

Reviews

David Hadaller, *Gynicide: Women in the Novels of William Styron* (London: Associated University Presses, 1996, £25). Pp. 218. ISBN 0 8386 3633 0.

In *Gynicide: Women in the Novels of William Styron*, David Hadaller argues that Styron's novels critique patriarchal norms by exploring the ill-treatment of women. Fictive gynicide as a ritual sacrifice of women occurs as a way of revealing the nature of social systems of repression and dehumanization. Hadaller also coins the term "psychogynicide," or "the proscription of the formation of any self beyond the formulaic ideals of womanhood based on patriarchal definitions." Using ideas from Carolyn Durham, Elizabeth Ermarth, and Dale Marie Bauer, Hadaller sees Styron's novels as fitting Ermarth's thesis that any woman who challenges the patriarchal system in realist fiction may be driven to "psychic suicide" often leading to actual death. But Styron's work, Hadaller argues, is "non exploitive"; it "portrays the complex variables surrounding the lives of his female characters" and challenges such "societal codes."

Hadaller claims that criticism of Styron's work as misogynous is subsidiary to his study, yet it seems central. Critics, he claims, minimize "the overwhelming importance" of the female characters, as well as the "obvious examples" of gynicide and psychogynicide. Yet, whether gynicide would be his focus in a different academic climate, as opposed to the general ill-treatment and sufferings of human beings – the deaths of the boys in *The Long March*, Nathan's suicide, Nat's execution, and Mason's murder included – seems questionable. "Constituted in polyphony," a good writer is unlikely to subscribe to a particular ideology. A dedicated enough critic can therefore change such writers into attacking or defending a given political position. *Gynicide*, where Styron becomes a writer primarily committed to the feminist cause, amply demonstrates this.

Styron does, as Hadaller says, present the deaths of "females of all ages – as the result of male dominance or selfishness," but this is not simply "an indication of the author's desire to give voice to the struggles and suffering of women." Peyton dies partly because of her *parents'* selfishness. Styron's presentation of Stringo "as an oppressor in his own right" underscores the theme of male and female complicity in acts of evil, not merely Styron's indictment of a "male-dominated society." The fact that Wilhelmine is also an oppressor shows such a judgment to twist the novel out of its more balanced assessment of human behaviour. Nevertheless, *Gynicide*, taken as a defence of one vein of Styron's work, offers a cogent commentary.

Bath College of Higher Education

GAVIN COLOGNE-BROOKES

Paul T. Phillips, *A Kingdom on Earth. Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880–1940* (Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 1996, £49.50 cloth, £15.50 paper). Pp. 303. ISBN 0 271 01497 0, 0 271 01580 2.

Professor Phillips, hitherto known primarily for his contributions to the religious history of Victorian England, here casts his net not only over the whole of Britain, but also over Canada and the United States. From a British perspective the Canadian material is particularly welcome as casting light into an especially black hole left by conventional historical education. He is also aware of, though he does not pursue, the German reference to the story, which is particularly close in the case of the United States, notwithstanding the almost total difference between the ecclesiastical organizations of the two countries. Professor Phillips speculates little on the social background to his story, though it is hard to believe that the partial repudiation of the dominant economic ethic brought about in hitherto privileged quarters by the Great Depression is not crucial; nor does he feel it necessary to make good his heroes' extraordinary failure to ask themselves what kind of intellectual processes were needed to infer or deduce social policy from Christian principles. What he does very well is to trace their manoeuvres as they floundered about with a few blanket notions: incarnationism, the Brotherhood of Man, and so forth. As usual in movements of this kind, they made more difference to the church than the world, while at the same time trying to overcome the limitations of ecclesiastical action. Literature (mostly bad), politics (mostly ineffective), ecumenism (mostly irrelevant) were among the broader spheres to which they aspired. Usually in the first instance an establishmentarian affair, much of the social Christianity here discussed has an antique look as national establishments have been left behind by international economic organization and competition; but for a couple of generations many good men thought the social reference of establishment represented the key demand of the gospel, and Professor Phillips commemorates them with effect.

Petersfield

W. R. WARD

Brian Higgins and Hershel Parker (eds.), *Herman Melville: The Contemporary Reviews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, £70.00 cloth) Pp. 556. ISBN 0 521 41423 7.

Herman Melville never underestimated the power of reviews to shape a literary reputation and a literary career. He collected and scrutinized reviews of his books throughout his career – especially in its early stages – and they always influenced the nature of the next book he wrote. His first two books, *Typee* and *Omoo*, established him in the reviewers' eyes as a writer of lively adventure narratives, and this was a label that he struggled to escape from then onwards. Whilst Melville was irritated by the righteously religious reviews of his early work, the hostility with which most of his books were received only continued to increase. In 1849 he acknowledged not only the pecuniary, but also the emotional, damage which bad reviews of his work had done: "In a little notice of 'The Oregon

Trail' I once said something 'critical' about another man's book – I shall never do it again. Hereafter I shall no more stab at a book (in print I mean) than I would stab at a man." By 1852 he was including biting satires of the literary world in his novels, especially in *Pierre*, where the eponymous hero comes to feel "pyramidal scorn of the genuine loftiness for the whole infinite company of infinitesimal critics."

During his lifetime, Melville's deliberately errant texts were usually read as the manifestation of something between lunacy and blasphemy. Horace Greeley declared his early novels to be "unmistakably defective if not positively diseased in moral tone," condemning "a *penchant* for bad liquors" and "a hankering after loose company not always of the masculine order...but thinly disguised and perpetually protruding itself throughout the work." *Moby Dick* (published in Britain as *The Whale*) enjoyed a mixed reception, but Melville did not see the largely enthusiastic reviews from Britain. Instead, the Americans' generally perfunctory tributes to the book's "thrilling" scenes of sea life goaded the frustrated author into declaring: "There are hardly five critics in America; and several of them are asleep."

It was only following Melville's death in 1891 that the marginalization of his work in the name of Puritan and capitalist ideologies began to be remedied. It was not until the 1920s that the Melville revival was fully inaugurated by such biographers and critics as Raymond Weaver, John Freeman, Van Wyck Brooks, and Lewis Mumford. *Billy Budd* was posthumously published in 1924, by which time Melville's reputation has undergone a major transformation, and *Moby Dick* had been proclaimed a classic of world literature. Reviews of this period, particularly those by John Middleton Murry in the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Adelphi*, reflect the turning tide of critical opinion. Because reviews played such a crucial part in Melville's career, this volume provides an invaluable resource for scholars interested in investigating the relationship between his work and the reception of his work. Higgins and Parker admit there are more reviews still to be found, but nevertheless they have provided a substantial sourcebook and – as they themselves claim – a challenge to scholars and general readers alike.

University of Liverpool

VAL GOUGH

Eben J. Muse, *The Land of Nam: The Vietnam War in American Film* (London: Scarecrow Press, 1996, £33.25). Pp. 287. ISBN 0 8108 2952.

Muse, in *The Land of Nam The Vietnam War in American Film*, charts the Indo-China war film from *Rogue's Regiment* and *Saigon* (1948), to *Heaven and Earth* and *The Last Hit* (1993). He has compiled a *Chronology of American Vietnam War Films*, that appears in his appendix, in which he includes films analogous to the Vietnam War, or films that include one, or more, characters who have, or have had, some connection with the conflict in Vietnam.

Muse's argument and analysis are built upon carefully considered observations of the traditions of the combat film genre and its inability to tell the story of the Vietnam War. He points to the portrayal of the Vietnamese, already defined in terms of the stereotyped World War II Japanese soldier, as being unacceptable to

America's multi-racial soldiers and civilian population. He recognizes the role of film, and television, in recasting public awareness and bringing the violence of Vietnam into the homes of America as never before. For all of the apparent incongruity of the traditional war film genre (that is when it attempts to tell the story of the Vietnam War) Muse's centre-point for his exploration, into *The Vietnam War in American Film*, is the failure of these films to successfully depict *The Land of Nam*. Muse argues, quite convincingly, that, up until Oliver Stone's *Platoon*, there was no attempt to portray Vietnam other than as an uncivilized generic jungle country.

The problems, according to Muse, lay not in filming the war but in portraying it. Hollywood faced a problem of invention. It had to compose a cinematic vision of the war that would be palatable to a mass audience despite the disparate and antagonizing views held by the nation. Muse proceeds with a chronological assessment of Hollywood's efforts which, in itself, writes the story of the film industry's attempts to compose an American consensus narrative.

Muse takes the reader through the decades from the sixties, and John Wayne's politically vulgar (western grafted onto the Vietnam War) *Green Berets*, through to the early seventies war vet horror films. He follows the implications on civilian life of the returning soldiers in the seventies, as shown in the intense alienation and violence of the decontextualized figures Billy Jack and Travis Bickel. Muse brings his work up to date, taking the trip wire of Reagan's eighties nostalgia in his stride. He identifies the sentimentalization of the past that so enhanced the careers of Reagan and Stallone. The anti-war *heroes* of the sixties and seventies were now the villains who had betrayed their soldiers and their fellow countrymen. These soldiers were now young innocents unaccountable for their war crimes.

The brief conclusion that Muse arrives at is that the romance that has been associated with the traditional war film is no longer viable. He suggests that a post-romantic ethos is required to people what had previously been considered to be an uncivilized landscape with Vietnamese voices, finally moving towards a vision of The Land of Nam that does not portray a hostile wilderness, but simply Viet Nam.

University of Essex

JASON CHARLES

S. Elizabeth Bird, *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture*, (Boulder, Colorado, and Oxford: Westview Press, 1996, hardback, £54, paperback, £13.00). Pp. 321. ISBN 0 8133 2667 2, 0 8133 2666 4.

The eighteen pieces in this lively and thought-provoking collection cover an impressive range of American popular culture. These essays look at postcards, trade cards, photographs; they discuss news media, medical writings, romance novels, humorous sketches, plays, poetry; they investigate pageants, processions, murals, museums, monuments, and film in every shape – ethnographic, quasi-ethnographic, westerns, television series, cartoons, and box-office successes like *Dances with Wolves* and the controversial and unavoidable *Pocahontas*. The

geographical range runs from Alaska to the Florida Everglades. The jacket modestly says the book covers the last 150 years, but in fact several articles go much further back than that, most notably Joel W. Martin's excellent and finely nuanced account of representations of Native Americans in Southern History, and Bonnie Duran's article, "Indigenous versus Colonial Discourse: Alcohol and American Indian Identity," in which she looks not only at white stereotypes of the drunken Indian, but also at the history of Native American responses to the problem of alcohol dependency.

This inclusion of the Native American view-point and their self-construction is a feature of several articles. For example, Theodore S. Jojola, of Isleta Pueblo ancestry, tells the story of his work for ABC-TV transforming the Native American character from a stereotype into a feasible pueblo inhabitant for a children's cartoon series, improbably conceived and known as *The Wild-West C.O.W.-Boys of Moo Mesa*. The book ends with a brief, moving autobiographical piece by Debra L. Merskin, of Cherokee descent, on the problems of perception and self-identity she has experienced as a fair-haired Indian. As the title suggests, many of the essays take up the theme of "playing Indian," both in the sense of Native Americans having to play themselves, often quite inauthentically as war-bonneted Plains Indians in order to be recognized by whites as "real Indians," and also in the sense of the long-enduring white American desire to play, and indeed, at some level, to be Indian. The history and psychology of this desire is the subject of one of the finest essays in the book, Robert Baird's "Going Indian: Discovery, Adoption, and Renaming Toward a 'True American' from *Deerslayer* to *Dances with Wolves*." Some particularly intriguing representations discussed by several of the essays were those produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as part of the drive to persuade – or coerce – Native Americans to assimilate. Not all the essays here are equally analytically sharp, but all raise important issues.

Goldsmiths College, University of London

HELEN CARR

Rose Marie Burwell, *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, £37.50 cloth, £13.95 paper). Pp. 250. ISBN 0 521 48199 6, 0 521 56534 X.

Scott Donaldson, (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, £35.00 cloth, £11.95 paper). Pp. 321. ISBN 0 521 45479 4, 0 521 45574 X.

Both of these studies aim to explore the dominant features of Hemingway's aesthetics: Burwell concentrates on his post-war novels, and the Donaldson collection provides a wide-ranging overview of Hemingway's entire fictional output. Whereas *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway* succeeds in establishing a broad but flexible framework within which to position Hemingway's work, Burwell's *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels* slips between autobiography and fiction too easily to provide firm critical demarcations between Hemingway the private artist and Hemingway the public celebrity.

Burwell focuses on Hemingway's last four works – *Islands of the Stream* (w. 1945–52, p. 1970), *The Garden of Eden* (w. 1948–59, p. 1986), the unpublished “African Book” (w. 1954–56), and *A Moveable Feast* (w. 1957–61, p. 1964) – which, she argues, form a Proustian fictional sequence. Proust is mentioned early on (together with Hemingway's ambivalent relationship to Proust) to set the tone of Burwell's volume. As such, the significance of memory and the search for an authentic aesthetic practice lend the book its two critical directives: the study of fiction as self-analysis and the development of the portrait of artist as American. Burwell claims that Hemingway's last four offerings form “a thematically coherent, through, unfinished unit” and also serve to document his “creative decline.” The major problem with this type of literary criticism is that, in her attempt to find a coherent design uniting the last four books, Burwell reads the fiction as wholly biographically determined: the fiction literally becomes an extension of Hemingway's life. The different strands of “pseudobiography” which can be traced in these diverse works, ranging from the fictional (*The Garden of Eden*) to the retrospective memoir (*A Moveable Feast*), are too readily elided in Burwell's attempt to force unity from fragments.

Despite the dynamic problems of this study, the author's ability to isolate and deal with patterns and modulated repetitions in Hemingway's post-war output is to be credited. The most perceptive chapter is on *The Garden of Eden*, in which Burwell develops the argument of Mark Spilka's fine book *Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny* (1990) by analysing the problematic relationship between sexual vitality and artistic creativity. The destructive power of the feminine towards the male artist is dramatized in the actions of the androgynous character, Catherine, whose desire to exchange sex-roles and to “cross-fertilize” David's (her lover's) imagination drive him away from the “eden” of the opening honeymoon towards the masculinist African sequence narrated later in the novel. Whereas Burwell interprets Catherine's actions as a sign of women's creative struggle, she reads David's artistic retreat as a “dirty secret,” both aspects of which are indicative of Hemingway's troubled sexuality and the depression that dogged his later life.

The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway includes essays on all the major aesthetic and cultural phases of Hemingway's life, beginning with his Canadian journalistic writings and the well-documented Paris years to the Spanish, African, and Cuban contexts of his later fiction. The volume begins with a clear and provocative introduction by the editor Scott Donaldson, in which he attempts to read against the media images of Hemingway as strenuous “sportsman or warrior” and the kinds of public aesthetic (and ethical) slogans epitomized by “grace under pressure.” Nevertheless, the introduction constructs a common meta-narrative of Hemingway's creativity: from the triumphant early achievements of *In Our Time* (1925) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) to the late “disparity between his public fame and fading powers.”

Two of the most accomplished essays in the volume focus on “Hemingway's Journalism and the Realist Dilemma” (Elizabeth Dewberry) and “Hemingway and Politics” (Keneth Kinnamon). Dewberry's thesis is that Hemingway's “lifelong investigation into the nature of reality” is discernable in his early journalism in the form of a “persistent skepticism” regarding the truth-claims of

language. In a similar, but more subtle, way to Burwell, Dewberry reads Hemingway as a true modernist writer in the sense that not only does he “render conventional distinctions between” fiction and factual journalism “almost superfluous,” but he views truth (in the epistemological sense) as “at best absurdly distorted and at worst dangerously unattainable.”

Keneth Kinnamon’s essay goes on to consider some of the questions of ideology which Dewberry’s study raises. He begins by resisting the claim made by Michael Reynolds (author of *The Young Hemingway*, 1986) that Hemingway was “one of the least overtly political writers of his generation,” by arguing that, although by the mid-1920s Hemingway’s “direct exposure to politics decreased,” his “political awareness continued to appear in his correspondence” to the likes of Pound and Dos Passos. In short, Kinnamon’s exposé of Hemingway’s sometimes contradictory politics (the essay begins by mentioning the Republican heroes of Hemingway’s childhood and ends with a brief speculation as to what Hemingway would have made of the collapse of communism in the late twentieth century) forms an interesting tangent to the other collected essays on Hemingway’s fictional and critical reputation.

De Montfort University, Leicester

MARTIN HALLIWELL

Edward Gallafent, *Clint Eastwood: Actor and Director* (London: Studio Vista, 1994, £12.99). Pp. 256. ISBN 0 289 80115 X.

Edward Gallafent’s book offers a very broadly contextual approach to American Studies, its presentation of Eastwood as a representatively American figure producing a series of comparisons with such diverse figures as Capra, Melville, Kerouac, Fitzgerald, Twain, and Henry James. The same broad brush is applied to historical background – the differing subject-matters of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, *Joe Kidd*, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, and *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot*, for example, are all linked variously to themes of disillusionment and reconstruction associated with the Vietnam War. This approach makes for an entertaining and informative read, although the frequent reference to an American “context” tends to strain the connections between some of the films. The emphasis on Eastwood’s movies as narratives which can be linked to other types of American text, coupled with a general unwillingness to draw on the insights of film theory, prevent a more detailed discussion of how these films work cinematically. Eastwood essentially functions here as *auteur*, and, although I take Gallafent’s point about his subject’s significant role as producer at Malpaso, the role of writers, technicians, and other directors seems to be unnecessarily marginalized.

However, there is much more there than just a central thesis, and Gallafent’s readings of individual films are attentive and intelligent. His discussion of the tension between historical specifics and more generalized genre requirements in the Spaghetti westerns, the notion of failed southern masculinity in *The Beguiled*, and the relationship between discipline and excess in *Bird*, are especially fine. Gallafent also does not shirk from a detailed examination of the objectionable aspects of the Dirty Harry movies, even though a professed aim of his book is to rescue Eastwood’s films from the conventional view of them as politically

reactionary. His book succeeds in its primary aim, however, of convincing the reader of the worthiness of its subject. There are enough ideas generated here to demonstrate that the recent discovery of Eastwood by the anti-mainstream, like that of Hitchcock by the French avant-garde thirty years ago, is no fluke – he really has been involved with some of the most interesting Hollywood films of the last three decades.

Liverpool John Moores University

JOE MORAN

Thomas S. Hansen with Burton R. Pollin, *The German Face of Edgar Allan Poe: A Study of Literary References in his Works* (Columbia, S.C.: Canadian House, 1995 £30). Pp. 152. ISBN 1 571130 691.

The authors of this book have assembled all the available evidence relating to Poe's knowledge of German language, literature, and culture. They have carefully scrutinized Poe's writings and noted his use of German words, phrases, and references; they also discuss and re-evaluate the considerable body of material already published on Poe's alleged knowledge of German and German texts.

Since Poe scattered German words and references quite liberally throughout his writings, it has been widely though incorrectly assumed that he must have had at least a working knowledge of the language, but, after detailed examination of the evidence, Hansen and Pollin conclude that Poe could not read German and had no knowledge of German texts in their original language. His attempts to associate himself with "Germanism" in his early fiction suggest his ambition to make a name for himself and to exploit a genre made popular by *Blackwood's Magazine*, rather than any deep interest in German culture. Following his move to New York in 1844, Poe's interest in things German declined, and his references to German culture were often hostile and mocking. He had a liking for de la Motte Fouqué's "Undine" and professed profound admiration for Humboldt and his *Kosmos*, but he was generally negative about German authors and texts and scoffed at their admirers – especially Longfellow and the Boston transcendentalists. Hansen and Pollin argue that Poe used German phrases/quotations either to give an impression of erudition, as with his lengthy epigraph from Novalis in "Marie Roget," or for purposes of parody and caricature, as with the puns and jokes in stories such as "Von Jung," "The Angel of the Odd," and "Von Kempelen and His Discovery." Hansen and Pollin clearly demonstrate that Poe's knowledge of German authors and texts was entirely derived from readily available English language sources such as George Calvert's lecture on German literature which Poe published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, George Bancroft's essay on Goethe in the *North American Review*, and Sarah Austin's popular *Fragments From German Prose Writers* (1841). The authors also include a survey of Poe's reception of German authors including Tieck, Hoffman, and the Schlegels, and correct the view that he was influenced by Kant who is, in fact, treated with unrelieved scorn.

Hansen and Pollin have provided a service to Poe studies by clarifying with scholarly authority Poe's exact relationship with German texts. Their book is not simply a catalogue of Poe's pretensions; it also provides fascinating insights into

his work as a “magazinish” and how German culture was popularly transmitted in America in the 1830s and 40s.

University of Manchester

IAN WALKER

Kevin J. Hayes (ed.), *Henry James: The Contemporary Reviews*, American Critical Archives 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, £65.00 cloth). Pp. 477. ISBN 0 521 45386 0.

In his prefaces, James recalled launching *The Tragic Muse* “in a great grey void from which no echo or message whatever would come back.” But his memory was selective: he had specifically asked his publisher not to send him “notices.” Hayes’s collection reprints 16 echoes and lists a further 27: a void that most writers would envy. The reviews were mildly enthusiastic, and one suspects that this would have irritated James considerably. If he could dismiss negative responses to his work as the products of stupidity, he could continue to believe that intelligent criticism would be, must be, ecstatic. The worst thing of all was partial praise. Time and again, however, the critics gave James an A minus. *The American* was “so good that we regret very much that it is not better.” *Washington Square* was “never dull and never dangerous to the nerves.” *Maisie* was “a slightly tedious master-piece.” A review of *The Golden Bowl* might well have been most wounding: “he is doing for fiction what his father did for philosophy.”

Hayes’ collection contains some enjoyably bad criticism, though not as much as one had hoped for. The *Detroit Free Press* recommends the “experienced reader” to indulge in “a little judicious skipping” of *The Bostonians*. The *Daily Telegraph* proclaims that *The Princess Casamassima* is a socialist novel. And the *Boston Evening Transcript* recommends its readers not to buy *The Sacred Fount* as “a valentine for a young person.” The reviewers who do not resort to skipping shed some interesting lights on James, but again not as many as one had hoped for. The *Boston Evening Traveller* comments on the way in which the public outcry over *The Bostonians* caused James to relapse from satiric realism into “nebulous indefiniteness” half-way through the serialization. Still more arresting is the extent of the critics’ discomfiture over James’s depictions of children in *What Maisie Knew*, “The Turn of the Screw,” and *The Awkward Age*.

In the series note that heads this volume we are told that the focus of the collection is on the novels. Unfortunately, however, there is nothing on *The Ivory Tower* or *The Sense of the Past*. We are told that we will get “reviews of James’s most important travel narratives.” But there is coverage of only one such narrative, *The American Scene*. Hayes’ selection wisely excludes material already reprinted in James Gargano’s *Critical Essays on Henry James* (1987) and Roger Gard’s *Henry James: The Critical Heritage* (1968). But his decision to concentrate on the novels inevitably leaves some holes unplugged. Critical response to *The Other House*, for example, is not fully comprehensible without knowledge of reactions to *Terminations* (1895) and *Embarrassments* (1896). And reviews of *French Poets and Novelists* (1878) and *Hawthorne* (1879) are surely more significant in the context of James’s career than responses to *Confidence* or *The Reverberator*. The reviews of *Daisy Miller* and *The Bostonians* paint a particularly partial picture since

their relaxed detachment sharply contrasts with the earlier (and unprinted) furore which raged in letters pages and private correspondence.

In his preface, the general editor of the American Critical Archives series states that the collection is aimed at students, librarians, and general readers as well as scholars. This is unrealistic; nevertheless, if nothing else, this collection shows just how good James's own reviews were.

Keele University

T. J. LUSTIG

Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.) Pp. 572. ISBN 0 684 80916 8.

This compelling book, the winner of the Bancroft and Kennedy prizes, is a "must" for anyone interested in modern American political history. During the Kennedy administration, George Wallace was the redneck southern governor who helped to make the establishment look good, the outsider who seemed to personify a dying racist breed. A generation later he seems more prophet than relic, a figure at the dark heart of the complex processes that have transformed American politics. The "politics of rage" might also be termed the "politics of hate." The key to understanding politics, Kevin Phillips told Garry Wills in 1968, is who hates whom? This book is a disturbing account of the power of fear and hate in the American polity, a power which swept aside the liberal optimism of the early 1960s with the brutality of a cinema monster crushing an innocent maid.

Of course history was never so simple, but Dan Carter's theme is the southernization of American politics, that is the role of George Wallace in undermining the New Deal Order by showing the potential of race-related issues to erode the attachment not only of white southerners, but also of northern working people and suburbanites to the Democratic Party. It was Richard Nixon who brilliantly and ruthlessly seized the opportunity presented, and it was Ronald Reagan who was ultimately to embody the new conservatism. The broad outlines of this electoral realignment have been clear since the publication of Phillips's prescient study of 1969, but no one has better captured the central role played by George Wallace, who is a more convincing founding father of modern conservatism than Barry Goldwater.

Dan Carter tells a rich tale in his awesomely researched book. As a student at the University of Alabama, the young George Wallace, intelligent and quick-witted, cut quite a personable figure, and was a close friend of the liberal Republican, Frank Johnson, destined for a distinguished career as a federal judge. But his obsession with politics and his ambition drew Wallace ineluctably into his fateful entanglement with his constituents' baser instincts, and the governor's stand in the schoolhouse door in June 1963 projected him onto a larger stage. One superb chapter graphically illuminates Wallace's part in creating the explosive atmosphere in Birmingham in the summer of 1963 that culminated in the bombing of the African-American church in which four young girls died.

It is Wallace's role on the national stage that primarily interests Carter, and over half the text is addressed to the twelve years from 1964 to 1976 when Wallace

repeatedly sought the presidency. Very little is vouchsafed about his gubernatorial administrations, and one of the unanswered questions is how Alabama managed to function for so long with a largely absentee governor? Indeed, some of the sections on state politics read a little awkwardly, the victims perhaps of cuts to a lengthy manuscript. But the larger story both fascinates and appals. One illustration of the compulsive power of the book is the story it tells of the relationship between George Wallace and Richard Nixon.

Though Nixon was later to play down the idea that his own strategy was influenced by Wallace, it is clear that Nixon's interest in Wallace bordered on the obsessional. In 1968 he feared that Wallace's Independent Party candidacy might deprive him of key southern votes, nudging him further into a close alliance with Strom Thurmond, the deployment of Spiro Agnew as a sort of surrogate Wallace, and the use of the code phrases of "law and order" and "freedom-of-choice" on busing. Subsequently concerned that a revitalized Wallace might jeopardize his re-election in 1972, Nixon secretly helped to finance Wallace's Democratic rival in the Alabama gubernatorial race in 1970s. The move failed to stop Wallace, and his frustrating buoyancy served to encourage Nixon's continued move to the right, as expressed in his purging of the liberals in his administration and his abandonment of the Family Assistance Plan. The White House had also unleashed the Internal Revenue Service on Wallace's associates, and a lengthy investigation in particular targeted George's brother Gerald, but quiet contacts were eventually opened between the Nixon and Wallace camps. In January 1972, the probe was publicly dropped, and a day later George Wallace intriguingly abandoned his third-party movement, announcing that he would instead pursue the Democratic nomination, a move that took the pressure off Nixon and put it on the Democrats. Even so, two days after Wallace's sweeping victory in the Florida primary, the President of the United States went on television to incite resistance to the federal courts on the busing issue. In May, Wallace was shot by Arthur Bremer, and Nixon's immediate reaction was to prompt his aide Charles Colson to plant McGovern literature in Bremer's apartment. E. Howard Hunt was assigned the task, which to the president's fury had to be aborted. (It should be said that Mr. Colson was "too busy doing the Lord's work" to help with Dan Carter's inquiries into this murky episode.) The incident served to fuel the governor's suspicions that the White House had somehow been implicated in the assassination attempt, and when during the 1974 impeachment proceedings a desperate Richard Nixon personally phoned George Wallace to enlist his influence with southern congressmen, he was rebuffed. Their mutual destruction was complete, but between them they had moved the centre of gravity of American politics.

A tearful George Wallace was later to beg forgiveness from black leaders and white liberals for the hurt he had done them, but he could not undo the past. As Dan Carter has magnificently shown, he had helped to unleash a politics of hate that was to refashion the American political landscape.

Daneen Wardrop, *Emily Dickinson's Gothic: Goblin with a Gauge* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1996, £21.95). Pp. 225. ISBN 0 87745 549 X.

It constitutes a truism to say that Emily Dickinson's poetry remains a notoriously difficult subject about which to write. Critics often have dodged the problem by concentrating on the woman rather than the work. Others, perhaps more wisely, have selected a single seam of metaphor or meaning in Dickinson's writing and organized their analysis tightly around it. Daneen Wardrop follows this second course by pursuing elements of the currently fashionable gothic style in her study of Dickinson's poetry. The results of this effort are mixed. While the poems selected for examination are well chosen (and, because they are Dickinson's, always a pleasure to encounter), and the gothic topics singled out for attention quite apt, the entire work suffers from the conscientious scholar's vice of insufficient selection. Too many previous critics, too many prior theories, and too many knocked-down straw men litter this study which could have been fascinating had the ground been cleared enough for Wardrop to locate her own critical views.

The ideas around which the study circles most frequently are those outlined by Freud in "The Uncanny," Hélène Cixous' commentary on Freud's work, and E. T. A. Hoffman's story, "The Sandman," on which Freud based his analysis of the psychodynamics of the horrific sublime. Wardrop has nothing new to say about this triad of now-standard reference points in writing on gothic, but does apply them appropriately to selected features of Dickinson's work. The haunted house, the bride, the rape, the double, and the encounter with the abyss are all identified as characteristic Dickinsonian tropes which align themselves with the gothic project. Less successfully, Dickinson's use of these images and figures is compared rather randomly with other literary works in which they appear. In addition, space is given to fairly pointless arguments about whether the appellation "gothic" can apply to poetry as well as to fiction, and to claims that gothic is predominantly a female form. Even more discouragingly, the text closes with ritualized gestures toward deconstruction as the new gothic, and Dickinson's uncanny pre-emptive engagement with its principles in the nineteenth century. Very much a production of its own academic generation, *Emily Dickinson's Gothic* is perhaps most interesting for the ways in which it uncannily (but obediently) reproduces the professional obsessions of its time.

University of the West of England

KATE FULLBROOK

Philip John Davies (ed.), *Representing and Imaging America* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996, £14.95). Pp. 249. ISBN 1 85331 164 2.

This collection of essays by an international stable of contributors uses, in the editor's prefatory words, "a multi-disciplinary range of approaches to examine how we perceive and interpret the United States of America. The authors each work from their own area of expertise to open a unique range of windows on the study of America." My initial suspicion was that this was merely one more in the plethora of edited volumes driven by the pressures of the research assessment exercise that so seriously threatens the quality of contemporary scholarship. This

suspicion has only been partially quelled. Having said that, nearly all of the essays are in themselves well written and well informed, ranging from the place of the imagination with regard to the frontier and national holidays, to the representation of regions and ethnicity in texts and practices, to ideology and foreign policy from the Monroe Doctrine onwards, to imagining democracy in American literature, film, and electoral practice. One must deal with the fact that the scope of a book such as this commits it to a certain arbitrariness and vagueness. Such is the danger of multidisciplinary (as opposed to interdisciplinary) approaches; and probably few books committed to this approach can escape this condition.

The editor has been given an unwieldy brief, and at times it shows. There are some problems with the organization of essays and their collective themes: for instance Part IV: "Representing America to the World" contains two essays on Preston Sturges's films and British constructions of the wartime "Yank." Fair enough; but why would an essay on Abstract Expressionism *go here*? Does not American literature also represent America to the world, and to a wider extent? There is no essay on American television or popular music here either (or anywhere else in the book) although "the rise of the autonomous corporation" *is* placed here – curiously, since the essay is actually about the *non*-representation of the American corporation in the context of multinational capitalism.

Moreover, some of the themes themselves are vague. We have "Imagining Modern America: Living on the Edge," even though considerable attention to modern America is given in most of the other sections, either in terms of American elections, foreign policy, or current mythologizing of America's past. So, while this section contains three very good essays – on "Serial Killer Culture," "Alienation in American Crime Fiction," and "Urban Reality and the Metafictional Novel" – it implies, at least, that "living on the edge" (whatever *that* means) is a particularly modern or contemporary symptom. What would Melville or Hawthorne say about that?

Very occasionally a given essay will appear somewhat out of place with the book's overall brief, being either of a mostly expository nature (again, the essay on Abstract Expressionism) or too narrowly focused (on Sam Ervin as a "contradictory southerner"). These are exceptions, though, and again I would emphasise that the essays in themselves are generally well written.

The book does not really stand on its own as a sole course text for the undergraduates at whom it is primarily aimed; but it could be valuable alongside others in a reading list. It would help, however, if the index promised in the table of contents were actually there in the book.

University of Central Lancashire

WILL KAUFMAN

Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996. n.p.). Pp. 439. ISBN 0 394 57858 9.

The origins of the United States constitution have attracted the interest of a small army of historians. They have subjected the document and its creation to a

rigorous and seemingly thorough scrutiny from a variety of ideological and methodological perspectives. Professor Jack N. Rakove has produced a new entry in the crowded field, which at first sight appears to be yet another examination based on Madison's *Notes of the Federal Convention*, the *Federalist*, and other long-familiar sources. Despite such a first impression, Rakove has produced a complex and important work which makes a significant contribution to the literature. Rakove has two aims: to explore how Americans created a national polity during the revolutionary era; and to consider what authority the original meaning of the Constitution should have in the ongoing interpretation of the document. He achieves the first superbly. His success with the latter is more mixed.

Much of *Original Meanings* is taken up with painstaking recreation of the intellectual history of the framing and ratification of the Constitution. Rakove's discussion of the Constitutional Convention and the various compromises which resulted in the creation of the Constitution is unsurpassed in placing the drafting of the document in its appropriate intellectual and political context. The latter half of *Original Meanings* explores the debate over ratification. Successive chapters on the intellectual and political debates over specific issues and concepts such as representation, federalism, the presidency, and the Bill of Rights shed valuable new light on old subjects, reinvigorating the struggles between Federalists and anti-Federalists.

Rakove devotes much effort to recovering the subtle nuances in the debates over the Constitution because his second goal is to examine the issue of "originalism." Originalism concerns the issue of how much importance should be ascribed to the views of the men who framed and ratified the Constitution when interpreting the document. This is a complex undertaking since the framers and ratifiers could not agree on the meaning of the document. Indeed the architect of the Constitution, James Madison, initially opposed the search for original intent in the Constitution, but gradually embraced it as he emerged as a leader of the opposition during the 1790s. If political concerns forced the very framers of the document to discuss and disagree over their original intentions, it is not surprising that Rakove reaches an ambiguous conclusion concerning originalism. It is unclear from Rakove's analysis whether originalism is possible, let alone advisable. This, perhaps, should give modern jurists and politicians pause before they attempt to divine the original intent of the framers. As an intellectual history of the origins of and debate over the Constitution, *Original Meanings* succeeds brilliantly. It may well be the definitive work on the subject for years to come.

La Sainte Union College of Higher Education

FRANK COGLIANO

Joel Myerson (ed.), *Studies in the American Renaissance: 1995* (Charlottesville, Virginia, University Press of Virginia, 1995, \$50). Pp. 370. ISBN 0 8139 1631 3.

With few exceptions, the essays collected here are engaging, exceptionally varied, and (above all) predicated on a scrupulous empiricism. How refreshing it is to

encounter scholars and critics who, in the main, abandon tiresome interpretative filibusterings in favour of the more enduring delights of investigation and information.

In one of the finest contributions, Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag supply what they modestly entitle “An Annotated Calendar” of “Thoreau’s Lectures Before *Walden*.” These “annotations” are, without doubt, a significant intervention in Thoreau studies. The dense notes – divided into three sections: “Narrative of Events,” “Advertisements, Reviews, and Responses,” and “Description of Topic” – are especially revealing when it comes to the detailed penumbra of each lecture. Garnered here are the yielding minutiae of weather, attendance, fees, and the like; and there are some handsome engravings of the venues. Particularly illuminating are the often quite extensive extracts from various notices and reviews; it there becomes evident that Thoreau was usually received in either adulatory or mocking terms, with little by way of any intermediate consolation. Against, for instance, the *Concord Freeman’s* celebration of Thoreau’s “philosophical truths” and “beauty of expression,” there is Horace Greeley’s invective: “the would-be hermit of Concord may or may not be a worldly-disappointed man: better for him that he were, than that he should deliberately sit down in the woods, a Titan without a cause.” The second part of this superb piece of scholarship is to appear in the 1996 *Studies*.

At first, given the scant and seemingly inconsequential nature of the letter involved (to Gorham Dummer Gilman), Ruth Blair seems to be chewing more than she has bitten off in her “Melville and Hawaii: Reflections on a New Melville Letter.” Blair contrives, however, more or less to convince the reader that the letter is not just a fortuitous peg on which to hang a nevertheless intriguing reconfiguration of Melville and his missionary audience in Hawaii. Elsewhere, Sandra Harbert Petrullionis writes powerfully on Alcott’s “Transcendental Wild Oats,” amply demonstrating the extent to which it parodies patriarchal utopias where “under the pretense of living simply and spiritually,” men could “completely escape from all responsibility.” Elisabeth Hurth’s essay on William Henry Furness and the “problem of the Historical Jesus” everywhere displays an enviable enthusiasm from its superfine discriminations and forensic sinews. Hurth’s successful project involves substantiating the claim that Furness’s “‘critical’ exegesis” was “tied to the assumption that textual and source critical findings comported with hardcore evidence about the facticity of the historical Jesus.”

Linda Grasso’s piece on Fanny Fern’s *Ruth Hall* fails to convince: the idea that Fern’s account of domestic conflict can be read as some kind of gender appropriation of slave-narrative anger is handled rather heavily. The weaknesses of Rosemary Fish’s “*The Marble Faun* and the English Copyright: The Smith, Elder Contract” are, so to speak, a little more robust. This is a meandering essay trading in the wearisomely familiar (as far as publishing history is concerned, at any rate). In recounting the possible constraints of the three-decker novel format, Fish finds herself depriving Hawthorne of far too much of his imaginative and critical independence. In any case, it is simplistic in the extreme to dismiss the novel in three volumes as a “clumsy costume.” There is some information, and much amusement value, in the rather credulous “Louisa May Alcott Had Her

Head Examined” (Madeleine B. Stern and Kent Bicknell). Whatever interest there may be in Alcott’s phrenological encounter, it cannot mitigate the methodological solecism involved in praising an analysis as astute when it is only “unlikely that he recognized her or that she identified herself.”

Reservations aside, this is a satisfying book. The final item – “Concord in 1882: The Journal of Florence Whiting Brown” – makes for absorbing reading. As Joel Myerson tells us, “it shows how a woman in her early twenties spent a year in Concord, one in which she met with her friends the Alcotts and attended the funeral of Ralph Waldo Emerson.” Florence Brown’s constant struggle with articulation is immediately interesting, as are her ceaseless mortifications when writing. As she vacillates between literary self-consciousness and studied silence, one glimpses a world contiguous with that of, say, Emily Dickinson’s. “The real,” Florence Brown writes, “I can’t put in here and the things that I should write of get to seem so sour and common place.”

University of Kyushu

PETER RAWLINGS

R. C. Simmons, *British Imprints Relating to North America, 1621–1760: An Annotated Checklist* (London: The British Library, 1996, £50.00). Pp. 395. ISBN 0 7123 0363 4.

In his introduction, the author modestly disclaims any intention of undertaking an “exercise in bibliography.” Rather he has sought to produce a useable guide to “a substantial, relatively neglected, and not uninteresting corpus of material.” Of course, other guides already exist, as the author readily admits, the most notable being the *Eighteenth Century Short-Title Catalogue*; the *National Union Catalogue of pre-1956 imprints*; Charles Evans’s *American Bibliography: A Chronological Dictionary of all books pamphlets and periodicals printed in the United States of America, 1639–1800*; and *European Americana, a Chronological guide to works printed in Europe Relating to the Americas*. However, all these much longer works are not necessarily comprehensive concerning British imprints, having been compiled mainly from bibliographical aids. To avoid such incompleteness, the author has not only personally searched the catalogues of some 250 British and American libraries, but also read many of their holdings to ascertain whether items like sermons, royal proclamations, travel narratives, plays, ballads, geographic studies, and scientific and medical studies contain materials relating to North America.

The volume is arranged in three sections. The first and most important comprises a chronological listing of all works published from 1621 to 1760. This period has been chosen because works published before that date are relatively well known, while the literature after 1760 has already been extensively covered. Included are not only the names of the authors and their titles, but the publisher, place of publication, number of pages, reference if first published in America, an indication of the materials included (where this is not obvious from the title), and most important of all, the location of existing copies, no small consideration for those wishing to track down obscure items. The second and third sections comprise a simple alphabetical title and author index, allowing full cross

referencing. The result is a thoroughly useful compendium which should be of considerable value to scholars working in the colonial field, and the author is to be congratulated for undertaking this project.

The Queen's University, Belfast

RICHARD MIDDLETON

Philip John Davies and Federic A. Waldstein (eds.), *Political issues in America today: the 1990s revisited* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1996). Pp. 276. ISBN 0 7190 4225 9, 0 7190 4226 7.

This new edition of *Political Issues in America* revisits many of the key debates that were covered in the first volume of essays published at the beginning of the decade. The book is divided into three distinct areas covering domestic policy and representation, government and governance, and foreign policy. The editors have set a course to chart the 1990s as a troubled and turbulent decade for the United States. As they concede in the opening chapter, the closing of the millennium has focused minds into critical retrospection and towards future uncertainty.

This new collection of essays certainly confirms some commentators' worst fears about social dislocation and political anxiety. Women's issues remain on the margins of the policy process, health reform must be confronted, the confidence in political institutions has waned, and the United States faces not a simple, but a more complex post-cold-war order.

Although not a primary consideration of this text, the editors rightly give attention to influential works on political culture by the likes of Robert Hughes and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., that have been much debated in this decade. The search for culprits amid a political system that appears to be in perpetual crisis, has led to a cycle of representative turnover; a cycle that has yielded new faces but failed to find satisfactory answers to many of America's problems. Much of the explanation for this spiral of disillusionment is located in the representative/institutional relationship with the wider public.

For example, the first section in the book groups together issues, like health, the environment, and women's issues, that now have considerably greater expectations attached to them in the eyes of the public. In the light of demands in these areas, the second section reveals the level of public activism that is being engaged in local and national government, and through the courts. These demands are not easy to reconcile within a system that is slow to change, and they highlight a mood of factionalism that the editors argue for in the first chapter. Add to this a media revolution, as chapter six points out, that has railroaded important political discourse, and herded it towards the era of "soundbite," and you have some of the reasons for policy degeneration and public cynicism.

Political Issues exposes the central dilemma of contemporary American politics; there is a search for renewal and regeneration, and for a vision of the twenty-first century. The authors grasp the topics here with lucidity and authority, and pose fascinating problems for the next American century.

University of Manchester

IAN S. SCOTT

Jan Furman, *Toni Morrison's Fiction* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996, \$19.95). Pp. 136. ISBN 1 57003 067 7.

Jan Furman's study of Toni Morrison's work appears in the University of South Carolina series "Understanding American Literature." The series endeavours to provide instruction to students and uninitiated readers in "how to read certain contemporary writers – identifying and explicating their material, themes, use of language, point of view, structures, symbolism, and responses to experience." Furman's book discharges this brief with great effectiveness, and manages to give a highly readable account of Morrison's writing.

Rather than floundering in an effort to cover numerous themes Furman limits herself to a small number of issues in each text. She writes particularly well about community in *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*, returning effectively to Morrison's own comments on her work to elucidate her points: "There is no need for the community if you have a sense of it inside." She also comments effectively upon music as social catalyst in *Jazz*, and attempts to encapsulate Morrison's historical engagement with the city of New York in the novel. Furman strives to define in simple terms the major role Morrison now occupies, as one of the most influential twentieth-century authors on the African-American experience:

"Solomon's song is Morrison's version of the flying African myth about enslaved Africans who escaped slavery in the south by rising up and flying back to Africa and to freedom. In adopting and adapting the myth, Morrison becomes the modern griot, reciting stories from the past to a new generation."

Furman strives to offer a clear insight into some of the most complex areas of Morrison's work, around which a large body of critical writing already exists. Commenting briefly on Morrison's engagement with the historical status of African-American women she notes that the author allows them to metamorphose. Of necessity Morrison's women are always: "reconstructing themselves, expanding beyond conventional limitations."

Furman's book is divided into chapters which deal with each of Morrison's major works, with the final chapter taking a very brief look at her critical writings. Her principal technique is to offer her own perceptive, accessible interpretations of Morrison's work, coupled with the writer's comments. While she rarely draws any comparisons with other critics' views on Morrison, Furman's personal readings are sufficiently fresh and engaging to make her book an ideal introductory text for first year undergraduates.

University College Suffolk

KATE RHODES

Noel Carroll, *Theorizing the Moving Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, £50.00 cloth, £16.95 paper). Pp. 426. ISBN 0 521 46049 2, 0 521 46607 5.

Theorizing the Moving Image is a selection of Noel Carroll's published essays. In the foreword, David Bordwell promotes the collection as an important contribution to the cognitivist turn in contemporary film theory. Noel Carroll locates his own position as one which has objections to "Marxist-Psychoanalytic-Semiology as it

is currently practiced.” In the introduction, it is stated that this collection aims, through the arguments presented in a variety of essays, to outline an alternative method of studying film through conscious processes as opposed to the unconscious, though Carroll uses the terms rational and irrational.

The collection is divided into seven sections. Each presents a series of arguments around issues which have been debated within film studies. These include the idea that film has an identity based on the restrictions of its medium; the construction of popular film, or movies; the construction of the avant-garde and the documentary; *Screen* theory; film history, and so forth.

Carroll’s rhetorical device is to set up his object of analysis and then to pull out and lay bare its underlying assumptions. The inevitable problem with such an approach is that it leaves Carroll open to the accusation that he is constructing the history of a debate in an overly simplistic way. His critique of feminist psychoanalytic critics, for example, cites Laura Mulvey’s article “Visual Pleasure” as a central text. Although Carroll does acknowledge that Mulvey’s 1975 essay is now dated, he continues to base his critique of feminist psychoanalytic film criticism on it without engaging in the subsequent debates which the article undoubtedly promoted. By not taking these debates into account, Carroll’s own argument remains an unconvincing one.

Overall, *Theorizing the Moving Image* reveals Carroll’s interest and participation in a broad range of debates within film studies. He draws on an eclectic set of theorists from film, philosophy, and psychology to situate his own arguments on the conscious processes involved in the comprehension and reception of films. Perhaps one of the most troubling aspects of this endeavour is its failure systematically to take into account difference. There is no consideration of how comprehension and reception might be inflected by the positions that groups and individuals take up in relation to the intersections of gender, race, class, sexualities, and ethnicities.

University of Nottingham

AYLISH WOOD

Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert (eds.), *The Transforming Hand of Revolution: Reconsidering the American Revolution as a Social Movement* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1996, \$47.50). Pp. 517. ISBN 0 8139 1561 9.

The phrase “the transforming hand of revolution” comes, of course, from John Franklin Jameson, and this collection of eleven essays seeks to explore the legacy of his classic 1926 work, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement*. Although all the contributors’ positions are familiar to specialists, what emerges is a useful, wide-ranging sampler of current scholarship. Some essays are essentially historiographical exercises. Morey Rothberg reveals the tension between Jameson’s conservative instincts and his determination to explore some of the Revolutionary era’s radical implications. Robert A. Gross shows how historians have invested one event – Shays’s Rebellion – with the task of signalling emotional and intellectual responses to the Revolution. Alfred F. Young offers a magisterial and lengthy survey of the full range of scholarship that

has assessed the social consequences of the American Revolution since Jameson's study.

Other contributions revolve around some of the themes that Jameson highlighted seventy years ago – the decline of deference, the erosion of slavery, the transformation in land distribution and in the economy. Gregory H. Nobles suggests that gauging the rise and fall of popular leaders like Samuel Adams and John Hancock may be one of the best barometers of social change in the Revolutionary era. Jean B. Lee highlights the transformation that the Revolution wrought in the relationship between the Chesapeake gentry, their constituents, and the new state governments. Concentrating on nonimportation and nonconsumption movements, Barbara Clark Smith argues that the American Revolution was social in its intentions, not simply in its consequences (as Jameson suggested). Marcus Rediker, in his piece on sailors and slaves, agrees. He analyses how both groups used the era's political divisions and turmoil to revolt and thereby make their own "declarations of independence." Billy G. Smith looks at another dimension of black resistance, showing how runaways struck an effective blow against the institution of slavery in the North. Turning to the land question, Alan Taylor discusses how the scramble for land in Vermont and the Susquehanna Valley generated a series of triangular contests involving settlers and two competing sets of speculators – well-established gentleman and aspiring, opportunistic new men. On the economy, Jean B. Russo charts the continuities and changes in the lives of Chesapeake artisans between 1760 and 1810, while Allan Kulikoff examines how the concept of a "bourgeois revolution" may provide a comprehensive theoretical framework within which we can analyse the American Revolution's socio-economic dimensions.

There is ultimately, however, a rather imperfect fit between the thrust of this book and the emphasis of Jameson's original thesis. To Jameson, after all, the Revolution was inadvertently radical, a stream overflowing its banks; by contrast, many of the historians here argue that it was inherently radical or at least became so by dint of the activities of those intent on pushing its promise to fulfilment. Whereas, for Jameson, the social content of the Revolution was most manifest in its consequences, for some of the essayists what is striking is how the Revolution's origins had an important social dimension that was ultimately lost as the leadership sought to disentangle the movement for Independence from popular participation. Finally, it is surprising that none of the authors address a topic that Jameson deemed to be of great importance – religion, particularly the organization of denominations on a national basis and the disestablishment of church and state. This, then, is an interesting volume, but one that actually tells us more about where we are today than about how Jameson's insights and questions have directly shaped historical thinking about the American Revolution.

University of Liverpool

KEITH MASON

Colin Shindler, *Hollywood in Crisis: Cinema and American Society, 1929–1939* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996, £45 cloth, £14.99 paper). Pp. 258. ISBN 0 415 10314 2 (paper).

The study of film history as a reflection of socio-cultural history has proliferated in the last generation, and it continues to grow ever more popular, ever more germane. 1980 saw the publication of Colin Shindler's *Hollywood Goes to War*, detailing the American film industry's engagement with World War II and the Cold War. Sixteen years later, his *Hollywood in Crisis* is what movie admen would term a "prequel" and, overall, it has been worth the wait.

Hollywood in Crisis focuses on those crucial years of America's history between the Wall Street Crash and the outbreak of war in Europe. Solidly grounded in the era's social and political history, Shindler's approach is partially thematic rather than a series of selected case studies. Thus we have, for example, chapters on the common man as hero, on censorship, one on crime, and another on the city. In one respect, this route seems a little uneven; for example, the films of John Ford and other Westerns are grouped together with Frank Capra's paeans to populism in a single chapter ("Fanfare for the Common Man"), whereas crime and the city, which might justifiably have been scrutinized together, merit a chapter apiece. Indeed, Shindler engages with William Wyler's *Dead End* (1937) in three separate chapters, which certainly suggests the case-study approach might have proved more cohesive. Shindler furnishes his own proof of this via his micro-history of the production and censorship wranglings surrounding *Black Fury* (1935), one of the book's most authoritative chapters.

Hollywood in Crisis covers the main bases of both production and potent narratives in one of America's most troubled decades. However, at least one chance has been missed here. It surely comes as no surprise that the author highlights the contribution of Warner Brothers, the studio which, more than any other, tackled the controversial social issues of the day. Yet we know already that gangster films, *Wild Boys of the Road* and *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* and, beyond Warner's, *Gabriel Over the White House* and Capra's pictures brimmed with contemporary pertinence. Some focus on such subtexts in less obvious productions (*A Tale of Two Cities*, *David Copperfield*, *Marie Antoinette*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*) perhaps may have enriched the book even further. While those films have non-American settings, they are still very much about the social conditions prevailing in 1930s America. Yet this is a minor cavil regarding this thoroughly researched book which, like the best film histories, makes one eager to track down the movies for oneself.

University of Edinburgh

MICHAEL COYNE

Michael Foley and John E. Owens, *Congress and the Presidency: Institutional Politics in a Separated System* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996, £50 cloth, £17.99 paper). Pp. 432. ISBN 0 7190 3884 7.

The recognition that presidency and Congress are separated institutions sharing powers has revealed new issues for scholars in the political field. Recent works, such as Charles Jones's "The Presidency in a Separated System," demonstrate

both the validity of a new approach, and a new series of pitfalls for either “presidency-centred” or “Congress-centred” works. Alongside this major adjustment, there have been a series of empirical changes and theoretical advances, including new leadership techniques and John Kingdon’s purposive model of legislative behaviour. Hence a study of the nature provided here by Foley and Owens was overdue. Outlining today’s main controversies in the field, they have produced a comprehensive summary of research into the relationship between America’s central political institutions.

The authors adopted an institutionalist approach to demonstrate that recent developments have occurred within the separation of powers’ framework. They initially concentrate upon Congress, recording its development into a highly institutionalized organization and examining the interactions between constituents and legislators. While presenting the classic models and introducing more recent developments in the field, Foley and Owens retain clarity in explaining the often complicated procedures associated with today’s Congress. The presidency section addresses the institutionalization of the presidency, the development of the “public presidency,” and presidential decision-making.

The book then draws together research on the interactions of Congress and the presidency. “Legislating Together” studies presidential influence on the legislative process, and progresses to the influential works of Steven Shull and Charles Jones, placing the presidency in institutional context. While *Congress and the Presidency* acknowledges that presidents establish leadership strategies in changing environments, it might have been interesting to extend this to profile James Pfiffner on Reagan, or Paul Light on political capital, as means of explaining presidential behaviour towards Congress. Foley and Owens then examine the courts and two controversies: the separation of powers’ influence upon foreign policy-making and control of the executive branch. The book concludes by examining the terms “democracy” and “separation of powers.” The authors demonstrate that the coupling of these two, often in the form, “the democratic system,” can shape both our understanding of contemporary issues and the nature of debate over them.

Foley and Owens’s comprehensive work will serve all higher-level undergraduates and above. Beyond its clarity, a particular strength is the ability to combine theoretical advances with more anecdotal information, such as the maps of congressional lobbying positions and the Clinton staff’s offices. It is also an excellent reference for material on contemporary politics. Statistics are usually inclusive of the first half of the 104th Congress, which alone makes it worth its cover price. Clinton and the Republicans’ successes in November only serve to extend much of this information’s validity. This is both a worthy and timely addition to the literature on American politics, and bodes well for Manchester’s new “Political Analyses” series.

University of Keele

JON HERBERT

Gary W. Gallagher (ed.), *Lee The Soldier* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, £42.75/\$45.00). Pp. 620. ISBN 0 8032 2135 3.

In his recent (1994) study of the American Civil War, Thomas Lowry commented that “just as Charlemagne was the matter, the central motif of France and King Arthur the matter of Britain, so, too, is Robert E. Lee the matter of Dixie,” and, to some degree, of America as a whole. Although a certain amount of *Lee The Soldier* is devoted to debunking the notion of Lee as the cavalier *sans peur et sans reproche*, the appearance, indeed the very size, of Gallagher’s study supports Lowry’s observation. As an individual, Lee was torn between his love for the Union and his stronger loyalty to his native state, Virginia, which was itself divided by the Civil War that brought Lee to prominence. When one turns to the subject of the American Civil War one is almost immediately confronted by the figure of Robert E. Lee astride Traveller, resolute in the face of defeat, a symbol both for a cause lost and a union restored.

Gallagher’s impressive collection of reminiscences and articles does not aim to provide any fresh assessments of Lee *per se*, since most of the essays in this volume originally appeared elsewhere. *Lee The Soldier* is, instead, designed specifically to be useful, to guide the reader through the development of the Lee legend, from the heroic imagery of the Lost Cause to the more critical assessments of Lee, to offer examples of each, and to assess Lee as a general in the context of several of the major campaigns in which he was involved. To these ends, following Gallagher’s own very helpful and succinct introduction to this imposing topic, the work is divided into four parts. The first comprises “a series of postwar conversations in which Lee spoke candidly about his campaigns,” and criticized some of his subordinates for his defeats. The second section is devoted to studies of Lee’s generalship, provided both by his contemporaries and twentieth-century historians. It opens with Jubal A. Early’s 1872 address on Lee’s campaigns, “the quintessential Lost Cause statement of Lee’s greatness,” as Gallagher puts it, and concludes with more balanced assessments of the cost and extent of Lee’s victories in essays by Alan T. Nolan, Gallagher himself, and William C. Davis. The third section is devoted to the study of specific campaigns, again from the viewpoint of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It covers the Seven Days, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness. Six out of the ten essays in this section focus on Gettysburg, “because of the imposing size and extreme contentiousness of the literature on this famous operation.” Readers should, however, bear in mind Gallagher’s essay on the impact of Gettysburg on Confederate morale (published in his *The Third Day at Gettysburg and Beyond*, 1994), and his observation that Gettysburg was not seen as especially significant in 1863, only becoming so later. The work concludes with an extremely useful – although the editor terms it “idiosyncratic” – annotated bibliography by T. Michael Parrish.

In terms of its format, *Lee The Soldier* is, in some ways, an extended version of the excellent volumes that Gallagher has edited recently, on Gettysburg, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville, each of which comprises a broad-ranging collection of essays designed to locate a particular campaign, battle, or individual in the wider social, political, and military context of the Civil War. *Lee The Soldier*,

perhaps unavoidably given its subject, has selected to go further, to include more, and, consequently, to come on the market at a far higher price, which may well limit its sales to libraries. This would be unfortunate. From any angle, this collection represents a substantial achievement, and is a valuable addition and guide to the literature on Lee, the figure who, as Reardon puts it in her excellent essays on the Seven Days' battles, "still commands the gates to Richmond."

University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

S.-M. GRANT

Steven O. Murray, *American Gay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, \$50.00/£39.95 cloth, \$16.95/£13.50 paper). Pp. 322. ISBN 0 226 55191 1, 0 226 55193 8.

American Gay attempts to understand the abiding homophobia in the United States and to test the power of "theories put forth to explain modern society and modern homosexuality" in relation to gay and lesbian lives. For Murray, gays form a "quasi-ethnic group" that is distinct from the dominant society, while nonetheless displaying important internal differences.

Murray explains how gay de-assimilation troubles sociology's grand tradition of a unified theory of society and seeks to address the implications of postmodernity's multiplication, fracturing, and hybridization of identities without using the terms of critical postmodernism. He also argues against prevailing gay and lesbian scholarship, contending in particular that the shared sense of oppression underlying 1950s homophile politics and 1970s gay liberation politics emerged out of more elaborate and complex contexts than those suggested by scholars who regard World War II and the Stonewall riots as watershed events. Though not without difficulty, these threads of Murray's argument work advantageously in his examination of gay social life.

Murray's discussion also (re)centers sex in gay and lesbian studies, looking both at S/M and discourses on AIDS. In both instances, Murray reviews the tense historical and social relations in San Francisco and chastises gays who have sought to police sexual expression and restrict civil liberties. Rather unpersuasively, Murray argues that recent demands for gay inclusion in the institutions of marriage and the military are modes of resistance rather than forms of assimilation.

American Gay makes some perceptive observations on difference within "lesbigay" identity, which "may be read as either 'lesbian and gay' or as 'lesbian, bisexual, and gay.'" Although there are a number of compelling reasons for pursuing a co-gendered analysis, Murray neither makes explicit the particular basis for such a project nor convincingly carries it out. His inclusion of lesbian examples is simply inadequate to the theoretical and analytical task he sets for himself.

The book relatively more successfully addresses racial/ethnic differences among gay men. Its latter chapters on black, chicano, and Asian/Pacific homosexuals are perhaps the most provocative, although they are substantially

surveys of literary, impressionistic, and speculative materials. Since this project is hostile to textualism, its use of subjective self-representations is odd. Rather than pointing to its crucial absence, however, such use might suggest a way around the felt need for quantitative social science data. As with the book's inclusion of lesbian data, locating "diversity" in a separate, final section that does not include whiteness presents a serious problem for considerations of internal queer differences. White gay men remain the unexamined central category of lesbian/gay de-assimilation.

American Gay's uneven successes result in part from the inherent difficulty of trying to theorize, analyze, and quantify the range of ways of being gay in the contemporary United States, but to a greater extent they are due to its unwieldy conceptualization of the subject(s) at hand.

SCOTT BRAVMANN

Kieran Quinlan, *Walker Percy: The Last Catholic Novelist* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996, £32.95). Pp. 242. ISBN 0 8071 2044 8.

Kieran Quinlan's *Walker Percy: The Last Catholic Novelist* balances respect for Percy's writing and beliefs with criticism of his reactionary outlook. For Quinlan, Percy's philosophy and theology "have serious flaws that affect his fiction. A seeker cannot find satisfaction in him unless he or she is prepared to cut off questioning at an unacceptable point." The most self-consciously Catholic novelist in America in recent decades, Percy saw "the Catholic view of man as a pilgrim" as "compatible with the vocation of a novelist." Quinlan, however, shows how Percy's faith right to the end bore a good deal of the ambience of the forties, the era of his conversion. He therefore sees him as a seeker "poignantly defined by the already receding Catholicism of his time, a wayfarer more than even he himself imagined."

The book begins by examining Percy's early life, including the impact of his father's suicide, his adolescence as foster child to his cousin, William Alexander Percy, and the tuberculosis that led him to abandon medicine as a profession. Quinlan then discusses Percy's eventual conversion to Catholicism, the milieu of American Catholicism during the period, and the various essays setting out Percy's philosophies. The remaining chapters follow his publishing career through the alternating essays and novels until his death in 1990, and explore Percy's views on such topics as evolution, abortion, and euthanasia. In Quinlan's view, Percy's ideas sometimes fail to address current thinking in philosophy and theology, or the problems that an evolutionary view of the universe poses for revealed religions.

Quinlan calls Percy "the last Catholic novelist" because he sees his standpoint as no longer tenable. Even so, he admires Percy's steadfast dignity, and notes the value of reflections, in such novels as *The Last Gentleman* and *The Thanatos Syndrome*, on how a Godless society can affect individual and political behaviour. While Quinlan views Percy's faith as primarily arising from a need for "a safeguard against every kind of human evil," Percy's warnings on the dangers of

a secular or scientism-influenced society remain valuable. Attacking the “antihumanism” of the poststructuralists, for example, Percy believed that, without inconsistency, it was impossible “to defend human rights with one hand and deconstruct the idea of humanity with the other.”

Bath College of Higher Education

GAVIN COLOGNE-BROOKES

Catherine Price, *The Oglala People, 1841–1879: A Political History* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, £38). Pp. 234. ISBN 0 8032 3710 3.

Among the aims of this book is an attempt, following the ideas of Alfonso Ortiz, to write a history of the Oglalas which recognizes them as “multidimensional and fully sentient human beings.” It concentrates on one tribe on the grounds that more is lost than gained in writing about Indians in general. The period covered begins with the division of the Oglalas into two major socio-political factions and ends, a little untidily, at the end of the decade which saw defeat in war and the death of Crazy Horse, both in 1877. A further purpose is to show how Washington and its envoys mistook the nature of Sioux society and its leadership structures, especially failing to grasp how fleeting some of its hierarchies were, how impossible it was to find a permanent and fixed point of ultimate authority in what was mistakenly but purposively seen as the Sioux Nation.

Although this point does help explain something of the failure of the United States Government to produce a problem-free Indian policy, it is neither as unknown nor, perhaps, as important as the author may think. Recent studies of Sitting Bull, by Robert M. Utley, and Quannah Parker, by William T. Hagan, have made the same point: that the Federal Government continually looked for responsible, representative heads of tribes with whom they could deal, as they saw it, efficiently and effectively. It may be asked, however, whether their existence could in any significant way have altered the revolutionary impact of Indian population collapse, the disappearance of the buffalo, the arrival of hundreds of thousands of whites, their technological superiority, the near-unanimity of their aims, and the lure of their trade goods, annuities, and even alcohol. It is arguable that what more interestingly characterizes governmental-tribal relations are the processes which led some Lakotas in 1875 to propose exchanging the Black Hills either for rations and supplies for seven generations to come, or for seven million dollars, a sum which Price perceptively remarks, was “large enough to earn sufficient interest on which all the bands could live comfortably throughout the coming years.”

This work breaks new ground in its use of the James Walker collection, the Eli Ricker manuscripts, and the W. S. Campbell collection. It makes extensive use of US Federal Government documents and has a good bibliography. It is well illustrated, and, whether or not substantial weight is allowed to its main thesis, its discussion of bodies like the itancan (war party leaders) and akacita (enforcers of decisions) is illuminating and helpful.

University of Manchester

R. A. BURCHELL

Mark Jancovich, *Rational Fears: American Horror in the 1950s* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996, £12.99 paper). Pp. 324. ISBN 0 7190 3624 0.

Tony Williams, *Hearths of Darkness: The Family in the American Horror Film* (London and Cranbury, NJ.: Associated University Presses, 1996, £32.50 cloth). Pp. 320. ISBN 0 8386 3564 4.

Whilst it has been claimed that the true subject of the horror genre is the struggle for recognition of all that our civilization represses or oppresses (Robin Wood), 1950s horror is generally dismissed as reactionary. Mark Jancovich disagrees with this critical orthodoxy and argues that 1950s horror is not always dominated by a conservative, Cold War politics. He pursues this argument through the three sections of this very readable volume which discuss different but overlapping areas of the genre: invasion narratives, outsider narratives, and narratives concerned with “crises of identity.”

Using the evidence provided by the arguments of 1950s theorists like Dwight MacDonal, David Reisman, Daniel Boorstein, and William Whyte – who were all uneasy with the impersonality of Fordism – Jancovich shows that the 1950s were not as complacent as it is often suggested. Rather than legitimating Fordism and its applications of scientific–technical rationality to the management of American life, 1950s invasion narratives often criticized this system by associating the alien with it. To interpret the alien as always representing the Red Threat is, Jancovich argues, too simplistic, for if the alien was at times identified with Soviet communism and its impersonality, it was also implied that this impersonality was only the logical conclusion of certain developments within American society itself. In films like *The Thing From Another World* (1951), co-operation may be necessary; but it is co-operation required not by the Fordist system, but by an interactive community threatened by Fordist rationalization and domination. *Rational Fears* also convincingly challenges dominant interpretations of the gender ideologies operating in these films, arguing that not all associate women negatively with monstrous nature and anti-rationality. Some films, such as *Them!* (1954) and *It Came From Beneath the Sea* (1955), present a “new breed of woman” whose authority and frequent control of the gaze challenges assumptions not only about the gender ideologies of horror films, but of mass culture in general in the 1950s. Others do indeed associate women with irrationality and emotion, but present such associations positively as the only counterforce to the dangerous rationalism of both aliens and men.

Outsider narratives, such as those found in the fiction of Ray Bradbury and Richard Matheson and the films of Jack Arnold and those produced by American International Pictures, are preoccupied with alienation, isolation, and estrangement, and provide a rich source for Jancovich to show how certain horror films in the 1950s were both self-conscious about the formal features of the genre and managed to de-essentialize gender and other social roles. The norms of American life become strange and alien, and the outsiders are victims who are as much threatened by those norms as they are a threat to them. Finally, Jancovich revises histories of the genre which have usually marked Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1959) as the moment of a radical break in the genre from the concerns of the

1950s. He finds instead that not only did numerous texts from the late 1940s onwards prefigure *Psycho* in many ways, but post-60s horror should be seen as a development from the central features and concerns of 1950s horror.

It is perhaps predictable that, in *Hearths of Darkness*, Tony Williams employs a psychoanalytic framework to analyse family horror films and the return of the repressed that they apparently thematise. Such an approach is a too-familiar one in film studies and, in contrast to the freshness of *Rational Fears*, Williams's volume proceeds in a lack-lustre manner, employing psychoanalytic theory largely bereft of the insights of post-structuralist theories and annoyingly assuming the existence of an essential individual pre-social subject. However, like Jancovich, Williams does address the horror film as a site of ideological struggle and contradiction, and his study provides ample evidence of the huge range and variety of family horror films, beginning with the *Frankenstein* films of the 1930s though to the *Child's Play* series, the *Stepfather* films and *Parents*, and *Day of the Dead* of the 1990s. Some convincing connections are made between the mid-eighties erosion of Reaganite hegemony, publicized accounts of child abuse and theories of family dysfunctionality (which, incidentally, Williams never challenges), and depictions of family horror such as *Friday 13th: Part VII*, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors*.

As Jancovich points out, contemporary audiences remain fascinated by horror. Both authors show, in different ways, how our understanding of the ideological implications of the horror text of past decades still reflects – sometimes self-consciously – the social concerns and ideological assumptions of today.

University of Liverpool

VAL GOUGH

Rita Ferrari, *Innocence, Power, and the Novels of John Hawkes* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996). Pp. 220. ISBN 0 8122 3341 7.

Rita Ferrari's *Innocence, Power, and the Novels of John Hawkes* is a welcome addition to the ever growing body of work that focuses on this fascinating, but often overlooked, American novelist. Ferrari tackles Hawkes's work chronologically in an attempt to "explore the development of the thematic and textual engagement of innocence and power over the course of his career." She introduces the disturbing dislocated images, so characteristic of Hawkes, in *The Cannibal* and *The Beetle Leg*, and concludes with *Sweet William: A Memoir of Old Horse*, which she believes to be the most representative of all of his works. She draws our attention to the role of the narrator, and how *Second Skin* sets a precedent of self-reflecting, self-questioning, narrators that Hawkes maintains in his subsequent novels, and short stories, so as to impose an order (however fragile that may prove to be) on the narrative whilst reciprocally affirming his stylistic currency of chaotic imagery, fantasy, nightmare, and fetish, which all work to abolish that order.

Ferrari, as the title suggests, scrutinizes the conflict between innocence and power, but in doing so she follows Hawkes's transgression of this traditional American dichotomy. She has successfully identified the way in which Hawkes has not conformed to American conventions of perceiving the conceptual and ideological tensions between Nature and Society as being mutually exclusive. It

is a brave move on Ferrari's part; a reading that confronts the sadomasochism of Hawkes's texts (one which at times they appear to demand upon), that declares the innocence and power, the pleasure and pain, of Hawkes's uniquely composed sexuality, as being the combination imperative to the individual striving to achieve personal fulfilment, or perhaps rather the combination that represents the individual's last chance to escape from psychic despair. It is desire and fear that can liberate, innocence alone fails, as can be seen in the tragic puritanical figure Hugh of *The Blood Oranges*, who appears to be Ferrari's favourite example of doomed moral purity. It is the failure of innocence, the rejection of the American Adam, that Ferrari zooms into focus. She charts the journey of the innocent in Hawkes's fiction, and his or her failure to acknowledge the power of desire, which consequently leads to impotence, violent mutilation, and, more often than not, death. It is not possible, and it is certainly not beneficial, to remain incorruptible, or to covet a state of innocence. Ferrari concludes that innocence and power are, in Hawkes's fiction, co-dependent, that pleasure without pain is simply a denial of the unconsciousness and its need to speak. We ignore it at our peril.

University of Essex

JASON CHARLES

David Rudenstine, *The Day the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers Case* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1996, \$34.95). Pp. 448. ISBN 0 520 08672 4.

In 1971, the *New York Times* published a series of articles based on extracts from a secret 47-volume Pentagon study of United States' involvement in Vietnam. The study was prepared between June 1967 and January 1969 on the orders of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara who, by 1967, was in disagreement with the Johnson administration's Vietnam strategy. LBJ was unaware that McNamara's resignation in February 1968 left behind three dozen analysts in the Defense Department writing a project (under the direction of Leslie H. Gelb) so sensitive that only fifteen complete studies were made. The Nixon administration was also unaware of this secret history until it was leaked by Daniel Ellsberg to Neil Sheeham at the *Times*. Rudenstine describes the *Times*' publication as the largest single unauthorized disclosure of classified documents in US history, and argues that it seriously threatened important national security interests.

Rudenstine's study probes the motivations of the major players at the *Times* and government, and chronicles the activities of the press, courts, and executive branch, seeking to balance the legitimate needs of government to keep information secret and of the rights of "the people" to be informed by their government in matters of vital national importance. That debates inside and outside court over the First Amendment, prior restraint, and freedom of the press took place while the US was engaged in major military operations overseas and a war at home is all the more remarkable. Political scholars will appreciate the meticulous detail of this substantial study.

The strength of Rudenstine's analysis lies in his scrutiny of the judicial decisions rendered in the federal court in lower Manhattan, the US Court of

Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the opinions of the US Supreme Court justices, all of which ensured the *Times* could publish. The weakest part of this study of the Pentagon Papers' case is Rudenstine's revisionist stance: that the publication of the Pentagon Papers threatened national security interests. This stance is ultimately unconvincing because these interests are not always clearly defined and, as Rudenstine notes, publication in the second half of 1971 had no impact on the course of the war itself. National security emerges as a convenient cloak for the shenanigans of arrogant and unscrupulous politicians. This study merely underlines that neither national security nor American democracy were safe in the hands of the Nixon administration.

Middlesex University

VIVIEN MILLER

Mario Materassi and Maria Irene Ramalho de Sousa Santos (eds.), *The American Columbiad: "Discovering" America, Inventing the United States* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1996, N.p.). Pp. 414, ISBN 90 5383 423 0.

Forming Volume 34 of the series "European Contributions to American Studies," the twenty-eight essays collected together here were all originally presented at the EAAS 1992 conference in Seville. One might expect the conjunction of scholars from both sides of the Atlantic on the quincentenary of Columbus's "first contact" with the New World to have produced a book more self-consciously designed to assess the story so far and survey the terrain ahead, but *The American Columbiad* does no such thing. Like Joel Barlow's poem which its title invokes, it has its moments but is too crammed with incompatible material to make a concerted impression.

Needless to say, historical surveys predominate, from Herbert Kunst's specific "Columbiads in Eighteenth-Century European and American Literature" to Thomas Grant's more speculative "The Captivity Melodrama from Colonial Massachusetts to Contemporary Lebanon." Columbus's after-life in art, opera, and literature is considered; as are cultural connections between America and Scotland, England, Spain, and the Caribbean, and plays, novels, and broadcasts by Eugene O'Neill, Willa Cather, Nabokov, and Alastair Cooke. The issues of gender and race produce a small number of essays which have more explicit theoretical definition, but the sense one gets is that American Studies has become a church so broad that no one bothers even to attempt to define a more broadly applicable methodology or ideology than that necessary for a short paper.

In this respect, it is telling that the issue of postmodernism is almost entirely absent from this book. Michael Dorris's feel-good opening essay invokes a new future in which we learn to recognize that "[o]ur diversity, as a species, has always been our salvation," but is conspicuously silent on how we might begin to achieve this. Someone more attuned to postmodernism like Andrew Delbanco might well observe that our diversity has also always been our damnation, and that we are currently wrestling with the apparent futility of Enlightenment idealism when measured against the accumulated burden of our history.

Delbanco's stimulating essay, "The American Question" (by far the best thing

in the book), is the only essay included here to address this question at all. We have become so adept at the specialized discourse of demystification, he suggests, that we now face “the problem of satisfying the inextinguishable human need for belief when our intellectual resources no longer support our will to believe.” Yet, since his essay shows that this problem has exercised a number of American writers from the earliest days of the Republic, perhaps he is also suggesting that we might do well to ditch our habitual recourse to the complementary modes of optimism and pessimism. Contemplating this volume, it seems we would be better off instead attending to the question of what we currently find worthy of belief.

University of Reading

FREDDIE BAVEYSTOCK

Roger W. Moss (ed.) *Paint in America: The Colours of Historic Buildings* (New York: Preservation Press/John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1994, £32.50/\$39.95). Pp. 318. ISBN 0 471 14410 X.

Collectively these essays by sixteen authorities demonstrate that the question of historic colour schemes, inside and out, has been a serious field of enquiry in America for nearly seventy years. In Britain these matters have received close attention only over the last decade.

John Cornforth and the late John Fowler have pointed out that interior decoration, as it has been understood in the twentieth century, began in the United States. Through the inspiration of Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman and the example of Elsie de Wolfe, a taste for *The Decoration of Houses* developed in which historicism was simply a vehicle for the fashion of the day. With the resurrection of Colonial Williamsburg, architectural conservation was approached with a more archaeological zeal. This work was, of course, circumscribed by the technical means of analysis then available. With the benefit of hindsight, it may be seen that Williamsburg and its many followers were part of a continuing fashion for the Colonial Revival which was originally inspired by the centennial celebrations of 1876.

It was in this context that Susan Higginson Nash visited twenty-nine historic buildings in Virginia in 1929 to record their colour schemes, a most creditable endeavour. However, she was dependent in this activity on “scrapes” which revealed these paints as they then appeared with their tone and colour values altered by time. Today, field microscopes are used for paint layer identification *in situ*, whilst samples are removed to the laboratory and examined by optical fluorescence so that colours may be identified as they appeared at the time of their application.

The history of this research is summarized in these pages and current practice is reflected in case studies, but the focus is narrow. The increasing use of paint in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, as so well documented by Richard L. Bushman in *The Refinement of America* (1992), is not considered as a sociological issue. Ian Bristow’s contribution on “House Painting in Britain” has been overtaken by his two magisterial volumes on the subject (Yale 1996), but his concern for the grandest interiors reduces the relevance of this chapter to the

more vernacular character of American work. The movable features, produced by house painters, including stained hangings, chimney boards, oil floor-cloths, transparent blinds, and shop signs, are not included. *Paint in America* nevertheless provides a valuable overview of a subject which is still in the process of gaining disciples in Britain. It also demonstrates the limitations imposed on historic reconstructions which require the use of paints with toxic properties.

John Judkyn Memorial, Bath

JAMES AYRES

Richard H. King and Helen Taylor (eds.), *Dixie Debates: Perspectives on Southern Culture* (London and New York: Pluto Press, 1996, £45.00 cloth, £14.95 paper). Pp. 242. ISBN 0 7453 0958 5, 0 7443 0957 7.

This is an important book and an enterprising one. It originated out of the first international conference on the South held in Europe which took place at Warwick University in 1994. The responses to southern culture and to the aesthetic, political, and historical puzzle that is “the American South” are critically informed, intellectually rigorous, and interdisciplinary. My own students have become much more aware of developments and transformations within southern culture through reading *Dixie Debates* since, whether an “insider” like Quentin Compson or an “outsider” like this reviewer, the search for an understanding of southern culture persists in story, in music and in this eclectic collection of essays.

Charles Joyner looks to the spirituals as a source of meaning, to the blues, and to jazz evolving over two centuries and across African and European interactions: “The fences between musical forms were not high enough to keep musical styles from ‘crossing over,’” as in the cases of Elvis and Charley Pride. Joyner’s is a wonderfully rich essay, and some of the issues it raises are taken up in Maria Lauret’s teasing out of the “crossover phenomenon” in jazz as she determines the extent to which commodification is “a necessary condition of modernity” and questions the orthodoxy which believes that African American writing is inevitably equitable with blues and jazz structures.

The editors establish four key areas through which the essays move: “high” and “popular” culture, dominant and minority traditions, the sacred and the secular, the contemporary and the traditional, reminding us that “what unites the South may be a relatively new and refreshing sense that what the region has to show of itself derives from the cultural and not the political realm.” Robert Lewis elucidates the cross-cultural history of Cajuns in Louisiana, and Judith McWillie details the iconography of monuments, paintings, and quilts that directly recalls West African cosmology. Richard Dyer and Jane Gaines gloss the images of a South as encoded in *Birth of a Nation* (1915). Dyer is persuasive in his assertion that images of northern whites strengthen the ideology of southern white supremacy in the text, and Gaines’s juxtaposition of the film with Oscar Micheaux’s recently rediscovered *Within Our Gates* (1919), a “long lost answer” to Griffiths’s paean to whiteness, demonstrates how two ideologically opposed melodramas re-edit the same interracial history deploying the same tropes of

“family” and “community” in cross-racial conflict in the post-Reconstruction South.

Southern culture is yet to be appraised in terms of some of its most distinctively hybrid icons. The “unanswered academic question” which Simon Frith poses is: what difference has Elvis made to our understanding of the history of Southern music when his specific affiliation to the South is often lost in discussion of his legendary status as “American” or his “global” appeal? Specifically, “southern” rock music with its lyrics about Civil War rebels and nostalgia for the “Lost Cause” is a resistant romanticization of “history” and “home,” as Paul Wells exposes. The style of Lynyrd Skynyrd, for example, is completely contradistinctive to that of the subtle but self-congratulatory *Southern Living*, that “lifestyle Bible” of the middle classes that Diane Roberts describes, but the same emblems of the former Confederacy and similar ideologies sit intriguingly, if uncomfortably, side by side.

To read this book as a whole is fascinating: layer by layer southern nuances are revealed at work in magazines, in music, in the mouths of radio DJs on black stations during Civil Rights, in film and fiction, in New Orleans or in Birmingham. Taylor and King in their Introduction and Richard Gray in his Afterword locate the debates about a “recognisable” South, a culturally produced “South,” and a rapidly changing South. They point up the many ironies, the propensity for self-parody in southern culture and the heterogeneity of southern cultural studies. To read *Dixie Debates* is to engage in the debates it raises and to be drawn into discussions of popular cultural production that are only now gaining scholarly recognition.

The University of Hertfordshire

SHARON MONTEITH

Garry Wills, *John Wayne: The Politics of Celebrity* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997, £20.00). Pp. 380. ISBN 0 571 19176 2.

In 1995, John Wayne topped the poll of America’s favourite filmstars. Kevin Costner, potentially Wayne’s replacement as all-American hero, came in fifth. Warner Home Video have just released twenty-two classic Wayne videos; his fan magazine (*The Big Trail*) prospers; statues of the man feature prominently in Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego, and can be purchased for the home from a foundry in Oregon. Why the enduring popularity? Garry Wills offers some convincing answers in a volume which represents a major achievement in cultural criticism, an account of the manufacturing of “John Wayne” from the raw material of Marion Morrison. As Wills makes clear, Wayne’s cult status was never less than irremediably political. He was the one American whom both Krushchev and Hirohito wanted to meet on their US visits. As the embodiment of courage, integrity, and tenacity, Wayne’s was a carefully crafted persona of the ultimate cowboy (he hated horses), the war hero (he dodged war-service), and conservative family values (he was serially divorced.) Wills’s riveting account of the formation of the myth is matched for interest only by his debunking of other myths – that of Wayne’s football prowess, the warmth of his relationship with John Ford, self-sacrifice at the Alamo. He is a sharp reader of Wayne’s body-

language, noting the costume and poses (modelled on classical statuary) designed to accentuate Wayne's body-profile and draw attention from his short legs. Wayne's political naivety, as a superhawk supporter of Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, and the Vietnam War, is underlined. There is a fascinating account of the early career in B Westerns and an analysis of *Stagecoach* in relation to its source in Maupassant's *Boule de Suif* which demonstrates its atypicality as Western, rather than its "classic" form. In *Stagecoach*, the Ringo Kid is passive, disarmed, and part of a complex social weave. Wayne himself rarely walks down the street to a shootout, favours the rifle over the revolver, seldom appears as a lone (st)ranger to rescue a town and move on, and dies in nine of his films. Again, as Wills notes, Wayne's "Manifest Destiny" assurance is generally carried into compromising situations involving clashing cultural or value systems. His late career, beginning with *True Grit*, was based on his self-consciousness as a living monument, with a good-natured acceptance of ridicule. (As the editors of the *Harvard Lampoon* discovered to their cost, he could be faster and funnier about himself than they were.) Wills avoids easy laughs (nothing on Wayne as Genghis Khan in *The Conqueror*, for example) and the result is a stunning book, full of insights and information.

So what is missing? Three points occur. Firstly, Wills (unlike Helen Taylor à propos of *Gone With the Wind*) does not pay much attention to Wayne's fans. The myth is made and sold to them, but we hear little of the ordinary movie-goer's individual responses. Secondly, Wills steers a sometimes uneasy course between admiration and condemnation. The Conclusion (a first-rate essay on the American Adam, the city in America, and the Western) concludes in Wayneian phrase, "That'll be the day." At other points, Wills bemoans Wayne's lack of integrity as if he expected the offstage Wayne to be a good guy. There is a myth of Wayne-the-fascist which needs as careful handling as Wayne-the-hero. Agreed, *Bloody Alley* is no masterpiece, especially in the scenes where Wayne addresses his imaginary guardian angel, but its anti-communism is so bald that it is about as worrying as the portrayal of French revolutionaries in *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. Finally, Wills makes little of Wayne's appeal to women. Jane Tompkins has argued that the Western owes its power to the reversal of all the norms of women's sentimental literature (isolation rather than family groups, silence rather than effusions, wide open spaces rather than parlours, men rather than women, no religion). But Wayne, still alive to the silent moves which bridge the gap between the two forms, was sharp enough to keep a dynamic relationship going between them. In *The Shootist*, the death of Wayne is the whole plot, outdoing even Little Eva. Children are rescued from a fate worse than death all over his oeuvre (*The Cowboys*, *Operation Pacific*, *The Three Godfathers*, *Blood Alley*, *True Grit*, *Rio Grande*), with repentant prostitutes, feisty old ladies, and Irish bands *passim*. As an Imperial icon he was never erotic or menacing (unlike Robert Mitchum, who could send shivers of either sort down the spine) and essentially appealed to nostalgia for lost virtue. Although it would be an exaggeration to place him definitively in the sentimental frame, he belongs more to that tradition than to the Westerns of Clint Eastwood or Cormac McCarthy.

M. Stokes and S. Conway (eds.), *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800–1880* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1996). Pp. 351. ISBN 0 8139 1649 6.

This collection of articles addresses the market revolution synthesis of *antebellum* American history associated with Charles Sellers. While all of high quality, some of the articles have only a tangential link to the central debate. Length constraints necessitate that I address those that speak to it directly.

The first section interrogates of the market revolution as a historical model. Christopher Clark criticizes Sellers for inexact conceptualization, as the market revolution is at times treated as a set of events and at times as a causative process, leading to a certain inattentiveness to the complexity of human experience and the unevenness of the market's spread. Harry Watson, adopting a "dual market" model for the South, argues that slavery made for highly uneven commercialization, both by its participation in a worldwide market-place and its insulation of upcountry regions from undue market forces. Amy Dru Stanley finds Sellers receptive to gender concerns but out of date with the historiography; the separate spheres he emphasizes were less reflective of economic reality, women being central to capital accumulation, than a gender-based discourse meant to align the family with capitalism rather than slavery.

The following two sections deal with the market revolution's political dimension. John Ashworth sees it as formative, and suggests substituting the concept of *wage* labour for Eric Foner's *free* labour, making the ideology more explicitly one deriving from the structural changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution. Similarly, Richard Ellis sees the Jeffersonian Republican party's commercial wing riding the boom until the bust of 1819 provoked an anti-market backlash that eventuated in a Jacksonian Democracy unable to come to terms with the market revolution. Donald Ratcliffe argues for the relative independence of political process from economic forces, and imputes Sellers has an unscientific approach to political cause and effect, whereas Michael Holt views the second party system as highly responsive to economic considerations until the late 1840s because many people were only partially integrated into the market.

The section on religion challenges Sellers most directly. Daniel Howe rejects his treatment of cultural history as "tendentious" and overly deterministic, particularly the values he attaches to Arminianism and antinomianism, and criticizes his portrayal of the market as evil and encroaching; instead Howe dwells on its responsiveness to the "pursuit of happiness," offering a complete reversal of Sellers's moral universe, equally tendentious and presumptive. Richard Carwardine provides a more balanced critique of his antinomian–Arminian cultural paradigm, finding it putative not proven; rather he argues that religious groups must be dealt with seriously in terms of their beliefs and sectarian policies.

Sellers' response in the final chapter is uneven in that it does not address all the articles, but insightful in its targeting. He disagrees with Clark's desire to see the market revolution as a complex of experience and events rather than as a process, fearing that "paradigmatic meaning may be lost." But he takes particular exception to Howe's "bourgeois" acceptance of the "merits of capitalism," in

that it undervalues the “costs and coercions” of capitalism. Finally, Sellers exploits Ratcliffe’s attempted resurrection of Lee Benson as a paragon of political history to launch an extended (and largely unnecessary) historiographical discussion of Jacksonian democracy. His time would have been better spent in addressing the other contributions to this volume, and indicating a way ahead for the market revolution.

This book displays some of the thousand flowers that have bloomed from the market revolution. Rich of colour, fecund in thought, these articles overspread dispersed fields of American history, and invoke reflection. The book, with its editorial comments that situate rather than lead, highlights both the concept’s revolutionary potential and the counter-revolution in waiting.

University of Sussex

PETER WAY

Adam Sweeting, *Reading Houses and Building Books: Andrew Jackson Downing and the Architecture of Popular Antebellum Literature, 1835–1855* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1996, \$35). Pp. 230. ISBN 0 87451 750 8.

Adam Sweeting presents his book as an account of the links, during one short period of American cultural history, between the related specializations of architecture, interior decoration, and landscape gardening, and the seemingly separate field of popular literature. His focus is the career of Andrew Jackson Downing, the horticulturalist and author of several pattern books for the building of country estates, whose own Hudson River home embodied an approach to life Sweeting sees as specific to the time and place, terming it “genteel aestheticism.” As a study of Downing, the book offers valuable research and commentary, and Sweeting is good on the particular architectural tastes and prejudices which went into the period’s characteristic privileging of the “picturesque.” His readings of house lay-outs are also of interest for what they reveal about domestic life at the time, but, in tracing the links between Downing and literary culture, Sweeting is not so sure. A fine chapter on “The Homes of the Genteel Romantics” – including Washington Irving’s Sunnyside – demonstrates Downing’s influence on writers’ living arrangements rather than on their work. Confining himself to the popular novel, in which, as he admits, morality tends to operate at the most straightforward level, Sweeting makes some telling points about the Downingsque worship of domesticity in such bestsellers as Fanny Fern’s *Ruth Hall* and Susan Warner’s *The Wide, Wide World*, but his remarks are too brief, compared to the attention given to Downing, to hold up the literary side of his argument. There might have been more to say had Sweeting chosen to go beyond listing “titles such as *The House of the Seven Gables*, ‘The Fall of the House of Usher,’ and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” to deal properly with the architectural inspiration for some of the American classics. To do so, however, would have meant raising issues not only beyond his own remit, but alien to the world view of those he studies. Sweeting’s prose actually imitates genteel architecture in its

knack of keeping unpleasant social realities out of sight. Just as, in the houses Downing designed, servants were kept in separate quarters, so Sweeting tends to relegate charges of elitism or racism to parentheses. Along with its author's persistent use of the word "antebellum" the dates in the book's sub-title – 1835–1855 – indicate a short-lived, suburban phenomenon, albeit one with long-term influence on the shape of America's cities. Downing was commissioned to build gardens in Washington, and his one-time partner Calvert Vaux worked alongside Frederick Law Olmsted on the creation of New York's Central Park. But, for the most part, Sweeting is content to give second place to the various forces opposed to "genteel aestheticism," preferring to study Downing *et al.* in their own terms. The result is an informative, but gentle – if not "genteel" – book.

Cambridge University

RORY DRUMMOND

James Nagel (ed.) *Ernest Hemingway: The Oak Park Legacy* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1996). Pp. 231. ISBN 0 8173 0842 3.

"If I had written about Oak Park you would have a point in studying it. But I did not write about it." So wrote Ernest Hemingway in 1952, in response to Yale professor Charles Fenton's request for permission to publish fiction the author had written between 1915 and 1916, while a student at Oak Park and River Forest High School. The second half of Hemingway's assertion is nominally true: nowhere in the Hemingway corpus (excepting the use of "Macomber," an old Oak Park name) is there a piece – not even an unpublished fragment – set in or featuring anyone hailing from Oak Park, Illinois, where Ernest spent his formative years.

Beyond biographers' consideration of this period, it is as though critics have taken Hemingway at his word: the net result is a paucity of material dealing with the influence of the repressive environment of Roosevelt-era Oak Park on Hemingway's work. As Morris Buske notes in his "Afterword" to this collection, Hemingway would later circulate misinformation about his Oak Park days, preferring to cultivate the image of "the youthful Ernest as a rebel, a perpetual truant on the verge of being sent to reform school." With the author himself guilty of running interference, the task of "separat[ing] fact from fiction," of grounding such bio-critical endeavours as are represented in this volume, continues to be a difficult one.

In spite of the challenge of finding and interpreting evidence regarding the impact of Oak Park on Hemingway's writing, the contributors to *The Oak Park Legacy* lack neither enthusiasm nor perseverance – indispensable given the lack of direct references to Ernest's hometown in his work. The first three essays emphasize the complexities involved in a meticulous reconstruction of the socio-cultural milieu in which Ernest grew up, and detail the matrix of moral, ethical, and religious codes that structured Oak Park life – and, by extension, Hemingway's fiction.

The book's middle section presents new work on Hemingway's early fiction, including essays on Ernest's high-school stories, on the impact of family dynamics on his views of women, and on the Edenic potential of the Michigan woods. Two essays on Hemingway's later work complete the collection, one detailing early attempts to market the author's work in America.

Beyond its interest for Hemingway specialists, *The Oak Park Legacy* gives the general reader a deeper sense of the personal and socio-cultural forces that shaped Hemingway's early years and influenced his work.

University of Kent at Canterbury

JAMES MASSENDER

Patricia R. Schroeder, *The Feminist Possibilities of Dramatic Realism* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996, £26.50). Pp. 185. ISBN 0 8386 3677 2.

Schroeder describes realism in plays as a phenomenon of the late nineteenth century when playwrights contrived to use "a detailed set (usually but not inevitably a drawing-room) separated from the audience by an imaginary fourth wall; and a causally structured, linear plot directed towards the resolution of a problem...replicating offstage society...[and attempting] to convince the audience by all available means that the onstage action is, in fact, real (not fictitious) and occurring before them as they watch." But, as Schroeder says, these devices only cohered into a dramatic form with Ibsen. Consequently, she leaves out the uses of realism in the vast spaces of dramatic history going back as far as the Greeks, the Yuan dynasty, and the Elizabethans as if they were distracting irrelevances. Her argument that it was necessary to focus her inquiry exclusively on American drama "primarily because dramatic realism has maintained its power throughout the twentieth century in the United States" excuses the author from employing any wider historical sense of what "realism" may have constituted, but it does mean she is caught in the trap sprung on all our minds since the invention of the term "realism" to denote a form of writing (or "aesthetic structure," as Schroeder calls it) rather than a view of the world. A concern with what precisely distinguishes naturalism from realism, and with what kinds of realism may or may not be acceptable to feminists, will, I hope, strike the historian of drama in years to come as a peculiarly arcane example of late twentieth-century scholasticism, fascinating (if also infuriating) in its unrelenting oddness.

Meanwhile, the aberration is the norm and we struggle to make sense of the "-isms" we find thrust upon us, a task Schroeder takes on with appropriate zest. For, although her vision is inevitably blinkered by the limitations imposed on her by the field she has chosen, she resists the opinionated, uninformed, and downright wrong, among the critics and theorists she upbraids, by utilizing one of the minimum requirements of inquiry, the defence of inquisitiveness against censoriousness.

She defends realism as providing "tools at a feminist artist's disposal" since realistic devices may be used as well to question power as to reproduce

uncritically the relations of dominance in which those devices are held. This dialectical, and creative, understanding of realism's potential for invention is crucial to Schroeder's treatment of plays by writers from 1900 to the present as various in their subject-matter as Clare Boothe, Shirley Graham, and Marsha Norman. The female body as a commodity in *The Women*, child killing among slaves in *It's Morning*, and structures of female confinement in *Getting Out* are just three examples of the subjects taken from many plays of the period discussed here, whose treatment engaged with varieties of realism, and did so in ways which Schroeder convincingly demonstrates were productive and empowering within the terms of their author's ambition to show women as women show themselves.

University of Essex

ROGER HOWARD

Francis Jennings, *Benjamin Franklin Politician. The Man and the Mask* (London and New York, Norton, 1996, \$27.50). Pp. 240. ISBN 0 393 03983 8.

The "hidden" Franklin has always fascinated, since this first American genius and transatlantic celebrity was also the careful creator of his own image. Some responses to Franklin have indeed been savage, shaped by the obsessions of critics who disliked his mock modesty and assumed humility and had little imaginative empathy with the pressures on those humbly born in the eighteenth-century who sought to realize their talent and ambition. Jennings writes of Franklin's "massive ego" but does not ask if this was not a requirement for his successful genius. In an unfortunate coda, he even links Franklin to "Richard M. Nixon and Henry Kissinger – men known as compulsive liars during their public lives." Franklin is a famous man, but he presented himself "like Nixon, draped in virtue." Jennings fights other older battles. Surely no one now "gives credit to the memoirs of historical celebrities." The *Autobiography* must be one of the most analyzed and criticized of American writings. But, just as Jennings chides Robert Middlekauff in an extraordinary "Addendum" for "unprofessional discourtesy" for not citing Jennings's works, perhaps the many literary and cultural historians who have explored Franklin's writings and personality will have a similar response to Jennings's omission of theirs. Also I regretted the lack of any citation of Esmond Wright's balanced and perceptive *Franklin of Philadelphia* (Harvard 1986).

These observations arise from the curious nature of Jennings's book. On one level, it is a useful and splendidly opinionated study of Franklin's politics, including his emergence as antiproprietary leader and his relations with the Quakers, the Germans, and the Presbyterians, and, of course, it is very valuable on Indian-white relationships. At this level it is also sometimes unhelpfully old-fashioned. The Penns – rather marginal figures in English society – are always seen as "feudal," with a "glow of aristocracy that radiates so glamorously at two centuries distance" rather than as somewhat desperate businessmen. English politicians and Parliament are all "Tory," supporting "Tory power." Nor is Jennings's conclusion that Franklin's opposition to the Penn Proprietary formed the basis for his revolutionary opposition to Great Britain carefully argued.

At another level, Jennings writes of his personal discovery that “Franklin was a real man rather than the chaste idol of an adolescent” – Jennings’s adolescence. Frequent asides and “evidence” to the effect that heroes – or even real men – have “feet of clay” and frequent swipes at other targets – “gentlemen” who disregard Indians, biased new England historians, or the “slanted trash” of others’ writings – abound. None the less, rest easy Franklin, for Jennings finally concedes that despite your “shortcomings of personality” you were a “hero” after all.

University of Birmingham

R. C. SIMMONS

Elaine K. Ginsberg (ed.), *Passing and the Fictions of Identity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996, £43.95 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 298. ISBN 0 8223 1755 9, 08223 1764 8.

Elaine Ginsberg introduces her collection of essays in a lucid, provocative and inclusive manner, insisting upon the imbrication of “race, gender, nationality, and sexuality” in both the means and ends of the matter of “passing”; as she says: “the assumption underlying this volume is that critical to the process and discourse of ‘passing’ in America and in the American cultural imaginary are the status and privileges associated with being white and being male.” This leads Ginsberg and her contributors through slave narratives, nineteenth- and twentieth-century fictions and autobiographies, reports of cross-dressing civil war actors and redactors before drawing to a close over one woman’s account of the complex contingencies of her refusal to “pass” for white.

Ellen Weinauer’s discussion of William Craft’s *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom* takes us into the text via contemporary statements about the nexus of truths and illusions which are excited by drag. Weinauer exploits to the full the interpretative possibilities offered by Craft’s account of the cross-dressing undertaken by his wife to escape from slavery, and she is particularly compelling on the production of meaning from the part played by Ellen Craft, moving from the “sole unarticulated category” of woman slave to the multivalent role of “the white man of property.” In her essay on *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, Samira Kawash problematizes the text generically before discussing the secularity of individual identity which is here predicated, via Lacan, as an endless refutation of certainty: a “knot of being and not-being.” Kawash pays some attention to the complicating factor of social class in the ascription of racial identity, but this issue is most thoroughly examined by Martha J. Cutter in her Barthesian reading of Nella Larsen, a reading which advances Larsen’s use of the revocability of passing as reflecting “the plural and unstable nature of identities and of texts themselves.” In “Blackness and the White Imagination,” the third of the collection, the Spanish masquerade in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is proposed by Julia Stern as “an important alternative vision to the Manichean allegory at work,” and Gayle Wald, interrogating *Black Like Me* to within an inch of its seat on the back of the bus, explores Griffin’s appropriation of “passing” as a means to explore white not black identity, where whiteness is guarantor of a “sovereignty over identity” and blackness is equated with “losing control.”

The long essay by Adrian Piper which dominates the final part of the collection is an angry but always controlled and cerebral critique of a culture which looks equally aghast at the decision not to “pass” as at its obverse. Piper also, however, provides an account of what must be lost – of family, of history, of solidarity – if the option of “passing” is taken up so that the essay offers a final and salutary qualification to Ginsberg’s proposition that “passing,” in its challenge to boundaries of race and gender, has “the potential to create a space for creative self-determination and agency.” If “passing” has any meaning for Piper it is of “severing and forgetting...disowning and distancing,” personal and cultural renunciations which would have been recognized as familiar travelling companions by William and Ellen Craft.

Roehampton Institute, London

JANET BEER

Gareth Davies, *From Opportunity to Entitlement: The Transformation and Decline of Great Society Liberalism* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996, \$35). Pp. 322. ISBN 0 7006 0757 9.

Gareth Davies’s book, though primarily a study of social policy, has far wider implications for our understanding of the transformation of American liberalism during the 1960s and 1970s and the decline of the New Deal political order. He reminds us that Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty, though sometimes blamed for the supposed excesses of current welfare policies, were originally designed to promote self-sufficiency and individual opportunity, rather than dependency. The Great Society’s commitment to liberal individualism, argues Davies, placed it firmly in the New Deal tradition and aligned it equally firmly with public attitudes to work, welfare, and dependency. Within a few years of the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act, however, liberal Democrats like Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy had come out in favour of a minimum guaranteed income for all poor persons, regardless of their employability or moral worthiness. By the time of George McGovern’s ill-fated campaign for the presidency in 1972, this had become part of “the dominant strain in American liberalism.” Davies explains how the political divisions opened by the Vietnam War combined with the impact of race riots in Northern ghettos and the growing militancy of black protest to shatter the consensus behind the Great Society. A number of leading Democrats, anxious to dissociate themselves from an increasingly unpopular Administration and inspired by the apparent vitality of the “New Politics,” seized upon guaranteed income proposals as part of a broader attempt to create a new liberal coalition. In doing so, they misread the degree of public approval of such proposals and the political strength of the minority-group and welfare rights organizations which supported them, with ultimately catastrophic results for both New Deal liberalism and the Democratic party. The “entitlement revolution” therefore formed “part of the crisis of American liberalism.”

Davies presents a detailed narrative, based on substantial archival research, which carefully traces the interaction between the various forces operating to undermine the Great Society. Along the way it helps to make sense of the furore

over the Moynihan Report and the strange career of Richard Nixon's Family Allowance Plan. Davies's account of New Deal social policy is not wholly convincing, and he can only establish a direct continuity between 1930s and 1960s liberalism by playing down some of the conflicting currents in the later New Deal. He perhaps overstates the significance of poverty, as against race, gender, environmental and consumer protection, and other issues, in the definition of a new liberalism in the later 1960s. Nevertheless, his account of the movement from opportunity to entitlement in liberal thinking about social policy greatly illuminates our understanding of American welfare history and the transformation of American liberalism since the 1960s.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

ROBERT HARRISON

Nathan G. Hale, Jr., *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917–1985* (New York & Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, £22.50). Pp. 476. ISBN 0 19 504637 4.

The Rise of Psychoanalysis in the United States forms the second and much awaited volume of Nathan Hale's worthy study of the impact of psychoanalysis in America, which he began in his 1971 book *Freud and the Americans, The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876–1917*. The second volume is marvellously detailed and will provide a valuable source for scholars working in the field of psychoanalysis or twentieth-century American (and transatlantic) intellectual history. The bridging year between the two volumes – 1917 – marks the beginnings of professional psychoanalytic practice in America and provides a useful focus for understanding the trajectory of Hale's analysis of competing interpretations of Freudian thought. Freud's own reservations about the dilution of his work in America, amongst a "hodge podge" of psychiatry and popular therapeutic techniques, forms one of the layers of Hale's inquiry. Another layer constitutes an archaeology of the numerous theoretical interventions into Freudian orthodoxy. Initially adopted in order to deal with "two concurrent crises" at the turn of the century ("crises in sexual morality and in the treatment of nervous and mental disorder"), Hale argues that psychoanalytic thought in America has since diverged in two extreme directions: the "conservative" interpretation which privileges social control "deployed in the service of American moralism" and the "radical" interpretation which advocates varying degrees of sexual liberation.

The book is divided into two sections. The first part – "Creating a Profession and a Clientele: 1920–1940" – begins with a study of the role of the "human laboratory" of the Great War, a war which was to provide a range of authentic cases of shell shock to supplement the existing coterie of analysands; "when traditional therapeutic means such as suggestion, kindness, rest, persuasion, and hypnosis failed" the emphasis of psychoanalysis on dream interpretation and free association of ideas provided a "more effective" and potentially liberating alternative. By 1940, the year after Freud's death, "the infrastructure of psychoanalysis as a profession had been completed" in America, together with an "influential" middle-class clientele which was to boom massively in the 1960s.

However, in both Europe and America, the inter-war years provoked disputes as to the professional basis of psychoanalysis; the earlier defections of Jung and Adler caused confusion amongst practitioners as to its actual metatheoretical foundation, and intensified the need to instigate rigorous courses of training to give psychoanalysis medical credence. When, in 1945, Otto Fenichel published *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* in an attempt to unify the diversifying psychoanalytical theories of the early 1930s, Hale discerns that he failed ultimately to reconcile “clashing views” and synthesize “fundamental disagreements.”

While psychoanalysis expanded commercially in America, Hale charts two more important problems which contributed to the growing crisis in the language of psychoanalysis, developed more fully in the second section, “Rise and Crisis: 1942–1985.” Firstly, the growing popularization of psychoanalytic thought furnished the patient with a set of intellectualized guards against potentially therapeutic techniques and, secondly, as early as the 1920s analysts like Helene Deutsch in Vienna and Karen Horney in Berlin began the “women’s movement” in psychoanalysis by disputing the masculinist agenda of Freud’s thought, especially his deeply problematic association of men with activity and presence and women with passivity and “the wound.” Women and gays, together with behaviourist psychologists, somatic psychiatrists, and practitioners, who, like Roy Schafer, have attempted to dispense with much of the baggage of Freudian metapsychology, provided collective ballast for the intense reaction against orthodox psychoanalysis in the 1970s and 1980s. While currently undergoing a crisis of “vocabulary,” Hale argues that the plight of American psychoanalysis is “in part the product of too great, too embarrassing a success.” The diversification of Freud’s thought has led to a proliferation of different “theoretical and practical systems” which variously distort, or tame his founding theories.

Although it is difficult to be critical of such a rigorous piece of scholarship, there are notable omissions. For example, Hale neglects to mention the Swiss analyst Ludwig Binswanger, whose *Daseinanalyse* represented an important break from the neurological presuppositions underpinning Freud’s thought and was to provide much of the impetus for the existential analytic trend in America during the mid-1950s and 1960s. Other important thinkers – Eric Fromm, Erik Erikson, and Carl Rogers – are all mentioned cursorily, and a consideration of the academic reception of psychoanalysis in America, influenced by French theorists like Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, is regretfully missing.

De Montfort University, Leicester

MARTIN HALLIWELL

Hugh Brogan, *Kennedy* (London and New York: Longman, 1997, £39.99 cloth, £12.99 paper). Pp. 249. ISBN 0 582 02889 2, 0 582 0 2888 4.

This lucid, stimulating and perceptive analysis offers to a student audience probably the best brief overview that has appeared to date on Kennedy the president. Hugh Brogan’s concern is with Kennedy as a leader in a bygone historical era defined by the Cold War and the New Deal tradition, not with the Kennedy myth.

Being a book on leadership, its themes are unsurprisingly infused with the dichotomy of Machiavelli's lion and fox. The tension between courage and compromise ran strong within Kennedy. Brogan makes effective use of *Why England Slept* and *Profiles in Courage* to explore his subject's views on this score. Interestingly, he takes the position, in contrast to conventional wisdom but not always persuasively, that Kennedy was personally more interested in pursuing the Democratic domestic agenda than Cold War militancy, but recognized the need for greater circumspection in this field because of Party divisions.

On foreign policy, Brogan argues that Kennedy's early bellicosity resulted from having to recoup US prestige after the Bay of Pigs fiasco and from Soviet high-handedness. In contrast to the likes of Thomas Paterson, who see the quest for Cold War victory as always dominant, he claims that the quest for peace became Kennedy's pre-eminent concern after the Cuban missile crisis. To Brogan, the Bay of Pigs defeat was a salutary lesson that forced Kennedy to confront the reality and complexity of international affairs, so helping to make him a more effective leader in world affairs. Hanging over any assessment of Kennedy's leadership is the insoluble question of what he might have done in Vietnam. Brogan wisely adopts a cautious approach in answering this, accepting without rancour that Kennedy was a man of his time and therefore a cold warrior, but arguing on the basis of a reasoned discussion of his actions in office that he would have been even more reluctant than his successor to Americanize the war "and might well have looked sooner, harder and more successfully for an alternative."

On domestic policy, Brogan acknowledges Kennedy's good fortune in inheriting an economy in the full flush of its postwar greatness, which freed him from problems faced by his successors. In this instance, however, he may be underestimating the success of the new economics, and Kennedy surely deserves some praise for being the last – perhaps the only – American president with a serious commitment to full employment. Nevertheless, civil rights offered the real test of Kennedy's domestic leadership. Brogan praises his handling of this explaining – if not excusing – his initial hesitancy on grounds that he could not risk the frustration of his entire political agenda by Congressional conservatives. Not everyone will agree that the fox within Kennedy wholeheartedly gave way to the lion on this issue in 1963, but few would question Brogan's judgement that no one else who might have been elected president in 1960 could have done as well.

London Guildhall University

IWAN MORGAN

Pascal Covici, Jr., *Humor and Revelation in American Literature: The Puritan Connection* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997, £31.95). Pp. 226. ISBN 0 8262 1095 3.

"What is an American?" Covici's structuring question is familiar. His answer produces a sustained contrast between two worldviews – two sides to the American self – call them patrician and demotic. The former's epistemological confidence is seen as socially conservative. Patrician humour confirms the superiority of the reader's perspective. The latter rejects metaphysical certainty,

jolting us with the unknowable. Demotic humour is vernacular and anti-elitist. Elucidating the patrician worldview, Covici's original connections between American Puritanism and Anglicanism preface work on equally overlooked relationships between the genteel tradition and "Old Southwest" humour. Meanwhile the demotic lineage (Ward, Wise, Franklin) is authoritatively established. There is a superb reading of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," Robin's laugh crystallizing Covici's concerns, some excellent work on Melville, Emerson, and Thoreau, and wonderful passages on Twain, whose side-switching career unlocks this book.

One's reservations are a tribute to the risks Covici takes. The systematic privileging of theological discourse provides the villain of the piece. It is, for Covici, a "megalomaniacal fantasy" that a knowable God has provided us with what Twain contemptuously described as a "moral medicine chest." Yet demotic humor has its own medicine chest. Without the assurance of God, Covici tells us, laughter reassures. Laughter is "coping." It "takes us outside ourselves." Rationalism, skepticism, tolerance, moral relativism, and a shot of energetic extroversion: the demotic worldview (i.e. democratic liberalism) is just what the doctor ordered. These unacknowledged political value judgments lead to a dubious reading, admittedly brief, of *The Great Gatsby*. Covici's idea that Carraway resembles the narrator/listener in "Old Southwest" tales is suggestive. Yet, suspecting "knowing," Covici too quickly accepts "unknowing." Carraway's self-interested and evasive invocations of mystery are merely praised for the Americanness of their ambivalence.

Covici devotes himself to the literary canon "invented" by Matthiessen and others but he does not do so unashamedly, referring to his "canonical bits and pieces" with unnecessary self-deprecation. Impertinently I imagine him as Twain at the *Atlantic* dinner of 1877. The canonical scraps stand in for the demotic, wickedly suggesting a link between "canon revision" and patrician norms. Sut Lovingood apparently appeals to "male sexist fantasies." Is this Covici's genteel side, bowing to contemporary proprieties? Perhaps so, and, if so, unhappily. The blurb and introduction present this book as an inquiry into "cultural hegemony." Yet the language of political correctness is misplaced: Covici sees revolution not reaction in humour's revelations.

Keele University

T. J. LUSTIG

Roy Simmonds, *John Steinbeck: The War Years, 1939-1945* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1996, £35.00). Pp. 348. ISBN 0 8387 5317 5.

This new study of Steinbeck's war years sets out to answer a question: how was it possible that the author of *The Grapes of Wrath* should have sunk to the depths of public esteem by the time of his death in 1968? It is a question which also hangs over the postwar phase of Dos Passos's career and even to some extent Hemingway's. Simmonds pursues a method of intensive detail in trying to find the reason in Steinbeck's case. He quotes extensively from much unpublished material, and shows a real skill also in capturing the situations Steinbeck found himself in while serving abroad as a war correspondent. Logically enough,

Simmonds takes his bearings from the furore which succeeded the publication of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Although Steinbeck hoped to be “born again,” he was quickly distracted by a growing interest in the cinema. Soon after *The Grapes*, he began his collaboration with the marine biologist Ed Ricketts on *The Sea of Cortez*, and at the same time became involved with the documentary film maker Herbert Kline in producing a movie about Mexico. In 1941, Steinbeck was approached to write the script of *Tortilla Flat*, and it is fairly certain that he wrote the script of *The Red Pony* almost singlehanded. One of the few substantial works to come out of this period was *The Man Is Down*, a generic cross between drama and novel. Despite its good points, *The Sea of Cortez* was published at an awkward time when the public – Steinbeck included – was distracted by the war. He was very interested in contributing to the Foreign Information Service (FIS) and was, in fact, appointed as special consultant to the Secretary of War and also became a foreign news editor for the Office of War Information (OWI). Here a grotesque irony emerges. As Steinbeck’s commitment to the war effort increased, and as his patriotism rose to fever pitch, he was repeatedly investigated by Army and Navy Intelligence, among other bodies. Suspected of Communist sympathies, he had been put under surveillance by the FBI as early as the mid-1930s, and during the war after one of these investigations the director of the government’s Counter-Intelligence Branch decided in his wisdom that Steinbeck was a security risk. In practice, this process seems to have been carried out so inefficiently that it mainly delayed Steinbeck. He did not have to suffer Howard Fast’s indignity of being refused a passport. Instead he published a recruitment book on the air-force (*Bombs Away*) and wrote a script for the propaganda film *Lifeboat* which Hitchcock subsequently changed so drastically that it became unrecognizable to Steinbeck. He next took up a post in London as war correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune* from where he went on a minesweeper patrol; then moved to Algeria and southern Italy. While in the latter country, Steinbeck attached himself to a special task force similar to the OSS and actually participated in a number of actions. Simmonds scrupulously examines the despatches Steinbeck wrote at this time, and demonstrated that he could not possibly have witnessed all the events he described. Furthermore, he shows that the 1958 collection *Once There Was A War* was very selective (twenty despatches were excluded), and by being tied to their dates of publication these give a completely misleading impression of Steinbeck’s period on the Italian front. On his return to the USA, Steinbeck wrote *Cannery Row* as an attempt to wipe out memories of the war, and on the eve of its publication he began to suspect public hostilities. In the event, the novel sold exceptionally well and received quite positive reviews although it was repeatedly described as a light-weight work. By Simmonds’ account, Steinbeck was very productive during the war, but his productivity tended to include a considerable amount of ephemeral material which quickly dated as soon as the war ended. We have already noted his fascination with the cinema, but here again Steinbeck’s labours over scripts tended to get swallowed up in the production process. Finally, Simmonds presents a portrait of a writer dissipating his energies by involving himself in a whole range of diverse time-consuming activities like writing a synopsis for the musical comedy *The Wizard of Maine*. If the war replaced the Okies as his new focus for concern, security restrictions

made it impossible for Steinbeck to pursue his method of documentary realism. And so by the war's end he had become, according to Simmonds, a writer without a subject who turned nostalgically back briefly to the California he knew for *Cannery Row*.

Liverpool University

DAVID SEED

Willard Carl Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation* (Kent, Ohio and London: The Kent State University Press, 1996, \$39.00). Pp. 416. ISBN 0 87338 536 5.

The life of Lewis Cass spanned the formative period of the American republic between the Revolution and the Civil War. The "father of popular sovereignty" was born in 1782, just slightly less than a year after the American victory over the British at Yorktown, and died just over a year after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. One might therefore assume that Cass was very much a man of his time, but in fact he seemed to be distinctly at odds with much of it. As Allan Nevins once put it, Cass appeared to be "a relic of the past." Historians since, in the main, have been content to leave him there. The figure of Lewis Cass appears in virtually every study of *antebellum* politics, but usually in the wings. Even more telling is the fact that no comprehensive biography of him existed, until now.

Quite apart from filling an historiographical gap, Klunder has performed a remarkable feat of scholarship in this study, which draws together material from Cass's private papers (at least those which he could decipher, Cass's handwriting being notoriously impenetrable), published work, and a wealth of newspaper, manuscript, and secondary sources. From every angle, this is an impressively researched, admirably controlled, and beautifully constructed piece of work. Klunder has taken pains to present Cass in a fair and balanced way, although the picture that emerges is, at best, a mixed one. Cass may well have enjoyed "a distinguished reputation as a moderate politician and staunch defender of national sovereignty," but, as Klunder goes on to show, he ultimately "did not understand the mechanics of the second political party system...failed to appreciate the importance of grass-roots organization...and...was naive when it came to campaign funding." Cass was certainly not naive when it came to personal funding, and his lack of concern for his business partners in the wake of the financial panic of 1837 did not win him many friends. Later, whilst on the campaign trail in 1843, Cass pushed moderation too far when, afraid of alienating voters, he refused to address a gathering of Free Masons in Cincinnati because they were dressed in Masonic regalia. Klunder puts this down to Cass's inexperience, but such behaviour was simply rude and, given that Cass himself was a past grand master, hypocritical. In his defence, Cass was cognisant of the national importance of West Point, fought to preserve the academy when it came under threat in the 1830s, and in general "devoted considerable energies to promoting the welfare of the American soldier." He was active in, if not evangelical about, the Temperance movement, and assumed a paternalistic attitude toward Native Americans. This did them little good, yet it was more than he did for African Americans. Throughout his career, Cass failed utterly to see

any moral dimension to the slavery question. It was, in his view, purely a political matter, and he acted accordingly not, Klunder argues, because it was the path of least resistance but because “it was constitutionally sound.” In this, as in other matters, Cass proved to be out of step with his time. Although Klunder stresses Cass’s consistent and aggressive nationalism, the picture of Cass that one is left with at the end of this impressive biography is of a politician whose agenda was ultimately too personal to have a truly national resonance.

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

S-M. GRANT

Laura Dassow Walls, *Seeing New Worlds: Henry David Thoreau and Nineteenth-Century Natural Science* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995). Pp. 300. ISBN 0 299 14740 1, 0 299 14744 4.

Recent work on Thoreau has highlighted the shift that seems to take place somewhere in the middle of *Walden* in the author’s attention to the world around him, and how he expresses it. For Laurence Buell, in *The Environmental Imagination* (1995), Thoreau moved from an “anthropocentric” to an “ecocentric” reading of his interior and exterior environments. Professor Walls traces the change on a different level of discourse, the evolution of ideas about natural science in the nineteenth century. Thoreau’s, reading, she thinks, made him first a “rational holist,” believing that the physical world is a transcendent unity to be comprehended only through thought; then, as the newer science of Alexander von Humboldt and (later) Charles Darwin came on stream, turned him into an “empirical holist,” for whom the whole could be approached only through close study of its constituent parts.

The trouble with the rational holists – the German *Naturphilosophen*, William Paley’s *Natural Theology* (1825), Charles Lyell’s *Principles of Geology* (1830–33), and the stream of Anglo-American romanticism running from Coleridge to Emerson – was that, prompted by a common anxiety to synthesize, they tended to efface the facts, whether in time or space, in favour of all-embracing systems like galvanism, or grand geological eras, or Goethe’s search for the *Ur-plant* underlying all vegetable species. As such, they set up a tension between the intractable facts of the world – the study of which they would come to anathematize as “dry science” – and the integrating, “poetic” sensibility.

For the new scientists, on the other hand, “nature” was not the creation of a divine intelligence, to be decoded by the equally divine human mind, but a system evolving by itself, the only access to which was the close study of its minute particulars. Humboldt’s field method – explore, collect, measure, connect – did not shrink from the responsibility to integrate, but, by putting the particulars first, “dissolve[ed] the dualism between mind and nature” and thus set Thoreau on a later career that was both “scientific” and “poetic.”

This is an intelligent and lucid reading of Thoreau’s reading, though its concentration on the history of ideas necessarily elides the other things that happened to him, like his experience of living at Walden, and (above all) of learning to write about it. It is not even clear that Thoreau’s sense of Humboldt was all that centred on the rigours of his scientific method. Of the rational holists,

I could have done with less lengthy paraphrase, and a sharper critique of their arid, contradictory abstractions. Finally, it is as well to remark that this book is about natural science or the philosophy of nature, not natural history. There is nothing here about Thoreau's practical and rhetorical use of the Linnean system of classification, or of his dialectic with Gilbert White's *The Natural History of Selbourne* (1789). For more on that latter topic readers would be better served by Frank Stewart's section on Thoreau in *A Natural History of Nature Writing*, also published in 1995.

University of Sussex

STEPHEN FENDER

Wayne M. O'Leary, *Maine Sea Fisheries: The Rise and Fall of a Native Industry, 1830-1890* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996, £52.50 cloth, £23.50 paper). Pp. 391. ISBN 1 55553 280 2, 1 55553 281 0.

This book is a revised version of O'Leary's doctoral thesis. It is a comprehensive study of the Maine sea fisheries, of which the most important was the cod fishery. Although the cod was by no means the most valuable fish, it was much easier to catch than more elusive fish such as the mackerel.

In his first chapter, O'Leary makes the curious observation that "consideration of the Maine sea fisheries could be a dubious scholarly activity if their impact had been felt only within the bounds of the state of Maine." This is a controversial view of local history.

Although O'Leary argues the Maine sea fisheries had certain unique characteristics, his book suggests that they can not be seen in isolation from the sea fisheries of New England and the Canadian Atlantic coast. Indeed, O'Leary makes frequent references to links with the sea fisheries of Massachusetts.

Maine's position as the second most important source of fish products in the United States was relatively short-lived. Its peak period was the middle years of the nineteenth century. By the 1890s, Maine had been overtaken by what O'Leary calls "unlikely producers" such as Virginia, Maryland, California, and Alaska. It is not clear why O'Leary considers these states were "unlikely producers." He suggests that the decline of the Maine sea fisheries was the result of a number of factors including inadequate railway links; the repeal of the federal fishing-bounty in 1866; the rise of Canada as a major competitor for Maritime provincial labour and also as a producer of the same fish products which were subsidized by the Dominion government from 1882; and a change in American taste whereby the salt fish produced in Maine was gradually displaced in the American diet by fresh fish and meat, milk, fruits, and vegetables. The high cost of insurance in Maine also forced some of the state's fishermen to relocate in Massachusetts.

The extensive research for this book is based on a wide variety of primary sources. O'Leary also provides a very useful bibliographical essay on the secondary sources he consulted. However, he has overlooked some sources: for example, the contemporary canning trade press might have provided further insights into the relationship between the canning industry and the Maine sea fisheries.

This important addition to the literature might have been more accessible to

the general reader if O'Leary had provided a glossary of fishery and shipping terminology.

University of Wolverhampton

RICHARD A. HAWKINS

Margaret Dickie and Thomas Travisano (eds.), *Gendered Modernisms: American Women Poets and Their Readers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996, £42.50 cloth, £17.95 paper). Pp. 321. ISBN 0 8122 3312 3, 0 8122 1550 8.

The thirteen contributors to this volume were given a brief: to write an essay on "X" for a book about American women poets and literary history. Even the book title reflects the complexities of the issues: modernisms in the plural, gendered authorship and literary production, issues of readership and reception, and issues around American literary history and debates about the literary canon are all pertinent to the topic as proposed. The effect of reading the volume is to destabilize one's grasp on all of these notions. The heterogeneity of approaches in *Gendered Modernisms* leaves this reviewer inarticulate at the level of conceptual overview. The problem is confounded by the expectations of coherence which the title establishes; so that one asks why are Edna St. Vincent Millay, Laura (Riding) Jackson, Elizabeth Bishop, Muriel Rukeyser, and Gwendolyn Brooks included, whereas American women poets with arguably as great or a greater claim to inclusion in a modernist canon – Mina Loy and Lorinne Neidecker spring to mind as obvious examples – are not mentioned? For example, Millay is praised for those qualities which I consider anti-modernist, being situated by Suzanne Clark in a powerful tradition of nineteenth-century sentimental fiction:

The alienation of affection and the personal that was modernism was bound to reject Millay, as it rejected in a larger sense the claims of women and sentimentalism to power and value.

This is somewhat confusing in a volume on modernist women poets, since the argument for Millay's inclusion in the modernist canon appears to be that she is a practitioner of the literature of sentiment, which is, by definition, the opposite of modernism.

My quibble is that the volume promises the impossible, a reconfiguration of literary historical definitions of modernism in the light of recent theories about gender and reader reception. What it actually delivers is a diverse collection of essays on individual twentieth-century American women poets, who can be categorized variously as modernist, postmodernist, anti-modernist, neoformalist, political, apolitical, etc., and who are discussed using a variety of critical and theoretical methodologies. The contributor who most nearly answers the impossible brief is the co-editor, Thomas Travisano. His analysis of the conditions which activate reconfigurations in critical reception and evaluation of a poet is a model of lucid analysis and informed, balanced argument. His method could well be applied to other authors, although he restricts himself to the poet, Elizabeth Bishop. Another closely argued essay, Robin Gail Schultze's "The Frigate Pelican's Progress: Marianne Moore's Multiple Versions and Modernist

Practice,” also addresses issues of literary history, but by a specific focus on textual concerns, and how Moore’s habit of writing different versions of the same poem at different moments in history, while reflecting the sensitivity of response to contingent reality, also mitigates against full recognition of the scope of her achievement, since subsequent editors tend not to publish full variorum texts. Cheryl Walker and Kate Daniels both answer the brief by considering the changing climates of critical re-evaluation. Other contributors to the volume do not answer the brief so directly. Of course, this does not make their essays any less welcome, but it does make for an uneasy read. Two personal favourites are Margaret Dickie’s essay on Stein and Cassandra Laity’s on H.D. As one who has survived the political correctness of radical feminism, it is with great personal pleasure that I read these two essays on eroticism and pornography in the art of these two major modernist authors. I am sure other readers will find other pleasures in a volume whose redeeming quality is precisely that it failed to accomplish what its original proposal hubristically set out to achieve.

University of Warwick

HELEN M. DENNIS

Gaylyn Studlar, *This Mad Masquerade: Stardom and Masculinity in the Jazz Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, £31.00 cloth, £14.00 paper). Pp. 320. ISBN 0 231 10320 4, 0 231 10321 2.

The author examines the spectatorship of male stars of the Hollywood film industry between the years 1915 and 1930, adding to her previous publications in a field opened by Miriam Hansen’s *Babel and Babylon*. Roles played by Douglas Fairbanks, John Barrymore, Rudolph Valentino, and Lon Chaney developed within the emerging mechanisms of stardom. Although newspaper interviews, fan magazines, publicity photographs, and advertising circulate meaning around these male stars, this heyday of feature films remains largely unexamined, the era overshadowed by general theories of stardom and masquerade. Studlar prefers to locate her interest in specifics, backed up by extensive research on the reaction to feminized masculinity in a culture of “the New Woman,” white American unease, and panic over male identity in a public culture in which women became increasingly visible.

The processes that constructed and reformed masculinity, and those that negotiated between tradition, femininity, and a gendered audience are discussed in extensive detail, always within the specific images of each star. Douglas Fairbanks is taken to be representative of the cultural norm which becomes increasingly transgressed as the era and the book progresses. With John Barrymore, the author is able to discuss what she terms deviant “woman-made masculinities” for female spectators of the 1920s, often a retreat into pre-modern historical costume dramas and child-like affectations. Given that up to 83 per cent of film audiences were female, it was not surprising that women became the subject of debate – especially around images made by and not just for women. With Valentino’s dance-like movement, this construction is linked to what was considered the unleashing of women’s sexuality in the period. Given the increasing ethnic demography, immigrants supposedly pouring into Tango

Palaces to exploit America's women, Valentino's image was sexually troublesome. Yet to assume that the film industry homogenized successful and newly coined "sex appeal" would be to underestimate Hollywood. The male body in pain is not simply an excuse to show rippling muscles to make audiences swoon and box offices bulge. Despite being neglected by scholarship, Lon Chaney was extremely popular amongst audiences. His monstrous "freak-show" identity problematized the possibilities of physical perfection that initiated the popularity of Fairbanks, and even confused the common view of star masculinity as recognizable and an image to be identified with, by heterosexual males at least. Chaney's screen roles were contained in narratives of revenge and self-loathing, yet his offscreen images remained a series of masochistic triumphs – as if a "disturbed actor" chose his freakishness.

This book's scholarship works against stereotypes of this age of Hollywood that has limited the films to what the author names as "the cinematic equivalent of the soundbite." It also contributes towards understanding the workings of the image of masculinities, and offers an excellent introduction to the popular culture of an image-centred modernity.

University of Nottingham

BEN ANDREWS

Chip Deffaa, *Blue Rhythms: Six Lives in Rhythm and Blues* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996, \$29.95). Pp. 301. ISBN 0 252 02203 3.

Blue Rhythms offers engaging profiles of six important r&b artists: Ruth Brown, Little Jimmy Scott, Charles Brown, Floyd Dixon, LaVern Baker, and Jimmy Witherspoon. While each has a unique tale to tell, several factors link them. First, their careers initially blossomed in the 1940s and early 1950s when r&b was primarily produced by black musicians for black audiences – although as Deffaa and his subjects point out, much of the money made from their recordings and performances has always found its way into white pockets. Second, they had to deal with the enormous impact of rock and roll on their careers, as sanitized white-cover versions of black hits prevented them from reaping the full rewards for their talents. Ultimately, the nature of black r&b was also changed as the mainstream market beckoned for those who could make the necessary stylistic adjustments. Many could or would not, and a third strand that links these diverse performers is that they have been beneficiaries of the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, founded in the late 1980s to recoup decades worth of missing royalty payments to hard-pressed rhythm and blues veterans.

Full of fascinating detail and anecdotes, it is the profiles of the lesser-known artists which make most appeal. The best is the chapter on Little Jimmy Scott, whose remarkable high, keening, almost feminine tenor was a consequence of his affliction with Kallman's syndrome, which inhibits hormonal development and puberty. With his fragile frame and heart-rending vocals, Scott invoked a good many male, as well as female, crushes among his listeners, and influenced singers as diverse as Frankie Vallie, Nancy Wilson, and Smokey Robinson.

As with all the profiles, Scott's story is sensitively and sympathetically told. Yet Deffaa's obvious respect for his subjects and their art is a weakness, as well as a strength, of the book. While Deffaa's enthusiasm for the music, and his deep sense of injustice about the way in which these artists and their contribution to American music have been neglected are clear, there is relatively little analysis here. Certainly, Deffaa rarely challenges, or qualifies, his subjects' views of the musical past. The conventional wisdom about a golden era of r&b degenerating into the diluted biracial era of rock and roll remains firmly in place – despite the fact that many of the artists here cite Bing Crosby as a formative influence even during the years of putatively segregated markets. Traditional complaints about the impact of white-cover records on black careers are allowed to stand without any comment on the sheer ubiquity of the cover phenomenon in the 1950s – a phenomenon which, without underestimating its racial co-ordinates in the middle of that decade, often saw black artists re-doing white hits, while respectable white pop acts like Patti Page covered those rowdy country songs by Hank Williams, all in an effort to reach diverse sections of a national market defined by region, class, gender, and generation, as well as by race. While Deffaa rarely gets involved in these sorts of complex interpretative problems, *Blue Rhythms* is a pleasure to read and contains much of value for those who may wish to do so.

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

BRIAN WARD

Mutlu Konuk Blasing, *Politics and Form in Postmodern Poetry: O'Hara, Bishop, Ashbery and Merrill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, £35). Pp. 219. ISBN 0 521 49607 1.

Experimental forms are often equated with radical content, whereas traditional forms are often consigned to conservative agendas. The history of the evolution of post-war American poetry is particularly marked by this bias, but Blasing will have none of it. From her point of view, all poetry is inevitably grounded in rhetoric and therefore cannot escape from history, no matter how hard it attempts to do so. Modernism vilified rhetoric and emphasized technique; rhetoric betrayed a collusion with the corrupted language of one's times, while technique sought a language of purity, based on the eternal verities of natural process. Blasing regards herself as a postmodernist precisely because of her emphasis on rhetoric; she chooses two experimental poets and two traditionalist poets in order to show how rhetoric permeates all of their work, lending it an ambiguous and embattled authority. These four poets know that they are enclosed within the net of rhetoric; they may entertain modernist or Romantic fantasies of escape, but they recognize that these fantasies are only fantasies, instances of an idle dreaming which could none the less turn sour, much in the way that Pound's dream of an alternative kingdom turned sour, propelling him towards a self-willed authoritarianism which sought validation in Hitler and Mussolini.

There is an obvious gain in Blasing's approach, since it enables her to bridge the gap between two rival bodies of literature. Any account of post-war

American poetry must find a way of including not only Bishop and Lowell, but also O'Hara and Olson. Blasing's stress on rhetoric seems to be an inclusive gesture, but one only has to look at her treatment of O'Hara to see that it is not; she is inherently uncomfortable with the anarchic surrealism of much of his work, and selects only those passages of it which appear to conform with her thesis. She wants to insist that "the only way to gain a critical distance within poetic language is to play one traditional paradigm against another and bring out how both models are equally constructed and equally in collusion with larger cultural economies." On the same page, she claims that "firmly aligning herself with the system, Bishop can show how a poetic imagination that positions itself against the system also belongs within it." Certainly O'Hara recognized his collusion with the system, yet he amplifies that collusion, expanding it until it reveals consequences that the system would find utterly abhorrent. Let America go to the movies – perhaps, in the dark, some dreaming boy might imagine he is Joan Crawford! Is that what the system wanted to hear in the early 1960s? Or what about Allen Ginsberg "putting his queer shoulder to the wheel" and offering his commodified culture a reasonable rate for each pulse of verse? One cannot imagine the prim Miss Bishop or the equally prim Ms. Blasing feeling comfortable with either gesture; the language of offense is too emphatically present for their more deeply conservative personalities.

Not that there is anything necessarily wrong with a conservative personality. It takes, as they say, all sorts to make a world, though that is an insight which stretches both ways; isn't it high time that the conservative lamb learns to lie down with the radical lion? One may indeed accept that we are all inevitably distorted by the culture we grow up in, but why make the assumption that there is so little we can do about it? The critical distance Ms. Blasing describes is the product of a fearful and cautious soul; without realizing it, her preferences are rooted in her personality. Larger, bolder and more radical distances can be achieved, distances which break the hold rhetoric has on us, though the vertigo this sometimes induces demands a price not all of us are willing to pay. It may be true that capitalism has proved itself to be an accommodating enemy, soaking up dissidence and selling it back as radical chic, but that is a stance that can also be deconstructed. Ms. Blasing's version of postmodernism turns it back on the deconstructions of the Language poets precisely because they assume that our critical distance can be deepened and expanded; she sees traces of the old modernist arrogance in their polemical fervour. Yet rage against those who oppress and violate us is a perennial human necessity; Ms. Blasing's compromised, conservative manifesto draws itself up into a tight, brilliantly constructed prison, airless and defensive. Its incessant repetition is the movement of a prisoner endlessly treading out the four-square dimensions of a cell. She needs to be told that it is all right to open the door – there is a large company out there, some of its members timid like herself, all in need of the refreshment of a variegated, tolerant resistance.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

CLIVE MEACHEN

S. W. Pope (ed.) *The New American Sport History. Recent Approaches and Perspectives* (Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press 1997, \$42.50 cloth, \$19.95 paper). Pp. 423. ISBN 0 252 02264 5, 0 252 06567 0.

Even before a ball had been struck at the 1997 British Open gold championship, unprecedented crowds witnessed the practice rounds of Tiger Woods, a one-man melting pot who embodies American social history and the mythology of the American Dream through sporting success.

There could be no better time to discuss what Stephen Pope argues, in a careful and scholarly introduction to his edited collection of literature surveys and original scholarship, is a new paradigm of sporting history. Going beyond both Marxist ideas of mass culture as the carrier of false consciousness, and the Weberian rationalism of Allen Guttman's early work, the new sport history has engaged with anthropology and with feminist and poststructuralist theory, and has diversified around three key areas: culture and identity; the body; and consumer capitalism.

The first group of essays concerns the emerging culture of the nation. During the nineteenth century, fierce debates threatened the status of football – seen by its opponents as too violent – and baseball, characterized as less “manly” than cricket. The sports' proponents countered by militarizing football, which, they claimed, displayed teamwork under coached discipline, while baseball (whose origins were bourgeois and urban) was mythologized as the sport of small-town America. The second set of essays emphasize sport's role in encoding changing notions of gender. Early nineteenth-century ideas of separate spheres emphasized the “sportsman” at the expense of female sporting activity. An anxious middle class worked sport into its own, disciplined and puritanical, self-image; this involved the suppression both of female sports, and of any notion of sports and the sporting body as erotic – a tendency corrected here by Allen Guttman.

The third section tackles class and ethnicity, whose most obvious weave through American history is via prizefighting, and whose most contentious area remains the attempts to explain the current hegemony of black athletes in certain sports. Less obvious areas illuminated here include the failure of the Marxist counter-Olympics, and the comparative success of Catholic sporting organizations, during the 1930s. The final group of essays examines marketing and consumption. The amateur participant is given welcome attention, as Pamela L. Cooper details the entrepreneurial transformation of the New York marathon with scholarly aplomb, while Benjamin G. Rader surveys the self-policing of the body through exercise regimes.

With their dual emphasis on the politics of identity and the actuality of processual change, these reprinted essays serve as a useful guide to the state of American sporting history in the early 1990s. On the whole admirably footnoted, they will be useful to scholars and undergraduate students alike.

King Alfred's College, Winchester

ANDREW BLAKE

Michael Kowaleski (ed.), *Reading the West: New Essays on the Literature of the American West* (Cambridge University Press, 1996, £40.00 cloth, £14.95 paper). Pp. 304. ISBN 0 521 45061 6, 0 521 56559 6.

Said Wallace Stegner, doyen of western scholars and novelists, reminiscing in 1990 and himself then in his 80s: "Nothing could convince them in New York or Massachusetts that there was anything of literary interest in the West except cowboys." (For New York or Massachusetts read, presumably, the New York Review of Books and Columbia or Harvard Universities.) With back turned on such once almost programmatic ignorance, *Reading the West* sets out, in Michael Kowaleski's introductory words, to explore "the true complexity and range of western writing." That range extends in time from the 1850s to the present, and in genre includes not only prose fiction, poetry, and drama, but also natural history, topographical description, meditative essay, travel journal, and diary. The cultural heritage may be Anglo-Saxon, or it may be Hispanic, American Indian, Asian; and women writers play almost as large a part as men. The place is not Middle but Far, west of the 100th meridian, from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast.

And "place" is where the essays begin, with William M. Bevis's bravura assault upon the placelessness, the "no-place center" of postmodernist mentality. Focusing upon the half-Indian D'Arcy McNickle's novel, *Wind from an Enemy Sky*, published in 1978 after 40 years in the writing, but locating that work within a global geography, Bevis finds the regionally inscribed, Indian-traced west joining "much of the third world in predicting an end to the imperialism of liquidity and... a return to the fate of place." (Or watch this space, and dream, Van Winkle?) Accompanying Bevis in this first section is David Rains Wallace, who "in the wilderness west" follows a path away from anthropocentric humanism through Emerson, Thoreau, John Muir, and his "visceral hatred of human arrogance," and Mary Austin, to Gary Snyder's *Practice of the Wild*. Within this context, the Eskimo Igjugarjuk's words, "the only true wisdom lives far from mankind, out in the general loneliness," – a wisdom shared by Robinson Jeffers, for instance, and sometimes by Jack London – may serve as epitome.

The volume's second section, "Reimagining the American Frontier," has a predominantly nineteenth-century concentration, as Shannon Applegate recounts her long, scholarly pursuit of frontier literary remnants, letters and diaries comic and tragic, poignant, entertaining, and everywhere revealingly informative; as Kowaleski examines the records of two genteel women travellers, Louise Clappe's *The Shirley Letters* and Isabella Bird's *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, with especial regard for their interest in local idiom and slang, in "the wicked wit of the west"; and as Lee Mitchell compares (perhaps a little more conveniently than differences should permit) two contemporaneous figures, namely Bret Harte and the painter of the grandiloquent sublime, Albert Bierstadt, who in the late 1860s and early 1870s with like suddenness soared to, and plummeted from, far heights of fame.

In "Sentimentalism in the American South West," an essay that disturbs the book's prevailing, benevolent weather, Peter Wild subjects to a tough-minded critique three enchanted rhapsodists of the desert, John C. Van Dyke and Mary

Austin from the turn of the century and Edward Abbey of more recent years. He sees each, in whole or significant part, as elitist, aestheticist, and reactionary, with an influence that contributes to a culture of dehumanizing stereotypes and the evasion of real problems, to a characteristic American sentimentalism "of the sort more and more holding sway in contemporary life." In a different mode, one very much in tune with the previously mentioned David Rains Wallace, Thomas J. Lyon celebrates those "revisionist" writers who have recoiled from activist egocentricity towards a pantheistic mysticism, notably the poet, Robinson Jeffers, into whose mind, felt the anthropologist Loren Eiseley, "something utterly wild had crept," and the novelist, Frank Waters, the complete revisionist calling into question "an entire civilization."

The remaining essays are precise in their concerns. Susan J. Rosowski, best known for her work on Willa Cather, sees "the western myth" as "not only profoundly hostile to women, but ... [also] hostile to language," and, armed with that assumption, compellingly expounds Jean Stafford's *The Mountain Lion* as a "rewriting of the Western." Margaret Garcia Davidson, Misha Berson, and Philip Burnham discuss respectively Hispanic autobiographies, Asian American plays, and American Indian novels, with Burnham resonantly concluding that "'What is Indian?' and 'Who is Indian?'" are questions ... that ring far beyond the literary world." Linda Hamalian provides an historical account of the San Francisco Renaissance of the 1950s (Rexroth, Everson, Duncan, Spicer et al.), one that offers no food for new thought to those familiar with that crowded and excited poetic stage but that, for the more general reader, will be plainly and clearly instructive. Finally, John D. Houston, in "The Circle Almost Circled" surveys twentieth-century California's fiction, from Steinbeck to Didion, via Chandler and Hammett. The title of his essay is taken from Whitman's poem, "Facing West from California's Shores." That insistent westward gaze provokes in Houston the observation that, for many a recent writer, California is no west, but rather for Asian Americans an east, for Chicanos a north, whilst for American Indians "the ancestry pushes straight up from the soil beneath their feet." It is a perspective upon American cultural history that must subvert and destabilize the traditional Anglo-Saxon or European American vantage ground. From the soil beneath the feet to the wisdom of the great loneliness, this excellent collection of essays assuredly does explore and uncover "the true complexity and range of western writing."

University of Essex

R. W. (HERBIE) BUTTERFIELD

Ann duCille, *Skin Trade* (London: Harvard University Press, 1996, £19.95 cloth, £11.50 paper). Pp. 211. ISBN 0 674 81081 3, 0 674 81084 8.

This collection of lucid, engaging, thoughtful essays on the current uses and abuses of race as a cultural commodity in America should prove highly attractive both to specialist and to general readers. It provides another fine example of that category of American books which deploys expertise in a profoundly democratic fashion by undertaking sophisticated cultural critique in ways which invite rather than repel the largest possible audience. By looking at a handful of the most

visible recent manifestations of race as the pre-eminent strand in the national narrative of the United States, duCille offers compelling, well-composed snapshots of what she calls “the uncivil war of the 1990s.” Each of the five essays which make up the collection is tightly focussed on one much-discussed illustrative example of the “commodification of alterity” in contemporary America. The first essay takes on the currently vogueish topic of Barbie dolls and looks at the history of Black Barbie as an exemplar not only of rather dubious American identity politics but of the ways in which corporate America appropriates political struggles and psychological investigations for its assured profit. This essay, which deserves its pride of place as the lead essay in the collection, interweaves autobiographical commentary with intelligent analysis of the mechanisms of American capitalism as it plays with the counters of race and gender for its own purposes. The next three essays, each on an aspect of “the commodification of alterity” in the academy and in the Black intellectual community, look at the debates surrounding the recent success of African American women writers and at the rise of the academic popularity of theoretically grounded and highly abstract Postcolonial Studies as a potentially dangerous substitute for African American Studies with its insistence on attention to African American experience. Before its disappointed but passionate Epilogue, the collection closes with an essay which offers a wide-ranging commentary on the media’s treatment of the O. J. Simpson trial and the American public’s reaction to it. Beautifully written, each of the essays displays a finely balanced and judiciously deployed mixture of personal reaction, analytic power, and political commitment. Simultaneously displaying the accessibility of the best journalism and the rigorous standards of expert scholarship, this is a book which one can only hope will reach the very large number of readers which constitutes its proper audience.

University of the West of England

KATE FULLBROOK

Elizabeth Renker, *Strike Through the Mask: Herman Melville and the Scene of Writing* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, £29). Pp. 182. ISBN 0 8018 5230 7.

“Strike through the mask!” cries Ahab in his desperate attempt to discover meaning behind the looming hieroglyphic wall of the whale’s featureless forehead. This faceless front, in Renker’s reading, is only the best known of Melville’s obsessive figurations of the white page he daily encountered. Renker contends that from first to last Melville’s fundamental subject is his own chronic writer’s block: the “paralysis of arm” he experienced in “the prison pen” of his study faced with the “obscuring, frustrating, resistant force” of his page.

Renker is interested in the material process of writing. She describes Melville’s habits of composition, where and how he wrote, and the physical features of his page: “ink, paper, handwriting, typeface,” arguing that the “violence” of his physical engagement with the page, which she claims is visible in the surviving manuscripts, is evidence of his anxiety at the scene of writing, his terror at the blankness of the page, and his frustrated desire to render its surface transparent

to “a world of true experience.” She maintains that Melville’s “confrontation with the written page... is **constitutive** [her emphasis] of the persistent facial confrontations in his fiction.”

Renker charts Melville’s changing relation to the page through deconstructive and technically detailed close readings of *Typee*, *Pierre*, and *The Confidence-Man*, with glances at *Moby Dick* and some of the poems in “Battle Pieces.” She adduces fascinating information about contemporary writing, penmanship, printing, and typographical practices to support her assessment of the manuscripts. Because her readings often fly in the face of received Melville criticism (in which she is deeply versed), she is careful to address points of difference from the critical canon. This is particularly true in the chapter on “Wife Beating and the Written Page.” Melville’s scene of writing was domestic; his labour driven by his duty to support a household of dependent women. Renker attempts to show how evidence that Melville physically and emotionally abused his wife and children can contribute to an understanding of his work. In this reading, Melville the illegible, alcoholic wife-beater becomes the flawed and tragic hero of an epic struggle with the blank page; his wife and children the innocent bystanders maimed and destroyed.

This densely argued, scholarly book makes a compelling addition to Melville criticism.

University of the West of England

RENEE SLATER

Joseph G. Morgan, *The Vietnam Lobby: The American Friends of Vietnam, 1955–1975* (Chapel Hill, NC and London: University of North Carolina Press). Pp. 229. ISBN 0 8078 2322 8.

In the early 1950s, Ngo Dinh Diem was just another failed exiled Vietnamese politician. By October 1955, he was head of state of the artificially created state of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), which held power in the south of Vietnam below the 17th parallel. Joseph Morgan in this book shows how Diem was able to build up an extensive network of contacts in the US including Justice William O. Douglas and Senator Mike Mansfield, which was able to gain him support from the Eisenhower Administration. The AFV (American Friends of Vietnam) was set up to defend the interests of Diem and other anti-communist Vietnamese and to ensure the survival of the nascent state. They were to play an important role in ensuring that the US would back Diem over the claims of the French backed Emperor Bao Dai who was the then *de jure* ruler of Vietnam. The 1950s represented the peak of the AFV’s influence on the US Government and, as Morgan shows, they were largely irrelevant during the 1960s when the US was committing troops to save the RVN. By the time President Nixon was disentangling the US from the conflict, the AFV was moribund.

The book is well researched and written and is a thoughtful and detailed study of the AFV and its relationship with the US and RVN governments. Morgan brings a lightness of touch which illuminates the subject, especially the importance of Diem’s Catholicism in garnering him support within the US. Furthermore, the book throws light on the role of lobby groups on various aspects of the making of American foreign policy. Morgan shows how the AFV suffered owing to lack

of contact with the host government in Saigon, financial constraints, and lack of influence on a succession of US presidencies. These failings contrast sharply with the influence of the so-called China Lobby that grew up in the 40s to promote the interests of the Chinese Nationalist leader Jian Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek). The China Lobby was to stymie US policy towards the whole region for a generation. Unlike the RVN, Jian ensured his supporters in the US were well funded and supported and maintained influence on the US Government mainly via the Congress. In this, as in so much else, the RVN failed, and Morgan charts that failure well.

University of Warwick

KEVIN QUIGLEY

John N. Riddel, *The Turning Word: American Literary Modernism and Continental Theory* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996, £34.00 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 173. ISBN 0 812 21600 8.

The Turning Word offers an analysis of American modernist literature in terms of the European (“Continental”) theory by which it is, in any event, informed. Riddel locates American Literature’s modernist moment in an awareness of the “turning word,” or the development of a self-critical modality in which language’s propensity for troping itself is foregrounded in the literary text.

Riddel begins by positioning literature in relation to Derrida’s deconstruction of Heidegger’s destruction of “Being”:

The literary text is a play of textuality, not simply in the obvious sense that a work of art always originates in the historical field of predecessors. Its own play of differences mirrors its displacement and reappropriation of other texts, and anticipates the necessary critical text that must supplement it, insert into it the undecidable or raise the undecidable which is dissimulated in it as a unique word.

He deploys this reading strategically, so as to avoid the pitfalls of a reductive New Historicist criticism, and in order to write (in) the between of art’s problematic ontological status at the limit of the very metaphysics from which philosophical critiques of metaphysics have sought to spare it.

The Turning Word proceeds with a reading of Freud’s psychoanalysis of H.D., and of H.D.’s poetic translations of these analyses. The most compelling feature of Riddel’s argument is that he consistently directs his readings of literary texts by engaging with philosophical concerns, and yet persistently seeks out ways in which the literary text brings the philosophical text into crisis. So, for example, Riddel conceives of Hart Crane’s *The Bridge* as an allegory (or, by a more circuitous route, an exposition) of American modern poetry’s chiasmatic crossing beyond the pale of Hegelian History, but this crossing is fraught by the impulse to “make it(a)new,” to re-create an American voice which is distinctly different from previous and ostensibly authentic American voices. Finally, Riddel explores the implications of Bergson’s *durée* for Gertrude Stein’s exploitation of the redundancy of language. In each of these chapters, Riddel demonstrates the influence of continental philosophy upon these exemplary American modernists – although he is careful to qualify the Crane example by claiming an Hegelian influence via Emerson and Whitman. Equally, Riddel highlights the ways in

which the literary text disrupts, displaces, tropes, and repeats with a “difference” the potentially prescriptive modes of both continental philosophers and American literary precursors (“father” poets). Central to the argument in *The Turning Word* is the contention that the modernist text is “less reflexive, and genetic, than a productive act of self reading.” Riddel thus claims a performative, rather than a constative, modality for American modernism. In his concluding essay “The Anomalies of Literary (Post) Modernism,” he develops Lyotard’s contention that postmodernism is ineluctably anticipated in modern texts, *albeit* that modernism is not continuous with the realism and postmodernism which constitute its temporal limits.

Perhaps the only dissonant note in this otherwise eloquent and accomplished work emerges when Riddel admits to his reticence in situating the “multiplication of possibilities and thus... a *production of senses*” in Stein’s *Tender Rubbings* as a “clitoral writing.” He attributes his reticence to the suspicion that such a claim for *Tender Rubbings* might be misconstrued as “a category of castration in opposition to phallogocentrism.” On the contrary, deconstructive feminism has designated as clitoral the productive force of signification which exceeds phallogocentrism’s (gendered) logic of binarism; although the clitoris here is a metonym for woman’s production of cultural value, rather than a physiological, hence essentializing, category. Notwithstanding this isolated and idiosyncratic moment in Riddel’s account of American modernism, *The Turning Word* is a witty and challenging work of criticism, punctuated in places with what one might appropriately term “a nice turn of phrase.”

University of Essex

BRENDON NICHOLLS

Tim Hames and Nicol Rae, *Governing America* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1996). Pp. 339. ISBN 0 7190 4077 9 hardback, 0 7190 4078 7 paperback.

To know American politics is to know something of the social, cultural, and historical backdrop to this diverse nation. This new book by Tim Hames and Nicol Rae successfully espouses this philosophy, and in the process creates a work that is about not only American institutions, but also the United States as a whole.

By looking at all facets of the political process, from the constitution to institutions, from organizations to public policy, the authors have been obliged to confront the issue of change in all its forms. America has recently watched the world change around it, and has also seen attitudes and perceptions alter in the internal conflicts and debates that continue to rage within society. The nation has thus faced a quarter of a century of alteration and renewal. But, as Hames and Rae point out, change has always been welcomed and sought after by Americans, while history has always been something to soon discard. They argue most persuasively that history, and not just political history, has become important to America. It is no longer a new nation, and it does not possess an untried constitutional system. America is older than some of the nation-states of Europe, and with this maturity has come reflection and a desire for structural reform like never before.

The result is that the political system is in a state of flux, challenged from many sides to restrict the tenure of representatives, to balance the financial books, and to downsize a monolithic bureaucracy, to name only a few demands. The history leading up to this critical struggle in political development, and the debates that surround contemporary issues, are presented together here in a seamless, informative, and rewarding manner. From the development of judicial activism on the Supreme Court to explanations for the rise of American global preponderance, there is a rich undercurrent of historical debate running through the text that sheds light on many aspects of American society.

The case studies that are highlighted in each chapter, and particularly the tables and statistics, some of which are quite unusual for a politics text, are all worthwhile and useful. Some may be surprised to find mention of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Quentin Tarantino alongside Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich in a book of this nature, but this only serves to emphasize the surreptitious link between politics and culture in the United States today. When politicians wish to become entertainers and sports stars would like to be politicians, then power surely resides in some of the most strange regions of society. As the authors so admirably demonstrate, something profound has been happening in American politics and the future consequences remain unclear.

University of Manchester

IAN SCOTT

Marjorie Perloff, *Wittgenstein's Ladder: Poetic Language and the Strangeness of the Ordinary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, £22.95). Pp. 302. ISBN 0 226 66058 3.

For the past twenty five years, one influential movement in American poetry has been practising a linguistic acesis which has stripped poetry of voice, metre, poetic diction, and theme, completing an earlier avant-garde mission to clear away all vestiges of specialized literary languages. Its usual targets are described as “the formalized first-person mode we call lyric poetry” (and its claim to be what Marjorie Perloff calls “the *expression* or externalisation of inner feeling,”) and naive realism, but Language Writing has arguably another more elusive target too. Perloff’s highly readable new book identifies a current in modern writing which runs from Gertrude Stein to poets as diverse as Robert Creeley, Ron Silliman, Rosemarie Waldrop, and Lyn Hejinian, opposing the idea that poetry is a means of improving language by making it more precise, “as though a word, an accuracy were a pincer,” as Charles Olson puts it, “for taking hold of the smallest details of the world.” For many writers, this aspiration of linguistic fidelity misses both the pragmatic, communicative possibilities of language, and what the critic Daniel Cotton has called the distressing but “ultimately familiar condition of anomia” or semantic murkiness of the “avant-garde of our everyday chatter.” Perloff identifies the literary history of this belief that language is a condition to be investigated, by tracing affinities between the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and the literary strategies of Stein, Samuel Beckett, Ingeborg Bachmann, Thomas Bernard, and contemporary poetry. She shows that Wittgenstein’s anti-systematic practice of reflexive attention to the

ordinary use of language as a means of clarifying complex philosophical problems, which often makes its philosophical arguments by extended play with utterances and their imagined contexts, is a semantic resource in a diverse range of modern texts. Some writers like Beckett and Stein seem to have developed their own methods independently, while others like Bernhard or Waldrop self-consciously play and break the rules of Wittgenstein's language-games. Perloff can play these games too, and the book offers brilliant close readings of texts that at first sight seem enmeshed in banality, in order to show that they can be described as resolute investigations into the signifying implications of the small words that sustain the mesh of everyday life. The lines "If I wanted / to know myself, / I'd look at you," from Robert Creeley's *Away*, are meaningful because of the contexts which they imply to an attentive reader.

Perloff ends her book with a review of an exhibition and resulting book by Joseph Kosuth, inspired by texts of Wittgenstein. In an accompanying essay, "The Play of the Unsayable: A Preface and Ten Romans on Art and Wittgenstein," Kosuth claims that the discourses of contemporary art are limiting because of the "institutionalized paths *meaning* itself is permitted to take," which prevent them recognizing many of the means used to generate significance in art works. A similar criticism can be made of contemporary literary criticism's encounters with recent innovative American writing. What is needed, as Kosuth points out, is the recognition that "*the description of art* – which art itself manifests – consists of a dynamic cluster of *uses*, shifting from work to work, of elements taken from the very fabric of culture – no different from those which construct reality day to day." Perloff argues an analogous case for writing. Its reflexive use of everyday phrases makes possible quite subtle meditations on forms of thought and life.

If both Kosuth and Perloff sound as much pragmatist as Wittgensteinian, this is probably no accident, given the apparent revival of pragmatism in America today. The American philosopher, Hilary Putnam, has recently claimed that "Wittgenstein's reflections... parallel a certain strain in pragmatism." Perloff's fascinating study points in the direction of more investigation of the interdependence of the ethics of poetically specialized language use, and to the lasting impact of pragmatism on American intellectual life, which has consistently given its enthusiastic imports a characteristically pragmatist turn.

University of Southampton

PETER MIDDLETON

Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995). Pp. 414. ISBN 0 393 03773 8.

In 1988, Alan Ryan left Oxford for Princeton. He had already written on J. S. Mill, and in America wrote a political biography of Bertrand Russell which extensively covered that philosopher's long engagement with the United States. Now he turns his attention to perhaps the most quintessentially American of all philosophers, John Dewey, and completes his study of three outstanding liberal thinkers. This intellectual biography is subtitled "the high tide of American liberalism," and it might seem odd to attempt a rehabilitation of Dewey at a time

when the “I” word has been all but expunged from American political discourse. Following his death in 1952, Dewey sank without trace: the left dismissed him for his bland optimism, the right for his collectivist leanings and progressive educational theories. Yet Dewey has recently been resurrected and made relevant to our post-modernist predicament. Why? Here Ryan draws an interesting parallel between the 1890s and 1990s and a malaise which both decades share. At the end of the last century, Russell was well launched upon his ambitious enterprise of revealing the underlying structure and reality of the external world by means of mathematical logic. Dewey always considered this a futile exercise. His own pragmatic experimentalism rejected Russell’s passive, spectatorial view of the world and its assumption that, by dint of hard and esoteric mental labour, truth was indubitably to be had. Indeed, Dewey was not at all sure that there was an absolute truth to be grasped, only provisional hypotheses temporarily held, till replaced by one which worked better. So, philosophically, Dewey, not Russell, fits our current millennialist mood of uncertainty. Dewey also addressed other, more practical, current concerns: the seminal importance of education; the need for intelligent action in place of fundamentalist conservatism and violent revolution; and, in an increasingly fractured and atomized society, a growing concern for communitarian values. Dewey repeatedly stressed the individual’s social role; that while we must cultivate our own garden we must not put a fence around it for, as Herbert Hoover’s America clearly demonstrated, “rugged” individualism could so easily degenerate into the material and spiritual impoverishment of “ragged” individualism. In this excellent biography, Ryan succeeds in making us take seriously Richard Rorty’s assessment that Dewey still stands waiting for us at the end of every blind alley.

University of Bristol

HUGH TULLOCH

Hana Wirth-Nesher, *City Codes: Reading the Modern Urban Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, £35). Pp. 244. ISBN 0 521 47314 4.

This book attempts to redress what Hana Wirth-Nesher views as an overemphasis on plot and character at the expense of setting in discussions of the modern novel, and to complicate truisms which register the city as a site of modernist “alienation.” She suggests that the modern urban novel is distinguished from its pre-modern counterpart (Stendhal, Balzac, Dickens) by its blurring of the traditional bourgeois distinction between public and private space, with neither the rural idyll nor the private household presented any longer as an antidote to the dangerous energies of metropolitan life. Wirth-Nesher argues that, in the modern urban novel, the human merges imperceptibly with the built environment so that setting creates character and vice versa, and that this single unifying characteristic actually opens the genre up to widely divergent interpretations, since this blurring is different according to such factors as the race, class, and gender of the central characters. She demonstrates this with reference to novels by I. B. Singer, Amos Oz, Theodore Dreiser, Ralph Ellison, Henry James, Henry Roth, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf.

The four chapters on American authors are, for me, the best in the book and

the most successfully linked to each other. Wirth-Nesher demonstrates carefully, for instance, how *Sister Carrie's* repeated use of streets and restaurant, shop and hotel windows as indeterminate spaces, simultaneously both barriers and means of access, points to the notion of a self as both observer and observed, defined by self-display; and how, in *Invisible Man*, this characteristic is subverted by the notion of the self as a mask, the visibility of race concealing the human being behind it. *The Ambassadors* and *Call it Sleep* are similarly paired off in order to show how the tourist and immigrant both read the city in ways which merge public and private space – the former by inhabiting exclusively public places, and the latter by creating an “auditory cityscape” marked out not by physical landmarks but by accent and dialect.

Although Wirth-Nesher's overall thesis fits well into these four chapters, the choice of some of the other case studies seems slightly arbitrary. In particular, while they open the book out, the selection of two more contemporary works by Singer and Oz undermines the book's focus a little. Whereas the other novels seem to have been selected because they exemplify the broad social, cultural, and economic aspects of “modernity” and are thus generally applicable to each other, *The Family Moskat* and *My Michael* are both more geographically and historically specific, dealing with pre-Holocaust Warsaw and a divided Jerusalem immediately after the 1948 partition respectively. Generally, though, Wirth-Nesher succeeds very well in assembling a number of articles produced over several years into an integrated, self-contained whole.

Liverpool John Moores University

JOE MORAN

Alan Farmer, *The Origins of the American Civil War, 1846–1861* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996, £5.99). Pp. 160. ISBN 0 340 65869 x.

Alan Farmer, *The American Civil War, 1861–1865* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996, £5.99). Pp. 160. ISBN 0 340 65870 3.

These two books belong to a series, “Access to History,” designed for higher-education students and the general reader. They contain an impressive amount of material. Aids to digestion, in the form of flow-diagrams, advice on note-making and essay-writing, and questions on primary sources are provided for each chapter. The advice is helpful and probably necessary in these days of large groups.

The books are clearly organized into themes treated in roughly chronological order. After a general introduction and a chapter on slavery, the first book covers the main events and issues of the 1840s and 1850s with the emphasis on politics but with some reference to economic developments. The second book deals with the relative strengths of North and South, their respective home fronts, military events, emancipation, and relations with Britain. Both end with chapters containing historiographical material.

The books are easy to read with a style and vocabulary accessible to non-specialists. The author shows a good command of the main literature on the subject and, while making his own opinions plain, does justice to those of others. The narrative and discussion are clear and usually consistent.

There are some reservations. Obviously, students must be introduced to the historiography of such contentious subjects, but one has the impression that the author is trying to include a summary of it all, an impression reinforced by the General Editor's somewhat pessimistic reference in his preface to "additional reading (if any)." Students need to know more of what is being interpreted before coping with such a large proportion of interpretation. Good, up-to-date reading lists are provided and the concluding chapters, which contain some repetition, could contain more historiography, leaving more space for the author's narrative and analysis of contemporary views. Compression does leave some loose ends. We are told, for example, that women and free blacks played a crucial role in the abolitionist movement, but not what it was.

The books contain several printing errors. Page 10 in the first book reappears as page 10 of the second. We read of Alexander de Toqueville, "mystic cords of memory," "associations" instead of "avocations," and there are others. Despite these caveats, students will find the books helpful and interesting, although the general reader may prefer a more leisurely approach.

Rolle College

BARBARA CURRIE

Sara Blair, *Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, \$49.95). Pp. 258. ISBN 0 521 49750 7

With inevitable equivocations, let it at once be said that this is a consistently dazzling book: Sara Blair – in distilling the best of post-modern, post-structuralist, and even post-new-historicist critical intersections – has produced one of the finest explorations of Henry James to have appeared in recent times. I would hazard that there are few sharper readers of James around just now, even though over-ingenious manoeuvres, occasionally, do not always convince. Blair has a way of allowing James to speak for himself (stunningly so with *The Princess Casamassima*, where Hyacinth Robinson's attraction to Paul Muniment has never seemed so erotic), and yet cannot resist the ventriloquism that arises from selective quotation and the making representative of serendipitous encounters. Despite its almost forgivable weakness for a grand narrative of James's "nation-building designs" on "American Realism," however, this book sumptuously revises, defines, and establishes the race-nation contours of James and his popular expropriations.

Blair argues that "over the range of his career," James's texts "productively negotiate the race-thinking and nation-building habits and institutions of modern Anglo-America," and that his "'mixed' performances of whiteness... not only register but extend the range of available responses to American racial history." Crucially, and for this alone the book is imperative, the suggestion is that

these performances, far from insular or merely dismissive of material culture, share, redirect, and revolatilize the broadly racial features and energies of popular texts, ranging from photography, romantic travel narratives, ethnographic studies, minstrelsy and yellow journalism to the iconography of the industrial city.

The early reviews, essays, and notices, frequently dismissed elsewhere as trivially embryonic, are here seen as opening out onto "a fluid body of scientific

and popular ethnographic texts traversed by strong currents of post-Darwinian anxiety about racial definition and taxonomy.” In the 1883 essay on Anthony Trollope – together with, much less substantially, “The Art of Fiction” – “the conspicuously Jamesian idiom of freedom” becomes part of the way in which the novel is promoted as “vehicle of cultural – rather than strictly racial – renewal.” In a chapter that induces an immediate re-reading of *The Princess Casamassima*, Blair extracts the notion of “type” from the archive of “Naturalism,” the “sign” under which James penned the novel, in the process of conducting “a more extensive study of realism as a cultural politics and a structure of racial fantasy.” The most acute strategy here is that of identifying Paul Muniment as a “heroic figure imported from the race fantasies of male romance.” The Princess herself is construed as a surrogate author terminally subordinated to the very realms of romance she has challenged in the interests of James’s “on-going project”: “the binding of text, nation, and the ‘immeasurable body’ of Anglo-America.”

Surrogate authors, and unacceptable rivalry, are also at the focus of an analysis of *The Tragic Muse* which posits a Miriam Roth whose “convertibility of origins and radial nature underwrites, even as it continues partially threatens, the very possibility of civic and cultural agency in an increasingly transnational modernity.” In many ways, Blair’s treatment of *The American Scene* is her most yielding and distinctive. There is an endlessly suggestive juxtaposing of phantasmagoria, photography, and mass visual culture, as part of a Jamesian rhetoric for mastering the potentially overmastering modernity of America. James contests phantasmagoric excess, ultimately, by declaring his own “power of producing the “next installment.”

There is scope for challenging the Anglo-American constrictions of the argument; throughout, there is a lingering feeling – for this reader, at least – that the European constituent of James’s discourse, let alone the Gallic, cannot be reduced to comments on Naturalism aimed, in “Anthony Trollope,” at a New England audience. In asserting that Trollope is eventually recuperated for his “moralism,” Blair overlooks James’s disavowal of bourgeois moralism in “The Art of Fiction,” an essay that consistently sets its theoretically self-conscious self against the feebly empirical English. The “freedom” that James seems to vaunt in both these essays, is surely tested to destruction in practice? Isabel Archer is “ground in the very mill of the conventional,” and the “dead wall” that the novel can avoid in “The Art of Fiction,” is precisely what she encounters: “she had suddenly found the infinite vista of a multiplied life to be a dark, narrow alley, with a dead wall at the end.” As James went on to remark (in “Guy de Maupassant,” 1888), “the work is often so much more intelligent than the doctrine.”

This book is valuable not least because it will engender counter-argument and positive critical departures for some time. Notwithstanding, indeed even because of, any reservations, the reader is left with a vivid sense of an effervescent analysis. Jack the Ripper and *The Tragic Muse*?, Livingstone, Rider Haggard, and James? Magic lanterns, slavery, the Pullman, and Jamesian meditative carousels? What next? Read *Henry James and the Writing of Race and Nation*.

Kevin Starr, *Endangered Dreams. The Great Depression in California* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. \$35.00). Pp. 402. ISBN 0 19 510080 8.

Kevin Starr is State Librarian of California, and this weighty volume is number four in his *America and the California Dream* series. Because of its size, regional variations, ethnic mix, and voluminous historical records, the Golden State is a challenge to any historian, but Starr, wisely, attempts to cover the entire state rather than restrict himself to part of it. What emerges is a study which places particular emphasis on labour unrest. The coverage of the 1934 maritime strike is thorough, not merely in its analysis of the events in that year but also in the manner in which the long history of labour militancy on the west coast is integrated into the dispute. He writes with feeling on the intimidation, lynchings, and confrontation which were a common feature of Californian life. Starr does not ignore the farm sector, and he shows how organized farm interests were usually able to crush labourers' protests, sometimes with the help of law officers. The lengthy account of Upton Sinclair's attempt to End Poverty In California is particularly informative, as is the account of the Townsend and "Ham and Eggs" movements. Major public works, for example the building of the Boulder, Hoover, and Shasta dams, are described in a way that makes clear that these pathbreaking feats of engineering were the culmination of decades of planning, not just a depression-induced reaction. There are also chapters on the talented men and women who recorded the effects of the depression and on the migrants whose appearance struck fear into Californians made insecure by the economic collapse.

Is this a comprehensive study of California in the depression? The emphasis which Starr has given to labour disputes and to major public works has left some other issues neglected. What happened to unemployment in the state? Were there marked regional differences? What impact did the 1937-38 recession have on both farm and non-farm income? Surprisingly, the 1933 AAA merits only one entry in the index, and the concentration on PWA projects relegates the WPA to a minor role. Nor is there a serious attempt to assess how effectively New Deal policies were implemented. One problem is that, while Starr has been assiduous in collecting data inside the state, he has neglected the Washington dimension which is unfortunate as comments by, for example, FERA/WPA field representatives usually provide an invaluable insight into state politics and to the management of New Deal agencies. Starr has told part of the history of California in depression, but much remains to be done.

University of Leicester

PETER FEARON

Jonathan Auerbach, *Male Call: Becoming Jack London* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996, £47.50 cloth, £16.95 paper). Pp. 289. ISBN 0 8223 1827 x, 0 8223 1820 2.

Leonard Cassuto and Jeanne Campbell Reesman (eds.), *Rereading Jack London* (Cambridge: Stanford University Press, 1996, £35). Pp. 287. ISBN 08047 2634 5.

Jack London, we are reminded at the beginning of Jonathan Auerbach's impressive and original study, "remains the most widely read American author in the world." Auerbach is especially interested in London's own understanding of this literary success and his relation to the early twentieth-century material processes which generated a writer's reputation. His provocative analysis reverses traditional notions of the creative process by positioning London himself as the *effect* of his own work's preoccupations as well as their (anticipated) reception. London's moral and existential privileging of the natural world has usually been perceived as problematic by critics, but it has never been refracted through the type of radical historical consciousness evident here.

Although Auerbach is wary of the biographical leanings of previous criticism, his emphasis on London's negotiations of turn-of-the-century publishing outlets invariably hinges on such details. What is exceptional, however, is the way his readings of several major texts – as well as the hitherto overlooked *Kempton-Wace Letters* – succeed in conveying the important degree to which London's work cultivated a malleable yet always commercially digestible "trademark self." The homonym (mail/male) housed in the work's title contains the two most significant factors informing this self-fashioning. The stress on mail circulation in a number of works and personal records is viewed as an expression of London's hunger for the publication and recognition it enables. The gender referent contained in the other half of this trope meanwhile foregrounds questions of masculinity, homo-eroticism, and the body which Auerbach explores in relation to the conclusions and findings produced by recent theoretical and historical studies.

These latter concerns, combined with a more sustained focus on the impact of (white) notions of masculinity on London's racial characterizations, also inform most of the essays in *Rereading Jack London*. Apart from an over-dependence on certain critical terms in one or two pieces (invocations of "discourse" begin to sound a somewhat weary note by the end of the collection), these essays are lively, incisive, and especially noteworthy for the pieces examining London's later work which takes Hawaii as its backdrop.

The editors' introduction is an especially lucid and welcome reappraisal of London's position in American letters. Leonard Cassuto and Jeanne Campbell Reesman here sidestep the reductive understanding of his fiction as crude literary representations of social Darwinist and/or Nietzschean intellectual currents. Instead, they point to the degree to which London embodies a deeper Emersonian ideal of "representativeness" which incorporates a capacity to both absorb *and* generate new realities. This is a persuasive characterization which, underlining the collection's desire to *re-read* London, outlines a claim for him as an important figure in the broader domain of American intellectual history.

Following this, there are several excellent essays which assert the relevance of contemporary literary theory to London scholarship. The concerns of such theory with the status of the subaltern are brought into particularly sharp focus in Robert Peluso's study of *The People of the Abyss*: a text which, whilst acknowledging the "colonial" status of the East End late Victorian underclass, also, he notes, "attest[s] to the correctness of a newly emerging U.S. foreign policy that had at its core colonizing activities of its own." Other contradictions and ambiguities with more loaded connections to the notion of cultural/racial difference are probed with similar acuity in several pieces which focus on the Hawaiian stories. This is given a particularly powerful sheen in James Slagel's fascinating analysis of London's journalism and fiction which treats both a real and figurative idea of leprosy.

The paucity of London criticism in the fifty years following his death in 1916 is mystifying given his perennially popular appeal. The energy and originality evident in much of *Rereading Jack London* thus represents a particularly important contribution to the ongoing attempt within the American academy to compensate for this previous absence of critical attention. In the context of this general re-evaluation, *Male Call* should be viewed as not just important but indispensable reading for all future London critics. Whether they concur with or contest Auerbach's thesis, it is, for the foreseeable future at least, the one they will all feel obliged to respond to.

University of Nottingham

ANTHONY HUTCHISON

Stanley I. Kutler (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the United States in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Scribners, 1996). Pp. 1941. ISBN 0 13 210535 7.

The value of this encyclopedic reference lies in its effective breakdown and organization of the topics and themes considered most germane to a comprehensive understanding of twentieth-century America. The contributions of eighty historians to this reference work are arranged into four volumes which cover six domains: The American People; Politics; Global America; Science, Technology, and Medicine; The Economy; and Culture. There are clearly areas of overlap, and the encyclopedia acknowledges this in the way the individual articles include cross-references and bibliographic essays which point to the interdisciplinary way these areas of knowledge impact on each other. The success of this undertaking lies primarily in its renegotiation of older categorizations under which American culture and society has been approached and its changes understood. That is, the encyclopedia reflects a change in interpretative concerns which is entirely appropriate to the transformations the twentieth century has brought about. The essays dwell on new dimensions to older questions of race, ethnicity, class, gender, health, wealth, technology, the environment, and global power. In this sense, the encyclopedia pays due homage to the accelerating complexity and diversity of twentieth-century America. In the process, it avoids an encyclopedic tendency to affirming and imposing a canonical overview of what is significant and what is not. Instead, the organizational matrix and individual

essays grant due representation to the rich range of competing discourses on America's socio-historical transformation over the last one hundred years.

The encyclopedia will serve undergraduates very well. As a place to gain initial insight into key questions and topics across a range of areas, this reference work provides excellent summary essays. It is clear that the vast array of contributors has honoured a general principle in giving readers more than a simple précis of a given topic. They have offered concertedly an idea of the different critical-methodological rubrics which have governed the research associated with each domain of knowledge. Rudolph Vecoli's essay on ethnicity and immigration, for example, not only provides a fine overview of the historical impact of immigration on twentieth-century America, but also includes a perceptive summary of the recent malevolent controversy which has erupted between advocates of multiculturalism and the defenders of a more singular national heritage.

The encyclopedia serves an especially useful function in pointing students to effective use of library resources. The essays and bibliographic overviews provide a coherent idea about how to explore areas of interest further and profitably. And for this, this reference work is to be particularly applauded. An invaluable addition to the library, this work will also aid those scrambling for general background material to augment seminar and lecture repertoires.

Lancaster University

JONATHAN MUNBY

Peter Messent, *Mark Twain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997, £37.50 cloth, £11.50 paper). Pp. 235. ISBN 0 333 58566 6, 0 333 58567 4.

Peter Messent begins with a discussion of "The Stolen White Elephant" in relation to Marcel Gutwirth's writing on the comic. Tracing various puzzles, inversions, and "blind leads," Messent argues the need to read Twain with "both eyes open." With its constant reference to and subversion of social convention, "The Stolen White Elephant" provides no secure understanding for the reader. Messent generalizes from this to the effect that, although laughter may be anarchic, its challenge may also prove temporary: there is no simple and permanent way of establishing the potential of the comic. Such a view ultimately leads Messent to suggest that Twain produced "a comedy of estrangement that speaks to the very condition of the modern – a form of humour that operates at an epistemological level." In the course of the book, this association of epistemological uncertainty with modernity is worked through in relation to most of Twain's major fictions. This also opens out into larger issues, including that of capitalist expansion in the face of cultural and racial difference, but Messent's approach is not primarily historicist. Although he does provide a series of suggestive contextual frames for his analysis, for the most part the book consists of a series of close readings for which the key critical terms are instability, provisionality, and relativism.

One might ask what must be lost or suppressed in order to turn Twain into such an interestingly "current" figure. Certainly, Messent makes a careful selection from the corpus, and one which perhaps causes the oddity and

oppressiveness of Twain's Victorianism to vanish. (There is no *Prince and the Pauper* here, no *Joan of Arc*, little of the mawkish and the vituperative Twain.) Of course, Messent is not obliged to offer a "rounded" view of the man and his work, not least because he is not so much interested in individual agency as in the "cultural conversation" in which Twain participated. And yet, perhaps there is a contradiction in writing a book which may not be "about" Twain in the old-fashioned sense, but which nevertheless pivots upon him alone.

That said, Messent prosecutes his scheme with exceptional skill. What impresses is the detail and precision of the technique. There is a knowledge and a quality of attention at work here which make this an excellent critical study. Messent is both generous and discriminating in his deployment of earlier critical opinion, and his book is especially useful for its sense of colloquy.

Queen's University, Belfast

PETER STONELEY

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. £25). Pp. 425. ISBN 0 19 878070 2.

John Lewis Gaddis's new book provides not so much a rethinking of Cold War history as a restatement of arguments made in his earlier work. Gaddis admits that the circumstances of the Cold War's end took him by surprise. In terms of general interpretation, however, post-Cold War perspectives and access to new archives have only served to confirm Gaddis in long-held views. The grand themes of *We Now Know* are familiar. The Cold War was characterized principally by asymmetry. It was a prolonged contest between an American empire by invitation, and a Soviet empire by imposition. The experience of Soviet imperialism revealed the stupidity, inefficiency, and emotionally based romanticism associated with autocratic rule. Stalin sought confrontation as a fish seeks water. American leaders made significant errors: for example, in exaggerating the Soviet threat to the Middle East, or in misconceived modernization strategies for South East Asia. Generally, however, the West was right to fear the advance of Marxism–Leninism in the developing world. Despite all this, "not the least of the Cold War's oddities is that its outcome was largely determined before two-thirds of it had even been fought." Nuclear weapons both guaranteed the "long peace" and postponed America's victory, exchanging destructiveness for duration. Gaddis implicitly argues for the primacy of history as an academic discipline, making deft if predictable lunges at social science theory.

Gaddis' accomplishments as a Cold War historian need little in the way of advertisement. He writes provocatively and brilliantly. Yet *We Now Know* claims too much. The author seeks to reinvigorate his well-known earlier interpretations of the Cold War by incorporating archival material from the communist side. Here, Gaddis's method is to utilize published work based on the "new" archives, and especially to draw on the papers and bulletins associated with the Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project. The result is a series of summarized accounts (for example, of the origins of the Korean War or of the partition of Germany) which, albeit indirectly, do reflect multi-archival research.

These accounts, taking the story of the Cold War up to 1963, are intrinsically valuable and provide welcome short-cuts to the student. They do not, however, constitute a guide to the complexity, problems, implications, or possibilities of the newly opened archives.

The end of the Cold War does not seem to have made it any easier for opposing academic camps to talk to, rather than across, each other. Neoliberals, neorealists, Marxists, orthodoxers, and revisionists have all written books and articles proclaiming, sometimes to the point of sheer unreason, that they were right all along. J. L. Gaddis – optimist, patriot, Samuel Flagg Bemis for our times – urges “new” Cold War historians to take ideas seriously. He might have begun the task by taking more seriously at least some of the ideas of his academic opponents, including those working outside the discipline of history.

Keele University

JOHN DUMBRELL

Elizabeth O’Leary, *At Beck and Call: The Representation of Domestic Servants in Nineteenth-Century American Painting* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996, \$34.95). Pp. 305. ISBN 1 56098 606 9.

Great, great-granddaughter of an indentured servant, art historian Elizabeth O’Leary has produced a telling study of domestic servitude in the new Republic. Drawing on a wealth of pictorial imagery, ranging from formal portraits or the sensuous, elegant fantasies of the Boston school with their European influences, to sketches of faithful servants, and encompassing advertisements, cartoons, and even the saucy stereographic card “*Oh! How Dare You Sir!*,” she analyses what is revealed, and speculates suggestively on what may have been omitted.

Service was part of American life from the arrival of the Mayflower, whose pilgrims included twenty servants, as O’Leary recalls in her prefatory chapter. Subsequently citing the harshness of the colonial indentures from which Franklin fled, she postulates that the revolutionary generation’s call for liberty was given a peculiar force by their experiences of bondage. Evidence of the founding fathers’ complex attitude to slavery meanwhile emerges from portraits of Washington and his family by John Trumbull and Edward Savage, in which Washington’s devoted wartime orderly and peacetime manservant William Lee – freed in his will – was included as an unrecognizable, marginal, shadowy figure.

Nothing was the same after Independence. Contemporary sources record both the Adams and Washington families battling with domestic insubordination, as servants in the European sense became virtually unobtainable. Free Americans declined to be anything more than “helps” who worked temporarily alongside the mistress of the household – to the horror of travellers like Fanny Trollope. Their independent spirit animates the early paintings of Lilly Martin Spencer – “*Shake Hands?*” depicts a powerful, confident dough-covered cook with a degree of sympathy and humour unthinkable after the Civil War.

From mid-century, rising immigration produced a new markedly “second-class” serving class, contributing to the social polarization and mounting tensions of the Gilded Age. Visible in paintings like Burr’s *The Intelligence Office*, which presents servants awaiting hiring almost like cattle, these tensions are

equally illustrated by Winslow Homer's depiction of the hostile reception afforded to the "Old Mistress" of three former slaves. Other pictures record how the largely Irish, and female, domestic labour force was progressively uniformed into anonymity, and relegated to the margins of domestic interiors, only to be romanticized, and eroticized, by painters like Charles Courtney Curran and William Paxton.

While constrained at times by her material – many of the harshest aspects of being "at beck and call" were never depicted because uncommercial or unacceptable – O'Leary none the less uses art history to cast new light on the contradictions of early American democracy, and conveys with feeling something of what it meant to be bound in the land of the free.

University College, London

ALICE HILLER

James P. Kraft, *Stage To Studio: Musicians and the Sound Revolution, 1890–1950* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, £29.00). Pp. 255. ISBN 8 8018 5089 4.

Probably the most dramatic changes in popular music were brought about by the invention of the phonograph and the subsequent developments of radio broadcasting and sound movies. These inventions not only transmitted the product to a mass audience, and broadened the repertoire of musicians and the public's musical taste by exposing them to a rich variety of styles, but also created a vast and highly profitable music industry. While there have been a number of studies which have explored the impact of these inventions, they have almost exclusively examined them in terms of stylistic change or from the perspective of the audience – the consumer of pre-packaged musical entertainment. However, as Professor Kraft points out, the new technologies, which began during the 1890s, had an equally dramatic effect on the musicians themselves and rapidly transformed their professional world. It is the consequences of this technological change on the professional musician that provides the main focus for *Stage to Studio*.

Kraft carefully charts the effect of technological change on the social and economic life of the musician against the backdrop of the rise of the modern music business. Economically these were dramatic indeed, as professionals were often forced to move from regular engagements for local audiences, to a single recorded performance that could potentially reach an international audience of millions through the gramophone record or movie soundtrack. In the first decades of the twentieth century, over a quarter of America's instrumentalists were forced out of the profession. Interestingly, as Kraft explains, the mechanization of the music industry neither speeded up the pace of work nor reduced the skill level of workers as did mechanization in so many other industries. But it did result in stress, concern for the future, and loss of professional identity and income among musicians. Despite the efforts of the American Federation of Musicians, by the 1950s the huge profits from recorded music went, not to the performers, but into the pockets of the middlemen who controlled the means of transmission. Kraft sensibly places this transformation of

the musicians' world into the much wider context of the effect of technological change on labour and the manner in which workers have attempted to deal with that change.

Stage to Studio ends in the 1950s, but the subsequent decades have witnessed even more damaging innovations for the professional musician; the revolution in electronics, for example, threatens to dispense with the professional instrumentalist altogether. It would have been useful to have had the author's insights into these later developments; but perhaps what has happened since the 1950s really warrants a second volume? Nevertheless, there is much of interest in this detailed and readable study for anyone interested in the production of popular culture.

University of Central Lancashire

MICHAEL PARIS

Elsa Nettels, *Language and Gender in American Fiction: Howells, James, Wharton and Cather* (London: Macmillan, 1997, £35). Pp. 214. ISBN 0 333 52092 0.

“(L)anguage, indicative of a writer’s attitudes and assumptions, is a vital sign of the culture he or she portrays... Language is a particularly telling sign of the relative power and status of men and women.” These statements, embedded in her penultimate chapter, arguably form Nettels’s basic premise. As such, the reader might expect a politicized discourse on sex and text. What is remarkable about this work, however, is a lucid objectivity, sustained consistently throughout her investigation. Her crisp, analytic prose, not only mercifully respects her reader’s time and patience, but more importantly clarifies a potential minefield of terminology and ideology in an excellent job of intellectual synthesis. Indeed, her text is so scrupulously edited that one is left wanting to see more of her materials, not just the results of her investigations. For Nettels conducts her research as if it were a scientific exercise, quantifies and analyses her data, and presents us with findings which one is prepared to trust, given the impartiality of her judgement. When there are alternative ways of analysing a text, Nettels sets them all out: she never attempts to argue a special or a partial case.

Nettels has an unfaltering eye for the detail of a telling phrase which illuminates an ideological position, even when the author is unconscious of it. She is aware of authorial irony, but is prepared to leave in question when it is brought into play, rather than redeem authors from unwitting sexist bias by always arguing for its presence. Hers is an intelligence which does not show off; she does not problematize issues unnecessarily, but she is incisive in illuminating contradictions and conflicts inherent in an author’s work, and producing the supporting evidence. The result is that, by focussing on a specific period – the turn of the century – and surveying the work of her four major novelists, as well as writers of Utopian fiction, generalizations about language and gender are transformed into a series of fine, comparative discriminations. Distinctions between male and female novelists are arrived at impartially. And it is difficult to say who comes off best. She exposes contradictions between stated positions in critical works and actual enactment in fictional texts by both James and Howells;

Wharton emerges as a conservative essentialist in many respects; and Cather's refusal to identify with her sex is also revealed. In her concluding remarks, Nettels gives her own judgement: "Of the four writers, Cather goes further in transposing traditional gender roles. James, in writing of male artists... does most to invest the word *feminine* with positive meaning." Yet, ultimately, she demonstrates that all of the authors she scrutinizes are products of their era; they may attempt to transpose gender attributes, they may create characters who gloriously transgress gender boundaries, but as Nettels concludes "the boundaries always remain."

One typographical error needs amending; the date of Dennis Baron's *Grammar and Gender* (1986) is given as a century early on page 15. This causes momentary confusion, since it is in a section devoted to exposing the gender dichotomies in nineteenth-century grammar books.

University of Warwick

HELEN M. DENNIS