardt.

Despite my questions about the limits of Wojcik's interpretive framework, on balance his range is more a strength than a weakness. He has gathered a stimulating set of practices with family resemblances, and if we ruled out all those that dovetail imperfectly with his core themes, we would eliminate some of his most fascinating arguments that explore the behavior of these groups: for example, how Bayside devotees take photographs of the sky at night and use them as tools for divination, or how the Ashtar Command expects Jesus to return alongside Commander Ashtar and Lady Athena leading a fleet of UFOs. Overall this is an important contribution that certainly should not be considered an artifact of the Cold War or Y2K, but a valuable resource for work in American Studies for years to come.

University of Tennessee

Mark Hulsether

A GENERATION DIVIDED: The New Left, The New Right, and The 1960s. By Rebecca Klatch. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1999.

A FICTION OF THE PAST: The Sixties in American History. By Dominick J. Cavallo. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1999.

Understanding the 1960s is still a work-in-progress. Recent scholarship has examined the period within a broader historical context and moved away from an exclusive focus on the New Left. Both Rebecca Klatch's *A Generation Divided: The New Left, The New Right, and the 1960s* and Dominick Cavallo's *A Fiction of the Past: The Sixties in American History* reflect this trend. Klatch's comparison of activists from the left-leaning Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the conservative Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) provides a fuller understanding of the sources and dynamics of sixties political activism, as well as the decade's contentiousness. Cavallo's study is a creative, yet not altogether satisfying, examination of white youth radicalism considered within a larger historical tradition of American individualism and democratic movements.

In *A Generation Divided*, Klatch, a sociologist at the University of California-San Diego, explores the life histories of seventy-four activists, thirty-four women (seventeen each from SDS and YAF) and forty men (nineteen from SDS and twenty-one from YAF), focused on the activists' backgrounds, development of their political thought, and their interpretations of key historical events. The study centers generally around three themes: the formation and evolution of political identity; the influences of gender on political identity; and the political convergence between the left and right.

Klatch suggests there were many compelling similarities between SDS and YAF activists. The Cold War, in different ways, was critical to their politicalization, and their parents, whose politics they generally shared, encouraged them to "think politically." Of

greater significance, she posits, is the experience of politicalization in and out of the organization, which is most evident in a revealing exploration of gender influences in SDS and YAF. While women in each organization came from similar backgrounds, the mothers of many SDS activists had paid employment, which made them more sensitive than YAF women to sexual discrimination. Moreover, they were more apt to recognize their subordinate status within SDS and their experience within the group gave them a language to express their discontent.

The importance of experience in the activists' politicization is further evident as Klatch examines the convergence of the left and the right later in the 1960s. For example, older SDSers generally believed drugs impeded movement building, while YAF traditionalists simply abhorred the counterculture's values. Within the counterculture, however, some SDS members and libertarians in YAF found "shared lifestyles and values" and a common experience of harassment by police, which radicalized both. The conflict between libertarians and traditionalists in YAF, and the internal divisions in SDS (over Weatherman and women's issues, among others), illustrate what Klatch calls the "intersection of interest between the left and the right" (186). As well, differences within each organization, over gender issues and the counterculture, contributed to the dissolution of each. Building on a theme in Ted Morgan's *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons About Modern America*, Klatch concludes that differences in experience, rather than social background, is the key to understanding the sixties generation.

While Klatch broadens the definition of sixties political activism, in *A Fiction of the Past* Dominick Cavallo, a professor of history at Adelphi University, places the decade in a wider historical context. Relying primarily on secondary sources, he looks at three expressions of white youth radicalism: the counterculture; rock musicians and their work; and SDS. Cavallo ignores the more important civil rights and women's movements, arguing that scholars previously have uncovered the deep historical roots of the civil rights and women's movements, which has annointed them with an air of legitimacy. He seeks to confer that same legitimacy on the sixties radicals, who he claims also "reprised myths and ideas that are touchstones of the nation's identity." This is a risky approach, he admits, for it removes white youth radicalism from the "wider context" of protest and liberation struggles during the era. He takes the risk because one of his "major goals" is to "link the youth culture to the American past" (12).

What can a study focused on white youth radicalism reveal to us about the decade, and America before and since? The answer, according to Cavallo, is that as they became politically active young radicals "revived older, mostly pre-industrial visions of work, individualism, self-reliance, community and democracy." In so doing, they confronted the modern bureaucratic state with their own vision of the mythical America of "open spaces, adventure and unpredictability" (8). Through their immersion in fifties' pop culture, sixties radicals were galvanized by the "democratic vistas" connected to the West, what Thoreau called "'fictions of the past'." They acted on those notions, and sought to remake a world based on "the myths of liberty, equality, autonomy and democracy" (254-255). The decade's sound and fury resulted from the "underlying struggle" between what he calls "two powerful, historically grounded yet contradictory versions of American life" (8).

Cavallo successfully links the youth culture to a distinct American historical tradition. Perhaps his most imaginative section takes an intriguing look at rock musicians' approach to their work. Artists such as Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead, Cavallo asserts, sought control over the content and production of their music against the bureaucratic music industry. Dylan's "life and music," according to Cavallo, "were studies in

the self-reliant individualism celebrated by Emerson more than a century earlier” (181). Similarly, Cavallo links SDS’s view of decentralized political power and anti-authoritarianism back to Jacksonian democracy, the Populists, and the Antifederalists.

Cavallo notes with irony that most Americans “recoil from the radical implications of the freedom, autonomy and democracy” which Dylan, SDS, and the Diggers helped to revive and act upon (13). While Cavallo is no doubt correct, in the end the sixties he presents here is rather static. There is little sense of process, or the extent to which these democratic vistas were transmitted to or received by others. One wonders, for example, why others of the sixties generation, raised in the same middle-class comfort and exposed to the same media and myths, were not radicalized? Was Dylan’s approach to his work or the content of his music of greater significance? Might YAF’s libertarianism also fit into this scheme?

Both *A Generation Divided* and *A Fiction of the Past* make important contributions to our understanding of the 1960s and the cultural and political conflicts of the past thirty years. Rebecca Klatch points the way to future studies that consider the variety of experience among political activists and, as well, Americans of all stripes. Dominick Cavallo suggests how the sixties might be understood within a broader historical perspective, a direction scholars of the sixties would do well to heed.

University of Missouri-Columbia

Rusty Monhollon

ELVIS CULTURE: Fans, Faith, and Image. By Erika Doss. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. 1999.

Erika Doss’s study asks why the image of Elvis, more than a quarter of a century after his death, remains as visible as Jesus and Coca Cola? In posing this question, Doss, Director of American Studies at University of Colorado, joins popular music critic Greil Marcus, who looked at “Dead Elvis,” and cultural studies analyst Gilbert Rodman, who examined Elvis’s “posthumous career.” Yet Doss combines art historical training in her examination of visual Elvis culture with an emphasis on the consumption of Elvis artifacts. By examining the investments people have in consuming and reproducing the image of Elvis, whether in photographs, paintings, dolls, lipsticks, collages, or shrines or through full-body impersonations, Doss enlarges her view of material culture to include not simply artifacts but also consumers. Furthermore, as her study demonstrates, neither the artifacts nor the consumers are fixed or inanimate.

Describing and organizing visual Elvis culture in relation to such social categories as race, class, gender, sex, and religion, Doss argues that the multifaceted image of Elvis—“as a religious icon, a sexual fantasy, an emblem of whiteness, and a legally copyrighted commodity”—remains popular because of its ambiguity, which makes it a useful site of struggle over religious, sexual, and racial identifications. Her argument about the image of Elvis as a site of cultural struggle serves nicely to organize her richly detailed study and to explain the witty vitality of Elvis culture, but it does not sufficiently account for the fact that certain images of Elvis and certain types of consumers or fans prevail over others. I think this is because, in spite of her careful examination of Elvis fandom from the 1950s onward, Doss’s study loses sight of history and its impact on the meaning of images of Elvis. The unremitting, albeit cleverly ironized and contested, whiteness of Elvis offers a fitting example of the impact of history on the image of Elvis. Doss is not unaware of this, and in her chapter on whiteness she speaks about the backlash provoked among many Elvis fans by the marriage of Lisa Marie Presley to Michael Jackson. To explain how and why the image of Elvis and the bulk of his fans are propelled toward

whiteness, even though, as Doss illustrates, neither Elvis, the images, nor the fans were or are exclusively white, requires more attention to the history of racism, particularly in the South. More important, it requires a theoretical revision regarding the prevailing context in which contestation over the meaning of an image occurs. Such a context, for example, would offer Doss a broader view of the heavy-handed yet ineffectual efforts of Elvis Presley Enterprises to control the production of visual Elvis culture.

One strength of this study is that it considers images of Elvis in the context of the people who were and are, as Doss puts it, emotionally attached to them. To investigate the shape and intensity of Elvis fans, Doss interviewed an impressively wide array of Elvis fans. To understand their attachment to Elvis, Doss draws richly upon theories of fandom, yet apparently discards psychoanalysis as a way of theorizing the role of emotional attachment in popular culture. Instead, drawing organically perhaps on her exploration of the phenomenon of Elvis shrines, including the gravesite at Graceland, Doss concludes, at least in her subtitle, that fandom is a matter of "faith."

Doss's exuberantly detailed and illustrated study succeeds in demonstrating the complexity of Elvis culture and in showing that it thrives on a wide array of powerful emotional investments in his image. If it does not quite arrive at an answer to its own guiding question (namely, "Why Elvis?"), it absolutely compels us to take this fundamental question about popular culture to heart.

University of Kansas

Cheryl Lester

... AND THE PURSUIT OF NATIONAL HEALTH: The Incremental Strategy Toward National Health Insurance in the United States. By Jaap Kooijman. Amsterdam: Rodopi. 1999.

The lack of national health insurance is the most distinctive feature of the American welfare state, the prime example of a larger historic issue captured by the phrase "American exceptionalism." During the 1940s, however, it was not at all apparent that the United States would become a welfare state "laggard." The Social Security Act of 1935 had created a national social insurance system to protect against the risks of old age and unemployment as well as joint federal-state programs for the elderly poor and poor mothers and children. National health insurance had been excluded from the Social Security Act for political expediency. Then World War II put welfare state expansion on hold. When the war ended, President Truman delivered a message to Congress proposing a national health program. On the same day bills were introduced in the Senate and in the House calling for a program of national health insurance. Four years later Truman's plan was in tatters and the issue of national health insurance was dead, seemingly forever. Then, in 1965 Congress enacted two new health care programs, Medicare, which provides national health insurance for the aged, and Medicaid, a federal-state program of health insurance for the poor. Why was Truman's proposal so resoundingly defeated, and why, just 15 years later, was Congress willing to legislate not one but two new government health insurance programs?

These are the questions that Kooijman seeks to answer. In this detailed historical study, he traces the fate of various proposals for national health insurance from the Progressive Era through the 1960s. His objective is not only to explain why these proposals failed but also how the United States ended up with an employer-based system of health insurance.

Kooijman locates the history in the context of broader debates about why the United States is a welfare state "laggard." In these debates the exceptional character is the Ameri-

can welfare state is attributed to such factors as the lack of a labor-based political party, the influence of business, or the institutional features of a government divided between the courts, the Congress and the executive branch and between the federal government and the states. Kooijman challenges these arguments on both empirical and theoretical grounds. According to Kooijman, any comparison between the United States and European nations is fraught with inherent obstacles that most scholars ignore. The United States is not only larger in size and population, it also has many health insurance programs operating, some at the state level. Why, then, asks Kooijman, should a small nation like the Netherlands be included in a comparative analysis while American states such as Florida or Minnesota are not? Further complicating the issue is that the meaning of national health insurance varies across western welfare states. In some cases it means health care provided by the government, as in the British National Health Service. In other cases it means that the government provides insurance but not health care.

Kooijman also contends that the character of national social programs cannot simply be read off large-scale social changes, institutional structures, or interest group influence. It is also embedded in an ideological context framed by an enduring anti-statism. Yet here he seems ambivalent about the role played by cultural values. On the one hand, Kooijman argues that the values argument is overplayed. The United States is not unique in its concern for *laissez-faire*, and Americans have been inconsistent in their resistant to big government programs. On the other hand, he wonders why the values argument is so enduring and (apparently) convincing. Although Kooijman provides a wealth of historical detail, he never fully comes to grips with the relevance of existing theories and what light his evidence sheds on these larger debates. Still, anyone interested in a detailed description of the fate of national health insurance for two-thirds of the twentieth century will find *And the Pursuit of National Health* an invaluable source of fascinating information.

Florida State University

Jill Quadagno

DETECTIVE AGENCY: WOMEN RE-WRITING THE HARD-BOILED TRADITION.
By Priscilla L. Walton and Manina Jones. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1999.

Detective Agency pays tribute to the emergence and radical increase of detective fiction since the late 1970s with female private eyes signifying on the traditionally male hard-boiled novels from the 1930s and 40s. In their book, Walton and Jones cover both publication and film/TV industries, including their resistances, subversions, and enhancements of feminist investigators who disrupt gender as well as genre conventions. Together with Gabriele Dietze's *Hardboiled Woman: Geschlechterkrieg im amerikanischen Kriminalroman*, published in German in 1997, *Detective Agency* offers a long overdue excellent analysis of a literary phenomenon questioning traditional notions of publishing, marketing, and consumerism and allotting "individual and collective agency" (3) to women within male-dominated institutions. "The feminist impetus" of novels by Sara Paretsky, Sue Grafton, Marcia Muller, Linda Barnes, Liza Cody, and many other women writers "is established," as Walton and Jones argue, "in the ambivalent relationship between contemporary works and the literary tradition, in the intimate connection between the individual reader and the novel in the act of reading, and in the more systemic interdependence of novelist, publisher, and audience" (4). Their discussion is informed by the field of feminist and cultural studies which have, like their objects of study, revolutionized academic research. Chapter 1 ("The Private Eye and the Public: Professional Women Detectives and the Business of Publishing") traces the origins of female hard-

boiled PI novels back to the early police procedural female cops in the late 1960s and 70s when feminist activism led to changed perceptions of gender roles in society. Marcia Muller's 1977 novel *Edwin of the Iron Shoes* is considered to be the first novel featuring a female PI (Sharon McCone). The chapter continues to delineate the impressive fact that feminist detective fiction dominated the "New Golden Age of Mysteries" (24) in the 1980s despite "the rise of antifeminist backlash from a number of quarters" (33) and how it constitutes "a fictional site where the link between gender, capital, and power central to Western economies may be both foregrounded and arbitrated" (31). Subgenres such as lesbian and ethnic crime fiction have helped feminism to infiltrate the publishing industry, the popular fiction market as well as the genre of detective fiction itself (39).

Chapter 2 ("Gumshoe Metaphysics: Reading Popular Culture and Formula Fiction") deconstructs traditional notions of genre or formula fiction and popular culture as static, conservative, and nonartistic. Walton and Jones argue that female PI novelists adapt the rules of hard-boiled fiction, but immediately subvert them, establish intertextual references to fellow women writers, meet in conventions, for example, Sisters in Crime, founded in 1986 with Sara Paretsky as its first president, and have managed to bring popular cultural studies into academia beginning with film studies in the 1960s. In chapter 3 ("Does She or Doesn't She? The Problematics of Feminist Detection"), the authors exemplify in Foucauldian terms their claim of female PI novels as "reverse discourse" (92), "an alternative discourse of power . . ." (93). These novelists appropriate and simultaneously mock a traditionally male genre, for example, in a process of "comic defamiliarization" (102) of behavior and dress codes, which demonstrates the performativity of gender (102-03) as an ally in the reproduction and/or subversion of power relations (102). The subversion of power relations on the textual levels of narrative voice and style is the focus of chapter 4 ("The Text as Evidence: Linguistic Subversion"), emphasizing female wisecracking and humor as means of resistance. As chapter 5 ("Private I: Viewing (through) the (Female) Body") demonstrates, the first-person narrative voice becomes the site of identification for the reader and suggests the female narrator as both subject and object of a narration (156) which relies on autobiographical and confessional modes of writing. Thus, female PIs turn the voyeuristic male gaze, traditionally associated with (sexual) violence done to women, into "a symbolic possession of the object of violence" through "obsession with self-defense and physical fitness" (178), resulting in the readers' awareness of the performativity of the gendered body (187).

In the same way that early male hard-boiled novels were "a response to the turbulent American city of the 1920s and reflected a deep unease with the threats that this milieu posed to law and order" (188), the female private eye novel began to "flourish" (190) because of the backlash in Ronald Reagan's republican conservatism in the 1980s. Many characters in female PI novels, disillusioned by conservative institutional law enforcement, turn to private investigation, as Walton and Jones argue in chapter 6 ("Plotting Against the Law: Outlaw Agency"). While in fiction police women and police procedurals are replaced by PIs and PI novels, TV series and films have focused more on female police officers (e.g., *Cagney and Lacey*) than on PIs, precisely because "the woman PI represents a position more threatening to social norms than the female cop, since the latter is sworn to uphold and to protect the law of the state, and since the former is in part defined by her resistance to it" (221) (chapter 7, "'She's Watching the Detectives': The Woman PI in Film and Television"). Although TV series such as *Prime Suspect* (1991) and *Charlie's Angels* (1970s) have successfully featured professional female investigators and PIs respectively, the only Hollywood production of a female PI novel, *V. I.*

Warshawski (1991), was a flop because, as Walton and Jones argue, it “strategically reverse[d] the reversals produced by feminist versions of the hard-boiled detective novel and thus effectively undercut[] the (detective) agency of its protagonist” (221-22). Yet, as Walton and Jones state in their concluding remarks, the “figure of the female investigator continues to reproduce itself” (272) and therefore “raises provocative questions about the shifting nature, function, and potential of women’s (detective) agency” (272).

Detective Agency is a carefully and extensively researched demonstration and analysis of how cultural and feminist studies can be fruitfully combined in the investigation of the highly productive and tremendously successful genre of the feminist/female PI novel as an outcome of changing economic, social, political, and academic contexts. Walton and Jones delineate the history of this genre as a reaction to male-dominated literary hard-boiled tradition and conservative social forces. *Detective Agency* is another significant piece in the mosaic of critical discussions of contemporary female and ethnic detective fiction.

Johannes Gutenberg-Universitaet

Carmen Birhle

THE RELUCTANT FILM ART OF WOODY ALLEN. By Peter J. Bailey. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. 2001.

Critics writing about Woody Allen have a hard time keeping up with his prolific pace. Allen has produced more than half a dozen feature films since Sam Girgus’s fine study in 1993; more than fifteen since Nancy Pogel’s book in 1987. Thus new studies are needed but also risk slipping out of date with alarming speed. Peter Bailey’s new book got to press fast enough to include a chapter on *Sweet and Lowdown*, and his detailed treatment of Allen’s work in the nineties is an especially welcome addition to the critical literature.

More important is Bailey’s illuminating focus on what is perhaps the central theme of Allen’s filmic *oeuvre*: the redemptive power of art and its limitations. Bailey convincingly argues that Allen returns to this theme repeatedly and evinces “a remarkably skeptical attitude toward the value of art to human beings” (7). Allen’s prolific production of entertaining films is itself in tension with his skepticism about their value and about the moral stature of the artist.

Bailey points out that Allen’s films are full of artist figures: sometimes (as in *Stardust Memories* or *Crimes and Misdemeanors*) Allen himself portrays a filmmaker; at other times, the artist is represented as a writer, a critic, a musician, an agent, a circus performer, a magician or an interior designer. While there are moments in Allen’s films which affirm works of art as reasons for living (such as the lists in *Manhattan* and *Stardust Memories*), Allen more characteristically depicts art as a wish-fulfillment fantasy and artists as vain, self-absorbed and exploitative. Art is powerless before death, and the idealizations of art crumble before the cruelty of life. Alvy Singer in *Annie Hall* rewrites the scene where Annie Hall rejects him so that she marries him in the play Singer writes about their relationship; Cecilia, in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, flees her poverty and cheating husband to the magic glamour of the screen only to find that the fancy cannot cheat so well. And yet there are few filmmakers who communicate a love of film more persuasively than Woody Allen. Bailey explores this paradox in chapters investigating twenty of Allen’s films.

One of Bailey’s avowed goals is to make the case for Allen’s “comedic/dramatic hybrids” of the eighties and nineties, films whose aesthetic status has been controversial, even among Allen fans. For Bailey, *Broadway Danny Rose* and *Stardust Memories* are

touchstones in Allen's career-long debate with himself over his art. *Danny Rose* celebrates the comedic impulse of making art from infirmity, and the humane dedication of Rose to his tired and pathetic acts represents an ultimate affirmation of life. *Stardust Memories* reflects the desire to affirm life more than an actual affirmation of it. Its complex self-referentiality repeatedly undermines narrative certainty, thus subverting every claim for art the film makes.

Bailey moves through Allen's films with ease, frequently making intriguing connections among the films. At times, his range of reference can be disconcerting, as in the chapter on *Radio Days*, where references to sixteen other Allen films precede any discussion of *Radio Days*. But Bailey's rich cross-references pay off in nuanced and persuasive readings of Allen's work as a totality. Bailey makes good use of interviews with Allen and other scholarship, and, importantly, he deals squarely with the uncomfortable issues of the autobiographical elements of Allen's filmmaking. Bailey's investigation of Allen's debate over the redemptive powers of art ultimately addresses crucial questions about American popular culture and entertainment. As such, it is an important contribution to American film studies.

Agnes Scott College

Christopher Ames

INSTRUMENTS OF DESIRE: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of the Musical Experience. By Steve Waksman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2000.

In the summer of 1969, Jimi Hendrix made audible a rocket's red glare and bombs bursting in air by slamming the whammy bar, squeezing the neck, and shaking the body of his Fender Stratocaster while cracked speakers, overdriven vacuum tubes and miswired transistor circuits screamed out the agonized distance between immaculate design and purposefully misdirected execution. Hendrix's rewriting of "The Star Spangled Banner" performed the ideological struggles of the sixties as a battle of sound, as a struggle over the meaning of the national anthem for a nation divided, rendering explicit the immanent political critique made possible by the creative exploration of the boundary between music and noise. Steve Waksman's important book explores moments such as this in the history of the electric guitar, in an effort to understand "the aesthetics of sound and the politics of sonority." Waksman's selective survey of eight of the most important stylists of the electric guitar demonstrates "how the boundary between norm and transgression, between music and noise, has been continually renegotiated in the recent history of popular music, and how the negotiation of these boundaries has been thoroughly entangled with a range of social and political tensions that continue to define popular music" (290).

Waksman makes effective use of Jacques Attali's theorization of the politically disruptive potential of noise. Attali claims a homological relationship between those sounds which are immediately apprehended as music and the political status quo. "Noise," therefore, becomes a cultural means of disrupting social and political expectations, creating a space where lived experience can be transformed. Each articulation of noise, however, raises the possibility of that noise being coopted and becoming part of a new understanding of status quo music, rendering the music/noise dichotomy the product of constantly renewed and newly invented contingencies. Waksman wisely steers away from Attali's more speculative suggestions about the predictive capacities of noise, yet uses this culturally relative understanding of the music/noise boundary to structure his narrative of the ways in which the electric guitar and the sounds it can make have been productive agents in (not mere mirrors of) the social struggles over gender and race in twentieth-century American cultural history.

The first half of the book begins with Charlie Christian's use of electricity to enable single-string runs on the guitar to cut through and be heard over the sounds of a swing rhythm section. Christian played an undeniably musical style; he was not particularly interested in expanding the sonoral capacities of the instrument. Nevertheless, Christian's role as a featured black soloist in perhaps the first nationally promoted integrated swing band immediately invested the electric guitar with racial significance. Waksman's next two chapters continue the racial dialectic by focusing on efforts by two white musicians, Les Paul and Chet Atkins, to combat the limitations of existing technology and to develop signature styles that were pure and noise-free. Contrasted with those styles in the following chapter are the contemporary efforts of black blues guitarists in Chicago, chiefly Muddy Waters and Chuck Berry, to expand the expressive use of blue notes, sliding microtones and noisy amplifiers in the sound vocabulary of electric guitars. Although Waksman problematizes the apparent equation of blackness with noise with social transformation and whiteness with pure sound and the status quo, it is not difficult to predict where the dialectic will take us in the second half of the book.

In probably his most effective chapter, Waksman helps us to understand the social significance of the sonoral complexity of Jimi Hendrix's guitar style. Drawing from Samuel Floyd's important synthetic discussion of *The Power of Black Music*, and situating Hendrix's celebrity in the legacy of blackface minstrelsy, Waksman's strategy of integrating musicological analyses (always in terms familiar to simple guitar strummers) with quotes from admiring white guitarists such as Eric Clapton and Pete Townshend, demonstrates convincingly that Hendrix's mastery of the technology of the electric guitar, his ability to musicalize noise while he transformed the codes of rock, set a standard for musical authenticity that incorporated artifice into its core and that curiously erased blackness from the meanings of guitar noise for a generation. The MC5 and Led Zeppelin complete the saga of the whitening of the rock guitar, with the explicit appropriation of an image of black male sexuality for the purposes of political agitation by the Motor City madmen slipping into Jimmy Page's and Robert Plant's evocations of Celtic, Indian and Arabic music for the purposes of post-colonial consumerist tourism.

Although in this short review I have focused on the racial dialectic in *Instruments of Desire*, this book is about more than race. Waksman is not unaware of the masculinist underpinnings of the styles he finds so important. He acknowledges the problematic assumptions of autonomy, mastery and control that his focus on the virtuosity of "guitar heroes" seems to reproduce. Nevertheless, I would have appreciated hearing more about alternative modes of guitar playing that have, since the rise of punk, both engaged with and contested this model of autonomy, mastery and control. Perhaps in his next book, Waksman will describe for us the social and political implications of the guitar styles of Patti Smith, P.J. Harvey, and Liz Phair, or maybe contrast guitar heroes with the claims to mastery made by jazz saxophonists or techno deejays, or maybe he will simply eschew the focus on individuals by shifting to an analysis of the recent public emphasis on the collective nature of music making. Steven Waksman has added another essential book to the distressingly short list of required reading in popular music studies. There is still so much to be done.

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Barry Shank

WOMEN'S HOLOCAUST WRITING: Memory and Imagination. By S. Lillian Kremer. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1999.

Writing from the Warsaw Ghetto as the Nazi genocide advanced on its horrible course social historian Emmanuel Ringelblum insisted that "[t]he future historian . . . dedicate a proper page to the Jewish woman." More than a half century later, not only historians, but also literary and art critics, sociologists and political scientists, and others, have begun to fulfill that mandate, looking seriously at the experiences and memories of women victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

In *Women's Holocaust Writing: Memory and Imagination*, S. Lillian Kremer adds her voice to this important field, examining the representations of women in American fiction about the Holocaust. Discussing works she judges to be characterized by their literary excellence and "moral profundity," Kremer focuses on the works of seven women novelists. Three are emigres writing out of personal experience, and four are American-born, writing out of research and imagination. Ilona Karmel, Elzbieta Ettinger, and Hana Demetz are eye-witnesses who transmute their experiences and observations into fiction, while Susan Fromberg Schaeffer, Cynthia Ozick, Marge Piercy and Norma Rosen "witness through the imagination," to borrow a phrase from Norma Rosen that Kremer uses to characterize imaginative writing about the Holocaust that is not written by survivors.

Focusing exclusively on women protagonists and, with few exceptions, selecting narratives set during rather than after the war, Kremer devotes a chapter to each of the novelists. Moving between history and its fictional representations, Kremer explores aspects of women's experiences under Nazi atrocity, drawing on earlier writing about women and the Holocaust. Kremer does not push new theoretical frontiers in this volume, nor is this her purpose. The book seeks to insert women's voices into what has been a predominantly male master narrative of the Holocaust.

Two distinct and important arguments engage Kremer in this volume: that imaginative representations, and not only memoirs, can "witness" the Holocaust (that is, impart historically-based knowledge and sensitivity), and that women's voices reveal a set of experiences distinct from those of men. Kremer presses these points in her extended introductory chapter, and continues to pursue them in her discussions of individual writers. While both of these two points have been amply demonstrated before, each continues to be the subject of debate—indeed, controversy—within the compass of Holocaust studies, particularly the focus on women. Thus, Kremer's voice is a welcome addition.

Kremer's book is thoroughly researched. She is familiar not only with the literary criticism about the body of works that have come to be thought of as Holocaust literature, but also with Jewish American literature and its criticism. The book emerges out the nexus of those two sets of writing. In addition, Kremer knows well the history of the Nazi genocide as it targeted the Jews of Europe for extreme brutality and mass murder. Her discussion is sensitive to the horrors of the Holocaust, and their effects on those who experienced it. She has also conducted personal interviews with most of the novelists treated in the book, making an important contribution to the field. Writing from an abundantly informed position, Kremer contextualizes the individual works of fiction that she discusses in the historical events out of which they spring.

While Kremer treats a wide range of topics and draws from many fields for insights, one wishes that she had, in addition, delved further into the Americanness of the writers she discusses—that is, explored whether and how their Americanness informs the way they look at and represent the past. Kremer distinguishes between the concerns of the "Europeans" and the "Americans"—that is, between the immigrant and native-born writ-

ers—whose works she treats, but the distinctions she draws are primarily between those who experienced the Holocaust at first-hand, and those who did not.

But the immigrant writers, too, are part of American letters. Karmel, for example, although born in Poland, wrote both her novels in English while living in Massachusetts. Having grouped these novelists together, one might inquire whether and how living in the United States shapes the way these immigrant writers look back upon their past, influences the meanings they find in their experience, and determines the literary conventions they utilize. In addition, given the spate of recent writings on American uses of the Jewish past, one might ask whether how the American-born writers Americanize the Holocaust in their writings—that is, derive from it specifically American sets of meanings. Grouping together, as Kremer has here, seven American women writers would seem to demand placing them not only in the context of the Holocaust and Jewish American writers, which Kremer has ably done, but also in the context of American literature, culture, and women's writing, more broadly.

For its elaboration of women's experience during the Nazi genocide, for elaborating the function of historical witness through imaginative literature and correlating historical and fictional accounts, and for explicating a set of complex novels about the Holocaust, Kremer's book is a valuable addition to Holocaust studies.

York University

Sara R. Horowitz

THE MOURNING OF JOHN LENNON. By Anthony Elliott. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1999.

In *The Mourning of John Lennon* Anthony Elliott draws on theories of psychoanalysis and postmodernism to assess this pop culture icon. As the title suggests, this is not a standard biography of Lennon, but rather it is an analysis of loss and mourning in Lennon's life and in popular culture. The author acknowledges that the book is autobiographical in that it connects his own life with Lennon's. Elliott came well prepared for this project with extensive publications on topics ranging from Freud to social theory.

According to Elliott, understanding John Lennon is particularly difficult because he was profoundly ambivalent about the cult of celebrity. In the early years Lennon and his fellow Beatles were desperate for recognition as they worked the teen dance clubs of Liverpool and Hamburg. As they achieved stardom, however, Lennon understood the profound price that he had paid to attain celebrity. Elliott describes Lennon's internal conflict, in which he was unsure of his own values, in a chapter titled "Mind Games: Identity Trouble."

Lennon's murder in 1980, at the hands of Mark David Chapman, profoundly demonstrates the dark side of celebrity according to Elliott. He suggests that Chapman was "caught in an emotional deadlock between narcissistic idealization and abject hatred of Lennon" (138). Chapman hoped to create a "sense of intimacy" (139) with Lennon, but he concluded that Lennon had abandoned his roles as Beatle, revolutionary leader, and was "unable to transcend the trials and tribulations of everyday life" (140). Ultimately the significance of Lennon's murder was defined by the modern culture's inability to confront the reality of death.

Elliott analyzes several accounts of Lennon's life to show how, particularly in death, he was a victim of celebrity. Elliott dismisses Albert Goldman's *The Lives of John Lennon* (1988), with its description of putative murder, obsessive cleanliness, and repressed sexuality, as more revealing of its author than Lennon. Similarly, Frederic Seaman's *The Last*

Days of John Lennon (1991) is an attempt “to corner the gossip market on the ex-Beatle” (29).

Elliott examines the major questions surrounding Lennon’s life that have intrigued students of 1960s and 1970s popular music: What was Lennon’s relationship with Paul McCartney in terms of song writing and leadership of the Beatles? What was Yoko Ono’s role in the breakup of the Beatles? What was Lennon’s relationship with Ono in artistic creativity? Perhaps most importantly for his thesis, how did Lennon’s relationship with his parents influence his feelings of loss and mourning, and his subsequent song writing? In a pivotal chapter titled “Mother: Paths of Loss” Elliott describes the dramatic incident when Lennon was five and his father, who had been absent for most of his child’s life, attempted to persuade him to emigrate with him to New Zealand. This incident, and his mother’s death in a 1958 car accident, leads Elliott to conclude that “Lennon’s difficulty acknowledging feelings of loss was an underlying driving force in his personal life and artistic endeavors” (66).

In *The Mourning of John Lennon* Elliott demonstrates his impressive knowledge of his subject’s life and the music that defines the 1960s and 1970s. While Elliott’s admitted sympathy for his subject limits the book, it is still a significant contribution to our understanding of Lennon and modern culture. Elliott’s discussion is strongest in examining Lennon’s personal life, particularly his relationship with Yoko Ono, but less satisfying in analyzing Lennon’s anti-institutional politics. In fact, Elliott does not connect Lennon’s politics to his larger theme and he sometimes loses sight of the evolving cultural context.

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Stephen L. Recken

THE MAKING OF NAFTA: How the Deal Was Done. By Maxwell A. Cameron and Brian W. Tomlin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2000.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (known as TLC or Tratado de Libre Comercio in México) provoked more controversy in the United States than any other treaty of the 1990s. In Mexico, where its effects were immediate and far more pervasive than in the United States or Canada, it was passed with little public protest. (The Zapatista uprising occurred well after the treaty was signed.) Criticism south of the border was confined to a few ultra-nationalists, academics, and some representatives of left-wing unions. Grumbling was heard from various agricultural producers, but their voices were for the most part isolated. H. Ross Perot’s warning of “the giant sucking sound” from the south received more press attention in the United States than the totality of Mexican opposition.

Mexico’s signing of NAFTA was momentous indeed, occurring in a country that had championed an import-substitution model of development, had nationalized its critical industries, especially petroleum and electricity, had a history of vast and heavy-handed government intervention in the national economy and in every relevant economic sector, and which publicly prided itself on its economic independence from the colossus to the north.

In *The Making of NAFTA*, Cameron and Tomlin ambitiously undertake explaining not just what happened but why: “This book is about how NAFTA was negotiated—where the idea came from, how the players came to the table, how the process of negotiation evolved, and how the final bargain was struck.” In addition to standard archival research, they conducted more than one hundred interviews, mostly with individuals directly involved in the negotiations. This first-person information permitted them to

describe so much in the NAFTA process that went on behind the scenes and is not available from other sources.

For the scholar or lay reader wishing to penetrate the obscurities and subtleties of the treaty—motivations, passions, divergent interests, and downright skullduggery—the book presents invaluable information. We learn that Mexican leaders believed their nation desperately needed the treaty to attract foreign investment. With a rapidly devaluing peso, hyperinflation, and astronomical foreign debt, the autocratic administration of Carlos Salinas, already predisposed toward neoliberal policies, decided that only free trade could end Mexico's economic slide. The authors note that in lobbying for the treaty, "Mexico hired thirty-three former U.S. government officials and took forty-eight congressional staffers on expenses-paid trips to Mexico."

The United States, on the other hand, had no imminent imperative to conclude a treaty with Mexico. Still, the thought of penetrating Mexican markets (Mexico at the time had a population of more than 90 million compared with fewer than 27 million Canadians) was attractive for most captains of American industry. We learn how American business interests also saw the treaty as an opportunity to force upon Mexico an agreement on intellectual property, copyrights, and patents whereby Mexico would conform to the standards U.S. businesses had managed to wring from the U.S. Congress over many decades. Mexico gradually learned, however, that there was growing urgency from the Bush administration to complete the treaty prior to the 1992 elections. The Salinas administration used this awareness to its advantage in bargaining.

In contrast, Canada had little to gain by participating, but much to lose by not. Many Canadians felt that they had been a bit hornswoggled in the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement in 1988. They feared that a bilateral treaty between the United States and Mexico alone would undercut some of the few safeguards Canada had retained. However, if the United States had two separate treaties, it would become a more desirable destination for investment as the locus for serving all three North American markets, leaving Canada in an even worse position than at present. Canada's participation, then, was reluctant and Canada always acted with deliberation and without any sense of urgency. The presence of Canadian trade representatives acted more to prevent damage to Canada than to facilitate a tripartite treaty.

The Making of NAFTA has two components—a description of the way the treaty was negotiated and a theoretical framework and hypotheses within which the authors interpret the proceedings and accomplishments. They were eminently successful in the first. Indeed, they manage to illuminate a most complex and otherwise almost unintelligible mishmash, and show it to be the product conflicting individual, corporate, civic, and national hopes and fears and ideological suppositions on the one hand, and a cat and mouse game on the other. Most of all, the treaty was a push-pull contest between hundreds of business, labor, environmental, and cultural interests kept in check by counter interests and various perceptions of the world of global business. Only a thorough familiarity with the arcane realm of treaty negotiations and the practical aspirations (and machinations) of the governments involved would permit this literary attempt to succeed. And, in general, it does. If you want to know the juicy details of NAFTA, read this book.

In the second component—placing the negotiations and signing of NAFTA in a theoretical framework of diplomatic process—the authors are less successful. Consider the following paragraph:

... positively framed negotiators perceive outcomes in terms of potential gains, and they will offer concessions in the threshold-adjust-

ment process in order to obtain the sure (risk-averse) outcome available in a negotiated agreement. . . . we define the imputed reference point for the evaluation of gains and losses in terms of the nonagreement alternatives available to a party to a negotiation. Furthermore, the subjective utility that a party attaches to its nonagreement alternative at any particular point in the negotiation process will determine its willingness to put agreement at risk by withholding concessions in the threshold-adjustment process. A positively framed negotiator will perceive negotiated outcomes in terms of the potential gains they offer over a nonagreement alternative with low subjective utility. (27-28)

This is typical of the prose of the theoretical sections. After working my way through the dense verbiage, twice, I decided that I understood little more about negotiating treaties after reading it than I did before. Even more important, I wondered if this obtuse language—calling it jargon would be a little unfair—rendered the background, negotiations, and signing of NAFTA more intelligible. After finishing the book I concluded that it did not and that my understanding of NAFTA would not suffer if it were expunged. In short, except for those scholars versed in the language and theory of treaty negotiation, one can skip pages 15-32 and 51-56 and suffer no intellectual loss. Those eager to view the language games of treaty theory, however, will not want to bypass these sections.

This book stands out not for its theoretical creativity but for its rich account of the details and personalities, the clashes of viewpoints and national interests, the petty and the pivotal, the trivial and the momentous aspects of the machinations behind NAFTA and the political context in all three nations. For anyone wanting to understand the intricacies of treaty negotiations, this is the book.

A word about the book's editing: An English professor of mine once warned me to be suspicious of any book containing the phrase "It goes without saying." It goes without saying that the odious sequence is found (73) in *The Making of NAFTA*. Judicious editing would have caught this and other unfortunate choices of terminology, such as the use of "conflicted" for "conflicting" (101), "disinterest" where the authors clearly meant "lack of interest" (66, 104, 235), and the intrusion of the buzzword "stakeholders" (163). Mexico's foreign debt under President de la Madrid was \$98 billion, not \$98 million (58). The prose also tends to be ponderous, (even when the authors gratuitously inform us that in a 1990 flight to Switzerland President Salinas and his Secretary of Commerce Jaime Serra "slept fitfully") and a good dose of editorial simplification would have made the reading easier and more enjoyable.

In spite of these weaknesses, the book is a remarkable accomplishment and essential to anyone interested in treaties, and, especially in Mexico's quick turn from a corporatist economy top heavy with parastatal enterprises to a neoliberal's paradise. Since the book's publication, Mexico has repudiated its long-term ruling party and perhaps an end to seventy years of corporatist single-party rule. Never again will Mexico be able to follow the same path to ratification of a treaty.

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