Journal of American Studies, **33** (1999), 1, 89–200 Printed in the United Kingdom

Reviews

Stephen Hopgood, *American Foreign Environmental Policy and the Power of the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, £35). Pp. 262. ISBN 0 19 828259 7.

International environmental politics grew rapidly during the 1960s and 70s and has been a major issue since the 1972 Stockholm Conference which established UNEP and the Rio UNCED conference in 1992, which created the Conventions on Climate, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development. I first saw the American environmental policy machine in action in 1968 in the early days of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea; it is manifestly recognisable as the machine described by Stephen Hopgood.

Hopgood starts by analysing the various academic concepts and theories regarding the nature of the state, and whether it exists as an independent actor, or is at the mercy of conflicting external pressures which produce an almost random result. This chapter is burdened with jargon and bizarre pseudo-terminology. The author seems to regard this chapter as a test of academic respectability in which he demonstrates mastery of post-modernist deconstructionism. By its end he reaches the conclusion that one can analyse the issues influencing environmental policies by considering them in context.

From this point on the book gains pace, describing events, policies, and conflicts in a recognisable narrative fashion. His main thesis is that each national government contains conflicting groups of officials who argue for national policies based upon different interpretations of international benefits, domestic benefits, and inter-departmental turf wars. During the year preceding a big international meeting on an environmental policy issue it is vital to have friends in different departments and agencies in other capitial cities who can tell you which agency, and hence which policy line, is likely to come out on top as that country prepares its final position papers. Hopgood correctly shows that policy can hang in the balance until the last minute.

He maintains that the policies emerging from internal horse-trading have a very strong influence in determining subsequent international agreements and the United Nations agencies, non-governmental organisations and "international opinion" are less powerful. I agree with this, but Hopgood underestimates the role of lobbying by some industries, especially the energy industry. Some American companies lobby world-wide to persuade developing countries to oppose environmentally restrictive policy options.

The extent to which scientific advice is taken seriously is not quite worked out and the role of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is underestimated. He suggests that political horse-trading is the exclusive currency and scientific facts are ignored, but, as the response to the Antarctic Ozone Hole, the modeling

and forecasting of El Niño, or the debate on the control of BSE show, scientific facts can force the issue. Hopgood paints a realistic picture of American environmental policy making and links many of his arguments to named people, often with strong personal views. This is refreshing and emphasises how abstract policies are interpreted, distorted, and used by the people who work with them.

Southampton Oceanography Centre NICHOLAS C. FLEMMING

Bridget Bennett, *The Damnation of Harold Frederic* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997, $39.95). Pp. 261. ISBN 0 8156 0390 8.

Harold Frederic, journalist and novelist, is a relatively unknown literary figure. Bridget Bennett's work of literary criticism and biography attempts to redress this by surveying his *œuvre* of journalistic and fictional works, whilst at the same time providing insight into a private life both extraordinary and scandalous for the period. Frederic was born in 1856 and died, relatively young, in 1898. During the period of his short life he lived in Utica, New York, the setting of many of his novels, and in London, where he was London correspondent for the *New York Times*.

Bennett tracks the development of Frederic's writing career through his geographical movements, demonstrating the ways in which the topography of Utica and its environs influenced Frederic's writing, as well as how his position in London affected his journalistic writing. Bennett provides extensive and detailed critical readings of Frederic's fictional works. He was the author of a variety of novels: *Seth's Brother's Wife* (1887), *In the Valley* (1890), *The Lawton Girl* (1890) and perhaps his best-known work, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, all of which are set in New York State; *The Return of the O'Mahony* (1892), set in Ireland; and *March Hares* (1896), *Gloria Mundi* (1898) and *The Market Place* (1899), set in England. He was also the author of a group of Civil War stories. Yet, *The Damnation of Harold Frederic* is more interesting in its discussion of Frederic's extraordinary journalistic career and personal life. For example, during his time as London correspondent for the *New York Times*, Frederic committed such feats as cabling an entire novel to the paper in New York in order to pre-empt its English publication, a move made in protest of lax copyright laws, and which earned him considerable notoriety. In his personal life, Frederic behaved even more bizarrely. He maintained two quite separate households, one with his wife, Grace, and their children, and one with his lover, Kate Lyon, and their children, a situation continued up until his death.

Bennett's book is a rather strange mixture of anecdotal discussion, literary criticism and biography, but this blend is dictated by Frederic's own triple identity as an idiosyncratic figure of his time, a quite well-respected novelist and a notorious journalist. It is, however, a fascinating read, particularly in the way that it places Frederic alongside his contemporaries in the literary world, including Mark Twain, Bret Harte and Stephen Crane. It is complemented by an interesting array of photographic documentation, and thus provides a wide-ranging and in-depth introduction to this rather obscure writer's work.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth HELENA GRICE

Mara B. Adelman and Lawrence R. Frey, *The Fragile Community: Living Together with AIDS* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997, $32.50 cloth, $16.50 paper). Pp. 128. ISBN 0 8058 1843 X, 0 8058 1844 8.

In October 1996 the NAMES Project quilt, which memorialises people who have died from AIDS, covered over 27 acres and contained over 45,000 panels when it was unfolded at the Mall in Washington DC. Newly added to that vast expanse of material, the making of which has become the largest community art project in the world, were the names of 86 residents of the Bonaventure House in Chicago, a residence for persons with AIDS. Founded by the Alexian Brothers of America, a Catholic order whose roots are in fourteenth-century Europe and whose first hospital ministry in the US was founded in Chicago in 1866, the House has cared for 274 residents between its opening in 1989 and 1995 (the period of research for this book). Although mostly men, the House population is of great diversity in terms of ethnicity, class, sexual persuasion, and state of health. A large proportion of residents have had a history of drug and alcohol abuse, while around a quarter of residents have contracted HIV through intravenous drug use. These facts, however, say little about the mission of the Bonaventure House or of the reality of residential life there. For Mara Adelman and Lawrence Frey, both professors of Communication at American universities, "Bonaventure House is a poignant drama – tenuous, marginal, and insulated – a distilled experience of social life created and sustained in crisis." In this powerful and persuasive book they argue that by understanding how a community based on dialectical tensions has coalesced at the Bonaventure House, an enabling vision emerges of community as a process of dialogue and negotiation in which there is space for multiple and oppositional voices to be heard. After noting that Americans have long sought to reconcile a strong ideology of individualism with co-operative endeavours, Adelman and Frey describe how from the beginning of the AIDS crisis community care provision was created at the grass roots level in the face of inadequate provision of health care and public housing for persons with AIDS. They carefully document the history of the House, describe its mission and criteria for residency, quote copiously from interviews with residents, and link theoretical claims with their research findings, all the while using a poised prose style that combines academic rigour with subtle yet unerring advocacy for a residence that "fosters collective healing, solace, and compassion." The voices of the residents interviewed, most of whom had died by the time of book publication, provide potent testimony to both the value and frustrations of the House community. Juxtaposed with the text are images by House photographer Paul Meredith that possess a visual eloquence of their own. One sequence of images depicts the traditional release of balloons at a resident's death (signifying release from illness and a collective celebration of the individual's life), while another sequence narrates eight months in the life of resident Robert Thomas. Despite ending with an image of his burial in a cemetery vault, this sequence illustrates the continuity of care and community participation in Thomas's life. Unlike, for example, Nicholas Nixon's photographic portraiture of persons with AIDS, where the sickness and isolation of the individual was emphasised, Meredith's images depict a *living* environment in which persons with

AIDS are shown interacting with fellow residents, staff and volunteers. This is not to suggest that death is ever a simple matter to negotiate for any of those involved with Bonaventure House, but it does point to the necessity of sustaining individual and collective hope so as to offset potentially overwhelming anxiety and distress. Adelman and Frey succeed admirably in offering an empowering vision of community in which dialogue, co-operation and diversity are valued while respecting people's entitlement to independence, autonomy and privacy.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth MARTIN PADGET

Jay L. Halio and Ben Siegel (eds.), *Daughters of Valor: Contemporary Jewish American Women Writers* (Newark: University of Delaware Press and London: Associated University Press, 1997, £35.00). Pp. 286. ISBN 0 87413 611 3.

Criticism concerning Jewish American writers has focussed upon the achievements of male writers, who have been at the forefront of the literature since the 1890s. However, since World War II a major body of literature has been produced by Jewish women, which may well be the future of the genre. The editors of this volume of cogent essays state that despite the importance placed upon gender in some current criticism, they do not feel it to be of the utmost importance when set against the intellectual, literary and perceptional qualities of writers and critics. Also, the simple fact of Jewish birth was insufficient to justify inclusion in the volume: the contributors were requested to stress the ways in which each author's Jewishness was important in her work.

In an astute introductory essay tracing the literary history of Jewish American writing, Ben Siegel points out that in the late 1960s and early 1970s a "second wave of American feminism" (Elaine Showalter) gave a spur to women's writing, emphasizing women's personal experiences in their art: relationships with parents (especially the mother/daughter relationship) and with other women; careers; marriage; motherhood. In addition, women's experiences in the Holocaust, and their relationship to Israel, began to prove fertile ground for new insights. A number of the writers began exploring topics related to their historical exclusion from religious ritual, delving into Jewish religious texts with a different slant than that of the male writers before them. The traditional Jewish "outsidedness" in society had a multiple effect in relation to women, Siegel argues, in that Jewish women have been excluded from central aspects of Judaism because of its patriarchal culture, and from aspects of secular society because they are women. These issues seem likely to rejuvenate Jewish American literature, which has now moved beyond its immigration and assimilationist phase.

Among the wide selection of essays, including pieces on Cynthia Ozick, Anne Roiphe, Norma Rosen and Adrienne Rich, there are those discussing Erica Jong's relationship to her Jewishness; critic Pauline Kael's influence on film criticism ("Kael and Farewell"); and two items concerning the young writer Allegra Goodman, one of which is her shrewd analysis of the future of Jewish

American fiction, which was delivered at the 1994 MLA conference. Overall, this is a most useful collection, setting out formally the important point now reached by Jewish women writers.

University of Hull EDWARD A. ABRAMSON

Lois Palken Rudnick, *Utopian Vistas: The Mabel Dodge Luhan House and the American Counterculture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996, $35.00). Pp. 352. ISBN 0 8263 1650 6.

Sylvia Rodríguez, *The Matachines Dance: Ritual Symbolism and Interethnic Relations in the Upper Río Grande Valley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996, $45.00 cloth, $25.00 paper). Pp. 193. ISBN 0 8263 1677 8, 0 8263 1678 6.

Recent years have seen a growing academic interest in analysing the cultural history of the Southwest. Literary and cultural critics such as Barbara Babcock and Marta Weigle have explored the cultural politics of Anglo representations of the region, stressing the ways in which Orientalist (or "Southwesternist") discourses produced debilitating negative stereotypes of Native Americans and Mexicanos. While historians such as Sarah Deutsch, Ramón Gutiérrez and David Weber have produced detailed investigations of the complex ways in which the Southwest's distinctive tri-ethnic population of Native Americans, Hispanos and Anglos has emerged over the past 450 or so years. Both Lois Palken Rudnick's *Utopian Vistas* and Sylvia Rodríguez's *The Matachines Dance* contribute vital analyses of cultural representation and ethnic identity formation to this rich body of work.

Designed to appeal to a wide readership, Rudnick's highly readable history of the Mabel Dodge Luhan House in Taos, New Mexico explores the countercultural appeal of Taos from 1917 to the present day. This book, which follows Rudnick's biography of Luhan, begins with the contention that not only does the United States have a long and rich history of countercultural activity and reform (particularly in the periods 1830–50, 1900–20 and the 1960s) but that "indigeneous American radicalism has often had both a utopian and a spiritual cast, with an ever-receding and mythical West as the locus for prophetic pronouncements and experiments." When Mabel Dodge moved from Manhattan to rural New Mexico in 1917, she was not only protesting the US intervention in World War I, but also making what she saw as a positive effort to create a home that would serve as a centre from which to "regenerate Anglo civilization from its urban–industrialist bias, its individualist and materialist credo, and its Eurocentric vision of culture." Through their seeming organicism and outward spirituality, the Pueblo Indian and Hispano communities of northern New Mexico appealed to Anglos alienated by the modernising impulses of early twentieth-century American society. While Luhan's embrace of "primitivism" was in certain respects a typical Modernist reaction, it should be remembered that her attachment to Taos was lifelong and that her marriage to Taos Indian Tony Luhan enjoined her, however problematically, with the local Native American

community. Although hardly the first Anglo to seek artistic inspiration and spiritual renewal in Taos, it was through Luhan's influence (both intellectual and monetary) that a great many well-known writers and artists came to visit and even live in the Taos locale particularly during the 1920s and 30s. The second and third chapters of the book provide brief critical overviews of Luhan's visitors, including Mary Austin, Dorothy Brett, John Collier, Andrew Dasburg, Martha Graham, Marsden Hartley, Aldous Huxley, D. H. Lawrence, Georgia O'Keeffe, Paul and Rebecca Strand, and Edmund Wilson. The second part of the book documents the fortunes of the house after 1962, the year Luhan died, and focuses on the career of film actor and director Dennis Hopper, who owned the house during the 1970s. Hopper purchased the house after filming *Easy Rider*, using it as a commune and studio in which his attempts to edit *The Last Movie* were fraught with difficulty. It also proved hard for Hopper to live on good terms with local Hispanos, many of whom were suspicious and resentful of the growing numbers of Anglo hippies drawn to Taos during the 1960s and early 70s. Ironically, the creation of Anglo communes came after many local Hispanos had been forced through economic necessity to give up old forms of semi-subsistence farming and take up new urban-based occupations. The third part of the book describes how over the past seventeen or so years the house has been used as a centre for multicultural education.

I do have one or two quibbles with the book (plus I should register my surprise that there are no colour plates considering the large number of images featured in it). For example, despite describing how moving to the Southwest meant *adapting* to a very different cultural and geographical environment from the East coast, Rudnick alludes to rather than fully addresses the consequences for Native Americans of Luhan's often fetishistic attachment to Pueblo Indian culture. In striving to balance the messianic (and thus most egotistical and arrogant) aspects of Luhan's thinking with her more liberally minded achievements (such as her invaluable patronage of Hispanic and Native American arts and crafts as well as Anglo literature and art) it is of course understandable that Rudnick stresses the latter over the former. Although Rudnick readily concedes that through her patronage of New Mexico "folk" arts Luhan contributed to the commercialisation of Native American and Hispanic cultures while generally obscuring the region's social and economic inequities, I wish she had paid more attention to ongoing critical arguments about how Anglos have exoticized, appropriated, and capitalized on the "otherness" of the region. It is to this subject and attendant issues of cultural survival and ethnic boundary maintenance that Sylvia Rodríguez pays intricate attention in *The Matachines Dance*.

Over the past decade or so Rodríguez, an anthropologist at the University of New Mexico and a Taos-born Hispana, has written extensively about the impact of tourism on the livelihoods of Native Americans and Hispanos in New Mexico. Her ethnographic study of the Matachines dance – a ritual drama performed by both Hispano and Native American communities in New Mexico – highlights the ways in which ritual meanings have been created and adapted to forge and maintain group identity in the face of external social and economic pressures. The Matachines dance seems to be derived from medieval European folk dramas that dramatised conflict between Christians and Moors and which were used, in

modified form, by the Spanish as a tool to Christianise Indians. Rodríguez understands the ritual drama as a "syncretic complex" which "symbolically telescopes centuries of Iberian–American ethnic relations and provides a shared framework upon which individual Indian and Hispanic communities have embroidered their own particular thematic variations." Performed by two rows of masked dancers and actors who represent the figures of El Monarca or Montezuma, La Malinche, El Toro (the bull) and Los Abuelos (two clowns), the ritual is an elaborate drama of Spanish colonial encounter with indigeneous peoples. Derived from patient and thoughtful observation and built about a careful theoretical structure (and also richly illustrated with colour images), Rodríguez's study sets out to answer two deceptively simple questions: what does the dance mean to its participants and those who celebrate it, and what does the ritual performance reveal about those people. She concludes that while in the past the Matachines dance re-enacted Spanish colonisation of Indians today when performed by Hispanos the ritual "symbolizes Hispano determination to persist against the tide of Anglo assimilation." For Pueblo Indians, the "[i]ncorporation of the dance into their ceremonial cycle gave the Pueblos a measure of control over how the story of their forced conversion would be remembered and told within their own communities." In short, Rodríguez tells an elaborate story of colonisation, appropriation, hybridisation, and the invention of tradition among both Indian and Hispano communities in New Mexico.

Taken together, these two volumes provide valuable insights into the formation of ethnic identities in New Mexico, the greater Southwest (including parts of northern Mexico) and, indeed, the United States as a whole.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth MARTIN PADGET

Geoffrey S. Proehl, *Coming Home Again: American Family Drama and the Figure of the Prodigal* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997, £32.50). Pp. 221. ISBN 0 8386 3547 4.

Proehl's concern is first with showing how, in a range of American plays, mainly of the period between 1946 and 1962, certain simple conventions conveyed values which suggest that even "mainstream" and "serious" authors (O'Neill, Williams and Albee are within his remit) were operating in a popular tradition stretching as far back as the reform dramas and sentimental comedies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the temperance melodramas of the nineteenth century. Proehl picks out the simple image of a man with a bottle as one which, almost like an obsession, appeared again and again, the action of drinking entering the family drama, as it left the sentimental and temperance plays, as a banal indicator of the family as an "institution strained by male sexual energy: conventionally expressed in terms of whiskey, whores, and waste; conventionally redeemed (often in the midst of tears) by the inherent goodness of the prodigal and the heartfelt benevolence of some parent or spouse."

Proehl's thesis – that drinking is integral to these plays – shows a lot of bottle. After all, as he says, the phenomenon of so much drinking in American plays has been overlooked by critics in favour of "more pressing critical concerns."

Whether you are convinced that it should not have been overlooked will depend on how far you are persuaded by Proehl's claim that the incidence of drinking on stage really owes its frequency to its "powerful rhetorical function." Or does drinking's repetitive banality as an "icon," "index," or "symbol" reflect, instead, the rather literalist notion that "dysfunctional" behaviour is in itself an interesting topic for dramatic treatment, especially when it suggests, or even reproduces, the story of the playwright's own life? "Our writers should write about their own lives in a realistic manner" is a recommendation Proehl singles out as one which many American writers have studiously observed. It is a touching belief that drunkards, even drunken writers, are intrinsically interesting, and therefore worthy of being written about. If their vice or delight can be given some uplift with the help of a Bible story, their stories may even begin to be considered important.

The prodigal landscape of American family drama places "home" opposite to "bar," with some instance of rupture appearing in between, such as a front-door slamming (either before or just after the whiskey bottle has been broached). The highway between the two must be returned along by whatever means of transportation appropriate to a reformed sinner, if the potential of a restorative, "Home, Sweet Home" is to be achieved. The riotous living *en route* must not be so heinous that an American audience could not forgive it, or the parable will not be apprehended, the action will fail to edify, and the events will sink to the level of a mere story. The chapters on varieties of prodigality which follow discuss the relationships of prodigals to others, including the those who merely sit at home and wait. Proehl bows in the direction of the main recent critical theories, healthily adopts none of them, and goes not far in developing his own. The book could gain from having a structure governed more by the needs of argument than by the ambition of covering a lot of ground.

University of Essex ROGER HOWARD

Ruth Milkman, *Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, $35.00 cloth, $12.95 paper). Pp. 247. ISBN 0 520 20678 9.

Deindustrialization is commonly represented as a devastating experience for factory workers. Gone is not only a "middle-class" standard of living but a social identity rooted in collective productive activity as well. Milkman's study of workers employed at General Motors' (GM) Linden, New Jersey plant in the 1980s paints a different picture. Interviewees and respondents to questionnaires who accepted GM's offer of buyouts (ranging from $10,000 to $55,000 depending on the number of years of service) or otherwise left the auto industry expressed no nostaglia for life on the assembly line. However, some, especially African-American, men regretted the loss of relatively high-paying industrial work along with fringe benefits secured through collective bargaining.

Among those who remained at Linden's downsized operations after 1985 the promise of reorganization of work including employee involvement measures and a system of just-in-time production, aroused expectations that workers would

be treated with greater respect. Yet, as the author demonstrates, the hopes that a new regime of production would create a more humane workplace were dashed as line managers clung to traditional methods of exercising authority and the company, after three years, abruptly ended the employee involvement programme.

While Milkman is keen on allowing workers – many of whom worked for GM for more than twenty years – to reflect on their experience, she seizes on the opportunity to assess the experience in the context of changes in the auto industry, the shifting terrain of labor-management relations and internal union politics. Even before the impact of intensified competition of global economy pressured US automobile companies to reduce production, viz, labour costs, Linden's workers were "prisoners of prosperity," putting up with alienating work and authoritarian treatment to pay their mortgages, send their children to college and vest their pensions. Shop-floor relations boiled over with conflict as shop stewards filed overwork grievances, members of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) waged "wildcat" (unauthorised) strikes and an insurgent caucus tapping rank-and-file discontent won control of the local union's executive board. As long as the union provided the means to protect workers from the most overbearing managerial harassment and to gain a modicum of justice on the job, life at the Linden plant proved tolerable.

Yet, from 1982 there on in, the UAW – put on the defensive by GM, Ford and Chrysler, which began closing plants and threatening more austerity measures to make their companies more competitive – agreed to concessions on wages, fringe benefits and work rules. Job security and concomitantly income security became problematic, and symbiotically, as the UAW's membership levels began to haemorrhage, its power to offset the corporate offensive waned. This explains why, in 1982, although 80 per cent of Linden UAW local voted against national concessionary agreement, four years later 84 per cent of those eligible opted for GM's buyout offer.

Milkman's probing and well-measured analysis leaves the reader with a sobering thought: after almost twenty years of managerial freedom to reshape corporate structures and cultures, automobile workers (a smaller cohort no doubt) still find themselves uncertain of their future, and troubled not simply by the erosion and transformation of factory work, but by the decline of organised labour's power to influence the course of these developments.

Nene College of Higher Education RONALD MENDEL

John Carlos Rowe, *At Emerson's Tomb: The Politics of Classic American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, £40 cloth, £13 paper). Pp. 302. ISBN 0 231 05894 2, 0 231 05895 0.

This book proposes that the canon of classic American literature is made up of books which resist pernicious social formations such as slavery, the suppression of women's rights, and later "the more insidious forms of social and economic domination" of capitalism. Pro-slavery Poe is out; Douglass is in; and, as the title indicates, things don't look too good for Emerson. Despite his years of energetic

work for Abolition (which are not skirted around here), Emerson, Rowe argues, failed to reconcile his Transcendentalism with his political praxis, thus founding an American literary tradition of aesthetic dissent which never delivered on its high-minded promises of social change, and, worse still, whose rhetoric often ended up employed in the service of capitalist interests. It is Rowe's contention that this contradiction is at the heart of problems with the American tradition, and it is only by addressing it can a solution be found to the canon debates currently raging in American academy.

It is easy to see how writers like Douglass, Jacobs, Chopin and Twain would be praised in such an argument; less easy in the cases of the James of *The American* of the Melville of *Pierre*. These two novels are read by Rowe as critiques of the emergent US imperialism which had more in common with the empires of Europe than it liked to admit. He argues this point with the critical discrimination that is evident everywhere in this book.

However, his cleaning up of US literature betrays a fundamental misunderstanding about the way that literary texts are generated: indignant at the positions their predecessors took up, writers often produce novels or poems in order to revise those positions, thus Toni Morrison cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of pro-slavery Poe. Rowe argues for a canon of writers who protest against slavery and commercialism; this is all very well, but shouldn't there be political quarrels *in* the canon as well as with the social hegemony *outside* it? Moreover, Rowe never considers the idea that the literary resistance he traces in these books is already allowed for by the supposed hegemony they protest against, a luxury granted critics and educated readers as salve and sedative.

Still, *At Emerson's Tomb* will provide pleasure and provocation even for those readers who do not agree with Rowe's indictments of capitalism. Its twelve chapters are preoccupied with the basic questions, "What is literature? What should we praise it for? What should it do?" In attempting to answer them in the context of US literature, Rowe has produced an important contribution to contemporary debates.

Charles University, Prague JUSTIN QUINN

John Wood, *The Photographic Arts* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997, £62). Pp. 191. ISBN 087745 5732.

John Wood is a prolific historian of photography whose previous work, most notably *The Daguerreotype* (1989), has illuminated the scope, workings, role and distinctiveness of particular photographic processes. The collection under review is uneven, in both quality and kind of essay. In some, Wood acts as an enthusiastic antiquarian, rescuing forgotten figures from undeserved oblivion, as in the engaging survey of turn of the century European Pictorialism. It is good to have such information – together with excellent reproductions of a range of rarely seen photographs – in the public domain, but, unfortunately, it is presented from a perspective determinedly rooted in unexamined and unproblematised notions of the individual "artist," with much praise for the "beauty" of this or that image, as if "beauty" was a universally recognisable entity, when in fact, of course, it

is a category which is perceived differently in different times and cultures. Paradoxically, that is, Wood is too often ahistorical and insufficiently interested in his topics' cultural dimensions.

"The American Autochrome," for instance, while wonderfully illustrated, basically asserts that the "best" works in this early twentieth-century colour process were made not by acknowledged "masters" of photography, such as Alfred Stieglitz, but by the professionals, such as Fred Payne Clatworthy, who specialised in it, exploring all of its potential. Despite a claim to the contrary, what Wood does *not* investigate is the cultural work of these colour images. He provides interesting evidence of their use by *National Geographic*, and it would surely have been valuable to see what editorial staff and readers made of them, whether the rendering of colour endowed sites with more actuality than those depicted in duotone. Similarly, in the essay on the cyanotype, technically a relatively simple process which produces blue images, Wood so sticks to aesthetics that he does not see a cultural difference between the way certain early twentieth-century photographers used the process – usually as one stage towards the preparation of a duotone photogravure which would *not* be printed in blue – and its more recent exploitation by John Metoyer precisely *because* of the blueness of its imagery. In general, Wood rarely gives dates, and this exacerbates the book's ahistorical tendencies.

At the same time, a couple of the better essays do bring the knowledge evident in Wood's earlier works into play in considerations of photographic imagery at certain moments of cultural history. The longest, "American Destiny of Manifest Mythology," analyses the role of daguerreotypes in the California Gold Rush and the extermination of Indians. Interestingly, Wood rightly differs from some previous commentators to show that surviving images do not in themselves provide an adequate representation of the complexity of what happened, and he deploys many letters by Forty-Niners, poems, speeches and other data to move towards a more comprehensive representation. Despite this range of evidence, however, he does not cite Stephen Fender's *Plotting the Golden West* (1981) or other studies of western rhetoric, an omission which partly explains why he still fails to see that even this more comprehensive representation is an interpretation. And, it is an interpretation dependent on an act of faith on Wood's part, in that he uses Whitman as an oracular voice able to transcend the distance between the mid-nineteenth century and now to speak directly to us, telling us, he claims, the truth.

In sum, *The Photographic Arts* is further evidence that American photographic history is out of its infancy – but also that it has yet to achieve consistent theoretical maturity.

University of Leeds MICK GIDLEY

Joel Myerson, editor, *Studies in the American Renaissance: 1996* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1997, $50.00). Pp. 428. ISBN 0 8139 1663 1.

This is the valedictory volume in a series whose contribution to the study of what has become known as American Renaissance literature has been unparalleled. Throughout its twenty years, editorial, bibliographical, and empirical (rather than critical or theoretical) work of all kinds has been high on the agenda. Joel Myerson, in prefatory remarks that also serve as a slightly embittered epitaph, laments that "there are fewer texts to edit, fewer biographical and bibliographical facts to discover, and fewer scholars to do the work."

That there are fewer scholars, in Myerson's sense, might have been seen as a corollary of what he specifies as the dwindling amount of tasks available. Myerson chooses, however, to rehearse a polemic that seems something of an anachronism in the late 1990s. Tiresomely, the reader is invited to consider that many contemporary scholars are casualties of the "French" invasion of "the academy in the eighties" and that waves of deconstruction have disabled "textual and bibliographical work." It is conceded, though, that there are simply more journals competing with *Studies* than hitherto. Myerson's gratuitous sniping at a spectral enemy, or one long since transmuted at least, reads as an impoverished rationalization of more tangible forces.

The opening item in this collection is Sterling F. Delano's essay on "The Boston Union of Associationists (1846–1851)." Necessarily, given its confinement to the records of the Boston Union, this piece offers a narrow kind of delight. It is followed by two school journals, both of which were written by pupils of Margaret Fuller's when she was in post at the Greene Street School, Providence, Rhode Island. As Shealy admits, "Fuller's daily teaching routine is now well documented due to the publication of several school journals kept by her students." This calls into question the need for two or more, and Paul Kopacz, the editor of the second, is anxious to justify its publication. Once the journal itself is tackled, however, there is a strong sense in which its introduction can be seen as pushing a wet rope. In any event, its claims for the importance of Hannah Gale's journal – and, curiously, she is described in the same breath as both "remarkable for her mediocrity" and "a serious but average young lady" – are grossly unsustainable. After ventilating a range of commonplace questions relating to the use of primary sources, Kopacz suggests that these ramify into "interesting theoretical issues related to the peculiar nature of school journals." The imbuing of the project with things theoretical fails to rescue it from a certain tedium. Once Kopacz waxes into its being a "valuable document for historians and composition," further asserting that it "contributes to our understanding of the position of women in early nineteenth-century America," this reader feels a victim both of special pleading and an unacceptable generalizing from the particular. On a practical level, it is difficult to see why these two journals were not co-edited: this would have prevented the repetition of material, already familiar enough, on Margaret Fuller herself.

Sophia Hawthorne's *American Notebooks*, edited by Patricia Dunlavy Valenti, is a highly significant inclusion. When Nathaniel Hawthorne's notebooks were

first prepared for publication, his wife decided to delete entirely the "portions of those notebooks which he had written," and these deletions are here restored. Valenti's scholarly apparatus is impeccable, and her editorial decisions are always convincing. But aspects of her interpretation, and especially the way in which she limits the value of Sophia Hawthorne's notebook to its illumination of Nathaniel Hawthorne's, are troublesome. What Valenti seems to overlook are the interpretative complications that arise from the fact that Sophia's notebooks were mainly written whilst her husband was away. This provided her with subtle opportunities for protest, given the burden of her life with the children, which she seized on with alacrity: "I wish I had leisure to daguerrotype [*sic*] & paint the hours as they go as my husband did while I was away from Lenox," Sophia wrote; elsewhere, and typically, we have "how charming for my husband in mid sea," and "I think my husband must be imparadised on an island." Such is the power of Sophia Hawthorne's handling of narrative, the reader is drawn into experiencing the frustration of her daily disappointment over the absence of letters. When one finally arrives, Sophia, in a desperate phrase, describes her feeling as a "revulsion of joy." Unconvincingly, Valenti analyses Sophia Hawthorne's plight in terms of her husband's foreswearing sexual relations and Sophia's sense of her own inadequacies.

This volume also sees the appearance of the second part of Bradley P. Dean and Ronald Wesley Hoag's "Thoreau's Lectures After *Walden*: An Annotated Calendar." (There are more detailed comments on this venture in my forthcoming review, in this *Journal*, of the 1995 *Studies*.) This is a welcome move in Thoreau scholarship, and it is good to see that the authors intend to keep the "Calendar" under revision. Particularly revealing are the intercalation of relevant extracts from Thoreau's journal with the lecture paraphrases and "Narrative of Events."

In his "Editorial Note," Joel Myerson expresses a fear that, had this series extended further, it would have looked more and more like an "aging boxer, continuing beyond its prime." Handsomely, there is little resemblance to Mike Tyson here.

Kyushu University, Japan PETER RAWLINGS

Esmond Wright, *The American Dream. From Reconstruction to Reagan. A History of the United States of America*, volume III (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, £42.50). Pp. 669. ISBN 1 55786 589 2.

Dustjacket blurb for Esmond Wright's survey of US history tells you precisely what to expect. "Its approach is a chronological narrative with numerous thematic digressions, the story is constantly brought to life by portraits of the men, women and dynasties that played such a formative role in the history of the region." Unfortunately, the approach does not come off.

Professor Wright's instincts are those of a biographer. One looks in vain for social movements and cultural developments. The section on Women's Rights is little more than a succession of thumbnail sketches of the lives of "great American women" from Elizabeth Stanton to Sandra Day O'Connor and Hillary Clinton. The Civil Rights Movement is reduced largely to brief biographies of 5

African-American "Dreamers of the (American) Dream" (Frederick Douglass, W. E. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Martin Luther King Jr., and Thurgood Marshall). The Counter-Culture is dismissed (in one sentence) in terms of burnt draft cards, sex, drugs and drink and is presented as a "family" which included murderer Charles Manson (the subject of another biographical sketch). There is no place here for Rosie the Riveter, the Freedom Summer or even Allen Ginsberg.

Some of the "numerous thematic digressions" are rather idiosyncratic and distracting; for example, a detailed exposé of ex-President Richard Nixon's views on politics based on his 1976 book *In the Arena* follows Watergate and leaves room for only the briefest allusion to Nixon's domestic legislative record. Wright's fascination with dynasties results in a seven-page assessment of Joseph Kennedy in a chapter entitled "JFK, LBJ and Vietnam."

There are also rather too many errors, e.g., "In Vietnam Ho Chi Minh and the Vietmin front had been in power since 1941"; "Louis Parrakhan and the Nation of Islam" (a spelling faithfully reproduced in the index); the Democratic Convention in Chicago and Nixon's election as president are both located in 1967.

On the other hand, the book is written in a lively style and the judgements are generally very shrewd. Wright is surely correct in assuming that Franklin Roosevelt accepted assurances (despite contradictory evidence) that the Japanese would not attack Pearl Harbor in December 1941, and in suspecting that the President was involved in a later cover-up of that evidence. He also has a nice turn of phrase: e.g., "the crude LBJ did more in practice than all the Kennedys and Kings put together. The sad fact is that the best are not always the brightest, nor the brightest the best."

However, in the final analysis, the mixture of the narrative, the thematic and the biographic does not gel; the portraiture disrupts both the chronological narrative and the thematic analysis.

College of Ripon and York St. John GEOFF STOAKES

Peter Messent (ed.), *Criminal Proceedings: the Contemporary American Crime Novel* (London: Pluto, 1997, £40.00 cloth, £13.99 paper). Pp. 252. ISBN 0 74531017 6, 0 74531016 8.

The collection sets out both to propose and demonstrate the extraordinary range and complexity of form and content in the contemporary crime thriller. Included is the entire modern canon: Elmore Leonard: James Ellroy; Walter Mosley; Tony Hillerman; Sue Grafton; Sarah Paretsky; Mary Wings; John Grisham; Scott Turow. A concluding chapter extends the discussion into the films of David Lynch and Ridley Scott. The usual themes of identity, sexuality and ethnicity are covered, as is the subversive rewriting of "noir" by these authors. As a student primer it should prove extremely useful, especially as the contributions are, on the whole, descriptive, rather than analytic.

Despite the genuflections towards current theoretical concerns, however, the essays do tend to concentrate on a rather homely analysis of characters and an often cosy retelling of the stories. The whole book has a peculiarly old-fashioned

affinity with the Leavisian approach from which these contributors would wish to distance themselves. It is certainly a problem in this collection that the contributors fail really to engage with either the complex history of the genre or the distinctly thorny theoretical problems that a "reading" of such texts creates.

Far too often problems are glossed or ignored. There is no clear explanation of the web of affinities that bind crime novels, detective novels, action thrillers, hardboiled novels and police procedurals; nor do the authors discuss the correlative discontinuities. Too often in the volume classic crime fiction equals Hammett and Chandler and the usual DWEM/WASP accusations. No thought is given to a history which is far richer and more diverse, and if it is such a sexist canon why no mention anywhere of Spillane? No thought either is given to the significance of crime or detection as ontological problems. Crime fiction is not merely the sociology of real crime as one contributor seems to think, but a parallel discourse of detection not directly about either real crime nor real detectives, but rather about a mode of being and experience of the contemporary.

This lack of analysis of the fundamental structural and contextual elements in the genre leads all too often to the unquestioned invocation of theoretical clichés (especially regarding gender) which gives many of the readings a monotonous and curiously politically correct and conformist slant.

Someone should have told the authors that what makes hard-boiled fiction so exciting is its refusal to be tamed, its vulgar, sexy, violent, *illicit* and anarchic refusal of political correctness and moral conformity. Crime fiction is, after all, about killing, violence, sex, mayhem and the pulse of the city – its not a vicar's teaparty for morally correct gender attitudes. Pass the *Black Mask*, pass me my tommy gun.

Middlesex University CLIVE BLOOM

James A. Bill, *George Ball. Behind the Scenes in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997, £21). Pp 274. ISBN 0 300 06969 3.

With the publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971, George Ball achieved fame as the lone voice of dissent in the inner councils of the Johnson Administration against escalation of US involvement in the Vietnam War. James Bill's new biography places this in the context of a long career in foreign policy. As an international lawyer in the 1940s and 1950s, Ball received his mentoring in international affairs from Jean Monnet, and became a keen supporter of European integration. He was part of an international network of elite figures which centred on the Bilderberg Group. He acted as foreign policy advisor to Adlai Stevenson in his presidential campaigns, and, despite his links with Stevenson, joined the Kennedy Administration as Under Secretary at the State Department. Until his resignation 58 months later, Ball was at the heart of affairs. He was particularly active in the Congo crisis, the Cuban missile crisis, the Cyprus problem and the MLF issue, as well as expressing his famous dissent over Vietnam policy in 1964–5. Bill shows Ball operating skilfully at the sub-cabinet level: not seeking public recognition, but looking to influence policy-makers

through formal and informal channels. Even after he left office, he continued to do this, and had it not been for a forthright condemnation of Israeli policies in 1976, he might well have become Carter's Secretary of State.

Bill sees Ball to have been a model of a "prudent" statesman, capable of matching means to ends, within a context of a moral pursuit of the public good, and paints a sharp contrast with Henry Kissinger. In doing so, Bill rather overreaches himself in his enthusiasm for his subject. Ball was clearly a prescient statesman and an effective bureaucratic operator. However, the claims made for his "enormous" influence seem somewhat exaggerated. In the issues Bill focuses upon, Ball did not by any means always get his way. Bill concedes some of Ball's flaws, such as his Eurocentrism, his elitism, and his touching faith in multinational corporations as instruments for the public good, but does not go further and investigate the extent to which Ball's vision of the national interest was shaped by these ideas, rather than issues of morality. His contributions on Vietnam were couched in terms of that interest. Criticisms of Ball from right and left are acknowledged, but could be more fully discussed. Overall, this is a useful, stimulating book. Deeper analysis of the decision-making process is needed to establish Ball's actual influence. This book is certainly, though, a contribution to such an analysis, and Ball's behind the scenes activities will have to be taken into account by scholars working on US foreign policy in this era.

Brunel University MARTIN H. FOLLY

Grantland S. Rice, *The Transformation of Authorship in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997, £33.50 cloth, £13.50 paper). Pp. 242. ISBN 0 226 71123 4, 0 226 71124 2.

In *The Transformation of Authorship in America*, Grantland Rice seeks to re-evaluate the development of independent public writing during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. But this volume is more than simply an historically astute exploration of the ways in which shifting social and economic conditions recast the role of writing in an around the founding of the republic. Rather, Rice labours to illustrate to his readers the aesthetic impact such changes left upon the writing itself. The result yields a rather provocative thesis: the complexities surrounding the evolution of literary production in the United States have neither been properly acknowledged nor adequately represented through specific reference to cultural practice.

Rice wishes to concentrate his investigation, primarily, on the writers of Protestant New England; a strategy that does limit the range of forms considered, but one that also effectively illuminates an inherent tension in much of the cultural practice carried out in the American colonies: the opposition between the desire of colonial authorities to suppress sedition and the need for right-minded citizens to effect reform. The change Rice outlines from direct, pre-emptive control imposed by civic leaders to various forms of *a posteri* methods of regulation on publishing mirrors the parallel development of a commercial society in America. The commodification of literary practice, while it ushered in a decidedly "modern" conception of authorship, troubled a number of newly

defined "literary" figures, including Benjamin Franklin and Washington Irving. This entirely more complex reading of the relationship between the author and the early American market is the fundamental achievement of this study.

The most extensive readings provided by Rice are of Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crevècoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* and Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*, two works that illustrate the tension between civil commentary and literary expression in early American prose. But, while less detailed, Rice's references to period texts are more spirited when he traces the desire to challenge social mores and legal restrictions through the invocation of the seduction plot in books like Tabitha Tenny's *Female Quixotism* and Hannah Foster's *Coquette*. The concern with the past as manifested in the literature of social novelists brings Rice finally to Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose utilization in *The House of the Seven Gables* of some of the same dissenters with which Rice begins his investigation testifies to the persistence of these concerns in the consciousness of the nation.

In his introduction, Rice is determined that his work is not read as merely "antiquarian." He believes that as former Communist countries move away from their established modes of production, they experience fundamental changes that similarly redefine authorship. Because a number of scholars, including George Steiner, have begun to ask questions about the future of art in the new Europe, we are thus able to connect *The Transformation of Authorship in America* with broader considerations of the history of cultural practice.

University of Lethbridge, Canada CRAIG MONK

John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas* (New York and Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1997, £24.94). Pp. 452. ISBN 0 471 16402 x.

This is a study that gives priority to military narrative and character assessments. War, rather than Revolution, is the author's concern as his central theme delineates Cornwallis's ambitious but unsuccessful drive north between August 1780 and March 1781 from Charleston to the borders of Virginia.

With both sides in the South having recourse to terror, destruction, and means of battle far removed from formal styles of European warfare – a development here given due emphasis though accorded undue originality as an interpretation – there is a clear need for an examination of the impact of such a war on the region. Unfortunately, in this account description overshadows analysis.

That is not to dismiss its merits. Printed materials, taken from a wide range of sources, have been skilfully deployed to provide evidence of the course of the conflict, not only as reported by the commanders, but as experienced by the rank and file. Set pieces, such as the battles of Camden, King's Mountain, Cowpens and Guilford Courthouse, are evoked in their full horror. The qualities and merits of the generals are painstakingly assessed, though the American portrayals emerge as more convincing than those of the British. Even so, any criticism in this respect has to be set against an absence of comparable British works: since 1964 only Piers Mackesy and Christopher Hibbert, admirable though their contributions are, have supplied general accounts of the war. Both in terms of

what the British army may, or may not, have learned from disaster and of what kind of war was fought, more remains to be investigated. History should not be left in the sole possession of the victors, no matter how scrupulous and balanced their preservation of it may prove to be.

University of Manchester PETER MARSHALL

Paul Jay, *Contingency Blues: The Search for Foundations in American Criticism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997, £40.50 cloth, £16 paper). Pp. 221. ISBN 0 299 15410 6, 0 299 15414 9.

Paul Jay notes that one of his principal aims is to consider "an influential set of American writers and critics" as they engage with the philosophical, aesthetic, and social problems of modernity. Thus much of his space is given over to following Emerson, Whitman, Santayana, Van Wyck Brooks, and Dewey in their self-conscious efforts to produce a cultural language adequate to the changing history of the United States between, roughly, 1840–1940. Jay's hermeneutic, however, is predominantly negative: in a series of vigilant if occasionally repetitive demystifications, he shows each of these writers either lapsing into a transcendental idealism, or failing to sustain and develop the progressive possibilities of pragmatism. Yet it emerges that the motivations of the book are as much future-oriented as historicist. For, after detouring through a positive account of Kenneth Burke, Jay concludes with a manifesto for criticism which would be "equipped to deal with the social, cultural, and political realities of the twenty-first century." He actually seeks, therefore, a *postmodern* American theory, although the relationships between postmodernity and modernity in the US are rather weakly conceptualized here.

Jay's appeal for American criticism to concern itself with the investigation of "border zones" and hybrid identities is valuable – albeit, by now, unexceptional (see, for example, Paul Giles's essay in *Journal of American Studies* 28:3 on the need for new "comparative perspectives"). Nevertheless, this conclusion to his book seems merely additive, rather than a properly genealogical or dialectical outcome to what has gone before. The earlier critics whom Jay rereads here appear relevant to him only as negative instances of that continuing stubborn attachment to metaphysics. A more dialectical method might have enabled him to derive usable resources even from these American metaphysicians (also, perhaps, from recent neo-pragmatist theorists like Rorty and Fish, whom he subjects to trenchant but somewhat monotonous critique). Such an approach would have given Jay's book greater variety both structurally and linguistically. As it stands, *Contingency Blues* cannot but suffer in comparison with the work of Burke, one of its few really valued historical precursors. Jay quite properly argues that Burke's punning, experimental, non-linear style revitalized American criticism in a modernist way; by contrast, Jay's own language – technical, academically conventional, often foreseeable – seems ill-fitted to do the same for American postmodern criticism, or to carry in its very textures those values of hybridity and transgression the book wishes officially to endorse.

Loughborough University ANDREW DIX

Eva Illouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia: Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997, £35 cloth, £12.95 paper). Pp. 386. ISBN 0 520 20571 5, 0 520 20571 5.

In this challenging and stimulating book, Eva Illouz asks a very important question: what has happened to love in the era of "late" capitalism? In attempting an answer, Illouz has two points of departure. First, Francesca Cancian's 1987 book, *Love in America*, which argued that growing equality between men and women has enhanced opportunities for intimacy and fulfilment for both genders. Illouz develops Cancian's thesis by an historical and sociological analysis of the "commodification of romance" in narrative, visual, musical, and prescriptive modes that have created a modern image of a "romantic utopia," and by a series of intriguing interviews with a wide variety of modern Americans about their experience of love and intimacy. Second, the author sharpens her thesis under the influence of Daniel Bell's classic *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976). She argues that the "contradictions" that Bell identified, that Americans were expected to be "hard workers by day and hedonists by night" has profoundly affected the culture of love. Here Illouz is at her most brilliant and original: the images of love and intimacy in film and advertising suggest that, in order to attain the "romantic utopia," it is necessary to be wealthy. For example, one classic image, "the deserted beach ... presupposes the rental car agencies, shopping areas, cafes and restaurants that are now appendages of most beach resorts." Love is a reward for working hard. The contemporary American middle class have come to see love, like everything else, as just another aspect of consumption.

Despite this compelling argument, Illouz flounders seriously in two regards. First, she regards post-modern "romantic utopia" for all the "disenchantment" (following Max Weber) that she identifies, as, essentially, a positive "emancipatory" development that can lead to a "higher self-knowledge, a greater ability to exercise [our] freedom and autonomy in the domain of love, and a greater awareness of the existential difficulty in loving another." Well, hopefully. Yet she dismisses a growing body of work that is rehabilitating the earlier system of Victorian values as the product of mere "Conservative apostles of doom."

This is boorish. Scholars like Rochelle Gurstein have recently shown convincingly that Victorian values served the purpose of preserving the privacy that love needs in order to flourish. Hence, Victorian love was all the more exciting because of its sacred, mysterious quality. By comparison with the rich, romantic world that the Victorians created that Karen Lystra and Ellen Rothman have unravelled in recent work, Illouz's "romantic utopia" spawned by the encroachment of the mass market, seems poor fare indeed.

If Illouz's interpretation of her central thesis is questionable, a subsidiary thesis is positively wacky. She interviews people whom she defines as "working class." These people, an electrician, a professional boxer (bizarrely, at one stage, boxing is described as a "middle class occupation"), even a college janitor, lack access to the "romantic dream" because it is so built around material accomplishment: because their lives are determined by "necessity," they lack the "capacity to live an authentic meaning of love."

Common sense alone must make us highly sceptical of claims such as these. For Illouz implies here a kind of post-socialist slant to her analysis: not only is her working class deprived materially, but romantically. A more plausible thesis is surely that an older construction of romance has survived in the working class that has transcended the invasion of mass culture: after all, the working class does not have time to engage in the intense negotiations and deal-striking that Illouz's middle-class sample reveal as part and parcel of modern love; anyway, Illouz's sample is too small to be more than suggestive.

Still, Illouz's raising of the possibility that the experience of love itself actually differs between classes is worth exploring further. In the meantime, her book will complement Cancian's as the most wide-ranging in the sociology of American love.

University of Sussex KEVIN WHITE

Lin Salamo and Harriet Elinor Smith (eds.), *Mark Twain's Letters. Volume 5: 1872–1873* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, $60). Pp. 939. ISBN 0 520 20822 6.

This is another massive book from the Mark Twain Project at Berkeley, documenting Twain's correspondence from 1872 through 1873. Much of this time he was in England (he made the Atlantic return crossing three times in the period), accompanied for part of it by Olivia, on her first trip abroad, and by the ten-month-old Susy. He was there to gather material for a book he intended to write about the country; to protect his British copyright on *The Gilded Age*; and variously to lecture, sight-see, and socialise. The letters start, however, with Twain's winter 1872 lecture tour in the American Midwest. As he would continue to do for much of his career, he chunders away about his dislike of his way of making a living, and aims sharp side-swipes at his less appreciative audiences, writing Olivia from Salem, Ohio, that "Heaven knows I shall be glad when I get far away from these country communities of wooden-heads."

Twain was a frequent and good letter-writer, and we get a full picture of his activities during this period from his correspondence. It is extraordinary how many of these letters remain extant, together with those from Olivia, Orion, and Mrs. Fairbanks, and many others (which appear as part of the scrupulously full annotation). Perhaps this was because Twain had one eye on his future reputation from early on, or so the note to his wife to "preserve all of these letters, Livy, in the green box" may suggest. The thoroughness of the editorial work here is occasionally just a touch heavy-handed, Twain's pet name for the infant Susy, "the Muggins", explained with the note: "In games such as cribbage or dominoes, if a player fails to record a score, his opponent may call him a 'muggins' and claim the score for himself." For the most part, though Salamo and Smith's notes, unpackings and additions help to give the collection an illuminating quality in which the individual letters provide a springboard for the thick biographical and cultural information that follows.

There is much diverse and interesting material contained in the collection. The closeness of Twain and Olivia's early relationship is particularly clear, though the

book's fire in this respect has been partly stolen by the use Susan K. Harris and Andrew Hoffman have recently made of these letters. One heavily cancelled section of a letter from England home to Olivia reads, "I do *love* you, Livy darling, & my last word is, (when I come) *Expedition's* the word!" Where the editors here comment, "the letter suggests … the phrase had acquired a private significance for the Clemenses, perhaps one that they were unwilling, on reflection, to allow posterity even to guess at," Hoffman (probably correctly) puts a more racy spin on it with his alternative: that Twain "expressed his sexual desire more frankly than ever." The social and intellectual range of Twain's contacts and friendships in England also come over strongly, with references to meetings with Trollope, Herbert Spencer, and Thomas Hughes, among many others. I suspect that, despite Welland and Baetzhold's previous scholarship on this subject, there is more work yet to be done on Twain's transatlantic crossings and how they affected his thought and values; work that will further modify the frame of narrow literary nationalism within which he is still often placed.

What Twain did write of his 1872 English Journal appears as an appendix here. He abandoned his project, though, long before completion. Perhaps he just found England too sympathetic for his comic purposes. Certainly, a statement like "I wish we had some of England's reverence for the old and great," and his comparison between a "country so beautiful" as England and "fairy-land," might suggest so. Perhaps, as Twain himself suggests, he did not wish to satirize the social habits of those who had so freely made him part of their lives. Not many people will read this collection, and its various annotations and appendixes, all the way through. But, as a scholarly source, this is another invaluable book in a fine, if baggy, series. For, with over nine-hundred pages of text here to represent two years of letters, thirty-six years of the author's life still to cover, and funding for the project in some jeopardy, some questions about the economies of scale involved here cannot help but intrude.

University of Nottingham PETER MESSENT

Len Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997). Pp. 278. ISBN 1 55849 060 4.

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on July Fourth, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, by which time Independence Day had matured into the republic's principal national celebration. It is the creation of Independence Day that concerns Len Travers in this interesting and well-written book, in which he explores "the role of Independence Day in the formation and communication of national identity and national consciousness in the early republic." Making use of a variety of anthropological models in order to "read" celebrations of the Fourth in the representative port cities of Boston, Philadelphia and Charleston, Travers suggests that annual observances of the Fourth had four major functions: to establish in the nascent national consciousness a fixed moment in the past at which the nation came into existence; to endorse and cultivate a myth of national identity and interests; to

furnish Americans with regular opportunities to re-examine their past and reformulate it in order to meet new situations and needs; and to overlay ambiguities and contradictions that threatened the new republic.

Travers is at his best in the fourth chapter, where he provides the reader with a wealth of detail about the lived experience of early celebrations of the Fourth. Festivities come alive as one reads about the participation (or lack thereof) of Americans of different classes, races and sexes. In other chapters, however, one sometimes loses sight of the motley assembly who populated large urban celebrations, the men and women of different rank who gave life to these rites and thus participated in the creation of a new sense of national identity. Travers points out in witty detail that many celebrations of the Fourth differed a great deal from the formalised accounts that appeared in newspapers after the event. Yet he pays little attention to the role of newspapers in the creation of rites of national identity, despite the fact that, by the turn of the nineteenth century, published accounts of festivities from all over the nation filled many newspapers: in short, these rites were performed once for participants and observers, and then many times over for those who read about them. All in all, however, this is a fine book with much to interest those interested in early American history and culture, and it is a worthy addition to the field.

University of Glasgow SIMON P. NEWMAN

Lorraine Elena Roses and Ruth Elizabeth Randolph, *Harlem Renaissance and Beyond: Literary Biographies of 100 Black Women Writers, 1900–1945* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1990, £12.50). Pp. 413. ISBN 0 674 37255 7.

Any attempt to assess the achievement of this book must take into account the fact that since its publication Darlene Clark Hine et al. edited *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopaedia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993) which is the two volume "definitive" study in the area. Roses and Randolph's investigations focus specifically on writers, however, and in her Foreword Mae Gwendolyn Henderson describes the editors as "literary archaeologists." She locates their work within a tradition of feminist scholars (Gloria Hull, Ann Allen Shockley and Erlene Stetson are significant names here) who have reclaimed neglected literary foremothers and whose researches bring forth what has previously been "a largely unknown legacy."

The publication of *Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* in paperback should ensure that students and teachers become aware of many of those African-American literary women who have been missing from broader intellectual and literary histories of the Harlem Renaissance. Roses and Randolph have unearthed a significant number of writers in addition to the "big names" like Hurston and Petry, Fauset and Larsen. This book provides a treasure trove of subjects for further research. The authors include minor writers like Juanita Harrison (1891?–?) whose single book *My Great Wide Beautiful World* (1936) sounds like a wonderful example of lively, idiosyncratic, autobiographical travel writing with a strong dash of self-reliant philosophising. Harrison was a domestic worker,

with only a few months of schooling, who hoarded her wages and took off to travel the world between 1927 and 1935.

Many of these women travelled different paths towards publication and those details the authors have amassed are presented in accessible profiles with bibliographies of primary and secondary sources. Katherine Dunham (1910–) who wrote in a number of genres, as did many of the writers in the collection, founded a dance company and toured the globe writing of her experiences as an ambassador for the US at a time when her company was denied hotel accommodation at home, an embarrassment over which she successfully sued. Eslanda Robeson and Shirley Graham DuBois, better known as the wives of Paul Robeson and W. E. B. DuBois, receive detailed attention in their own right.

The book would have benefited from a longer introduction: more could have made of the trends in the African-American literary tradition that may be discerned even from the work of the little-known writers. But, as it stands, *Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* is a carefully researched addition to scholarship in the area.

University of Hertfordshire SHARON MONTEITH

Gregory H. Nobles, *American Frontiers. Cultural Encounters and Continental Conquest* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997, $25.00). Pp. 286. ISBN 08090 2471 3.

American Frontiers examines the interaction of Europeans, Euro-Americans and Native Peoples in North America from the sixteenth century to 1890. This terminal date immediately conjures up Frederick Jackson Turner and the Frontier Thesis. Yet here 1890 is concerned with the death of Sitting Bull and the Battle of Wounded Knee, both symbolic of the devastation of Indian culture and livelihood. The theme of continental conquest in which Euro-Americans gained land ownership and dominated economic and ideological patterns prevails; but this is not a triumphal one-sided conquest. Europeans had to adapt and learn from their encounters with both Indians and other Europeans. They had migrated to exploit resources and to trade and thus they needed the assistance of Native Peoples. Indians co-operated, but they also played European rivals off against each other and gained a measure of control. When the invaders decided to remain and then to turn themselves into a nation, they obtained more land thanks to superior technology, cartographic authority, manipulative diplomacy, the inability of Native Peoples to resist diseases and their new consuming habits. Yet, even in the years after 1815 or 1848, there was still room for negotiation. Once corralled onto reservations, however, Native Peoples fared very badly. Nevertheless they did attain short-term influence and even admiration for both their resistance and their accommodation.

Gregory Nobles has written a perceptive and thoughtful account of American expansion, reflecting not only an appreciation of Turnerian scholarship, but also of the commentaries and strictures of postmodern research. Yet it is not enough to condemn the male-dominated Eurocentric biases of Turner; these must be countermanded by an alternative overarching thesis offering ethnic, racial and

sexual diversity and a sensitivity to cultural values. Equally, if not more importantly, this alternative structure must also move beyond the regionalism of New Western historians. There was a frontier before there was a West as region. *American Frontiers* suggests that frontier is no longer a word or a concept to be avoided. It still has potential as both a postmodern and a national framework not only in academia, but also in popular usage. Writing in a lucid and flowing style and unencumbered by endnotes Gregory Nobles has produced a highly readable volume designed to appeal to the general public as well as to academia. Yet the scholar should not worry unduly! The extensive bibliographical essay provides an admirable guide to recent and not-so-recent scholarship. This is not a book to be missed.

University of Nottingham MARGARET WALSH

Jeffrey DeShell, *The Peculiarity of Literature: An Allegorical Approach to Poe's Fiction* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997, £28). Pp. 176. ISBN 0 8386 3666 7.

This is an intensely theorised study which bases itself on Blanchot's understanding of the intransitivity – the irregularity or "infinite detour" – of fiction. In our attempts to contain fiction and to make it serve a critical purpose, we inevitably fail to account for the special power of fiction to resist containment: "The truly radical nature of fiction lies in the idea that it resists the totalising function of words like 'truly,' 'radical,' and 'nature'."

DeShell subsequently takes up Benjamin on the discontinuities of language(s), the notion – at once obvious and sophisticated – that the word communicates only itself, and the mental being of the referent only in a tangential, imperfect way. We exist in a fallen, mediating and signifying language, but we may find traces of a prelapserian, pure language of the creative word. Such traces may be found in allegory, which, in this instance, refers to a collision or palimpsestic relation between texts, whereby one is read through the other. Because it is always a mediation between at least two other figures, allegory is itself fallen rather than creative. But the excess of signification is also what permits allegory its power: in "mortifying" the work, in showing its mediated and communicative nature as opposed to the genuinely creative possibility, allegory strips away the "semiotic material content [which can be thus] transformed into ideas, into the figuration of philosophic truth." And here DeShell draws attention to an overlap between Benjamin's ideas and de Man's call for "an examination of the structure of language prior to the meaning it produces." DeShell argues: "By breaking language down into its constituent figures, de Man is able to shed the semiotic meaning of language and illuminate the sparks of language as such. De Man's rhetorical deconstruction thus can be seen as a continuation of Benjamin's project of allegorical criticism."

All the above leads (perhaps with a sinking feeling on the reader's part) towards Lacan and "The Purloined Letter." Lacan sees truth as an unveiling, with fiction as merely exemplary of something external to it: Freud is the truth which is external to Poe. But DeShell's model of allegorical configuration enables

him to argue that Poe may equally be the truth of Freud, and that the place of fiction – its "peculiarity" – is precisely in this rejection of truth as *aletheia* or unveiling. Readers who seek truth after a process of unveiling, rather than in the purity of figurative structure, are in the same position as the Prefect of Police who cannot see the letter before his eyes. Poe's story, then, is for DeShell a perfect example of the anti-philosophical and anti-epistemological truth of fiction. One might argue, however, that this model of allegorical collisions is more broadly anti-interpretive, and that the resulting "truth" is resolutely and unusably ideal.

My redaction of DeShell's argument does not do justice to the complexity and ingenuity of his readings. Nor does it necessarily invoke either the pleasure or the exasperation that this type of argument can produce. It should at least convey, however, the fact of DeShell's studied indifference to such a thing as a usable interpretation; and, as such, it should also convey both his challenge and his limitation.

Queen's University, Belfast PETER STONELEY

Michael F. Brown, *American Spirituality in an Anxious Age* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1997, £14.50). Pp. 236. ISBN 0 674 10882 5.

Michael Brown is an anthropologist who ordinarily teaches Latin American studies at Williams College in Massachusetts. In this brief, provocative work he turns his investigative methods to a much-publicized and often ridiculed topic closer to home, viz., the alleged channelling of supernatural entities by living persons for fun, profit, and personal improvement. Brown uses participant–observer methods enriched by informed historical reference to describe and analyze various persons, primarily in the American Southwest, who claim the ability to embody immaterial personalities and enable others to enter into dialogue with them. His accounts of his personal involvement with a number of channeling groups are at once empathetic, good-humored, skeptical and critical. His previous field experience among aboriginal peoples in Latin America is put to good use in his nuanced comparisons between present-day channelers and tribal shamans. Similarly, his familiarity with US history enables him to draw apt comparisons especially with nineteenth-century spiritualism, a movement to which channeling bears remarkable similarities in its social context and functions, as well as the New Thought movement of the earlier twentieth century.

In this book descriptive accounts alternate with analysis as the author recounts experiences and reflects successively on a number of dimensions of channeling. He links the movement plausibly with a number of developments in the broader culture, such as radical individualism and the quest for unity in the face of fragmented personal identity, as well as the desire to experiment with a wide variety of gender and other roles, and points to the Internet as another realm where very similar issues come into play. More specifically, he stresses the attraction of channeling especially for women, even though few channelers have a strong, overtly political feminist agenda.

Brown concludes that, even though channeling offers an opportunity for a

mild sort of therapy through play-like activity with vaguely religious overtones, it is finally not a very satisfactory alternative either to religion or psychotherapy. Part of the problem lies in the cash nexus involved, since channelers charge for their services. More important, however, is its ultimate lack of moral and ethical seriousness. Like other forms of contemporary cultural questing, it lacks a firm moral grounding and provides only proximate answers for the resolution of deeper concerns about personal identity and responsibility. Although most of such activity, for Brown, is harmless enough, the deeper risk involved for participants is that it may seem to provide metaphysical solutions that are more apparent than real.

On the whole, this is a fine piece of work: engagingly written, theoretically sophisticated, skeptically sympathetic, and mercifully brief.

Miami University (*Ohio*) PETER W. WILLIAMS

Traditional Literatures of the American Indian: Texts and Interpretations, compiled and edited by Karl Kroeber. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, £32.95 cloth, £10.95 paper). Pp. 159. ISBN 0 8032 2733 7, 0 8032 7782 2.

This welcome second edition is essential reading for students of Native American Literature as well as those concerned with ethnic studies. These essays effectively demonstrate the artistic achievement of early American writers in terms of subtlety of expression and technical control. The importance of *story* is emphasised throughout and this concern is still pre-eminent in the work of contemporary writers like Louise Erdrich and Scott Momaday.

Karl Kroeber points out in his introduction the tendency for western readers to misread these texts as a result of different literary and ethical assumptions; there is the added difficulty that a written text is made to represent an *oral* recitation: "Is it possible to understand a story from a vanished culture of whose characteristics we are entirely ignorant?" In traditional story-telling, the technique of the story-teller is unfixed and varies with each recitation, and, as stories were well known to their audiences, nuances of expression and performance were celebrated and admired. As in African theatre, the audience participated in the story-telling ritual.

Story-telling is an integral part of Native American tradition; it was the means by which tribes and nations communicated their myths and religious beliefs. In *Storyteller* (1981), Leslie Marmon Silko attacks the view perpetuated by white ethnologists that the oral tradition is dead: "I grew up at Laguna listening, and I hear the ancient stories, I hear them very clearly in the stories we are telling right now."

Contemporary Native American writers operate at the disjuncture between myth and reality and are much concerned with the question of Indian identity; however, in essence, they are working out of a continuum and are interrogating the same central psychological and social tensions as their predecessors.

For example, Karl Kroeber analyses a Nez Perce tale called *Red Willow* to show how narrative can function as a "psychosocial self-questioning process." The

sophisticated rhetorical devices displayed in this story, are comparable to the most intricate strategies of modern American fiction.

Similarly, Linda Ainsworth, in an intriguing essay on the Wintu myth of female sexuality, examines a story featuring "Rolling Head Loon Woman" in terms of object relations theory.

This edition, expanded from an earlier collection, also contains a contribution by Dell Hymes on "Narrative Form as a 'Grammar' of Experience," a new translation by Dennis Tedlock and an annotated bibliography.

The inclusion of complete oral stories gives the reader scope for understanding the purpose and structure of these early stories as well as the means to appreciate their technical expertise.

University of Edinburgh FAITH PULLIN

Benjamin Stora, *Imaginaires de guerres: Algérie–Viêt-nam, en France et aux États–Unis* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997, 125 f). Pp. 252. ISBN 2 7071 2667 5.

Benjamin Stora, one of the most well-known French historians specialising in the Algerian conflict, explores another facet of France's experience in Algeria in his new book, *Imaginaires de guerres: Algérie–Viêt-nam en France et aux Etats–Unis*. By comparing France's response to the Algerian war with America's response to Vietnam, he succeeds in exposing significant historical and cultural links between the two experiences without denying their specificity. His book offers a good overview of both French and American cinematic traditions with regards to Algeria and Vietnam, but also examines (albeit briefly) the role of photography and painting in the construction of a French and American imaginary of the wars. In order to compare the difference in cultural responses, Stora provides statistics of how many people went to see landmark films such as: *Le petit soldat* (Jean-Luc Goddard), *La guerre sans nom* (Bertrand Tavernier), *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Coppola) and *Platoon* (Oliver Stone). He discovers that even though films on Algeria are no longer banned, the French do not consume them at the same rate as the American public consumes films on the Vietnam war.

Stora frames his comparison by giving each cinematic tradition a historical context. For example, neither France nor America declared war on Algeria or Vietnam, and both wars had a crucial domestic impact, bringing about the fall of the IV Republic in France and the demise of Richard Nixon in the United States. However, the central thesis informing this comparison is Stora's conviction that Algeria and Vietnam were wars of decolonisation: wars fought by the colonised against their colonisers. Although America did not have explicit colonial ties with Vietnam, its motives for being there were of an ideological imperial nature (i.e., warding off the spread of communism). Indeed, America provided France with 400 million dollars in 1953 to help France in her losing battle to keep Indochina as a colony. This comparative approach provides the historian with a way of tackling decolonisation without bracketing out other experiences. To avoid looking at the role France and America played in Indochina/Vietnam and to ignore the impact of Indochina's experience on the Algerian war of independence

is to "pass beside the truth." The relationship between the two must be explored in order to get a clear picture of who was involved and how their involvement impacted the countries both tried to control.

Imaginaires de guerres is an ambitious work with a corpus of fifty American films dealing with the Vietnam War, forty French films on the Algerian conflict as well as fifty French and American documentaries about the experiences. Stora also incorporates Vietnamese and Algerian media responses to these wars. The breadth of his coverage is impressive and brings together two cinematic traditions and historical experiences whose links have not been fully exploited. However, such wide-ranging coverage prevents Stora from giving little more than a summary of the visual texts. His exploration is thus rather schematic, and many interesting aspects ofthe texts he uses are inevitably left out. It was perhaps not Stora's intention to examine film from a theoretical perspective; however this may have helped ground his discussion of how Vietnam and Algerian war film reflected a change in conceptions of national identity. By focusing on historical differences behind France and America's responses to their experiences in Algeria and Vietnam, Stora overlooks cultural aspects – such as the fact that American culture seems to be more expressive than French Culture – which may also explain the difference in reception. The book succeeds, however, in laying out the field of this rich and varied comparative cultural history.

University of Nottingham ROOPA CHAUHAN

Barbara Claire Freeman, *The Feminine Sublime: Gender and Excess in Women's Fiction* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997, £13.95). Pp. 211. ISBN 0 520 20888 9.

Barbara Claire Freeman's enterprise here is to prove that selected works of fiction which articulate "the feminine sublime" – briefly paraphrased as "a crisis in relation to language and representation that a certain subject undergoes" – can affirm an alternative to the discourse and ideology of the triumvirate of the sublime: Longinus, Burke and Kant. The fictional texts she chooses to illustrate this alternative allow her to refuse the sublime as a means of neutralising excess and instead to "re-metaphorize" its meaning as multiple, as transformative, as resistant to categorisation. Freeman notes on more than one occasion the coincidence of the entry into the marketplace of British women novelists with the "rise of the sublime in aesthetic theory," and her argument refashions gender categories, not into oppositional modes, but, as she says, "to offer a critique of a tradition that has functioned historically to reassert masculine privilege." The first and the last chapters, those dealing respectively with Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, are most successful in realising Freeman's aims, *The Awakening* in particular lending itself to the alterities of interpretation arising from the redefinition of sublime possibilities. The sea and its meaning and significance in Chopin's narrative is posited here as a "metaphor for language itself" and for indeterminacy and multiplicity, the climax of the novel constructing a "sublime in which there is no end of the line." The life and death of Lily Bart in Wharton's *The House of Mirth* counterpointed with Edmund

Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* seems to reverberate less productively, although analysis of Lily's "commitment to risk" and the problematisation – via the sublime – of the familiar argument of the *jeune fille à marier* as central to the market economy add interest to the usual readings of the novel. The Kantian sublime is invoked first in discussion of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Jean Rhys' *Good Morning, Midnight*, but is most fecund in explicating Morrison's denotative endeavours in *Beloved* and elsewhere to inscribe the Africanist presence in American literature. Freeman suggests that it "replicates the place of the sublime with respect to the beautiful, so that African-American literature is at once inside and outside the canon, both its border and its frame." She opens up Morrison's dedication: "Sixty Million / and more" in discussion of the "aesthetics of the incalculable," concluding with the most convincing of her uses of the sublime: "the process of translating and figuring events that exceed our frame of reference," in the disruption of the temporal where the story not "to pass on" expresses its own incommunicability alongside an irresistible injunction to tell.

Manchester Metropolitan University JANET BEER

David C. Gompert and F. Stephen Larrabee (eds.), *America and Europe: A Partnership For A New Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £30.00 cloth). Pp. 276. ISBN 0 521 59107 4.

Gompert and Larrabee have edited a book which advocates a closer partnership between the United States and Europe. The three core propositions as outlined in their conclusion argue that the two continents should move towards a "more ambitious Atlantic partnership" which could ultimately become the leading force in world progress; the economic and security institutions of both the EU and NATO need to be revamped to pursue mutual interests, shared responsibilities, and shared global leadership; and the "paramount interest of the partnership is the economic health, expansion, and security of the community of democratic societies." Through a series of articles mostly authored by RAND corporation employees, they go about exploring in a very clear and concise way the mutual advantages of such a closer relationship and the ground that has to be covered to get there. Ronald Asmus places the two continents security and economic interests within the context of the post-Cold War period. Treverton outlines a view of the new economic agenda; James Thomson the implications of the new structures associated with a deeper and wider NATO. In turn then a couple of chapters assess the merit or demerits of each continent as a partner in the proposed closer partnership. The implications of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the crises in Eastern Europe are examined, as are the security concerns posed by Middle Eastern contingencies. Their arguments are forthright and well constructed.

The suggestion throughout seems to be that Europe needs to get its act together if it is to be an adequate partner for the United States. Unless the members of the EU can forge a more coherent relationship in terms of both their security and economic arrangements, then Europe will be a less effective partner,

and less willing to address the new challenges posed to their security and both continents' mutual interests. The onus throughout seems to be on the Europeans to improve their contributions to the proposed partnership. While the authors realise that the concept "Europe" can mean many things and include a wide variety of states, for the purposes of this book they are generally referring to the democratic states, integrated or nearly to the EU, and those "well-disposed toward the United States." But having gone to this trouble for the eastern part of the Atlantic, an annoying (and extremely ethnocentric) feature is that the authors use US and America interchangeably, as if the Canadians, Mexicans, and other Latin Americans did not exist.

To their credit, the book suggests that the proposed new partnership should not be aligned against any power such as Japan, Asia, or Islam; indeed, Japan should be invited to join. This is not Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*. But the content of the book is reminiscent of the writings produced in the late 1970s by the authors of the Trilateral Commission advocating the leadership and management of global affairs by the industrial élite of the world. At that time a key objective of the Commission was to galvanize the industrial powers as the world became increasingly multipolar during *détente*; now, after the cohesion the Cold War afforded the Atlantic relationship has been removed, the objectives of this book echo the earlier goals. There is little room for dissent in the proposed new partnership, it is assumed that an increasingly integrated world economy "on open terms favourable to American capital, wares, and ideas" would benefit all. Though it is suggested that Europe should increase their responsibilities and leadership role, it is still within a framework which seems to be extending US hegemony. The book is favourably recommended by Henry Kissinger and George Shultz.

De Montfort University DAVID RYAN

Alice Gambrell, *Women Intellectuals, Modernism, and Difference: Transatlantic Culture, 1919–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £37.50 cloth, £13.95 paper). ISBN 0 521 55341 5, 0 521 55688 0.

Alice Gambrell prefaces her commentary upon women intellectuals of the interwar years with the question:

> What … does it mean to be affiliated with a school, movement, or discipline in which one would, under more usual circumstances, occupy the position of "Other": the privileged object of the investigation, the fantasized source of inspiration, the respondent in (though rarely the initiator of) an interlocutionary exchange?

Avoiding the dangerously reductive compliance/resistance binary, an exegesis of this ambiguous "insider–outsider" status orchestrates a patient and insightful analysis of the interactions of Frida Kahlo, Leonora Carrington, Zora Neale Hurston, Ella Deloria and H. D. with the powerful metropolitan "formulations" of their time: Bretonian Surrealism, Franz Boas's Columbia University Anthropology programme and Freudian Psychoanalysis. Gambrell's reciprocal readings contend that

on the eve of the Second World War, and in the twilight phase of… "Modernism" – these women's works helped to bring to crisis several influential strains of cultural critique that operated throughout the early decades of this century.

However, recognising the text's preoccupation with the ways in which such crises are retold by contemporary commentators, we should add to this cohort of protocols feminist scholarship itself – in all its multiplicity and self-questioning desire for mimesis – which is distinguished from the scholarship of those interwar counterparts by an embryonic *explicit* communication between peers working in related (institutional and non-institutional) contexts.

Throughout, Gambrell strives to negotiate taut illustrations of the multiple and competing situations occupied by both her self-revising women intellectuals and their various interlocutors, attending closely to the differences and tenuous continuities of contextual comparison. In the establishment and exposition of her own theoretical framework, this "provisionality" is manifest in the tentative appeal she makes for an academic feminism which

> emplots itself… across the swerving trajectories of multiple affiliation, attending at all points to the reciprocal relationship between scholarly commentary and the varied conditions within which it develops, and to the ways in which that relationship discloses itself.

In this historiographical evolution, the text presents far more than compelling local histories; rather, it offers an invitation to knowingly "break form" with established etiquettes in favour of a more mutually engaged scholarly dialogue of direct address. That Gambrell's text stimulates many more questions than it is able to answer would please her sense of the donative, and that it does so with such humility is testament to a precise eye unwilling to circumscribe its vision.

University of Keele MERIEL LLAND

Robert S. Levine, *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the Politics of Representative Identity* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $45.00 cloth, $18.95 paper). Pp. 328. ISBN 0 8078 2323 6, 0 8078 4633 3.

On opening Robert S. Levine's book on the complex relation between Martin Delany and Frederick Douglass, the reader is confronted with a startling visual image created by the careful positioning of two contemporary portraits: Delany and Douglass are made to stare, contemplatively, in opposite directions. This is the traditional view of these two nineteenth-century African-American writers, as unequivocal opponents, as ardent separatist versus committed assimilationist. This is the binarised stereotype which Levine sets out to thoroughly debunk, arguing that, whilst each writer did function as a contending other, they also shared a nexus of overlapping concerns and attitudes. Levine's compelling study of two central antebellum writers explores their debates on issues like abolitionism, emigration and nationalism, to show how each man influenced the other's political vision.

A particularly damaging aspect of the false binarism permeating scholarship on Delany and Douglass has been the tendency to – on the one hand – marginalise

Delany, as a black separatist, by erasing his work from the canons of American literature (none of the major anthologies of American literature include Delany's work), and – on the other hand – reify Douglass as the representative black writer of the period. Levine argues that between Douglass as representative black writer and Harriet Jacobs, Frances Harper and Harriet Wilson as rediscovered African-American women writers, there has hitherto been little space for attention to other nineteenth-century African-American male writers like Henry Highland Garnet, James McCune Smith, William Watkins, Samuel R. Ward, and Delany himself. Hence Levine's project is also to re-establish the significance of Delany's thought and work in antebellum culture.

Levine examines Douglass and Delany's coeditorship of the *North Star*, and their interrelated debates on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and black emigration. Extended readings are provided of three major antebellum literary texts: Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), Delany's *Blake* (1859–62) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred* (1856), demonstrating that there was a triangulation of influences among Douglass, Delany and Stowe. *Martin Delany, Frederick Douglass, and the Politics of Representative Identity* is a rich and important study of the complex cross-fertilisations that occurred in antebellum culture. It addresses many of the most important issues currently debated in transnational and "postnational" cultural studies such as the location of the (black) nation, the function of borders, the question of alterity, and the tension between integrative and resistant narratives.

University of Liverpool VAL GOUGH

Judith Sealander, *Private Wealth and Public Life: Foundation Philanthropy and the Reshaping of American Social Policy from the Progressive Era to the New Deal* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, £33). Pp. 349. ISBN 0 8018 5460 1.

Judith Sealander's new book is somewhat narrower in scope than its title suggests. It covers not all foundation philanthropy but the activities of the half-dozen or so organisations which, rather than merely distributing largesse to whatever worthy causes their founders had chosen to endow, made a systematic effort to shape public policy. These included the various Rockefeller charities, like the General Education Board, Rockefeller Sanitary Commission and Bureau of Social Hygiene, which were later united under the umbrella of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, the Commonwealth Fund, the Russell Sage Foundation and the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Secondly, the period studied stops short of the New Deal, terminating, in fact, in 1932.

Sealander finds little evidence to support accusations then and since that the foundations formed "a powerful shadow force manipulating the polity" in the interests of "the ruling class". Their influence was far too patchy for that. In some instances, such as the funding of USDA farm demonstrations by the General Education Board, the promotion of public-health education in the South by the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission, or the support given by the Spelman Memorial and Russell Sage Foundation to the public playground movement, their efforts were of central importance in opening up new areas of government

action. They did much to shape the administration of existing programmes, like mothers' pensions. Her account is also full of failed experiments, of seeds liberally sown on barren ground, such as the Spelman Memorial's abortive attempt during the 1920s to promote parent education classes or the Commonwealth Fund's sponsorship of child guidance clinics to assist the juvenile courts. Here case-studies, argues Sealander, illustrate the influence but also "the restraints placed by a pluralist political system on foundation power." Nor did it operate primarily as a conservative force. Those who formulated foundation strategies "shared a worldview that mirrored the salient features of contemporary Progressivism." They believed that a harmonious and well-ordered society would not emerge from the operation of market-forces alone, and they were confident of the capacity of the social sciences to provide answers to social problems. At the same time, they were "hopeless romantics" in many of their expectations regarding the possibility of social betterment.

Private Wealth and Public Life illuminates the close interconnections between private and public agencies that characterised progressive social policy, as well as shedding light on a number of specific reform movements. It would be helpful, in weighing the overall influence of the foundations to have some indication of the full scope of their activities. We are told that 1903–32 was "a definable epoch in the history of American foundations," but without further information about the ways in which they developed after 1932 its significance is difficult to evaluate. The closing date also debars serious consideration of how foundation activities contributed to the creation of the American welfare state during the 1930s.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth ROBERT HARRISON

Peter Wolfe, *A Vision of His Own: The Mind and Art of William Gaddis* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997, £36 cloth). Pp. 312. ISBN 0 8386 3694 2.

Any new study of William Gaddis is to be welcomed as raising his critical profile and further ensuring that he is not omitted from accounts of the shift in American fiction towards postmodernism. Peter Wolfe's *A Vision of His Own* essentially describes a sensibility unusually alert to the economic currents in American life. The main method he uses is of detailed commentary on select episodes from Gaddis's novels, one which may match the way most of us read his episodic works. Wolfe demonstrates a constant alertness to Gaddis's use of wordplay, his screening of motifs as apparently incidental, and the astonishing range of his allusions. His first novel, *The Recognitions*, does demonstrate a Joycean mosaic quality of interlocking details which raises enormous difficulties for critical explanation. In a work of this length the reader casts around for generalities that will help make sense of the whole, but Wolfe rightly demonstrates that there are aspects of Gaddis's method which militate against such totalization. While foreshadowing and repetition are used, issues are often left unresolved. We might turn then to the notion of recognition for help, which Wolfe does, but with surprising brevity. If recognition involves identifying what has already been seen,

then human experience might fall into a sequence of such acts without any original. Since this is a novel which investigates the trade in art-forgery and the circulation of forgeries as a kind of bogus currency, it is surprising that Wolfe doesn't take bearings from Baudrillard whose concept of simulacra could be used to profit with this novel. Gaddis himself has stated in interview that he wanted to depict a world without absolutes, and Wolfe does well to stress a pivotal scene where three key figures come together: Wyatt the forger, Rectall Brown the dealer and Basil Valentine the aesthetic named after a pseudonymous author of works on alchemy. Wyatt emerges from the context of New England Calvinism, and towards the end of the novel unconsciously eats bread which contains the ashes of his dead father. Wolfe treats such an episode ambiguously. Should we take this as a sacramental act or only notice its ironic resemblance to religious ritual? This is a symptomatic instance, since Gaddis's fiction contains many references to religion, but one usually hedged round with traps laid for the unwary reader.

One of the most valuable sides to Wolfe's study is his constant demonstration of how self-aware a writer Gaddis is. Sometimes this demonstration takes the form of unproductive attempts to identify characters with Gaddis. Usually it involves Wolfe showing how Gaddis plays with the reader's expectations. Much of his analysis tends to be too character-based to cope with the intricacies of this writer, but, when he turns to the style of Gaddis' second novel, *JR*, this reviewer's own expectations were raised – only temporarily. Wolfe notes one specific device, that of using different grammatical instances of the same word within the same sentence, before moving back to his most productive area of discussion, namely thematics. In so doing he leaves a lot more to be said on Gaddis's extraordinary method of casting virtually the whole of *JR* in dialogue without chapter breaks. This demanding method limits the visual dimension to the novel and makes its shifts of scene unusually disorienting for the reader. Wolfe, however, concentrates more on the economic themes of this novel which he compares interestingly with Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism*. The young protagonist JR (for "junior"?) personifies a single-minded acquisitive obsession which Gaddis had found in seventies America. Similarly, *Carpenter's Gothic* uses the figure of the Reverend Elton Ude, media evangelist and businessman, to demonstrate the resurgence of fundamentalism in the Reagan–Carter years. The main emphasis running throughout *A Vision of His Own* falls squarely on economics, and this approach pays off dividends with Gaddis who again and again shows his characters taking up positions within structures of power or finance. Even his most recent novel, *A Frolic of His Own*, is read as another analysis of Americans' preoccupation with striking deals. That being so, too much attention to character comes to seem anachronistic since, as Wolfe points out in *JR*, a misuse of language speeds the breakdown of the self which is shown to be precariously dependant on the socio-economic structures of American society. Wolfe's method of close analysis tends to smother his more general points, which is a pity because he has many insights to offer on one of the most enigmatic novelists writing in America today.

Liverpool University DAVID SEED

Thomas A. Tweed (ed.), *Retailing U.S. Religious History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997, £32 cloth, £10.95 paper). Pp. 308. ISBN 0 520 20569 3, 0 520 20570 7.

This series of essays raises important questions about the structuring of American religious history in particular and, more broadly, about the nature of the entire historical enterprise from what might be loosely called a post-modern perspective. According to the editor, the collective aim of the authors is to bring about a decentering of the study of American religion so that male-dominated Anglo-American Protestantism in the northeastern sector no longer serves as a focal point against which other perspectives are tried and frequently ignored. The foil for most of these authors is a series of texts which, at least until recently, have attempted to narrate the religious history of the US as a continuous narrative. These, they argue, have been in fact and perhaps, given the genre, even necessarily exclusionary, since their organizing principles presuppose a "core" – Puritan, Enlightenment, "mainline" Protestantism, organized religions more broadly – which distorts or obscures the "periphery."

These essays thus attempt to cast light on what has previously been viewed as peripheral – not the "sects" and "cults" that in the past have been marginalized, but rather categories of people, places and processes. Prominent among these groupings, not surprisingly, are women, about whom Ann Taves and Ann Braude write persuasively. In one of the book's strongest essays, Braude attacks head-on the notions of "declension," "feminization," and "secularization" as explanatory principles in American religion, arguing that all are interpretive fictions resulting from an inadequately or wrongly gendered reading of religious history. Laurie Maffly-Kipp emphasizes regionalism, citing examples from her own studies of religion in the American West. Joel Martin and Catherine Albanese, with narrow and broader foci respectively, stress the theme of cultural exchange, emphasizing the process all traditions, pre-existing or imported, necessarily undergo when forced to deal with the varyingly benign or coercive pressures of cross-cultural contact.

It is difficult to quarrel with the necessity of crafting a more inclusive version of the story of America's religious development, and the process has been going on in fact for some time. The problem posed here is one of historical meaning and method: if the study of American religion becomes a loosely related collection of what might be viewed as ethnohistories, what happens to the possibility of a unified narrative in the classroom or text? One strategy, stressing the larger themes and processes of American history – democratization, urbanization, immigration, race, et al. – suggests itself as a framework for integrating these concerns. The ongoing question of the one and the many, in any case, is not going to go away. These essays give sharper definition to the many, but leave the matter of the one highly problematic.

Miami University (Ohio) PETER W. WILLIAMS

Carolyn L. Karcher (ed.), *A Lydia Maria Child Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997, £16.95). Pp. 453. ISBN 0 8223 1954 3.

Lydia Maria Child, *A Romance of the Republic*, Dana D. Nelson (ed.), (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997, £15.00). Pp. 442. ISBN 0 8131 0928 0.

Scholars and teachers of the nineteenth century owe Carolyn Karcher a great debt for her efforts to bring Lydia Maria Child to the notice of twentieth-century readers. Her work, together with that of Jean Fagan Yellin and Patricia Holland, among others, should help to restore Child's reputation as an important writer and reformer of the period, Karcher's majestic biography of Child, *The First Woman of the Republic*, the republication, under her editorship, of *An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans*, and this new collection of Child's writings, together with the reissue of *A Romance of the Republic* are beginning to make Child's work more available and hence, more teachable.

Karcher has grouped her readings topically, arranged them chronologically within each topic, and has provided excellent introductions for each section. This, together with her readable and wide-ranging general introduction and a carefully arranged and selected bibliography facilitate the use of the collection in a variety of courses, fulfilling her intention of "helping teachers to identify the readings most pertinent to their fields." Karcher's informative and useful footnotes, like her introductions, display meticulous and exhaustive scholarship, deep understanding, and sensitive and perceptive criticism. Her strategy of grouping Child's writings under topical headlines emphasises the wide range of Child's interests: "The Indian Question," "Children's Literature and Domestic Advice," "Slavery, Race, and Reconstruction," "Journalism and Social Critique," "Sexuality and the Woman Question," and "Religion." While such divisions could be seen to distort Child's œuvre by failing to recognise the interrelationships in her social criticism, Karcher is careful to comment on these interconnections in the introductions. She also provides suggestive leads to other relevant material.

One might complain that the introductions to each section can appear somewhat repetitious in view of the points already established in the general introduction, or that the section on "Journalism and Social Critique" might be better be titled "The City: Prisons, Poverty, and the Abuses of Capitalism." Additionally, one might wish that Karcher had opted for the inclusion of "The Quadroons" or an extract from *The Patriarchal Institution*, but all criticisms seem ungenerous in the light of the thoughtful construction of this fine collection which achieves its aim or providing a valuable teaching resource.

One can only wish that Dana Nelson's editing of *A Romance of the Republic* had been as informed and as scrupulous. Nelson's reference to *The Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* as "fictionalized autobiography" shows scant regard for Jean Fagan Yellin's careful scholarship supporting the accuracy of the narrative. Nelson's rather minimal efforts to place *A Romance of the Republic* within a historical context show little depth of understanding of the historical forces at work when the novel was written. We are provided with nothing in the way of a publishing history of the novel, little on its reception, and nothing in the way of explanatory notes to go with the text itself. If one wishes for what would have

been a fuller and more useful introduction to the novel, one must refer back to the seventeen pages devoted to the book in Karcher's study, *The First Woman in the Republic*.

Nelson's introduction to *A Romance of the Republic* is the more disappointing because the novel is so interesting. As a historical romance first published in 1867 and written against the background of Andrew Johnson's controversial implementation of his reconstruction programme, the novel looks back to the struggle over slavery while the wounds of war were still fresh, and the bitterness of its aftermath palpable. The novel pays tribute to a number of leading abolitionists, only some of whom are identified by name, while capturing the antagonisms and hypocrisies which the crusade for abolition elicited in the North as well as the South. Janus-like, the novel looks to the future as much as to the past. Its plot centres on the fate of two octoroon slave sisters and their children, suggesting that racial prejudices and notions of identity based on racial distinctions are inappropriate and nonsensical, and that miscegenation is not merely harmless, but provides positive benefits. Child acknowledges a national obligation to ensure that the freed slaves be given the opportunities necessary to use their undeveloped capabilities and to enjoy their rights as citizens. Unfortunately, as Nelson and Karcher point out, the racial and gender politics implicit in the literary conventions Child uses negate some of the force of her arguments. This too demonstrates that *A Romance of the Republic* is a revealing novel of its time.

The publication of *A Romance of the Republic* and of *A Lydia Maria Child Reader* give us little excuse to continue ignoring such an interesting, accomplished, and important nineteenth-century writer.

Manchester Metropolitan University CYNTHIA S. HAMILTON

Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, Calif., and London: University of California Press, 1997, $27.50). Pp. 383. ISBN 0 520 20441 7.

Professor Ryan's ambitious and innovative study of public consciousness and behaviour in nineteenth-century urban America succeeds in providing a multifaceted portrait of the industrialising, multicultural city as the cradle of American democracy. Such a view was once anathema to generations of scholars and Americans weaned on the doctrine of American exceptionalism and sustained by antithetical notions that the New England towns and Western communities were the font of modern democratic institutions. Ryan's case studies – San Francisco, New York, and New Orleans – were the most European of American settlements during the colonial period, and by the onset of the Civil War were "rapidly growing, soon industrialized, garishly diversified cities." Ryan's preoccupation is with discovering the "dispersed and elusive habitats of the people," of reconstructing "public culture" in spatial, social, and political dimensions. The narrative, which begins with the democratisation of political society in the early part of the Jacksonian era, weaves intricate, elegant patterns of an often turbulent public life. For Ryan, democracy is best studied through

local history rather than national politics or institutions, that is to say by "eavesdropping," like Tocqueville, on what Americans thought of each other and by analysing matters of public record on which all sections of society might conceivably evince an opinion – if not participate in – such as parades, associations, and civic ceremonies, or election campaigns, crowd action, and disagreements on the use of municipal space.

Ryan's selective use of evidence inevitably raises a number of wider questions about the extent to which disorderly municipal politics and antagonistic relations among ethno-cultural groups made Americans more ready to accept and endure a destructive civil war. The "civic wars" that Ryan describes and explores did not subside until the 1880s. Before then, rival social and ethnic groups had competed for influence in all three cities, finding openings for self-expression in feisty public congregations. The spectre of "King Mob" descending on public office, which so appalled Jackson's detractors when he was inaugurated president, was more prevalent in San Francisco than in New Orleans or New York; but, in all three cases, a similar pattern emerges of political violence, Nativism, increasing racial and ethnic segregation, and vigilantism (including the lynching of corrupt officials in San Francisco.) Inertia on the part of the municipal authorities to control crowd action or eradicate corruption is a prevalent theme; in 1857, for example, New York was the scene of a frightening and bizarre stand-off between two rival groups of police, one appointed by the Republican state governor at Albany, the other by the city mayor, which presaged the armed conflict that was to follow and hinted at New Yorkers' predilection for settling disputes violently, as during the draft riots of 1863.

Public life and politics, writes Ryan, was and is neither pristine nor sanitised. Contention rather than consensus and pragmatism rather than principles are what fed and feeds American democracy. "If democracy thrives on the public airing of differences, even to the point of disorder, it wilts in an atmosphere of coercion and withdrawal from conflict." In the post-Civil War period, Ryan argues, public life was less exuberant and fractious, and, ultimately, less democratic: what emerged in larger cities was a new order of politics, where social, political, and ethnic groups were visibly less tolerant of each other, and more belligerently racist. We might, in the end, know so much more about the nature of American democracy, warts and all, by following Ryan's lead.

University of Stirling COLIN NICOLSON

Robin Grey, *The Complicity of Imagination: The American Renaissance, Contests of Authority, and Seventeenth-Century English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £37.50). Pp. 294. ISBN 0 521 495385.

The writers of the American Renaissance, declares Robin Grey, "were sufficient in their own agency, confident in their own powers, and deeply enough read in [seventeenth-century English literature] to revise those earlier cultural artifacts for their own distinctive aesthetic, social, and sometimes political purposes." Grey dismisses as too narrow those studies of early modern England and mid nineteenth-century America – by Miller, Winters, Chase, Bercovitch and others – that approach their subject in terms of a single social, cultural, or political

"variable." Allowing that seventeenth-century interests among New England writers were "rooted in the historical conditions of American society," she insists none the less that such interests must be broadly and "variously interpreted." Having expanded her critical horizons, however, Grey immediately – and rather oddly – narrows them again, insisting that American Renaissance "writers consciously absorbed literary, philosophical, and political strategies gathered from their wide reading in the earlier period in order to interrogate both the orthodoxies of the American Whigs and the radical ('Young American') Democratic agenda in the antebellum Northeast."

If this is a little confusing, then so is much else that follows in *The Complicity of Imagination*. This is not to deny the book its real strengths. Grey writes clearly, and can be relied upon – despite occasional lapses into jargon – to develop her ideas with force and lucidity. There is abundant literary intelligence on display in her work, most especially perhaps in numerous closely argued passages tracing "influences" from the earlier English writers to their later American admirers. Grey is also a very thorough and responsible scholar, both in her coverage of relevant modern studies, and in her familiarity with the English and American texts that interest her.

Still, this volume is disappointing in a number of ways, not least in failing to make good on its ambitious social, cultural and political program. Grey in fact seldom gets much beyond the general views that she lays down in her introductory remarks. Indeed, while her critical commentary is almost always insightful, much of it has little to do with her putative topic, literary influences and appropriations. We are struck as well by Grey's failure to take either Hawthorne or Dickinson into account. She acknowledges these conspicuous omissions, to be sure, but hardly explains or justifies them. Nor, despite her bold claim to originality, does Grey open many fresh critical perspectives on her featured writers. The lines that she traces between Milton and Emerson are substantial enough, but they add little to our knowledge of the great transcendentalist. The same may be said of Fuller in her relationship to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and to his brother, the poet, George Herbert. The chapter on Melville – surely the best in the volume – is frequently illuminating (most especially perhaps in its commentary on the style of Sir Thomas Browne), but notably flawed in its failure to extend its argument to include such manifestly relevant texts as *Pierre* and *The Confidence-Man*.

Despite its moments of genuine critical insight, then, *The Complicity of Imagination* is too often little more than a source study that falls short of its own ambitious intellectual objectives.

University of California, Santa Cruz FORREST G. ROBINSON

Arnold Lewis, *An Early Encounter with Tomorrow: Europeans, Chicago's Loop, and the World's Columbian Exposition* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997, $34.95). Pp. 353. ISBN 0 252 02305 6.

There aren't a great many new ideas in this book but there is plenty of intriguing and illuminating information about how "thoughtful Europeans" – mostly from Britain, France and Germany – responded to Chicago in the late nineteenth

century. And there is an impressive eighty-page bibliography and a further twenty pages of mini-biographies of the people who came, saw and left records of what they thought of *the* city of the Gilded Age. What they saw in Chicago was a harbinger of the modern: the visible modern of "the tall office building," as Louis Sullivan termed it, and of transportation systems which came so intensively together in the Loop but also the invisible modern of integrative processes and practices. The reactions of visiting European professionals and lay-people fall into the familiar oppositions which structure such accounts back to Crèvecœur: new versus old; historical authority versus brash, new confidence; precedent or tradition versus innovation; culture and commerce. Instances of culture, such as the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, would have been better appreciated had they been located in a European city was one viewpoint.

An Early Encounter with Tomorrow is high-level synthesis, a bringing together of knowledge accumulated by Arnold Lewis over a career of teaching and research. So, for example, what he has to say about the World's Fair does not greatly add to the debate over that event. By far the most important contribution is a study of the Loop which uses foreign observations to make the case for it as "a novel congruency of public behavior, architecture, profits, and contemporary techniques," rather than focusing upon the individual architects whose buildings have made the Loop a living museum of American modernism. Having said that, one would still go to Daniel Bluestone's *Constructing Chicago* (1991) for the original argument that treating the architecture of the Loop as a matter of aesthetics and technology without looking at civic factors was to miss the point of metropolitanism. Perhaps the absence of European theorists from Lewis' selection of visitors – presumably ruled out because of the time-span of his study or because Max Weber or Georg Simmel might not have written directly on Chicago – explains the tendency to go for synthesis and coverage. Surely Simmel's "The Metropolis and Mental Life" or Weber's theory of rationalisation take us closer to an understanding of Chicago than the more particular accounts brought together in this book? And it is a little disappointing that Lewis does not worry away at some of the observations he quotes; for instance, the claim that "smiling and happy thoughts take over once again" when the businessman escapes from "the vise" of the central business district and enters within the sphere of "influence" of the woman. But then the book's main purpose is to sift and sort accounts and Part 2 of the book does this expertly by concentrating upon the Loop, the suburbs (the "domain of women"), the World's Fair, and, in an integrative manner, upon Chicago's architecture. It is odd, though, that residential but not industrial neighbourhoods are examined. The later chapters build – perhaps a bit repetitively at times – on Part 1 which lays out the extent of European fascination for Chicago after the Civil War and provides a framework within which Lewis can pass on the results of his painstaking research.

University of Nottingham DOUGLAS TALLACK

Joel Foreman (ed.), *The Other Fifties: Interrogating Midcentury American Icons* (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1997, $49.95 cloth, $17.95 paper). Pp. 346, 17 illustrations. ISBN 0 252 02271 8, 0 252 06574 3.

The introduction locates this collection by American academics as part of the project to rewrite the 1950s, less as the decade of simple conformity squeezed between the crisis of world war and the fetishized or demonized radicalism of the 1960s, and more as a bridge between these decades. The standard view of what Robert Lowell calls the "tranquillized" Fifties as constructed through a culture of complacency is challenged in this book's focus on alterity, though you could criticize the revisionist nature of the work as being a little formulaic now: that issues of race, gender, class and sexuality are interrogated and problematized to illustrate transformation or flux rather than fixity sounds fairly familiar.

Neither title or subtitle informs that this is really a book about popular culture, or, more accurately, *mass media popular culture*. Yet this is what makes the book so impressive: not only is it a collection of well-chosen and authoritatively written pieces, but also it insists on reading pop icons within an industry context. It offers both popular cultural textual analysis and consideration of their production, distribution and consumption within the constraints of the various strands of the culture and entertainment industry which was massively expanding at the time. So, for example, the *de rigueur* piece on Elvis focuses on the often overlooked fact that his groundbreaking performances were broadcast on television, and seeks to read him through the televisual display of the sexualized body and the gendered gaze. The chapter on J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* places the novel in the context of the Cold War, but also presents it as a phenomenon of the mass-market paperback industry "that played such a vital role in the rise of teen culture." The commercial failure of the eighteen different versions of the Ford Edsel is looked at through analysis of its television and magazine publicity campaigns – including *The Edsel Show*, a sponsored one-hour television special featuring Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra watched by 50 million people. The overt presentation and covert problematizing of femininity and masculinity by the characters played by Doris Day and Rock Hudson in *Pillow Talk* indicate the film industry's own ambivalence on these subjects. The comparison of the book and film versions of *Something of Value*, about the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, reveals a perhaps surprising capacity on the part of Hollywood to present a signifier of black self-determination. In other ways, though, of course, the book confirms the hegemonic power of culture during that decade, as when editor Foreman explains that "*in the moment of maximum control*, resistance appears in the products a culture uses to entertain itself" (emphasis added).

University of Central Lancashire GEORGE MCKAY

Stephan A. Sass, *The Promise of Private Pensions: The First Hundred Years* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997, £26.50). Pp. 332. ISBN 0 6749 4520 4

"Old age pension institutions emerged in the United States, as in all industrial nations, in response to the rise of the rational factor-market economy," argues

Stephen A. Sass. The London-based directors of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada Superannuation and Provident Association in 1874 installed the first program in North America. Based on English models, this compulsory retirement plan, which contained a savings program, was intended to make laborers assiduous, to secure white-collar loyalty, and to facilitate retirement. In the name of efficiency, pensions spread during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Private-pension coverage expanded with the enactment of Social Security (1935), reforms in tax laws, and the legitimation of collective bargaining after World War II. Congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act in 1974, a century after the first provision was instituted in North America.

Since this highwater mark, the promise of private pensions has diminished – although retirement assets now represent a major component of US financial markets a smaller percentage of workers are covered by plans. Bankruptcies and underfunding make people as skeptical of private pensions as they are of Social Security. The stagnation of real wages, increased life expectancy, as well as the erosion of structural support (among leaders of multinational corporations, the Federal government, and organized labor) render this "composite institution, composed of managerial, business, actuarial, financial, legal, and political subsystems" vulnerable to the exigencies of an uncertain future.

Stephen Sass tells his complex story well. A student of Louis Galambos and currently editor of the *Regional Review* at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, Sass had full support from the prestigious Pension Research Council. His institutional account is richly documented with archival materials and interviews with key actors in the arena. *The Promise of Private Pensions* is stronger on detailing organizational shocks and changes than on illuminating alterations in the social fabric. Thus Sass highlights class differences in stipulating variations in provisions for managers and workers, but he pays insufficient attention to how pension managers may have accommodated increases in women's long-term employment trends since the 1930s. Sass ignores possible racial inequities.

With *The Promise of Private Pensions*, economic and social historians as well as gerontologists now have a case study of US institutions that is a worthy complement to Leslie Hannah's *Inventing Retirement: The Development of Occupational Pensions in Britain* (Cambridge, 1986).

University of Michigan W. ANDREW ACHENBAUM

Mark W. van Wienen, *Partisans and Poets: The Political Work of American Poetry in the Great War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture, £40, $59.95). Pp. 311. ISBN 0 521 56396 8.

Van Wienen's subject is poetry about the First World War written for and by the people, published in newspapers, journals, and anthologies, and reflecting broad political alliances in the marginalized social constituencies of women, industrial workers and ethnic groups such as the Women's Peace Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People and their journal *Crisis*. At the same time, a centrist and conservative poetry issues from sources such as the ultrapatriotic writers' syndicate the *Vigilantes*, and, indirectly, the US Food Administration, which fostered "food poetry" as a propaganda means to encourage diminished home consumption and increased productivity in the war years. Van Wienen traces the history of affiliations and conflicts within these ideological formations and their uses of poetry as an agency of feeling and opinion from 1914 to the United States' intervention in the War in 1917. Van Wienen's agenda embraces a history of the "cultural battlegrounds" of homefront policy and politics in the preintervention years of the War, the erasure from history of the literary traditions preceding and coexisting with experimental modernism, and the challenge to the privileging of the "war texts" of soldier-poets by recent feminist writing which emphasizes the interdependence between homefront and battlefront. Van Weinen's approach is governed by debates in Marxist theory in which he is drawn to Antonio Gramsci's alternative to Althusser's conception of ideology as always "imaginary and delusional," a condition which seems to impede the possibility of effective political and social transformations. He therefore reads the politics of these partisan poetries as manifestations of Gramsci's distinction between "intellectual functionaries" who exercise "the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government" and the "organic intellectuals" who seek to mobilize alternative politics through their identification with various constituencies of the masses. He shows the workings of these alternative politics in the WPP, the IWW, and the ethnic voices of *Crisis* throughout the War years, analysing the poetry particular to each group in terms of its political and strategic value rather than its aesthetic value as this might be construed in conventional terms, and shows that if the period of American neutrality appears to tolerate the competing claims of these partisan groups, that situation changes with America's intervention in the War in 1917, when the ideology of national pride and self-identity supervenes and seeks to suppress these agencies contesting the dominant ideology. This instructive and absorbing study brings to light a body of poetry and its political contexts largely ignored in literary critical versions of American poetry in the second decade of this century, and makes a particular challenge to elitist canonizations of American modernism. Van Wienen's book bears favourable comparison with its mentor-text, Cary Nelson's *Repression and Recovery*.

University of Reading LIONEL KELLY

Kimberly S. Hanger, *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769–1803* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997, £47.50 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 248. ISBN 0 8223 1906 3, 0 8223 1898 9.

The free black population of New Orleans has long been recognised as a unique social group in the antebellum South. Kimberly Hanger's achievement is that she explores the evolution of a free black populace in the city directly from the primary sources rather than "upstreaming" to the eighteenth century, conclusions reached for the early nineteenth century. By her willingness to

immerse herself fully into French and Spanish source material, Hangar has placed our understanding of New Orleans' free blacks on a much firmer footing.

As other scholars have pointed out, free blacks tended to emerge in the Americas when the sex ratio of white men to women was highly unequal and where a large number of black women are resident. White men who fathered mulatto children often manumitted them – especially in the Iberian New World colonies. What Hanger points out for New Orleans is that the social structure of Spanish society in Louisiana, with a relative dearth of white artisans, made the immigration of free blacks from elsewhere in Spanish America an attractive proposition to white authorities. It was this dual sexual and economic dynamic that allowed New Orleans' free blacks to reach a critical mass in the late eighteenth century. According to Hanger, it was this critical mass which permitted free blacks to form their own social groupings which were sustained through kinship networks and economic contacts – just as similar free black groupings in Charleston and Savannah were. What distinguishes New Orleans from other cities was the formation of free black militia groups. These units, which fought in the American War of Independence, gave free blacks a sense of identity and status which was highly unusual in North America.

Hanger's book is well written and immaculately researched. The author is sensitive to all facets of free black society – correctly pointing out, for example, the fluid social relations which existed between the races in the late eighteenth century. By examining free black society in the late colonial period Hanger has demonstrated just how much status free blacks lost once the United States took control of Louisiana in 1803. In this sense, the Spanish era in New Orleans was their golden age.

University of Warwick TIM LOCKLEY

H. L. Hix, *Understanding W. S. Merwin* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997, $29.95). Pp. 191. ISBN 1 57003 154 1.

Robert Kirschten (ed.), "*Struggling for Wings*": *The Art of James Dickey* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1997, $34.95). Pp. 276. ISBN 1 57003 165 7.

Both W. S. Merwin and James Dickey have attained a stature which entitles them to be numbered among the grand old men of contemporary American poetry. Their publishing histories are substantial and distinguished, their life-long commitment to poetry is indisputable. Both poets have won the right awards, attracted the right kind of disputatious attention from critics, and secured the kind of credibility with academic writers which elicits sophisticated consideration of their work. Yet, different as they are, the impression left by both poets is that they belong to the category of "good enough" writers, that somewhat melancholy subset of authors whose work, while displaying signs of accomplishment and seriousness, simply does not matter much. This category is the dominant one for post World War II American poetry which, for the most part, has been mannered, self-consciously and strainingly experimental, and ineffective

in securing a general audience. Any art, in these historical circumstances, tends to become hermetic and to address itself to a coterie. What these studies of Merwin and Dickey attempt to do is to open out the taste for their respective subjects to a wider readership. Each is too dutiful to succeed at this primary task, though each contains material which should be welcomed by the already committed specialist.

H. L. Hix's little volume on Merwin is part of the University of South Carolina Press's serviceable *Understanding Contemporary American Literature* series, where it joins introductions to the Beats, the Black Mountain Poets, Robert Bly, James Dickey, Denise Levertov, Theodore Roethke, and Gary Snyder. Written with students in mind, the volume has the virtues of clarity and concision demanded for this kind of exercise. It also, however, tends toward oversimplification and schoolmasterly assurance of certainty when a speculative approach would have been more appropriate. Hix's enthusiasm for Merwin's work nevertheless comes through clearly. As well as providing the sort of basic biographical information on the poet expected in an introductory guide, Hix offers basic analyses of Merwin's poetry under the topical headings of myth, apocalypse, ecology, society, and love, as well as dealing with Merwin's treatment of family and of the places he has lived. As a professor of philosophy, Hix is most interested in the ethical strand in Merwin's work and in the ways in which the poetry links the mythic with current political abuses. Hix tries to align Merwin's thought with that of Kant, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein, although the attempt to do so is unconvincing except in the vaguest terms. What emerges is an account of the poet which is worthy rather than exciting, dutiful rather than notable, in a study which has fulfilled its brief honourably but without passion.

Robert Kirschten's collection of material on James Dickey suffers in the opposite way. Too much passion, of the entirely wrong kind, informs much of this collection which tends to veer into the sycophantic with alarming frequency. Dickey was always noted for his talent at self-promotion and *Struggling for Wings* convincingly demonstrates his success in securing partisan readers for his work. While several highly critical pieces on Dickey's work are included in the collection, their function seems to be to serve as easy contrasts for the somewhat embarrassingly reverential views of his work which make up the bulk of the volume. All this is utterly fascinating if the collection is viewed as an artefact which enacts the politics of poetry in the United States in the 1990s. However, sceptical as the general reader will be left by the production, the book gathers together material which should please Dickey's fans. Kirschten has put together a selection of reviews, interviews, and essays which forms a handy sourcebook on Dickey's poetry, fiction, and life which partisan readers can only relish.

University of the West of England KATE FULLBROOK

Larry D. Eldridge (ed.), *Women & Freedom in Early America* (New York, N.Y.: New York University Press, 1997, $55 cloth, $22 paper). Pp. 354. ISBN 0 8147 2198 2, 0 8147 2193 1.

This volume brings together a number of scholars who are collectively interested in the idea of women's freedom in colonial America. As the editor delineates in his introduction, the authors are concerned with "how freedom was defined for and by women, how it was achieved or missed, how the parameters and realizations of freedom expanded or contracted over time." This is a worthy goal, but I am unsure as to how far it was realised in this volume.

Individually the essays are interesting and well written, illuminating the lives of women which have hitherto lingered in obscurity. Thus we have examinations of the lives of women in Native American communities, of the experiences of white women of all classes and of African American women. As works of scholarship, most of these essays are well researched and bring new insights into this burgeoning field of inquiry. It is also good to see that this volume on Early America, unlike many others, includes fascinating work on Canadian women – of particular interest is Jan V. Noel's essay on the noble women of New France. However the main problem with this particular volume is over-ambitiousness. There are no less than sixteen essays packed into a book only 350 pages long. Once the notes are taken into account, then most essays are only about 12 to 15 pages long. This is often simply too little space to say anything really important about the lives of Early American women. While I can appreciate the desire to try to include essays on all aspects of women's religious, economic, familial, and legal roles, it may have proved beneficial either to publish a longer book, (or books), which permitted the authors full scope for what they wanted to say, rather than limiting them in this manner. As it is, the essays in this book often create interest only to leave the reader tantalizingly short of proper satisfaction.

University of Warwick TIM LOCKLEY

Christina Giorcelli and Rob Kroes (eds.), *Living with America, 1946–1996* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1997, £29.50). Pp. 329. ISBN 90 5383 548 2.

In 1964, McLuhan observed that "every American home has its Berlin Wall." Consisting of a 324-page selection of papers from the 1996 EAAS conference in Warsaw, *Living with America* initially seeks to explicate one (not particularly McLuhanite) interpretation of this transatlantic metaphor. It opens with two sections, which, taken together, explore the transatlantic political history of the Cold War and the validity of portraying Europe as "coca-colonized" by aspects of American culture. The latter exploration centers on a peppy debate between Bill Marling and Reinhold Wagnleitner, whilst the former is undertaken by Geir Lundestad (considering the USA's quasi-imperial attempts to promote European integration), Peter Boyle (examining Britain's attitude to US attempts to "roll-back" Communism after 1952), John Lewis Gaddis (attacking the idea that a certain "moral equivalency" existed between the foreign policies of the USA and

the USSR) and Howard Temperley (skeptically revisiting the idea of post-war "affluence"). Section Three explores the identity and future of "International (American) English," via a "dialogue" between Bernard Vincent and Zoltán Kövecses. Somewhat later, a second "dialogue," on "Race Relations," is much less transatlantic in orientation (David Goldfield focuses solely on the US, though Josef Jařab sets up some – inconclusive – links to recent European racist eruptions).

The loss of focus between these two dialogues betrays what happens in the book's final 180 pages. The attempt to give the collection shape by considering transatlantic issues is largely relegated to the book's penumbra. Instead a ragbag of essays explores more specific facets of American culture, literature and art. A bald list of names unmasks the heterogeneity: Pollock; Pound; Charlie Parker; Bellow (Kristiaan Versluys reading Bellow off against Charles Taylor's version of "authenticity" as a "powerful moral ideal"); Barthelme (Barry Lewis mapping out recent critical debates about US postmodern fiction); Styron (Emily Miller Budick exploring "silent inscriptions" of the Holocaust); Irving Howe; Sam Shephard; Frank O'Hara; Sarah B. Elliott, Glasgow; Frances Newman; Albert Gelpi and Roy Harvey Pearce (Stephen Matterson sternly pointing out how these two critics' US-centric "take" on American poetry causes them to underestimate transatlantic debts and continuities); Mukherjee (Jopi Nyman reading *The Holder of the World* as a critique of Western historiography); Amy Tan; Wang Ping.

This inevitably makes the collection meander: my above summary finds no ready place to mention ox-bows like David Nye's article on the cultural impact of the energy crisis of 1970s or Anne-Marie Scholz's exploration of the place of gender in American Studies in Germany, with its reminder that "American Studies" is a variably negotiated intellectual space (global <> national). The collection is also uneven in quality, and contains a few lapses (how anyone can describe Thomas Wolfe's monumentally verbose writing as "condensed" is beyond me, whilst Robert Creeley acquires a half-brother, Creely).

Are such motley collections of conference proceedings worth it? In this case, yes. A spasmodic but real energy exists. However, books like this need an index: *nota bene*.

The Nottingham Trent University R. J. ELLIS

Robert J. Corber, *Homosexuality in Cold War America: Resistance and the Crisis in Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997, $49.95 cloth, $16.95 paper). Pp. 240. ISBN 0 8223 1956 x, 0 8223 1964 0.

Homosexuality in Cold War America investigates the cultural construction of gay male subjectivity in the midst of the postwar crisis in masculinity precipitated by the ascendance of a post-Fordist economy of consumption. Beginning with a discussion of the suburban domestic heterosexuality of the "organization man," Robert Corber explores how gay men countered the confines of the closet during the 1950s through the production of new cultural and political spaces. In successive sections, he considers how film noir legitimated the gay male gaze despite its homophobic representations and how the writings of Tennessee

Williams, Gore Vidal, and James Baldwin "treated homosexuality as a subversive form of identity that had the potential to disrupt the system of representation underpinning the Cold War consensus." Both of these modes of cultural production, Corber argues, resisted the domestication of masculinity in ways that were at odds with the dominant liberal politics of the era and the emerging New Left critiques.

While film noir offered (limited) resistance to the reorganization of masculinity and created a (partial) space for gay male subjectivity, the work of Williams, Vidal, and Baldwin "provided a potentially more productive knowledge of postwar structures of oppression" by "treat[ing] gender as a constitutive category of identity and experience." In this way, their writings unsettled the "masculinist understanding of America's symbolic significance" of the New Left critics who "failed to address the concerns of women, African Americans, gays, and other groups disenfranchised by the postwar settlement." Corber also shows how these three gay writers challenged the Cold War project of making gay men invisible even as they wrote against the grain of the developing subcultural model of homosexuality and its attendant discourse of civil rights. Instead, they conceived of community and political solidarity that linked gay male struggles to those of all oppressed groups, thus prefiguring the later gay liberation ideals they would influence.

Recognizing gay men as subjects in history without acceding to an essentialist, minoritarian model of identity, Corber seeks to recenter the dynamic contradictions and instabilities within gay cultural politics and "to address the political needs and aspirations underlying identity politics." His critique of both the liberal discourse of gay rights and the subcultural practice of camp, however, does not itself carry out that kind of project to full effect. Despite its important analysis and its political intervention, the book leaves open the question of whether a cultural history of some of the most provocative representations of homosexuality allows an understanding of the complex gay social histories of the same period.

San Francisco, USA SCOTT BRAVMANN

Eric Cheyfitz, *The Politics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from* The Tempest *to Tarzan* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997, £16.50). Pp. 272. Expanded edition. ISBN 0 8122 1609.

This is both an inspiring and an annoying book. Using the methods of deconstruction, new historicism and (post)-colonial studies, Cheyfitz re-examines the ideology of western imperialism, which he conflates with the ideology of American democratic capitalism, through a sustained meditation on representations of particular moments of initial encounters between European colonizers and Native Amerindians in key historical accounts and literary texts. One's annoyance arises in the main from the discrepancy between the expectations raised by the title and the actual content. The first chapter offers a reading of *Tarzan*, albeit one which is conducted somewhat against the grain, for the purposes of Cheyfitz's argument. But in effect this book is an extended essay on

Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, drawing on while revising, the work of Leo Marx, Frank Kermode, et al.

One might have expected to have seen this categorized as Renaissance Studies, rather than American Studies. Yet through his analysis of the imperial project, grounded in a reading of *The Tempest* as imperialist poetics, Cheyfitz suggests ways in which the classic texts of American literary studies might need to be revised in the light of contemporary methodologies. His fundamental thesis is that imperial settlement of American colonies was conceived and executed through the deployment of European rhetoric, rather than through the deployment of superior technology. For, as he reminds us, in terms of knowledge of how to survive in the New World, European technology was sadly deficient and demonstrably inferior to that of the native inhabitants.

Cheyfitz's central argument is "that while the language of land as *property*, with its companion vocabulary of *identity* (*I* versus *you*) and *hierarchy* (*governor/governed* or *owner/worker*), was at the time of the conquest of the Americas (and today) fundamental to the culture of the West, it was at the same time utterly foreign to Native cultures." His exposé of the political unconscious and political lack of conscience reveals inherent contradictions in classical rhetoric and eloquence, and in the expansionist, imperialist project of sixteenth-century Europe. What is fascinating is the way in which he makes the connection between translation theory, the English legal system and political practice; with his detailed revision of *The Tempest* remaining the sustained site where historicist discourse and literary analysis can converge. Montaigne is used as the foil to Shakespeare: "Whereas Montaigne writes to translate *cannibal* equivocally, Shakespeare writes to translate it univocally." Which is to say, that Montaigne alone seems capable of comprehending the impossibility of translation, given the inability to conceive of the different cultural systems which "meet" here. Prospero is the type of the imperial colonizer, Montaigne gestures towards recognition of cultural difference and lack of cultural equivalence in the colonial encounter.

Despite its revelatory analysis of Empire's ideology, this book does still ultimately annoy me. Declaredly inspired by the radical resistance of Zapista and of US Native Americans, the focus remains almost entirely on Western canonical texts and on European cultural forms, on authorities such as Leo Marx, Frank Kermode, Stephen Greenblatt, F. O. Matthiesson, to the exclusion of Native American authors. Silko's *Ceremony* is mentioned briefly in passing, but Native American perspectives remain strangely muted in a book which declares its sympathy for them.

University of Warwick HELEN M. DENNIS

James D. Tabor and Eugene V. Gallagher, *Why Waco? Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America* (Berkeley, Calif. and London: University of California Press, 1997, £22.50). Pp. 252. ISBN 0 520 20899 4.

Mark S. Hamm, *Apocalypse in Oklahoma: Waco and Ruby Ridge Revenged* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997, £25). Pp. 283. ISBN 1 55553 300 0.

Tabor and Gallagher's examination of David Koresh and the Branch Davidians destroyed in the tragic conflagration at Waco, Texas in April 1993 appeared earlier in a cloth edition. The authors, both religion scholars, argue that the confrontation between this group and US government agents could have been avoided or at least could have taken a different turn had the government understood the dynamics of new religious movements and the apocalyptic world view. Instead, they unquestioningly absorbed the negative images and hysteria fostered by the media and so-called anticult activists who stigmatize such movements, falsely claiming they brainwash reluctant converts with ideologies dangerous to society.

Tabor and Gallagher do not deny that law-enforcement officials had a legitimate case against Koresh and his followers for laws they broke. But they castigate the government for failing to get inside the apocalyptic world the group inhabited, a world firmly grounded in the absolute authority of their understanding of the biblical text. The end result is an ongoing threat to religious liberty in Tabor and Gallagher's view; those who perpetuate caricatures of new religious movements see any alternative view as undermining the uniformity of thought believed necessary to halt perceived moral decline.

The ineptness and harshness of the government's response to Waco and to an even smaller so-called militia group shaped by the radical religious right at Ruby Ridge, Idaho one year earlier fed the suspicion of government that captivated Timothy McVeigh and a few friends. Convinced of a conspiracy to eradicate individual freedom, they planned terrorist activities leading to the bomb that killed scores of people in a government building in Oklahoma City.

Criminologist Mark Hamm traces their story, arguing that drug abuse, fascination with the neo-Nazi Christian Identity and white supremacy movements, and even subliminal messages of popular music, thrust McVeigh into a delusional world where fiction became reality.

Both books see the symbolic dimension of these tragedies. Waco symbolizes how misunderstanding the dynamics of emergent religions becomes an assault on religious freedom, while Oklahoma City signals the paranoid reaction to excessive government infringement on personal freedom. Beneath both is a more complex issue of increasing importance to American culture that the authors avoid, namely how any society constructs and maintains boundaries of acceptable belief and behavior. The government's response in Waco may have prompted Oklahoma City and endangered religious liberty. But surely that does not mean that "anything goes" in the name of religious freedom.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga CHARLES H. LIPPY

Renée C. Hoogland, *Lesbian Configurations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, $19.00). Pp. 168. ISBN 0 231 10907 5.

Hoogland's material is highly disparate: *The Color Purple*, two movies – Verhoeven's *Basic Instinct* and Polanski's *Bitter Moon*, *The Bell Jar*, and Elizabeth Bowen's *Friends and Relations*. A final chapter ranges over the critical positions of Judith Roof, Jane Gallop, and Teresa de Lauretis, inviting the reader to consider these as "intertexts," or even as some kind of "non-fiction," instead of plain old literary criticism and theory. Wittingly, perhaps, the "configurations" of its title adumbrates more a patch-work quilt than a mosaic. Chapters separately conceived, four of which having been published in various forms elsewhere, are constantly wrestled into some kind of problematic coherence in a book whose details are self-consciously under coercion from shifting senses of an overall project. The burden and, indeed, some of the energy of this set of enquiries, arise from its heady miscegenation of polemic, manifesto, close reading, and psychoanalytical revision. More than once, the impression is of a writer whose ambition to trade in Freud and Lacan has been obstructed by some generic requirement to make prior investments in critical readings. Each text generates different, and not altogether compatible questions, and Hoogland's adoption of what she sees as "perverse readings" is hardly distinctive enough to offer some kind of methodological homogeneity.

At the centre of its consideration of *The Color Purple* is the presupposing question of whether the text is "a black novel, a feminist novel, or a lesbian one." Why should it be any of these? Why – in a book that elsewhere seeks to deconstruct essential categories such as the heterosexual, the patriarchal, and even the heteropatriarchal – is the reader subjected to the reinscription of essentialism in the forms of lesbian, black, or whatever? In a familiar strategy, Hoogland reduces her foes by being reductive, perversely refusing, in the process, to see the extent to which not only lesbianism, but so-called biological sex in all its manfiestations, is merely, however powerfully, a set of discursive formations. The novel's happy ending is seen as "substantially" undermining its "potential as a feminist, an African-American," and "also a lesbian text." The problem, for Hoogland, is first of all that Celie and Shug "openly carry on having a sexual relationship" without its "causing so much as a ripple in the sexual order," and secondly Shug's "degrading heterosexualization."

At issue, in *Basic Instinct*, is its marked lesophobia: here – and more widely in popular culture, Hoogland believes – conspicuous lesbianism functions as a reinforcement of heteropatriarchal structures. The "lesbian," Roxy, is depicted as a "bad copy of the straight male" by a film which, in any case, eliminates her. Again, *Bitter Moon* amounts to no more than appropriation of lesbianism by main/male-stream culture. However apparently visible the lesbian in postmodern culture, this figure must continue to be "reduced to a negative semantic space in the collective imagination" by its insertion in "master narratives" whose aim is the perpetuation of heteropatriarchy.

Uncontentiously enough, in turning to *The Bell Jar*, Hoogland continues to settle on the marginal, liminal areas of her texts, concentrating on their fissures, aporias, and infinite ways of remaining silent about their adversarial positions.

After Nietzsche, Freud, Foucault, Macherey, Althusser, Derrida, Lacan, and the rest, it can hardly be the case that these texts need to be read into perverse positions, or that there can be anything specifically "lesbian" about deconstructive practices now institutionalized. Surely, the postmodern critic, if not the postmodern reader, has a season ticket to the realms of the marginal, and revels more in paratext than text, regarding what is said as merely displacing the importance of what is not? It can come as no surprise that any extradiegetic stability in *The Bell Jar* is open to intradiegetic challenge, especially as interrogated in the adolescent heroine's *doppelgänger* relationships with Doreen, Betsy, and Joan. What is surprising, though, is to be informed that "the concept of adolescence as a stage of development with explicitly sexual connotations is of relatively recent date" and that overwhelming feelings "of meaningless" constitute such characters. Viola–Cesario in *Twelfth Night*, together with a raft of similar Shakespearean characters, relegate Freud to Harold Bloom's 'belatedness', and it is difficult to see, at random, Fanny Price, Huck Finn, Pip, Maisie, and Nanda Brookenham as characters anything other than interrogatively controlling, and reconfiguring, the adult world. Hoogland's focus, with Bowen, is on Theodora as a "female adolescent" whose role is that of "an ambivalent yet privileged signifier" who, again, "undercuts the story's underlying sexual meanings."

Feminist criticism, in a final chapter that reads criticism rather than literary texts, is analysed as residually lesophobic. By way of explanation, Hoogland, in a lesbian appropriation of Lacanian refractions of Freud, recuperates notions of repression, disavowal, and fetishism, believing that she is "using … the excentricity [sic] of a lesbian subject-position as a critical source of insight into the hegemonic structures of heterosexual presumption." That "subject-position," throughout the book, assumes monolithic, non-discursive, and counter-productively unchallengeable proportions.

Kyushu University, Japan PETER RAWLINGS

Mark R. Schneider, *Boston Confronts Jim Crow, 1890–1920* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997, £40 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp 262. ISBN 1 55553 296 9, 1 55553 295 0.

This is as much a study of the participation of white and black Bostonians in racial debates at a national level, as it is an analysis of the challenge of racism to the city itself. In what are essentially a series of essays on the intellectual development of leading political campaigners, journalists and lawyers, the author attempts to probe "the sources of their ideas and actions in the unique antislavery tradition of the city." At different points, he considers how race informed Boston's attitudes towards the 1890 Federal Elections Bill, the campaign for women's suffrage and the legal decisions which undergirded segregation in the South. Despite the gradual waning of Boston's abolitionist legacy, it remained, according to Schneider, a cogent source of guidance for the conduct of both races.

The book is at its best when the discussion is firmly rooted in Boston's own

experiences. The impact of Booker T. Washington's philosophy and his Tuskegee machine in the city is skilfully treated: Schneider demonstrates the complex ways in which white liberals and black activists combined notions of African-American self-help and accommodation with their traditional faith in the efficacy of direct political action. Meanwhile the tactics of William Monroe Trotter, the forthright black editor, are persuasively explained in terms of Boston's abolitionist milieu and the institutions of its black community. Schneider also describes the transformation of the city's prominent NAACP branch – unusual for its concentration of distinguished white members – into a black-run organisation.

Yet elsewhere it is unclear, in the absence of personal explication by the younger generation of Bostonians, how they were actually influenced by the likes of William Lloyd Garrison and suffragist Lucy Stone. Blacks and whites certainly gathered to honour Garrison and Wendell Phillips in anniversary commemorations. But it is dangerous to impute the behaviour of civic leaders on the basis of their residence in a town once animated by such noble figures. Ultimately, the details of individual lives are elucidated with greater confidence than the origins of the convictions which governed them.

The episodic style tends to result in a fragmented depiction of Boston's changing intellectual character. For instance, Schneider waits until near the end before explaining how the growing influence of Boston's Irish-American population significantly reduced the attention given to racial matters. Nevertheless, the book contains some useful insights for those interested in what was undoubtedly an important enclave of northern black society.

University of Cambridge ANDREW M. KAYE

Ross Labrie, *The Catholic Imagination in American Literature* (London: University of Missouri Press, 1997, £31.95). Pp. 306. ISBN 0 8262 1110 0.

The Catholic Imagination in American Literature provides the reader with appreciations of thirteen Catholic-American authors from the past two centuries. To distinguish this book from a collection of loosely connected critical essays, Ross Labrie chooses his subjects in keeping with strict criteria: they must be major writers, they must be practising Catholics, and their work must be informed in a fundamental way by their Catholicism. In doing so, he is able to underscore the consistency and evolution he reads in the American Catholic faith and how this has been translated into art over the past two hundred years. Yet his understanding of the significance the church holds for art also unwittingly creates a dubious standard by which the individual works of his chosen subjects may be measured. While a range of writers and texts is represented here, Labrie moves most contentedly through those works that eventually come to some resolution in their debates regarding the faith. It is quite interesting, therefore, that Labrie finds his moments of greatest achievement when considering those works that fail to arrive at such satisfactory resolutions. For, while these texts deviate from the conciliatory spirit promoted throughout the book, they also encourage a liberal inclusiveness, a desire to read Catholicism in America as a movement with a profound and wide-ranging intellectual legacy.

Many of the authors here like Allen Tate, Thomas Merton, Robert Lowell, and Flannery O'Connor will interest the widest range of readers. O'Connor, in particular, remains compelling and enigmatic. What distinguishes individual chapters devoted to these figures is the manner in which Labrie intertwines their introductions, comparing throughout the volume the approaches of a number of artists. As a result, a clear picture of a movement develops, a movement comprised of individuals whose faith, for example, is translated to their work through an interest in the potential of the natural world. More interesting, however, are the implications found in the modernisation of Catholicism: the effects of the church's social progressivism and the struggles undertaken by women against the hierarchy of the institution. For this reason, the end of Labrie's study, in which he looks at lesser-known writers and the future of Catholicism and literature, is perhaps of greatest interest. In particular, the novels of Mary Gordon are considered. Gordon, whose *Final Payments* (1978), *The Company of Women* (1980), and *Men and Angels* (1985) are discussed, examines the role of women in church and society by tracing the ways in which they exist within structures dominated by men.

University of Lethbridge, Canada CRAIG MONK

Catherine Fisher Collins, *The Imprisonment of African-American Women: Causes, Conditions, and Future Implications* (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1997, £26.95). Pp. 152. ISBN 0 7864 0263 6.

African-American women are arrested, indicated, convicted and sentenced to longer prison terms more often than their white counterparts who commit the same offenses. In 1982 there were 63 per 100,000 African-American women in prison in the United States, and 9 per 100,000 white women. Further, the over-representation of African American women in the US states and federal criminal justice systems has been largely ignored by criminologists, sociologists and historians. Collins argues that US prisons in the 1990s are essentially warehouses for "primarily poor, miseducated black females, and are a major employer of white males." Collins' indictment of current penal arrangements and the inadequacy of treatment of African-American female offenders (and the detrimental effect of incarceration on their children) places the existence and interaction of race, gender, and class hierarchies at the heart of differential enforcement.

In challenging current political emphasis on incarceration and neglect of rehabilitation, Collins uses her study to criticise the increasing economic power of private prison corporations, and to highlight the adverse impact of the 1994 Crime Bill on African Americans. Her strong recommendations for improved penal arrangements for African-American women include increased skills training for prisoners, expansion of general prisoner health care, house arrest for HIV/AIDS-infected offenders, electronic monitoring for mothers of small children, and increased numbers of non-white/minority criminal justice personnel.

This study, however, is deeply problematic. Part of the problem lies in the

attempt to provide simultaneously a policy document and a historical study. The attempt to suggest a theoretical basis for African-American female criminal behaviour is superficial, as are the historical overviews on the treatment of black female prisoners. For example, the late nineteenth century and 1980s saw dramatic rises in the numbers of African-American female prisoners convicted of poverty-driven crimes. This suggests an examination of the relationship between black crime, gender and industrial capitalism and post-industrialism (for example, paralleling Roger Lane's work on late nineteenth-century Philadelphia) is needed. The author often uses the oxymoron "free slaves" – does she mean "former slaves" or "penal slaves"? Statements on the prejudicial behaviour of the white male prison guards may be accurate, but no evidence is provided to strengthen the argument. The history of African-American female prisoners still awaits meaningful study.

Middlesex University VIVIEN MILLER

Stephen F. Mills, *The American Landscape* (BAAS Paperbacks, Keele University Press, 1997, £12.95). Pp. 147. ISBN 1 85331 179 0.

Stephen Mills' critique, *The American Landscape*, begins a new series of texts aimed at students of American Studies. Published in association with the British Association for American Studies, each volume will provide an outline of a key area of investigation of the region; in this instance, Mills provides a considered and wide-ranging introductory account of environment and landscape study of the United States.

The balance and scope of this critique is achieved through examination of both Old and New World landscapes, and the social, political and historical transformations which have shaped the present environment. Opening with observations about the diversity of current perceptions about the United States, through commentary upon such areas as the "Dream" and economic transition, from Watergate to Whitewater, the introductory chapter establishes a sense of "place" as, "perhaps, the ultimate synthesis, the bringing together of all dimensions of environment, perception and experience into a vast whole." Within such synthesis, Mills provides "a vantage point from which the workings of society can be examined, if not in all their complexities, at least in a fresh light." Under this new light, *The American Landscape* argues that perceptions of environment must encompass the varied cultural processes which have left their mark upon the United States.

In order to trace the nature and extent of these processes, Mills initially introduces the reader to the physical diversity of the region, moving swiftly from the Appalachians to the Rockies, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. From this, the reader is taken back to conjecture about a time before the crossing of the Bering Straits, through early arrivals upon the continent from Asia, to later European colonisation and, beyond, to the present day.

Other early chapters examine regional diversity within the United States, exploring the colonial legacy to the landscape, from the family farming areas of the Midwest to plantation communities, and the respective ecological,

administrative and (agri)cultural differences amongst them. Central to such concerns are also those of settlements, mapping and displacement (of the migration routes and habitation areas of precedent diverse peoples, upon whose affect on the landscape Mills also comments to some extent).

The analysis is at its strongest, however, in later chapters. Here, Mills makes reference to cultural influence upon the perception rather than the formation of the United States' landscape. He examines the perspectives offered by landscape painting and, in a subsequent chapter, investigates methods of interpreting landscape images, which leads the reader to the final main chapters of the book which reflect upon urban, and "Theme Park and Heritage" environments. The latter two chapters take on a daunting role in their attempt to introduce areas upon which writing has been so prolific in recent times and perhaps, in this instance, the book needs to provide a more sufficient sense of the complex nature of the theory and politics of this area of debate.

The scope of the book as a whole, by its very nature, is one of breadth rather than depth; yet Mills' is a rare achievement in terms of his balance of the scale of survey required by such introductory works; his thoughtful understanding of what the study of landscape studies might encompass is to be welcomed in the more general field of US Studies. The methodological scope of the work is most helpful here, presenting a convincing definition of landscape studies, and a useful exploration of precedent work in the field. There is also a helpful end section of "Suggestions for Further Reading" which provides a brief survey of areas of landscape representation which have not been mentioned in any depth in the main body of the text, amongst which is the key area of literary, and literary critical, representation. Once more, the work, care and thought which have gone into the publication as a teaching aid and introductory tome, is clear here; rather than a prosaic list of books, this section provides a most useful and detailed commentary upon the suggestions for further reading provided in the area.

Clare Weissenberg UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

Janice A. Radway, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $29.95). Pp. 424. ISBN 0 8078 2357 0.

As with her excellent earlier work on women romance readers, Janice Radway's *A Feeling for Books* is concerned with "variable literacies, that is, divergent ways of reading, using, and evaluating books." She traces the formation of the Book-of-the-Month Club, placing it within the context of middle-class or managerial aspirations at mid century. This involves consideration of the Club's expertise in inspiring and satisfying a desire for, in Bourdieu's phrase, "cultural capital." The Club succeeded by adopting modern methods of advertising and distribution, even though this sat awkwardly with the promise of book culture. Books were supposed to provide a sense of individual importance and agency in an increasingly machine-oriented and standardised world. The Club had to create an aura of accessible quality, while fighting off the claims that it was itself an agent of standardisation. Radway looks, then, at the marketing, buying and reading of

books in terms of social function and class symbol. She also offers a section on content, analysing some of the Club's choices. She demonstrates that the Club's judges were equally ensnared by conflicting affiliations. They wished to promote "quality" even as they rejected the élite culture of Modernism. Radway associates their rejection of Modernist writing with a belief that it encouraged "the cold indifference, disdain, and cynicism they associated with the modern era." The Club and its judges presented old values via modern methods.

There is much of interest in all this, and yet it seems to me that the book is seriously flawed. After over four pages of acknowledgments, Radway plunges into pages of reminiscences, both of her childhood reading and of her experiences researching her topic. This is good ethnological practice, to come to terms with one's subjectivity, and also with one's effect on that which one observes. I also like her ploy of reading the academy through popular culture as well as vice versa. But after a while I found Radway's prolonged and wide-eyed stares at herself-in-the-world rather tiresome and trite. They are related to us in Woukish sentences, with leaves changing colour, "crystalline" mornings, "dusty archives and hushed libraries," "worlds etched by words," and so on. I found myself wishing that she would get on with it. Instead, she allows her mixed agenda to pull the book out of shape; we move from the 1980s back through the 1960s to the book trade of the 1870s, and then gradually forwards again. Consequently, there is often a sense of repetition or near-repetition, as commentary on terms such as standardisation, massification, and literary expertise come and go rather too often. Those first Book-of-the-Month Club judges may have urged a naïve and sentimental realism on a generation of American readers, but one feels that they could have told Radway a thing or two about structure and purpose.

Queen's University, Belfast PETER STONELEY

John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997, £39.95 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 286. ISBN 0 8135 2400 8, 0 18135 2401 6.

The Other Side of the Sixties is an important contribution to our understanding of American politics in the 1960s and beyond. Writing from the perspective of the 1990s, Andrew combines thorough research with balanced, sensible analysis and conclusions, focusing on the early 1960s rather than the latter part of the decade much visited by students of the Left. His work, like that of William Hixson and Mary Brennan in related areas, is an investigation rather than a polemic.

In numerous contemporary books and articles on the Goldwater insurgency in the early 1960s commentators sought then to cut down to size what they considered an aberrant political movement: the Right could be explained in terms of its members' sociological problems and psychological difficulties – as a regrettable social dysfunction. Many contemporary liberal commentators viewed Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) with amused contempt as lower middle-class philistine zealots. Andrew admits greater diversity and examines their ideology.

He sees how YAF emerged from the 1960 Goldwater-for-President effort, yet traces its intellectual and political origins to the late 1940s. He shows how YAF created a cadre of conservative activists who would gain control of the Republican party. YAF arrived at a set of principles – the so-called Sharon Statement – and then moved from thinking about the world to trying to change it. He describes the development of YAF into a highly structured, centralized organization, but reveals that it was no monolithic group – it was riven with factionalism, personality clashes and ideological disputes. It even had its own Eastern Establishment. Andrew charts the steadying influence that those at the *National Review* sought to exert on YAF. Although keen to avoid any taint of irrationalism, YAF did experience a "thrill of treason" in challenging the liberal hegemony of the Kennedy years.

Anti-communism was what bound the disparate group of conservatives together. They were strongly opposed to government interference and expenditure except when it came to fighting the Cold War. Right-wing libertarians complained that YAF's free market nostrums concealed a glorification of national state power. Andrew shows how JFK used the IRS to launch politically motivated tax audits of right-wing foundations in an attempt to deal with the threat from the Right. After the 1964 election, the YAF regrouped and moved on and new conservative organizations emerged. Andrew shows, however, that YAF graduates played important roles in the New Right and the Reagan administration.

University of Cambridge DAVID J. C. PERKINS

David Reed, *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States, 1880–1960* (London: British Library, 1997, £45). Pp. 288. ISBN 0 7123 0417 7.

With *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States, 1880–1960*, David Reed undertakes the monumental task of charting the rise of important aspects of the magazine trade on both sides of the Atlantic from the end of the nineteenth century. His book holds much food for thought for readers interested in American Studies, for an examination of publications that found favour with the American public contributes much to our understanding of the culture that gave rise to these magazines. But this is, first and foremost, a bibliographer's project: a painstakingly researched volume that fixes itself on an appreciation of the publications themselves. By approaching his subject in this manner, Reed resists the temptation to generalise about the backgrounds of these magazines; rather, he provides us with a plethora of information about the publications that made up a vibrant and important segment of American culture in the period under discussion.

Reed observes that similar studies generally pay too little attention to the presentation of popular magazines themselves, to the form and content evident in the manufactured object, so that they may overemphasise the context in which the publications are rooted. By concentrating on best-selling publications at the end of each decade under discussion, Reed is able to take a quantitative look at the most popular magazines of these eras and determine something of the

changing composition of the works at a time in which technological advancements were matched by the increasing specialisation of periodicals as publishers matched specific readerships with advertisers seeking a niche.

Moving beyond a laboured overview of the methodology at work in the study, Reed emphasises the changes in the publishing trade over the past century. He devotes separate chapters to the British and American scenes at the end of the nineteenth century before taking a more comparative approach to the first six decades of the twentieth century, two decades at a time. This structure is useful not only in looking at movements in American publishing in the context of the British situation, but also because the chronological survey of the century underlines some of the motivations behind the changes in the magazine industry as *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Woman's Home Companion* weighed their commercial concerns. Lavishly illustrated, Reed concludes the book with appendices that allow the reader to compare the shifts in context of the popular publications over the eighty-year period.

University of Lethbridge, Canada CRAIG MONK

Jon C. Teaford, *Post-Suburbia: Government and Politics in the Edge Cities* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, £27.00). Pp. 249. ISBN 0 8018 5450 4.

To those familiar with European urban government, the survival of the small American borough is a fascinating thing. Most large cities in the USA possess a penumbra of functionally dependent but administratively distinct municipalities which either resisted, or failed to win, annexation. It is a familiar part of the story of American urban development since the mid-nineteenth century. Since the 1960s, however, the independent boroughs and townships, once at best attachments to the metropolitan centres, have become social and economic centres in their own right: the processes of "post-suburban" spread and new ways of organising (or disorganising) urban space have, according to some commentators, made it impossible to describe the American city any more. To these places Joel Garreau (in 1988) applied the term "edge cities."

Jon Teaford, who can synthesise urban history with impressive clarity, traces the twists and turns of the relationships between the large cities and their burgeoning satellite communities primarily through studies of six counties: Nassau and Suffolk on Long Island; Oakland on the northern edge of Detroit; DuPage fringing western Chicago; St Louis, Missouri; and Orange County embracing several Los Angeles satellite cities. In 1920 they contained 83 municipalities and 0·5 million inhabitants; by 1990 the figures were 278 and 7·9 million. (By which time the five cities to which they relate contained no more than 15·0 million.) Two chapters chart the interwar years and are a sharply focused guide to the processes that created edge cities: population growth, and the fight for political and administrative protection from the menace of the city.

This is really a study of ambivalence, the inexorable evaporation of the Arcadian dream as the independent suburbs came to depend more and more on the very things they most abhorred in the giant cities, the infrastructure,

employment, and other facilities that only cities can provide. The creation of a distinctive political culture and rhetoric along the metropolitan edges has been the expression of that ambivalence. Most of the book concerns the years after 1945 when the edge cities grew most rapidly and the central cities were in relative decline. Teaford demonstrates both the persistence and generality of the processes he describes. Sometimes the wider historical wood gets lost in the trees of local politics, but there is a wealth of material on the way this central issue of core-periphery relations and the tenacity of suburban antipathy to the giant centralising city, that underpinned urban affairs and municipal politics. This is a sound contribution to an impressive literature on the political and administrative history of American cities, so sadly absent for European cities.

As the useful bibliographical essay suggests, this is an essay in urban geography as well as urban history, yet the geography itself is not well presented. There are four maps (though no list of figures) all at different and unspecified scales. It is assuming a lot to discuss the edge cities of Chicago and (most of all, for it is a prominent aspect of the book) New York City without maps. Scale and distance are the essential context for the processes Teaford describes in other respects so well.

University of Liverpool PAUL LAXTON

James D. Sullivan, *On the Walls and in the Streets: American Poetry Broadsides from the 1960s* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997, cloth $29.95, paper $14.95). Pp. 206. ISBN 0 252 06624 3.

In his introductory chapter, James Sullivan likens the proliferation of broadsides in the 1960s to "an American Samizdat, produced and distributed beneath the surface of institutional and commercial publishing." Cultural modes, political urgencies, and available technologies came together during "this last great era of a mass culture for poetry … a culture not yet quite dominated by the electronic media," to cover the walls and fill the streets with broadsides, defined by the author to include "*all* single, unbound printed sheets." Many, perhaps most, of such productions have been lost in their entirety, and Sullivan is continuously, ruefully aware of the irony that those which do remain, held in the stacks of university libraries, are accessible chiefly to scholars and specialists and not at all to the random, passing public for whom they were originally intended.

Broadsides have a long American history, which Sullivan expeditiously traces from seventeenth-century funeral elegy, to eighteenth-century sensationalist rhymes upon disaster, to nineteenth-century sentimental poems such as Twain liked to parody, to the ballads of the Wobblies in the early years of this century. However, it was in the 1960s that broadside publication spread so rapidly as to become almost a nationwide, or at least coast-to-coast mass form. As the book's sub-title indicates, Sullivan's concern is almost exclusively with poetry, of roughly three kinds. First, there are poems serving a specific political purpose or responding to immediate political events or circumstances; secondly, there are likewise political poems, but these by famously established poets, whose fame is assumed to add force and authority to the political statement; and thirdly, there

are poems designed for a rather different context, as art objects to be cherished and carefully preserved.

The foremost expressions of radical politics in the 1960s were surely the development of African-American consciousness from Civil Rights to Black Power (chapter one) and the anti-Vietnam War movement (chapter two). Dudley Randall's Broadside Press, for instance, aimed to "search for black identity, reinforce black pride and black unity, and … create the soul, the consciousness, and the conscience of black folk." To this end his Broadside Series offered a mixture of poems by widely reputed figures (Gwendolyn Brooks's "We Real Cool") and poems inspired by specific, often violent events (the assassination of Malcolm X). As for anti-war broadsides, the very great majority must have been anonymous, or effectively so, but well-known poets also published their dissent in this form, with examples by W. S. Merwin and Lawrence Ferlinghetti being reproduced here and examined. Chapter three is devoted to what Sullivan regards as almost the special case of Robert Lowell, so great was his celebrity and moral authority at this time. However, if the title of his poems – "Che Guevara" and "The Pacification of Columbia" – were radical and political enough, the editions of "one hundred numbered copies without Lowell's signature and twenty-six lettered copies with the signature" clearly show that we are moving towards the broadside as art object in the territory of the radical chic. Here, in chapter four, "The Aura of the Text," poet, painter and printer work together in harmonious equality to create poetic and pictorial artefacts of charm and beauty.

The final chapter of *On the Walls and in the Streets* is entitled, with a nice irony, "Ginsberg in the Closed Stacks," those closed stacks in rare book sections of university libraries where, often awkwardly stored, obscurely catalogued, and therefore rarely seen, are all but hidden the broadside publications of the ideologue of street-life openness. It's a fitting concusion to what is, on the one hand, very much a work of scholarly research and probing analysis of literary materiality, but that, on the other, is also a text coloured by a mixture of excitement and melancholy. Broadsides are all about; but most of them will disappear without trace. "Photocopy a poem … and the archive is one untraceable broadside larger. … The collection is everywhere, but any one example of it is nearly inaccessible," either lost, or to be found only in the closed stacks, where it might as well be lost.

University of Essex R. W. (HERBIE) BUTTERFIELD

John D. Chappell, *Before the Bomb: How America Approached the End of the Pacific War* (University Press of Kentucky, 1997, $24.95). Pp. 246. ISBN 0 8131 1987 1.

Dr. Chappell has examined the perceptions of the American people towards the Japanese in the final months of the Second World War between VE Day on 7 May 1945 and the Japanese surrender in early September by looking at newspaper and radio commentaries and letters from private citizens to American politicians during this period and attempting to gauge what, if any, influence they had on politicians, officials and military leaders. The interval between the defeat of

Germany and the defeat of Japan was intensely frustrating for all Americans. Germany, the most formidable foe, had been totally defeated yet the Japanese were still holding out. American troops were fighting bloody battles of attrition on Japanese islands in the Pacific at a time when their relatives at home were being deluged with advertisements promising a variety of technologically advanced consumer goods based on the assumption that the war was nearly over. American leaders were increasingly concerned that war-weariness might lead to overwhelming public pressure for a compromise peace which would leave Japan's war-making capacity intact. Most media commentators played up to this fear, indulging in an orgy of racism which depicted all Japanese as fanatical savages who must be utterly crushed before peace could be restored. The heavy casualties American troops suffered on Okinawa prompted fears that the invasion of Japan's home islands would result in an even heavier butcher's bill, and consideration was given in Washington DC to using chemicals and poison gas to end the war quickly. In the end, logistical difficulties rather than moral objections to the use of chemical weapons prevented their use. Atomic bombs were easier and cheaper to deploy. The author also discusses the arguments over the Truman's insistence on "unconditional surrender," which many inside and outside the government believed should be modified slightly to give the Japanese at least a face saving means of abandoning the struggle. In this hysterical climate, there were a few Americans who were prepared to uphold American humanitarian, moral and liberal principles, mostly church leaders and pacifists who condemned the fire-bombing of Japanese towns and cities. As the author points out, these protests could be safely ignored by the policy makers secure in the belief that the majority supported a hard line against Japan. This is a fascinating study, based on a wealth of research in the American media and in public and private archives.

King's College, London MICHAEL DOCKRILL

Aldon Lynn Nielsen, *Black Chant: Languages of African-American Postmodernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £40.00 cloth, £14.95 paper). Pp. 288. ISBN 0 521 55510 8, 0 521 55526 4.

This iconoclastic text is an eye-opener for those of us whose knowledge of African-American literature is founded on an established tradition and a few central anthologies. It opens up a lost history of radical poetry in the period leading up to the Black Arts Movement, digging its way, at times sadly, through the forgotten poets and little magazines of a post-war avante-garde, and in so doing offering a critique of recent canon-formation and literary histories in which a "triumphal identity politics" can be attached to the career of a Baraka or Morrison.

Nielsen's general case – which emerges intermittently within a rather rambling structure – is that arguments on Postmodernism and black aesthetics have suffered from an ignorance of the range of avante-garde writing, and of such subjects as the intersection of writing, the blues, Surrealism, and Césare's Negritude. His opening chapter tackles the issues of orality and "authenticity"

(as manifested by the prominence of rap in recent cultural studies), and problematizes simple oppositions between speech and writing, seeking to recover a tradition of experimental writing with origins in African calligraphic practices, hieroglyphs, and spirit writing. Two final chapters return to this issue via the intersection of jazz and poetry in the period, exploring poets performing to jazz and musicians performing poetry (notably Cecil Taylor) as "radical artifice."

Two long central chapters are the historical core of the text. Beginning with Langston Hughes's role in fostering experimentalism through support for the *Free Lance* group in Cleveland and his anthology *New Negro Poets U.S.A.*, Nielsen considers connections between Free Jazz and the *Dasein* group; black Beats; poets like Tom Postell; and the *Umbra* group in New York. There are fascinating vignettes: Jonathan Williams at Jargon mailing Mina Loy's work to Harold Carrington in jail, where he could only receive books sent from a publisher; Baraka and others (allegedly) kidnapping Norman Pritchard to get the *Umbra* accounts. When well-known names appear it is often in unfamiliar contexts; junior instructor Antonia Wofford (Toni Morrison) supporting *Dasein* at Howard; Audre Lorde in a group including A. B. Spellman publishing chapbooks in New York; the young Baraka among black poets rather than the Beats. It is a testament to the success of Nielsen's expanded literary history that the reader is left frustrated at the end of the book: until we have the reprints, reissues, and new anthologies which he suggests we need, we are stuck with a partial canon.

Royal Holloway TIM ARMSTRONG

Daniel S. Licht, *Ecology and Economics of the Great Plains* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, £42.75). Pp. 225. ISBN 0 8032 2922 4.

Over the past decade, the rapidly intensifying economic and environmental crisis on the Great Plains has inspired a series of prescriptive studies seeking to restore economic hope and biodiversity to a troubled region. Beleaguered by drought, depleted aquifers, deepening agricutural crisis and evaporating federal subsidies, residents are deserting the nation's heartland in droves, giving rise to a new generation of western ghost towns. The more dramatic proposals to reverse this decline have attracted considerable national publicity and provoked heated debate within the region – none more so than the "buffalo commons" (1994), an arresting idea most closely associated with Deborah and Frank Popper. The Poppers argue for the replacement of cattle and crops with a sustainable, buffalo-based economy (a vision that also broadly informs Richard Manning's *Grassland* [1995] and Ernest Callenbach's *Bring Back the Buffalo!* [1996]).

Ecology and Economics of the Great Plains, the latest contribution to the debate over the region's future, is the work of a fish and wildlife biologist. Licht is convinced that the Plains (his adopted home) are a very special place – not only peerless among US regions in their beauty and appeal, but also unmatched (perhaps even globally) in terms of the richness of their original ecological profile, the process of degradation that accompanied European conquest *and* the

contemporary opportunity for fundamental restructuring. He delineates the components of the area's natural wealth and the agents of impoverishment in a manner and language accessible to the general reader (though this book has as much relevance to environmental and geographical studies as to American Studies). He covers issues such as the relative merits of grazing by buffalo and livestock and highlights the limitations of the "buffalo commons" proposal (not least its preoccupation with commercial buffalo ranching).

Licht also discusses the various modest means (such as endangered species legislation) currently available for protecting what is left of the original Plains ecosystem. The most important section of the book, however, is the author's own clearly formulated proposal for promoting biodiversity and economic revival through a network of "hypothetical" wildlife reserves on the public lands, a plan of action that differs from previous buffalo-centric proposals in its scope and emphasis (Licht's reserves represent the full spectrum of grassland types and full complement of wildlife) and the amount of attention devoted to the nuts and bolts of restoration. Though more genuinely restorationist than other reformers, Licht is hardly wild-eyed and greedy; his reserves would occupy a modest 4 percent of the nation's grassland biome.

If only Americans would take the time to get to know the Plains, Licht claims, then they will come to love and respect them as much as he does. And the rest will be easy: "Let your eyes explore unknown horizons … Let your imagination roll back the clock to the thundering herds of buffalo. If that could happen, then I believe without an ounce of doubt that the restoration and preservation of grassland ecosystems would be as inevitable as a prairie breeze." Such faith in the region's mystical capacities is probably unnecessary. As he also appreciates, nostalgia is backed by hard economic logic: the existing regime on the Plains may well collapse without much of a push before too long.

University of Bristol PETER COATES

Susan Harris Smith, *American Drama: The Bastard Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £35). Pp. 248. ISBN 0521 56384 4.

The sub-title is wrong. It is not American drama alone that is said to be a bastard art. Smith's book does, however, review the American forms of that accusation. Its extensiveness in making that review is the main virtue of this book.

The position of American dramatic literature, says Smith, is marked by its marginalisation or exclusion by the culture generally and by university disciplines in particular. The bias against it has less to do with that drama's merits, she writes, than with "the struggles for authority and legitimation of emerging professionalisms," mainly among academics. To demonstrate her thesis, she documents exhaustively, sometimes in undiscriminating lists of names, one hundred years of bias in anthologies, literary histories, college texts and curricula, literary magazines, scholarly journals and critical histories.

Smith eschews an approach which would have involved her in defining the literary and aesthetic qualities of American drama. Her aim is not to vindicate it as literature (or as performance), but to examine the exact terms in which it has

been devalued. But the examination is critically deficient because, in making what she admits is a narrow use of the generic term, she, like many of her reviled sources, writes under the misapprehension that drama is writing, when drama is a particular kind of "thing done" on the stage, distinguishing it from other kinds of theatre, one which organises theatrical action into a sequence of dramatic moments, a task usually aided by the dramatic use of the linguistic elements of performance. It is these last elements which may be written down and which then constitute the major part of the text of the play which we read. If the linguistic dramatic element in the "thing done" is a determining one, the text we read will be of interest as writing, since its qualities will contribute so much to what makes a play dramatic in performance that our understanding of the play's theatrical nature will be enhanced by a linguistic study of it, a study in which literary considerations may play a part.

Few plays, in any culture, pass that test. Smith goes to much trouble to describe the insults that have been hurled at American drama for so long, only prolonging the hurt by doing so. Some attempt to characterise the conditions under which American dramatic writing has qualities which make it worth our attention could have reassured the reader that the insults are unjustified. As it is, one wonders why Smith has written over two hundred pages about something which so many people she quotes have said does not exist.

Smith's prose is by turns turgid and melodramatic. A whole string of some of the more lurid sentences on page twelve repeat, word for word, phrases which appear on page three. But the greater fault of this book which the editors should have addressed themselves to is the author's failure to grasp any superior concept of drama and theatre than the ones employed by the authors she castigates. That failure makes Smith's ability to imitate the techniques of scholarly inquiry and presentation shockingly specious.

University of Essex ROGER HOWARD

Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler (eds.), *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861–1871* (New York: Cambridge University Press and German Historical Institute, Washington, DC, 1997, £70.00). Pp. 705. ISBN 0 521 56071 3.

In April, 1992, Washington's German Historical Institute sponsored a conference, "On the Road to Total War," where experts from seven countries compared aspects of modernity in the American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification. According to the speakers, nationalism, racism, particularism, and industrialism were common themes that spirited warfare in Germany, France, and North America during the 1860s and 1870s. On both sides of the Atlantic, warfare's brutality touched soldiers and civilians as never before. Topics of discussion at the conference included nationhood, leadership, mobilization, the home front, wartime realities, and the legacy of the wars in the United States and Germany.

In *On the Road to Total War*, editors Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler include twenty-nine of the papers presented at the conference and previously published

pieces by Mark E. Neely, Jr. (nature of "total war") and Phillip S. Paludan (Lincoln and public opinion). Contributors on the American Civil War include Carl N. Degler (similarities between the U.S. and German experiences), Richard E. Beringer (Confederate identity), Hans L. Trefousse (Unionism and abolition), Edward Hagerman (Union generalship), Herman M. Hattaway (military mobilization), Joseph T. Glatthaar (African-American mobilization), Stanley L. Engerman and J. Matthew Gallman (Civil War economy), James M. McPherson ("limited war" to "total war"), Nagler (home front), Donna Rebecca D. Krug (Confederate women), Earl J. Hess (combat experiences), Michael Fellman (guerrilla warfare), Reid Mitchell (prisons), Jay Luvaas (Trans-Atlantic military thought), and Richard N. Current (war as a stimulus to global power). Essayists on the German wars include Förster (Prussian leadership), Ulrich Wengenroth (Prussian industrialism), Manfred Messerschmidt (Prussian military), Wilhelm Deist (Prussian preconditions for war), Alf Lüdtke (Prussian opposition), Jean H. Quataert (German women), and Thomas Rohkrämer (home front). Commentators on the French perspective are William Serman (French mobilization), Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau (French public opinion), Robert Tombs (the war against Paris), Manfred Botzenhart (French prisoners of war), and Gerd Krumeich (French historical memory). Roger Chickering provides a summary and some analysis.

Unfortunately, in their Introduction the editors fail to establish a factual framework for the disparate essays that follow and, surprisingly, the contributions make few direct comparisons between mid nineteenth-century American and German military and civilian experiences. Such dog-eared historical cliches as *total war*, *modern war*, and *people's war* – central to the conference – remain largely uncontested and their meanings little explored. The only genuinely comparative essays are those by Degler and Annette Becker (on war memorials).

On the Road to Total War, then, is a poorly integrated collection of symposium papers, one whose parts add up to less than a coherent whole. Regrettably, it conveys few meaningful contrasts between the American and German military, civilian, and nationalist experiences. One finishes the book yearning for more.

North Carolina State University JOHN DAVID SMITH

Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *Encyclopedia of Frontier Literature* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997, £29.95). Pp. 540. ISBN 087436 888 x.

The dustjacket boasts that this encyclopedia "surveys the frontier literature of North America from the time of Columbus through the twentieth century." Unfortunately the cover promises more than the book delivers.

The overwhelming majority of the entries in this encyclopedia consider nineteenth-century authors, titles, and themes, related to the trans-Mississippi west. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are usually only mentioned in relation to broader themes and people and writings from that period do not receive substantive treatment. For example, there are no entries on Mary Rowlandson's *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mary Rowlandson*, John

Williams's *The Redeemed Captive* or William Byrd II's *The Secret History of the Line* all of which would seem to qualify as frontier literature. (Rowlandson and Williams receive a brief mention in the entry on the captivity motif.) Similarly the twentieth century does not receive substantive coverage. While there is quite rightly a lengthy entry on Louis L'Armour, popular and prolific author Larry McMurtry does not warrant an entry. It is unclear why Norwegian author Johan Boher has a lengthy article based on his novel *The Emigrants* (1924) which considers Norwegian immigrants in Wisconsin and Dakota, yet the Swedish author Vilhelm Moberg who wrote a series considering Swedish settlers on the Minnesota frontier and during the California Gold Rush (*The Emigrants*, *Unto a Good Land*, *The Settlers*, and *Last Letter Home* [1949–1970]) is omitted.

Even when Snodgrass is inclusive the results are somewhat mixed. Here article "Explorers of the Frontier" is a case in point. Snodgrass considers the literature of exploration from Columbus to Charles Darwin. Her relative neglect of Lewis and Clark (who do not warrant their own entry) in the article is remarkable. Snodgrass writes of the expedition "Setting out by water, portage, and land from Mandan territory in North Dakota, they moved up the Missouri, Snake, and Columbia Rivers to the Pacific Ocean, where they established a base camp and viewed a beached whale." No mention is made of the scientific discoveries made by the expedition or the literary significance of the *Journals of Lewis and Clark*.

The articles in this encyclopedia do not always reflect current scholarship. The article on the captivity motif makes no reference to the works of John Demos and June Namias. Perhaps most startling, the entry on James Fenimore Cooper ignores Alan Taylor's interdisciplinary masterpiece, *William Cooper's Town*. Many of the entries in the *Encyclopedia of Frontier Literature* are well written and informative. General readers may find the work useful. Scholars and researchers will be better off consulting Howard Lamar's *Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West* (1977), soon to appear in a second edition, or Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod, eds., *Encyclopedia of the American West*, 4 vols. (1996).

University of Edinburgh FRANK COGLIANO

Daniel Soyer, *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880–1939* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard, 1997, n.p.). ISBN 0 674 44417 5.

This dissertation, submitted by Daniel Soyer at New York University is an important contribution to the understanding of the cultural, social and political transformation of a large part of Jewish immigrants to the United States and thoroughly explains their relationship with American society. Between 1880 and 1915, over 2 million Jewish immigrants came to America from Central and Eastern Europe and were seeking a new home in a country of whom they expected religious liberty and full citizenship, but were also confronted with the challenges of a modern mass society. Still, most of the immigrants desired to become part of the larger American community as quickly as possible and tried to adapt to American values and standards.

In this process, the old cultural and social ties gained special importance in the definition of the immigrant identity. Social life in the immigrant neighborhood

was characterized by the individual's origin in a particular region. Clubs, societies, associations and lodges among East European Jewish immigrants strongly tended to organize members from the same hometown or region and were called "landsmanshaftn." They tried to connect "landslayt," people from the same regional background, and provide them with the familiarity and security of the old community, giving mutual aid, financial benefits and an arena for social and cultural interaction as long as the immigrants were still struggling with the process of adaption to the wider American society. Providing its members with a stronghold in many aspects of their lives and organizationally introducing them to the structure of American pluralism, *landsmanshaftn* took the role of a main catalyst for the immigrants' adaption to the New World.

In this thoroughly researched and well-documented study, Daniel Soyer points out the function of the organizational structures of *landsmannschaften* and their role as transmission belts into the new environment. It is surprising how he manages to give both an analytical overall picture of the phenomenon and of Jewish immigrant life in New York at the turn of the century and, at the same time, detailed insight into the microcosm of the individual immigrant experience, which he traces back to the Old World *shtetls*, like Bialystok. It is a special merit that Soyer, although providing detail, explains the contribution of the *landsmanshaftn* in a larger picture. He describes how they were interwoven with the larger American Jewish community and with American society, an approach that is particularly important for the understanding of ethnic histories, which is unfortunately often neglected. Without doubt this book must be seen as a valuable contribution not only to Jewish History, but also to American History.

University of Munich CORNELIA WILHELM

Mary Suzanne Schriber, *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830–1920* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997, $50.00 cloth, $18.50 paper). Pp. 266. ISBN 0 8139 1730 1, 0 8139 1779 4.

It was in the nineteenth century when travelling American women became a noticeable phenomenon. Like their male counterparts, they made their way to Europe on steam-powered ships, and as the century progressed they became more and more adventurous, causing Henry James to remark in his preface to *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), "coming to Europe is even for the 'frail vessels,' in this wonderful age, a mild adventure." Victorian women travelled to increasingly more exotic destinations – China, Palestine, India, Egypt, the East Indies, Greece, Arabia, Algeria and other parts of Africa, Central and South America, Cuba, the Yucatan, and Jamaica – and their culture both sanctioned and encouraged their adventures. In *Writing Home*, Mary Suzanne Schriber examines writings by American women travellers both new and familiar to analyse women's practice in the travel genre and to demonstrate the extent and complications of its "cultural work."

Writing Home discusses now-obscure women travellers such as Sarah Haight (1808–1881), New York socialite and traveller; Caroline Paine (1820?–1880?), who went up the Nile; and Fanny Bullock Workman (1859–1925), conqueror of

Himalayan peaks; as well as more familiar figures such as Margaret Fuller, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edith Wharton, and Constance Fenimore Woolson. The first two chapters of the book lay the groundwork for the examination of specific writers, by describing the historical context in which white middle- and upper middle-class United States women proceeded to travel, and in which women's travel writing as a gendered genre occurred. Three succeeding chapters examine women's constructions of self-identity through travel writing as autobiography, their use of travel writing as political occasions, and the relationship of women's travel writing to women's fiction, local colour and realism. A concluding chapter focuses on a single work, Edith Wharton's *Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort* (1915), which Schriber claims as the text which marks the end of an era of women's pre-war travel writing.

En route, Schriber addresses the gendered nature of the Victorian travel genre, arguing persuasively that women's travel writing of this period paradoxically inscribes both sameness *and* gender difference. On the one hand, she finds, women used the same guide-books and dutifully visited the same obligatory sites as their male counterparts, hence they regularly constructed in their accounts of travel virtually the same attitudes about their experiences of the world. Both sexes exploited similar themes of anti-tourism, romantic nostalgia, American exceptionalism, fixation on the past and the inevitable comparisons of "abroad" with "home." And women travellers, Schriber finds, could be as insensitive to gender as men, as demonstrated by Lucy Bronson Dudley's claim to have "discovered in the old world three new beasts of burden – women, cows, and dogs; also two new desserts, green hazelnuts and almonds." On the other hand, Schriber also claims that there are significant differences, that "at particular interstices of gender and genre, fissures open to allow a glimpse of gender at work." In the women travellers' textualising of the female "other," for example, the author notes a schizophrenic identification that amounts almost to an identity crisis. In women's travel texts, Schriber finds, there is often an uneasy fluctuation between the female "other" as the traveller's double and the "other" as difference incarnate. Similar traces of gender difference mark the women travellers' engagement with a staple of the genre – the writing and rewriting of "home" – an engagement always inflected by the culturally produced special relationship between women and the home.

The critical journey on which *Writing Home* takes its reader is marked by traces of its author's own passion for taxonomy and formal organisation, such that its argument proceeds via a series of categories and sub-categories. At work in the volume is an organisational impulse to tame and control the generic hybrid that is women's travel writing, to map in a logical manner the eclectic, multifaceted textual body which *Writing Home* takes as its subject. Clearly leaving post-structuralist undecideability alone, the impulse of Schriber's critical cartography is to make coherent a resolutely casual and polyvocal genre. And, apart from one or two lapses into *passée* feminist cliché (*écriture* feminine, "honey-mad" women, and the blank page), Schriber's enterprise of critical map-making is an informative and compelling one.

University of Liverpool VAL GOUGH

Gerald L. Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism: The American Churches and the Second World War* (Chapel Hill and London, University of North Carolina Press, 1997, £31.90). Pp. 317. ISBN 0 8078 2333 3.

Following the collapse of the communist empire with its secular faith, the second Christian millennium approaches amid a world-wide resurgence of religion and a reinvigorated academic interest in the role of Christian churches in the twentieth century. A great deal of research remains to be done into the religious dimensions of the twentieth century, making Gerald L. Sittser's *A Cautious Patriotism: The American Churches and the Second World War* a valuable and a timely contribution, especially with the increasing interest in the war's non-diplomatic players.

Acknowledging as his mentor Martin E. Marty, the doyen of American religious historians, Sittser provides a detailed and scholarly corollary to Marty's third volume, *Under God, Indivisible 1941–1960*, (1996), in his acclaimed chronicle of faith, *Modern American Religion*. Sittser's extensive research into the issues raised by the war in light of the reactions they provoked among Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Unitarians and members of other denominations, including Fundamentalists, reveals profound insights into the inherent importance of Christianity in American society as a bulwark of the prized democracy seen to symbolise the American way of life.

Sittser highlights the differences and diversity of church responses to the war, and indeed of competition between denominations as it assumed the perspective of an opportunity for Christian renewal and growth. There none the less remained a basic unity of concern, a similarity of patriotic posture. Sittser shows how revulsion over the memory of the First World War profoundly influenced the conduct of the churches during the Second. Arguing the virtual impossibility for churches to be unpatriotic in a country in which most Christians believed their nation occupied a special place in God's plan for history, Sittser contends that by making religion a more important issue during the war than the war itself, the churches were able to commit themselves to the war without making it a holy crusade or caricaturing the enemy. Equally important – with the exception of Fundamentalists, Evangelicals and other conservative Christians who remained silent on the issue of civil liberties – the war facilitated church leaders' effective participation in the fight of African Americans and Japanese Americans for freedom at home as well as abroad.

Sittser clarifies the religious component in a range of crucial issues, from the debate over American entry into the war to postwar planning, elucidating another vital chapter in the long and complex history of church–state relations in the United States. He challengingly concludes that, although the American churches' "cautious patriotism" provided a worthy model for how the church should co-operate with the state during a major international crisis, the determination to exercise Christian influence engendered a preoccupation with national affairs. This, Sittser argues, led the churches into a battle for America's soul which eventually compromised their unique and independent mission.

Sittser's creative and important thesis brings a fresh perspective to the "last

good war'' and provides new insights into the significance of religion in American history and culture.

York University DIANNE KIRBY

Susanne K. George, *Kate M. Cleary: A Literary Biography with Selected Works* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, $30). Pp. 250. ISBN 0 8032 2164 9.

Fifteen years ago I worried (problematically) ''Do women write differently?'' Now the more interesting and surely anterior question is ''What did women write?'', and anthologies like the new Blackwell *Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers* demonstrate how much our answers to this question have changed. Such reclamation work totally alters both our map of the century and the questions we then go on to ask. We owe a debt to scholars, such as those in the excellent Rutgers series, who provide us with modern editions of little-known figures included in these new anthologies.

Now the anthologized ''Feet of Clay'' has its backup in Susanne K. George's combined biography and selected tales, sketches and poems (100 pages of Cleary's writings). George includes a bibliography of over three hundred of Cleary's works (a labour of love and scholarship indeed). Even without the Cleary texts this would be an absorbing read, as George constructs, at times using marvellous letters, the story of a young woman born 1863 to a cultured family, who went west with her new businessman husband to live in a Nebraska town which had not existed four years previously. There she continued to write, bore six children (speaking of her fear of childbirth, the ''black shadow''), and endured the death of two of them and a eight-year-long morphine addiction started after puerperal fever. Returning after fourteen years to Chicago she wrote more, then hospitalized herself for the horrendous therapies of that time (there were 250,000 opiate-dependent people in the US then) while continuing to write. She lived her last three years in single rented rooms writing to eat and to pay off hospital bills, the rent of her typewriter, drycleaning bills, and was often down to less than a dollar. Her estranged husband attempted (and failed) to have her committed as ''insane'' (i.e. addicted). Was she leading a double life or one of heroic sanity? – George cannot say. Cleary died at 41.

It's a story George tells with well-judged detail, but not a tale Cleary herself wrote directly. Instead she deflected her mixed responses to Nebraska onto her portraits of farming people, different in class, culture and relationship with land and climate. Unlike some women regionalists, Cleary writes as an outsider, but when she stops talking in categories, moves behind crude psychology of the ''mean'' farmer and stops castigating their failure to notice the landscape (beautifully but tangentially delineated by the narrator), she creates striking characters who clearly engage her even if she doesn't like them all that much. I see the stories as embodying but not directly negotiating those tensions in late nineteenth-century culture between East and West. They appear observant but from certain classed and residually stereotyped positions. Whether they are realist (a key concern for George) is something which even Cleary's contemporary

readers could not agree on. When she writes about her own class, she rehearses the still powerful ideology of domestic femininity with is powerful strategies of sentimentality, yet she can also criticize how this ideology impacts on the reception of women writers. Alas, George did not include examples of Cleary's domestic advice writing, nor the "formula" stories she wrote in huge quantities to keep afloat financially and which were syndicated in newspapers. We need these, too, to help answer, What did women write?

Lancaster University ALISON EASTON

Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London, 1997, $14.95). Pp. 396. ISBN 0 252 06624 3

In this most welcome discussion of American politics in the final two decades of the antebellum Republic, Michael Morrison seeks to recast our understanding of the origins of the Civil War. His book is thus a further sign that at long last this question, once as widely debated as any in American history but recently in a state of partial if not total eclipse, is once again on the agenda.

The neglect of the subject was in no sense because it had been satisfactorily resolved; on the contrary, perhaps a majority of the critical questions are still very much open. Rather, one suspects, it was because it seemed to entail the study of dead white males, operating where dead white males are to be found in profusion: in the arena of Federal politics. Those who deplore such a focus will not, it is safe to say, applaud the appearance of this volume, for Morrison freely acknowledges that the voices of women and African Americans are "silent" in his text. Moreover, he gives little attention to the ethnocultural conflict ("the dog that failed to bark in the night") which some historians have seen as paramount in American politics in these decades. Instead, his focus is upon Federal politics, his subject the relationship between westward expansion and slavery.

Here he has many interesting observations to offer. Taking issue with those who have discerned a distinctive Southern political culture, fundamentally different from that of the North (or the nation as a whole), he argues that there was instead a single political culture of which there were two conflicting interpretations. This culture was essentially derived from the American Revolution with its legacy of freedom and self-government. Morrison then demonstrates how, time after time, as the sectional controversy unfolded, each set of partisans harked back to the Revolution, genuinely believing that they alone were true to its glorious legacy.

Based upon a formidable amount of research in the primary sources, Morrison's book is organized around a conventional narrative of events, and he examines and explicates the reactions of various groups to the events under consideration. He successfully reopens many historiographical debates. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is that which deals with the Kansas–Nebraska Act, surely the most portentous single legislative measure in the history of the Republic, and the doctrine of popular sovereignty which underpinned it. Here his interpretation – emphasising its roots in traditional Democratic orthodoxy – is highly persuasive.

One question above all, however, presents itself. Is the author claiming that without this Revolutionary heritage or, come to that, without the debate on slavery fuelled by expansion westward, the war would not have come about? If so, the claim is not really substantiated here. Are we to believe that if there had been – unlikely as it may seem – a peaceful separation from Britain, the slavery controversy would not have divided the nation? And, whilst it is true that westward expansion stimulated concerns about slavery, it is also true that concerns about slavery stimulated westward expansion. All of which confirms, perhaps, that there is still much to be said on these old and until recently, at any rate, unfashionable questions.

University of Hull JOHN ASHWORTH

Lora Romero, *Home Fronts: Domesticity and its Critics in the Antebellum United States* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997, £43.95 cloth, £14.95 paper). Pp. 143. ISBN 0 8223 2030 4, 0 8223 2042 8.

Lora Romero's aim in this study is to incite her readers to free themselves from the idea of nineteenth-century women's cultural production as immutable or even monolithic in its conformity. Domesticity, the chief topic under scrutiny here, is examined both in and of itself, but also as the central repository of late twentieth-century investment in "the theoretical assumptions about power and resistance underlying contemporary debates about dominant and oppositional cultures." Almost inevitably, her theoretical approach, in contesting the simple binarisms which account for many of the critical perceptions of early nineteenth-century power relations, is derived from Foucault. The complexities and instabilities of the discourses of both power and resistance upon which he insists, are taken, by Romero, into a consideration of "domesticity's integral presence in a plurality of traditions: mass cultural and elite, popular and marginal, women's and men's" from whence she can undermine its status as a fixed marker of difference between oppositionality and hegemony.

Romero's thesis is supported by readings of individual authors whose work opens possibilities of distinct – even local – cultural politics which acknowledge both multiplicity and mobility within power relations. James Fenimore Cooper, Maria W. Stewart, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Nathaniel Hawthorne provide the "horizons of representation on which struggles for authority played themselves out in the antebellum period: the middle-class home, the frontier, African-American activism, social reform movements, and homosocial high culture." Romero's work on Stewart is particularly interesting for its examination of the uses to which she put the terms and conditions of Anglo-American domesticity in her articulation of black nationalism; here, as in all other instances, Romero complicates her critical evaluations with huge political, cultural and theoretical concepts, weaving in and out of the dominant and the marginal, indeed, continually shifting notions of what these terms might denote.

Although the majority of Romero's work here is already in the public domain, different chapters having featured in a variety of well-known essay collections, the volume offers a coherence which makes it worth the risk of duplication for the reader. Whilst her writing is dense and difficult, the ideas and insights she has to

offer are worth struggling for, thoroughly and productively grounded, as they are, in cultural, critical and literary history.

Manchester Metropolitan University JANET BEER

Elisabeth S. Clemens, *The People's Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890–1925* (Chicago, Ill., 1997, $46.50 cloth, $19.95 paper). Pp. 472. ISBN 0 226 1099205, 10993 3.

One of the most striking features of later nineteenth-century America was the rapid development of associational politics. In the early days of the Republic, the dangers of faction had given way to the necessity for elites to organise, if only to secure potential majorities for successive presidential elections. However, party politics did little more than represent the main regional, and a few of the main economic, forces until after the Civil War. Then came the effects of a substantial male suffrage, more diverse economic change, literacy, mass transport – all designed to encourage the growth of associations which vied with the older elites to exercise political influence in the name of change. Move forward a generation, to keep between the confines of this book, and the aspiring elites are relatively well entrenched and form a key sector of American politics.

To illustrate her thesis that by the end of this period partisanship was less likely to be the primary guide for political action, Professor Clemens has taken three main pressure areas which were salient at the turn of the century. Organized agriculture was, perhaps surprisingly, the most successful of these with organized labour and the women's movements somewhat less so. To give a clear grass-roots approach, she has limited her geographical coverage as well as her institutional one. The three states from which she borrows her prime examples are California, Washington and Wisconsin, not because of their size – they were in fact among the smaller states in population terms a hundred years ago – but because political innovation was more prevalent in the Northwest at that time than in most of the states. This, in turn, led to social policy reform more striking than even in the Midwest where there were some similar pockets of progressive strength.

Partisanship took something of a beating at the hands of interest-group fervour early in this century but recovered by the 1920s. Although it is beyond the scope of this book, it is worth noting that partisanship has declined again as a force in more recent years and that this is now looked upon as a national rather than a local phenomenon. Interest-group politics is regarded as a vital part in the machinery of government, sometimes beneficial, sometimes venal, and one is glad to welcome a study such as the one under review which throws so much light on a time when party was the key player in the political game and interest groups were subsidiary to them.

University of Kent ALEC T. BARBROOK

Jennie Skerl (ed.), *A Tawdry Place of Salvation: The Art of Jane Bowles* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997, $34.95). Pp. 185. ISBN 0 8093 2100 9.

This collection of essays is, surprisingly, the first to be published on Jane Bowles. Jennie Skerl, previously editor of a key collection on another Tangier-connected American, William Burroughs, has sought to build on Millicent Dillon's groundwork in recovering and re-evaluating Bowles's work. Skerl finds Bowles to be exemplary in being overshadowed by the proximity of a male writer (her husband, Paul), and her works being obscured by her biography and "legend." As with other women writers, this "silencing" by critical neglect, misunderstanding or hostility needs to be undone; ironically, the difficulty in finding a "voice" or a language was one that informed Jane Bowles's texts and her troubled life.

Skerl cites the variety of Bowles's *œuvre* as a reason for her neglect: she published short fiction, a novel, and a play in her lifetime. All are considered here, along with more obscure, fragmentary and unpublished writings. Several essays in the collection analyse Bowles's positioning *vis à vis* a modernist or postmodernist textual practice; her indeterminate endings, fragmentary narrative and affectless characters were at odds with the critical and fictional vogue and perhaps – as Allen E. Hibbard suggests in his essay on Bowles's unfinished second novel – her own intentions. Bowles's texts illustrate, and demonstrate, a struggle for expression, and her formal experimentation, writer's block and slim *œuvre* suggest that she never found a medium to truly suit her.

In each of Bowles's works, there is what John Maier calls "her odd, idiosyncratic language," a textual dislocation suggesting that the language that women use, perhaps like that of Bowles herself, is not their own. This equation between women and a colonised people is explored in Stephen Benz's fruitful essay, which analyses the female travellers in Jane Bowles's narratives – Americans spatially dis-located in Central America or North Africa – who find themselves confronting, and surrendering themselves to, the colonised Other.

A variety of critical tools is brought to bear, but the main focus is on the relationships between women: Carolyn J. Allen uses queer theory to discuss lesbian erotics, and Peter G. Christensen and Charlotte Goodman focus on mothers and daughters. Consequently, and ironically in the light of Skerl's introduction, biography is a recurrent (and perhaps unavoidable) touchstone. This collection is a first step in remedying Bowles's undeserved obscurity and will hopefully catalyse the study of a strange but remarkable writer.

University of Liverpool BRIAN BAKER

Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans have loved, hated, and transformed American culture since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997, $30). Pp. 444. ISBN 0 465 00164 5.

A frequent source of amusement for Europeans is to happen upon a group of American tourists posing for one picture outside a McDonald's restaurant in a foreign capital, documenting the fact that Barcelona or London or Paris is "just

like home.'' The actions and assumptions of such visitors, combined with an insidious growth in the vernacular of American film, pop music, language and other cultural products have often led to both a popular and academic conception of ''Americanisation'' as both threatening and replacing the autonomous cultures of not just Western Europe, but of the whole world.

Richard Pell's latest book sets out to challenge this vision. Focusing on the major nations of Western Europe (excluding Spain) Pells questions the extent to which American hegemonic expansion, either by design or accident, was ever truly successful. Though Europeans welcomed American money, investment, protection and (usually) products, this did not mean that they also took on board American political and cultural ideology, nor that they neglected their own cultural aspirations. In short, Europeans were not ''Americanised.''

Indeed, as Pells suggests, the interchange between the two continents was far more reciprocal. European educators, musicians, intellectuals and (later) investors had as great an effect on the United States as their American counterparts did in Europe. Perhaps the best example of this exchange was in cinema. Just as French directors revered the likes of Hitchcock, Ford and Welles, so American film-makers in turn were inspired by Truffaut, Godard and Rohmer. This process has continued up to the present day.

While the book is a lively and often fascinating read, it disappoints on two fronts. Firstly, there is little theoretical input of either explicit or implicit nature. Pell's apparent conclusion that we are a mish-mash of cultures is hardly new, as any reader of Raymond Williams or Edward Said would recognise. Secondly, he is prone to lapsing into the very generalisations that he claims to refute, generalisations that are undermined by the particular. For instance, he speaks of the troubles of Northern Ireland and Bosnia in the same light of post-Cold War globalisation; Althusser and Levi-Straus are lumped together with a collection of other thinkers as postmodern; and Baudrillard's 1980s' observations on America are juxtaposed with chroniclers of the 1940s as though nothing had changed between the two dates.

As a theoretical exploration of transatlantic cultural relationships, *Not Like Us* leaves something to be desired. As a narrative or introductory account, however, the book should prove useful to students, teachers and the general reader.

University of Nottingham DREW WHITELEGG

Timothy Morris, *Making the Team: The Cultural Work of Baseball Fiction* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997, $34.95). Pp. 190. ISBN 0 252 06597 2.

''If you want to understand America,'' goes the saying by Jacques Barzun, ''you had better learn baseball.'' In his opening to chapter one, ''Everybody Wants to Play for the Yankees,'' Timothy Morris quotes Barzun to make clear that in his book he investigates the ''work'' of the rhetoric which suggests the ''play'' of baseball reflects the ''seriousness'' of American society. Barzun's ''saying'' illustrates the cultural work of these baseball fictions in learning to be or become

American. Provocatively, Morris explores these lessons of becoming American through the genre of juvenile baseball fiction and analyses authors such as John Tunis and Mark Harris. The book is organised around four themes, which according to Morris are "particularly problematic issues for America and Americanists in the mid-1990s": assimilation, heterosexuality, language, and meritocracy. In the process of this thematic discussion, the author also questions divisions between adult and children's fiction, between serious and playful fiction, and between high and lowbrow literature, and exposes the cultural work of canon formation. For a book on baseball, this field of dreams reaches beyond the dimensions of the playing field, suggestive of the interdisciplinary nature of American Studies itself.

Morris's rigorously analyses the masterplots of these fictions, ingeniously exposing a continuum between the optimistic juvenile and sceptical adult masterplots of baseball fiction. John R. Tunis's wartime novel *Keystone Kids* (1943) becomes a model text for assimilating Jewishness and by extension ethnic identity in the majority of juvenile baseball fiction. With the classic line "You don't ever think of yer ma as a Jew?" ethnicity in the text finds its moment of erasure, since Jocko Klein is now offered a rhetoric which does not (according to the manager Spike) mark his Jewishness as his reading of poetry did. With such paradoxical rhetoric, baseball fiction offers the language of Americanisation and the ideology of teamwork to assimilate immigrants and Otherness. A range of other texts demonstrates the process of Americanisation for immigrants (Chinese in Bette Bo Lord's *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson* (1986) and Hispanic in Peter Lefcourt's *Dreyfus Affair* (1993), for example). The book convincingly shows compulsory heterosexuality at play in these works, usefully applying Eve Sedgwick's analysis of the homosocial to the bodies on the baseball field. The witty style contrasts to the seriousness of the issues involved, and Morris exposes the complete erasure of non-American identity on and off the baseball diamond. Winners are scripted in the fiction of the white heterosexual American man who has got "it" to "make" the entire team into winners.

The chapter on meritocracy is the most challenging of the book ("Hitting the Bell Curve") in which Morris proposes that "the availability of sports as an analogue to (or allegory for) the more general workplace in American society is a major underpinning of the meritocratic ideal. Business success is sold in terms of winning at sports." Morris compares the meritocratic system of sports and baseball in particular to a hegemonic operation of power distribution in American society, mapping Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve* (1994) on to the ideologies taught in juvenile baseball fictions and which are at the narrative basis of Robert Coover's *Universal Baseball Association*. The ubiquitous statistical data of baseball that identifies winners and losers parallel Herrnstein and Murray's rationalisation of inequality in American society via their statistical apparatus.

The surprising links between baseball fiction, on the one hand, and American ideologies, on the other, make this a provocative study for Americanists of many disciplines. As an exploration of culture, American sport is still a relatively open playing field and Morris's book can be seen as a new evaluation of sports fiction and its "work" in American culture. Others would perhaps like to challenge

Morris's somewhat totalising readings of sports fiction and Americanisation. But the book validates a slight rewriting of Barzun's saying: "If you want to understand America, you'd better learn about baseball fiction."

University of Sheffield DUCO VAN OOSTRUM

Kenneth M. Cameron, *America On Film: Hollywood and American History* (New York: Continuum, 1997, $29.50). Pp. 272. ISBN 0 8264 1033 2.

In his preface, Kenneth Cameron describes the book's purpose as an exploration of the relationship between American film and historical fact, establishing early on that a certain "framework of fact" underlies historical events and their representations. Offering this formula as the book's foundation, Cameron proceeds to survey a century of American cinema, choosing only those films that conform to the criterion that each include "a real person and some version of a real and specific event." At times this approach however, seems rapidly reduced to a one-dimensional analytical tool: films are frequently assessed as to whether they are "good history" or "bad history," depending on the author's faith in their historical verisimilitude.

Still, this is an inherently interesting theme. Indeed, recent debates surrounding the historical precision of films like *Amistad* and *Titanic* suggest a keen popular and critical interest in the construction of historical realism on the screen. The first chapters are especially promising, offering engaging synopses of historical films from the silent period, such as *The Black Hand* and Ince's *Custer's Last Fight*. Cameron's focus is occasionally peculiar, however, and his persistent concern with certain anachronistic details, such as the inauthentic use of guns, never evolves beyond the anecdotal.

Essentially a reference book, the structure of *America on Film* follows a straightforward pattern: chapters are divided into decades, while each film is treated to a paragraph or so of plot summary followed by analysis. This makes for fairly arduous reading, and the book might have worked better had its entries been clearly catalogued as a series of miniature reviews on par with something like Pauline Kael's *5001 Nights at the Movies*. Cameron, however, at least saves the best for last, his insightful conclusion suggesting ways to read the wider socio-political ramifications of American history on film, and offering suggestions for teaching and assessing the historical genre.

While frequently entertaining, on a theoretical level the book seems ultimately unwilling to concede that historical hindsight provides the contemporary critic with a paradoxical mixture of critical power and blindness. The result of the book's largely prescriptive approach to history is that, unsurprisingly, most of the films examined do not pass historical muster. Cameron's criticism of films prior to 1970 on the basis of their racism, sexism, and historical inauthenticity – while undoubtedly correct – thus lacks an explanation both of the films' more precise contexts and of the evolving film language of which they are a part. One suspects beforehand that most of these films will be severely limited in their politics as well as in their historical accuracy: as Cameron himself points out, Hollywood films are commercial products more interested in constructing myth

than in reconstructing history. But the exclusion of such complex and controversial films as *Birth of a Nation* (according to the author it does not contain enough history) while including, for example, *Heaven's Gate* and *I'm Dancing as Fast as I Can* (as these films are more concerned with historical fact) is surprising, and seems to add little to the author's argument concerning cultural self-representation and historical revision. Furthermore, little indication as to such films' precise historical contexts (the Johnson County cattle wars of 1892 and Barbara Gordon's television memoirs, respectively) is ever offered. The book might have benefited from a more detailed exploration of the very "framework of fact" that lies behind such productions. We are left waiting until the impressive yet relatively brief conclusion to discover the full scope of the author's argument.

University of Essex JEFFREY A. GEIGER

Bruce G. Tigger and Wilcomb E. Washburn (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas: volume one; North America, part one* (Cambridge University Press, 1996, £40), pp. 564. ISBN 0 521 57392.

Writing about the history of the original inhabitants of the land mass which became the United States and Canada is fraught with problems. The very geographical area itself poses one, for the aborigines who lived there before the coming of Europeans, and for centuries after, had no conception of the present boundaries of the two sovereign states. Such considerations present some difficulties in this volume. Linda S. Cordell and Bruce D. Smith, in a chapter on "Indigenous Farmers" add a footnote to their discussion of "the South-west culture area" pointing out that it "extends, without interruption, into the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Sonora, and Sinaloa. The organization of this volume and series necessitated limiting boundaries to conform to the modern southern border of the United States." From the start, therefore, the conceptual framework which informs the approach is one which makes sense mainly to modern Americans and Canadians imposing a European category, that of the nation state, onto the native past.

Again, until recently that past was seen primarily through European eyes, since the only written sources were compiled by colonists or their descendants, while those who interpreted them were overwhelmingly white. Colonists referred to the natives as "Indians" and called their communities "tribes." This terminology had bedeviled much history dependent upon their testimony. The possibility and even the desirability of dropping the term "Indian" is much debated. Certainly it is to be found in this volume, along with Native, both always with an initial capital letter. The word "tribe," however, is not employed in it "except as it is used as an administrative term by the US government."

The ingenuity of anthropologists, archaeologists, ethno-historians, folklorists, linguists and others using methods not traditionally employed by historians in revealing the complexities of native culture is strikingly conveyed by the contributors to this volume. The introductory essay by Peter Nabokov on "Native Views of History" is particularly impressive in this respect. But then he,

along with the other contributors, is of European descent, a fact for which the editors have felt it necessary to apologise.

This apology indicates another problem of dealing with the history of native North Americans, a politically correct sensitivity to race relations in the present which makes objectivity about them in the past almost unachievable. Postmodernists would deny that it was a problem, since all history is subjective, but the editors stoutly refute this. They themselves contribute a review of the historiography of the subject, concluding, as do all the chapters in the volume, with a useful "Bibliographic Essay."

The pre-contact history of natives as hunter–gatherers is discussed by Dean R. Snow. Something of the methodological difficulties this field presents is indicated by the fact that the dating of the Old Crow site in the Yukon was once thought to be 25,000 BC, while now it appears to be only 2,000 years old! Bruce D. Smith contributes a chapter on "agricultural chiefdoms of the Eastern woodlands." It concludes with the intriguing theory that Mississippian societies were in decline before the contact with Europeans. This raises questions as to how far the contraction of native culture after colonisation was caused by contact or coincided with it.

Bruce G. Trigger and William R. Swagerty discuss the varied consequences of sixteenth-century contacts in their contribution "Entertaining Strangers." The most important was an exchange of diseases, though estimates of the pre-contact population are so varied that any precise measurement of the undoubtedly catastrophic impact of European diseases is impossible. Neal Salisbury picks up the story of interaction in 1600, and deals with it in eastern North America until 1783. His chapter will doubtless appeal most to colonial historians. They will find a superb synthesis of recent work written mainly as narrative, the first time in the volume that this is possible. The final chapter, by Michael D. Green, deals with "the expansion of European colonization to the Mississippi valley, 1780–1880." During this period, Indian polities were treated as sovereign nations with which the United States negotiated treaties. In 1871 Congress finally denied the separate sovereignty of Indians and an era in their history came to an end.

University of Leeds WILLIAM A. SPECK

Melissa Holbrook Pierson, *The Perfect Vehicle* (London: Granta Books, 1997, £10.99). Pp. 256. ISBN 1 86207 056 3.

Melissa Holbrook Pierson is not the first American author to write a philosophical book about motorcycling (recall *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* from 1974), but she does it both engagingly and well. Unlike Robert Pirsig's overintellectual approach, which uses the motorcycle as an extended metaphor for other concerns, Holbrook Pierson's reflections are intermittent and subtle and arise out of her material, flashing like headlights in the night through the texture of a part-autobiographical, part-documentary narrative. The story of her discovery of bikes (the usual way, through a boyfriend), the rush of desire to own one and (via another two love stories) the subsequent years of riding in "the alternative universe of motorcycles and motorcyclists," is interspersed with

material of a more factual kind, a rather haphazard cultural history of motorcycling. This includes brief accounts of the birth of the bike, American motorcycle racing, rallies and riots, different kinds of bikes and bikers (with particular and perhaps inevitable emphasis on women, still a rarity on two wheels) and a loving look at the history of Moto Guzzi, the Italian make she rides.

The transitions between these modes can be awkward and uncalled for, but the two strands sometimes blend in a satisfying way, as when she attends the Laconia rally or rides through Europe on a pilgrimage to the origin of the Moto Guzzi. Her work also runs the risk of slipping over into polemic, prone to diatribes against pollution or society's demonisation of bikers. Interesting as much of the motorcycling history she has unearthed is, it is the narrative of the vulnerable self beneath the leather clothing which works best and makes one yearn for more. As she puts it, "anything as unexamined as the normal heart has got to have a few interesting things to be said about it"; she certainly finds enough to keep the reader hooked by providing glimpses of the seemingly slight but often far-reaching dilemmas of her own "ordinary" heart, on and off the bike.

Motorcycle riding inspires observations about our need for movement (alluding to the work of Bruce Chatwin and peering deep into her own restless nature), the paradox of desire and motivation (she rides "away from home in order to feel the sweet sensation of missing it" at the same time as she loves leaving it), loneliness and companionship, and, above all, fear. Few pursuits make you more vulnerable than bike-riding, a deliberate toying with death which may grant you the illusion of overcoming it ("If you continue to ride in the full knowledge that you could lose your life, then you are not asking for death but for immortality. The motorcycle is a vehicle to everlasting life"). Riding becomes a way of focusing the vague anxiety that haunts her, a "persistent unconscious belief that every moment is a catastrophe waiting to happen" which she eventually diagnoses as panic disorder. This anxiety is the biting point of the work, a raw nerve which is exposed with due regularity by descriptions of sudden tears by the kerb-side or unease in crowds of strangers, or indeed by her accounts of the emptiness that follows in the wake of departed lovers. Even the successful bypassing of the threat of accidents, which she dwells on to the point of obsession, cannot temper this well of grief for long.

The selfless loyalty of bikers provides a potent counterpoint to such sadness. It is epitomised by the European Moto Guzzi riders she meets and characterises almost every one of her reverentially portrayed biking friends. In truly paradoxical fashion, motorcycling is described as a direct route to both company and solitude. This most private pursuit, which shields you from contact and grants you some inviolable space in an overcrowded world, also propels you out into it and makes you part of something. The stubborn (but seldom laboured) complexity of the work is matched by a literariness which belies the tantalising opposition between studying and riding she sets up in the opening chapter ("one day, say, you can be in graduate school, sweating over blazingly irrelevant papers on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and yet another reading of Hawthorne… and the next you can be out there so entirely you have grease beneath your fingernails as you bump-start your bike down a hill"). Alluding to anything from *Don Quixote* to the American nature writer John Burroughs, Holbrook Pierson lets

her background inform her work in a rewarding way, although there is little doubt that her heart is firmly placed in the outer landscape of freeways and sweeping bends. Her thought-provoking book certainly makes you yearn for that heady rush of speed down the straightaway, so if you are not already a converted biker, why not think again and consider following her down that hill into another dimension of human experience.

University College London MADELEINE MINSON

Michael P. Spikes, *Understanding Contemporary American Literary Theory*, *Understanding Contemporary American Literature* (Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1997, $24.95). Pp. 201. ISBN 1 57003 134 7.

This book is part of a series, "Understanding Contemporary American Literature," whose target readers are "students as well as good nonacademic readers" (whatever comprises the latter). Hitherto, the series has mostly concerned itself with single-author studies and, from the outset, it seems an unsuitable host for a volume essaying a survey of literary theory. The general editor, in a preface not adapted in any way to Spikes's specific genre, recites a familiar mantra: "these" introductions "do not provide a substitute for the works and authors" concerned. Alas, it is all too likely that many students will favour a quick skirmish with these necessarily reductive encounters over an immersion in the amorphous and incoherent realities.

This account never recovers from a decision to organize the material in terms of individual theorists rather than theoretical positions. Spikes argues that none of his cast can be taken as either representative or typical and that his emphasis, therefore, "is on each theorist's unique contributions rather than on his or her place in a larger school." Yet each of the writers at issue – Paul de Man, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Elaine Showalter, Stephen Greenblatt, Edward W. Said, and Richard Rorty – carries the burden of a qualifying adjunct adhering him or her to some nebulous grouping or other: respectively, "Deconstruction," "Black Studies," "Feminism," "New Historicism," "Political Critique," and "Neopragmatism." This makes for a fractured analysis always struggling with the competing demands of vertical solitariness and horizontal conviviality. It is surprising, and even alarming, that a book which invests so much in the discourses of deconstruction and contemporary theory should recuperate biographical, or bio-theoretical, fallacies in this way. In the process, there are few opportunities for seizing on the lateral connections between, say, Feminism, New Historicism, discourse theory, Said, and the like. The inexperienced reader, whom Spikes has in his sights, is in danger of leaving this excursion with a collection of writers in neat compartments.

Unquestionably, Spikes sometimes rises to the challenge of expounding without distorting too much and oversimplifying; equally, he is more successful in some areas than in others. The introductory chapter which, curiously, has no concluding counterpart, trades in primary colours, the main victim of this (apart from the fact that Saussure becomes a Frenchman) being a failure to articulate a more complex sense of the relations between structuralism and post-structuralism.

Additionally, to see Frye, as Spikes does, as a progenitor of structuralism is to overlook the possibility of a narrative of formalism that could subsume both. Formalism is a conspicuous absence in an account of New Criticism that compounds the problems of Spikes's colonising title. Similarly, Edward Said (hardly an hermetic American) and Stephen Greenblatt are both deprived, in the main, of the fostering discourse of Foucault. More egregiously, Showalter's "feminism" is largely unsituated, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. has no contact, apparently, with the postcolonial, hyphenated-American problematic at large, and Rorty who productively straddles much of this terrain has to sit, like the rest, in solitary confinement.

If the book loses as a whole by more or less confining each chapter to one name, it suffers in part by further restricting each chapter to the chronological treatment of a selection of texts. In evidence here is what Showalter termed, in another context, "a certain teleological sentimentality" as each writer is seen as somehow progressing from one position to another. What all of these figures move inexorably towards, is Spikes's platitudinous evaluations and approvals. Paul de Man is "complex and original," Gates – whose mobilizations of "white" and "black" criticism invite more of a contest – is applauded for not desiring "to replace the treasures of the white world with those of the black," Said is "interesting, provocative, and useful," and so on.

The proffering of one or two counter-selections is both tempting and pressing. It is arguable that Harold Bloom, and J. Hillis Miller, for instance, are more than footnotes to "American Literary Theory," the same might be said for Frederic Jameson, too, except that Spikes's apotropaic commitment is to the view that "Marxist attitudes" are antecedent to a consequent New Criticism, itself vanquished by a structuralism that mutated into post-structuralism. There is no place here, either, for Paul Ricoeur, a much better candidate for the dubious title of "theorist" than, say, a Gates or a Greenblatt; their concerns, if the categories have to be negotiated at all, often being more critical than theoretical. What, too, about Gay and Lesbian Studies? At the very least, there might have been more of a rationale of exclusion.

This book can be seen as producing one or two useful clarifications, especially where there is more than a basic familiarity with some of the terrain; what it could engender in terms of student essays, however, is only too ponderable.

Kyushu University, Japan PETER RAWLINGS

Mark M. Smith, *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery, and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $45.00). Pp. 303. ISBN 0 8078 4693 7.

This historical narrative chronicles the formation of modern clock-time consciousness in the American South and explores how this distinctly capitalist characteristic affected Southern society and the system of slave labour. Challenging Genovese's reading of the Old South as pre-modern and bound to a nature-based conception of time, Smith demonstrates that clock-time in the region has a longer history. Although mercantile clock-time was but one

impersonal force wrestling with "God's time" and "Nature's time" for control of a colonial Southerner's personal and social affairs, by the 1830s the same frenetic forces of capitalist mechanical time that were speeding the rest of the American nation into the modern era also allegedly governed life and labour in the South.

Making a case for the presence of "publicly accessible time" and "the ownership of private time" as "one of the South's most democratic and universal features," Smith presents an extensive analysis of probate inventory records from two districts (Charleston and Laurens County) in South Carolina, detailing the rise in timepiece ownership between the colonial and ante-bellum periods. However, democracy in the South was not without its contradictions, as slave-masters managed to import the *power* of the clock on their own terms. Explaining the process of appropriating and adapting the order and regularity of the timepiece to control slaves, Smith substitutes the Thompsonian model of industrial time discipline for the notion of "time obedience." Defining and regulating both slave labour and leisure-time, Smith suggests the clock became "the planters' weapon of choice in their ongoing battle with their chattel." Forbidding their slaves personal possessions such as watches, planters attempted to "inspire" time obedience through the plantation bell or the sounding of horns. If that failed, they had more certain methods of coercion in the form of the lash.

Mastered by the Clock is perhaps most valuable in having identified one of the least conspicuous features of the "engrafted" form of capitalism that operated in the ante-bellum South. Where it becomes more problematic is in having privileged a single feature of an extremely intricate and efficient disciplinary mechanism that bore little resemblance to free-wage labour in its relentless surveillance of the slave subject. The rationality and order imposed through time obedience in the slave South may indeed have resembled the use of time discipline under a free-labour mode of production, but any analysis of the real differences between the two systems will always have to accept the overriding importance of race.

Liverpool John Moores University STEPHEN C. KENNY

William L. Andrews, Frances Smith Foster and Trudier Harris (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, £40). Pp. 866. ISBN 0 19 5065107.

Presented with any reference work, the reviewer's kneejerk reaction is to try to outwit it. I have to confess, however, to being completely outfoxed by the *Oxford Companion*, a thoroughly comprehensive volume. From "Abolition" to "Zu-Bolton, Ahmos, II" there are entries on more than 400 writers, along with character sketches, plot summaries, short essays on literary movements or forms, longish essays on literary criticism, the novel, and music, plus a host of others. Although the conception of literature remains essentially based on *belles-lettres*, the *Companion* also considers Blues poems, sermons, journalism, oratory, musicals, travel writing and the like, with useful entries also on libraries and research centres, publishing enterprises and periodicals. A broadly conceived

image of African American literary culture allows for the inclusion of entries on figures who are in some way iconic for African American literature (e.g., Stowe, Jackie Robinson, John Coltrane). For the reader who wants a succinct introduction to Blue Vein societies, the Sapphire stereotype, Ma Rainey or Cornel West, this is the place to begin.

A few minor quibbles are worth setting down for the record. The ordinary reader (haunted by an elusive title) might well want to look up *Black Like Me*, John Howard Griffin's autobiographical account of his adventures in the Deep South in 1959 with drug-altered pigmentation, but will find no reference either to it or him, not even in the entry on "passing," where passing for black should surely have had a mention. Despite Toni Morrison's case for a deep, abiding Africanist presence in canonical American literature, the *Companion* makes little of it. Critics may be asking "Was Huck black?" but the reader of the *Companion* will find no references to Twain's works. Despite Morrison's account of it, *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* never features. It is not enough to tell us merely that Johnson's *The Middle Passage* has Melvillean overtones; it has firm intertextual relations to the treatment of slave rebellion in *Benito Cereno*. The entry on neo-slave narratives offers a splendid account of contemporary re-workings, without noting the most famous adaptation of the form, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*; that on Stowe limits itself to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the usual invocation of white liberal impotence. Ann Petry's *Tituba of Salem Village* gets an entry, but no mention is made of Maryse Condé's novel, *I Tituba*. The controversial tends to be played down, yet general readers might want to known something about *bêtes noires* as well as icons. The controversy over *Black Athena* does not feature. One or two contributors tend to be heavy-handed. The editors could well have rephrased the description of a gay novel as "seminal," for example. The entry on cookbooks made rather a meal of the cultural importance of okra gumbo and pigsfeet, though I shall boil my next haggis, secure in the knowledge that the reproduction of such dishes "works to maintain cultural specificity in the face of assimilative pressures attempting constantly to amalgamate cultures for the benefit of the 'melting pot.'"

University of Newcastle Upon Tyne JUDIE NEWMAN

Dale Cockrell, *Demons of Disorder: Early Blackface Minstrels and their World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £35 cloth, £12.95 paper). Pp. 276. ISBN 0 521 56074 8, 0521 568285.

Upon this book previous accounts of blackface minstrelsy will be found wanting and future studies will be judged. The book concentrates on the three minstrel character types and the men most identified with them who dominated blackface in the nineteenth century, Jim Crow & T. D. Rice; Zip Coon & George Washington Dixon; Old Dan Tucker & Dan Emmett. Cockrell argues that these performers and characters best represent the shift from blackface (based upon charivari and the display of public disorder) which did not differentiate its performers from audience, through to its refinement as minstrelsy which separated performers from their audience – when staged concert performances of

Music replaced less formalised theatrical chaos and noise. Cockrell's agenda is thus revisionist, accusing prior works of presentism, of subjecting early nineteenth-century blackface to a reading derived from later manifestations, and thereby constructing a monolithic and unchanging conception of the mask of burnt-cork and ham fat.

As his subtitle suggests, Cockrell's primary methodology is drawn from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, but, rather than offering Bakhtin's theory as a paradigm into which he fits his evidence, the theory operates as a guiding-hand only lightly greasing the path towards a more complex and telling understanding of the subject. Firstly, Cockrell's study departs radically from previous accounts by offering not only the image and texts of song sheets, playbills, posters, etc. as evidence, but also Police Court reports found in contemporary newspapers. From this source he is able to construct the world in which blackface is performed, producing a compelling social and cultural history. Secondly, he suggests that minstrelsy during the 1830s operated not only within a theatrical space but also in the wider public sphere – in the streets. Thirdly, it was in these spaces that the new visual world occasioned by industrialisation during the Jacksonian period clashed with a premodern performative culture of the ear. From the court reports he argues that noise is as important as the written word, if not more so, in understanding the meanings produced by the first practitioners of blackface: noise is implicit violence, a challenge to law's authority. This music assaulted sensibilities, challenged the roots of respectability, and promised subversion, a world undone, and, concomitantly, a new set of codes.

The stories he retells are never less than fascinating, filled with the most unexpected detail and symbols, in particular for the way in which they account for the historically shifting boundaries of racial liminality. When white George Washington Dixon tried to leave behind Zip Coon (a character that lampooned the powerful) and to use the new media stage of newspapers to expose the cant of the high and mighty, he came into direct conflict with authorities who, in turn, attempted to vanquish this impertinent African Warbler by tarring him with the brush of race. The New York Herald called Dixon a mulatto: "He is an impudent scoundrel, aspires to every thing, and was fit to be any body's fool. Somebody used his name (such as he called himself for negroes have, by right, no surnames) as the publisher of a newspaper, in which everybody, almost was libelled."

Cockrell has produced an account of minstrelsy that complicates our understanding of the dynamics of race in early nineteenth century urban America and he writes in a prose style that is finely wrought and highly accessible. A brilliant book.

Southampton Institute PETER STANFIELD

Mark Phythian, *Arming Iraq: How the U.S. and Britain Secretly Built Saddam's War Machine* (Northeastern University Press, 1997, £28.50). Pp. 325. ISBN 1 55553 285 3.

The sub-title of this book is something of a misnomer; for, although Mark Phythian sets the context of what he terms "the biggest foreign policy blunder

of the post-1945 era next to the Vietnam War,'' namely the desire ''to ensure that Iraq did not lose the Iran–Iraq War and the leading U.S. role in this tilt towards Iraq,'' it is heavily weighted, as he admits, to the British contribution, and of the dramatis personae listed very few had direct American connections.

The book is detailed, on the side of the angels, naturally, and revealing. As one arms manufacturer observed, ''Many people live under the illusion that arms deals are struck by shadowy entrepreneurs operating on the margins of the law. This may be true of light weapons,'' but for the advanced military hardware needed for the eight year Iran–Iraq conflict,'' the only realistic sources of supply are the state-regulated arms industries of the industrialised nations.'' Hence the official prevarication, not to say deceit, that clouds the story.

The author suggests analogies with Argentina and the Falklands, Iran-Contra and the Bay of Pigs; executive control of foreign policy encourages secrecy and double-dealing. Yet the book poses questions that deserve an answer. Even if there are ''important secrets and convenient secrets,'' it is hard not to have some sympathy for David Gore-Booth's pragmatic assertion, ''You cannot base foreign policy on telling everybody everything. It would not work.'' It is easy to be wise after the event, but Iraq, with 16 million people compared to Iran's 46 million, had little strategic depth; and, if the October 1989 national security directive, NSD-26, that Iraq could be brought into the ''family of nations'' was self-deceiving, then not all gambles pay off. Thus Mrs. Thatcher surely had a point when she admitted that, even if Jordan was a conduit for arms to Iraq, it was necessary to remember that ''there was a possibility that this rather remarkable country and this very, very courageous king, who never flinched from physical danger, might be destabilised.'' This does not justify trial defendants being denied documents crucial to their defence by Ministers cavalierly signing Public Interest Immunity Certificates. It does suggest that in the Middle East there are no easy options.

University of Liverpool JOHN KENTLETON

Richard Salmon, *Henry James and the Culture of Publicity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £35). Pp. 233. ISBN 0 521 56249 x.

When, late in his career, James conflated a ''high and helpful public'' with a ''civic'' use of the imagination, he was rehearsing a complex of writerly practices and authorial stances which, in various ways, had preoccupied him from the beginning. The relationship between James's writings and contemporary discourses of ''public'' and ''private,'' mediated through the ascendancy of ''publicity,'' provides the subject of Richard Salmon's thorough and enlivening inquiry. It was a relationship characterised by anxiety, hostility, and fascination; charted through the changing notions of public and private spheres experienced during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries where the understanding of publicity shifts from a sense of mechanical forces imposed externally to that of cultural saturation, ingrained within consciousness. James is viewed instructively as a critic of these transformations who, simultaneously, is caught up within their

discursive practices, and his historicity as author is read revealingly through the formations of the mass-media and mass culture. Salmon follows on, then, from the work of the last decade (Marcia Jacobson, Anne T. Margolis, Michael Anesko, Jean-Christopher Agnew, Ross Posnock, Jonathan Freedman, and myself) to reconfigure the story of James's artistic isolation and recognise his place within a visible material history.

Salmon assesses the politics of James's response to new notions of the "public" before graphing the rival claims of privacy and knowledge in biographical narrative and the technological, institutional, and rhetorical practices of journalism and the mass-media (from my sense, the most interesting sections of the book) to conclude by considering the development of James's later style of cultural criticism in relation to the world of the spectacle that is one of modernism's presiding features. Salmon's principal texts are *The Bostonians*, "The Aspern Papers," and *The Ambassadors*, with substantial attention to *The Reverberator*. "The Death of the Lion," and "The Papers." There is generally not much profit to be gained from debating a critic's selection of texts, but, while applauding the choice of "The Papers" (on the grounds that it has been neglected by previous commentaries), it is difficult to see why *The Tragic Muse* has proved rather evasive for the present occasion.

Salmon's theoretical cues are premised from Jurgen Habermas's distinction between the "critical" publicity of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and from more recent arguments that, under the aegis of publicity, consumption may be seen as an active and social rather than a passive and private activity. His main thrust, that James's declared distance from what he sees as a debased arena of mass culture becomes in fact itself an indication of his proximity to it, is eminently compelling. It serves to tell us a great deal not only about the historical positionings of James's work, but also about the seemingly endless circumlocutions of style through which they are expressed: just as publicity in its more sophisticated forms cannot be located within the referential space of fictional realism, neither can social intercourse, in its fullest sense, be so found.

Richard Salmon has produced an important and energising study. He makes excellent use of contemporary extra-literary material (from sociological accounts of the crowd and debates about the nature and responsibilities of journalism, for example) to persuade James's fictional and critical texts into a generative arena of competing claims over seemingly fixed epistemological and aesthetic categories (subject/object, private/public, surface/depth), an arena where James's distinctive modernity emerges in fresh and expressive forms.

University of Keele IAN F. A. BELL

Christopher Lasch, *Women and the Common Life: Love, Marriage, and Feminism*. Edited by Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn. (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1997, £15.95). Pp. 196. ISBN 0 393 04018 6.

Christopher Lasch's *Haven in a Heartless World* (1977) stimulated a wide response about its presentation of the family at the time of its publication, and in this collection of essays the reader can view both some of the intellectual problems he

encountered on the way to writing it, and the way that he responded to some of the criticism the work invoked. Sensitively edited and introduced by Lasch's daughter, the historian Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn, the essays mostly first appeared in collections, in little journals like *Salmagundi* or as reviews in the *New York Review of Books*, *Commonweal*, or *New Republic*. The first half examines "Manners and Morals" and includes substantial pieces of intellectual history which consider the roots of what Lasch viewed as an assault on family life in the modern era. All deal with European intellectual history, and are not specifically related to what was happening in the US at the same time. This reveals Lasch's training as an intellectual historian, and gives scope to his desire to look at the way ideas helped to shape later material developments. As Lasch-Quinn notes in the introduction, these essays are often contradictory in their analysis, but this reflects Lasch's changing thinking in the period leading up to the writing of *Haven*. Although two were written more recently, neither demonstrate an open engagement with either his critics or others working in the field.

The second half, "From Patriarchy to Neopaternalism," is more entertaining, and perhaps more revealing, as Lasch confronts his critics by attacking their approaches. It becomes clear that Lasch was irritated by cultural analyses and saw them as ignoring the basic realities of biology. This is clearest in his review of several works on men as a gender, "The Mismeasure of Man," where Lasch is irritated by the historicization of masculinity by historians Antony Rotundo and Kevin White. Both historians try to situate masculinity as a central organizing tenet of men's lives, and this Lasch rejects out of hand. For him, men are more than simply creatures of their gender. This exposes a central problematic of Lasch as a historian. When treating women he is often an essentialist, seeing their role in the family as constructing their lives. For men, however, gender is escapable as an organizing construct. It is indicative of the way in which Lasch's mind worked that he did not see this contradiction within himself.

Middlesex University KELLY BOYD

Henry D. Thoreau, *Journal*, *Volume 5: 1852–1853*, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997). Pp. 715. ISBN 0 691 065365.

There has been a long wait for each new volume of Princeton University Press's scholarly edition of Henry Thoreau's Journal (part of their publication of his complete writings), but the volumes are certainly worth waiting for. Sixteen years after *Journal 1* appeared and five years on from the last volume, the project is still nowhere near halfway through the one million word Journal text, although several further volumes are near completion. *Journal 5*, edited by Patrick F. O'Connell, covers less than one of the twenty-five years the Journal spans: from the end of April 1852 to March 1853. In the early 1850s, Thoreau devoted increasingly more time to recording the events of the evolving year and the Journal entries grew in bulk and frequency (1852 is rightly regarded as his first full year of observation). In this volume, we are presented with the extensive and

often meticulously detailed results of his quest to comprehend nature. We can follow the progress of external seasons and, to a lesser extent, inner landscapes, almost day by day, for, even in the midst of his overwhelming obsession with the minutiae of nature, Thoreau never stopped believing in the interrelation between inner and outer worlds.

A new edition of the Journal is badly needed. For all its pioneering achievement, the previous standard edition (edited by Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen, 1906) took great liberties with Thoreau's text. The editors excluded sections used elsewhere in his works, changed spellings and punctuation and even rewrote passages to make them read more fluently. The following example, from the entry for 30 July 1852, is typical of the way they consistently smoothed out the rough edges of the original text, turning Thoreau's hasty jottings into neatly punctuated sentences: "Do not all flowers that blossom after mid-July remind us of the fall? After midsummer we have a belated feeling as if we had all been idlers, and are forward to see in each sight and hear in each sound some presage of fall, just as in middle age man anticipates the end of life." the *Journal 5* version of this passage restores it to the more spontaneous, if less "correct," form in which it appears in the manuscript, reintroducing the dashes Thoreau loved: "Do not all flowers that blossom after mid July remind us of the fall? After midsummer we have a belated feeling as if we had all been idlers – & are forward to see in each sight – & hear in each sound some presage of the fall – just as in mid-age man anticipates the end of life." Even when the changes Torrey and Allen made seem minute, they significantly alter the tone of the passage. Indeed, the more you compare the two versions, the more aware you become of the liberties the earlier editors took and the less willing to trust their text. At their most extreme, they did not just cut out material they found irrelevant, they also added words and sentences which have no foundation in the original notebooks.

Another fundamental problem with the Journal of 1906 is its lack of annotations of any kind, a deficiency the Princeton edition amply remedies. In *Journal 5*, 470 pages of Journal text are supported by over 200 pages of introductory material, appendices, notes, tables of emendations, alterations and revisions and a detailed index. Some of this will only be of interest to scholars in search of subtle variations of meaning, while other sections, such as the historical introduction, textual notes and list of cross-references to published works, are likely to be of use to the general reader. A glance at the latter section reveals that Thoreau drew a great deal of material for *Walden* from the journal entries of this period; the meticulous editing clarifies the murky terrain of duplicated passages and partial overlapping between works in Thoreau's *œuvre*.

The scholarly apparatus of this edition (and the other volumes in this series) is a laudable achievement, but one suspects that the greatest gift the editors can give us is the accurate text of Thoreau's Journal as he wrote it. No errors are hidden, no slips of the pen obscured; the text we have before us in *Journal 5* is the raw text Thoreau wrote, and what more fitting tribute to a man who so stubbornly faced the "whole and genuine meanness" (*Walden*) of life and wanted to express it in his writings? Thoreau would surely have felt uncomfortable about the kind of scholarship encouraged by some of the appendices to this edition, but

he would have valued the fact that the text as he originally wrote it is painstakingly revealed to us here, in plain and beautiful veracity.

University College London MADELEINE MINSON

Joseph Nye, Jr., Philip Zelikow, and David Kind (eds.), *Why People Don't Trust Government* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997, £26.50 cloth, £12.50 paper). Pp. 339. ISBN 0 674 94056 3, 0 674 94057 1.

The only thing more prevalent in America than anti-government sentiment is the torrent of books and articles devoted to exploring this phenomenon. *Why People Don't Trust Government* is the latest variation on a theme captured by writers such as E. J. Dionne in his excellent *Why Americans Hate Politics*.

The test of this book, then, has to be: does it tell us anything new? Certainly, *Why People Don't Trust Government* is methodical in its approach, with chapters exploring not simply the performance of American government, but also many different, though not ultimately exclusive, explanations for why Americans appear to exhibit such antipathy towards government. The scale of this antipathy, indeed, cannot be disputed, and, while America has, as Richard Neustadt's fascinating chapter details, suffered similar bouts of hostility to government on previous occasions in recent history (including 1938–39, 1946–47, and 1950–51), there can be little doubt that the reaction against government which began in the late 1960s is different for a number of reasons. First, there is the sheer duration of the sentiment. Second, current mistrust seems to have spread from anger directed at individual officeholders (which is, of course, still widespread) to attacks on government *per se*. Third, (and, in the end, the key to the conclusions reached in this book), there is the fact that previous eras of mistrust seemed to be "cured" relatively quickly: Great Depression led to post-war Great Prosperity, Truman's war in Korea led to Eisenhower's peace and a period of sustained, though fragile, peace for the United States.

But if, as the authors conclude, present-day hostility to government began with Vietnam and Watergate, what has happened since to ease it? Very little. Economic forces, from the information revolution to globalisation, have created an economy which appears to oscillate between recession and recovery tempered by great insecurity (this anxiety perhaps explaining why it is, as Robert Lawrence argues, that personal prosperity and faith in government show little correlation). The problem of raised expectations, caused by the staggering prosperity of the post-war years, is also clearly compounding the relationship between anti-government feeling and the economic difficulties experienced by the US since 1973.

On top of these economic changes there are the longer-term sociocultural and political trends at work: the post-materialist decline in respect for authority, the convulsions associated with civil rights, changing views about gender and families, all of which have led to suspicion of government on both left and right. Television-driven, candidate-centred campaigns have helped to increase the distance between elected representatives and the voters, while the media has adopted a more consistently negative approach to government.

For all the clarity of *Why People Don't Trust Government*, and a number of excellent chapters (Ernest May's survey of the evolving scope of government should be required reading for all American politics undergraduates), there is, finally, something rather frustrating about this book. For instance, at times there is a kind of simplicity which is rather unnerving. To take one example, David Kind argues that American political parties have been polarising while voters remain in the centre, thus contributing to frustration with government. But is this really so? The manner in which the Democratic party has moved to the right (a process evident long before the apparent triumph of President Clinton's New Democrats) seems to fly in the face of this explanation. Many liberal Democrats, indeed, would contend that frustration with government is, in part, the result of the manner in which Democrats have aped Republican appeals and policies, thus depriving voters of a meaningful choice. Nowhere is this suggestion canvassed. There is also repeated here the media's favourite myth about Clinton: that he campaigned in 1992 from the centre, moved left in his first two years, then sharp right after 1994 and hence rescued his chances of re-election. But what of the President who devoted himself to deficit-reduction and NAFTA before 1994, and who, after the "Republican revolution," won re-election not simply through welfare reform, school uniforms and banning gay marriages, but, most importantly, standing forthright in defence of Medicare, the environment and education when they came under sustained Republican assault?

Why People Don't Trust Government clearly has something useful to add to the debate about why Americans drive around with a host of anti-government bumper stickers on their cars (the least worrying, in many ways, example of hostility to government). The problem is that politicians reading this book may, from some of the conclusions reached, merely repeat the mistakes which caused the problems the authors seek to describe.

Brunel University ROBERT PHILPOT

Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682–1861* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, n.p.). Pp. 211. ISBN 0 87451 818 0.

In the early American literary market-place, captivity narratives were best-sellers because their protagonists reaffirm existing ideologies such as Puritanism, Republican Motherhood, and Manifest Destiny, while attempting to survive in an extreme situation which requires that they transgress the cultural or gender norms underpinning these same ideologies. The literature of captivity is rich in violence, illicit sex, frantic pursuits and unexpected denouements, depicting a looking-glass world in which everyday realities are subverted or distorted. It is thus not surprising that narratives dealing with the captivity of women sold like hotcakes.

In *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682–1861*, Michelle Burnham analyzes a group of seemingly disparate texts (captivity narratives, novels, slave narratives) in which women are held in bodily

confinement in a context which transgresses national or cultural boundaries. Captivity is thus viewed as the experience of interstitial space, in which the captive both affirms and transgresses the conventions of her own culture. As Burnham points out, narratives and novels of captivity constantly undermine their own premises. Though such texts may deconstruct their own postures of nationalism and cultural identity, and though they may engender revisions of dominant ideologies, these revisions may also deploy nationalist or ethnocentric representations of culture. Burnham interprets the sentimental discourse (and the pleasurable emotional or even tearful response of the reader) as a veil which simultaneously conceals movement across cultural boundaries and legitimizes the transgressive acts and attitudes of female agency that such a movement provokes.

In order to illustrate her hypotheses, Burnham analyzes personal narratives such as those of Mary Rowlandson and Harriet Jacobs, Ann Eliza Bleecker's *History of Maria Kittle*, Susannah Rowson's novel *Charlotte Temple* and others. Such texts, she maintains, suggest that "America" as a political, cultural and national category has been for the most part articulated through the bodies, especially the reproducing bodies, of women. Burnham writes clearly and persuasively, and the chapters on Mary Rowlandson and on Republican Motherhood are especially useful and interesting. Though her arguments linking texts as apparently disparate as those discussed in this volume are convincing and well articulated, it might seem that here one could encounter material for two or even three books. The chapter on Harriet Jacobs, for example, is intriguing and tightly argued, but one is left wishing for more; the section relating Jacob's text to the theoretical work of Michel Foucault could have been developed in much greater detail. Another very minor caveat is that Burnham, though she provides the reader with a lucid discussion of the strategies of sentimental fiction, fails to mention the equally effective (and quintessentially American) genre of melodrama, which would seem to be singularly applicable to the literature of captivity in that its protagonists are seen as individuals pitted against an overwhelmingly hostile reality. Perhaps, however, this is due to the fact that the heroes and heroines of melodrama are characterized by an undivided worldview.

It is always a good sign when the critic is left wishing that more, rather than less, had been said. Michelle Burnham's *Captivity and Sentiment* is intelligent, challenging and provocative, and will be read with considerable pleasure – though not, perhaps, with pleasurable tears – by Americanists everywhere.

University of Glasgow SUSAN CASTILLO

Joel F. Handler and Yeheskel Hasnefeld, *We the Poor People: Work, Poverty and Welfare* (New Haven and London: A Twentieth Century Fund Book, Yale University Press, 1997, £25.00). Pp. 281. ISBN 0 300 07248 1.

This is an impressive and extensively researched study, focusing on the highly politicised issue of welfare, its reform and the disturbing questions posed by increasing inequality and poverty within contemporary American society. Despite the insignificant sums spent – for instance, the most basic programme "Aid to Families with Dependent Children" costs only 1·5 percent of all federal

spending – welfare has assumed a symbolic importance far beyond its real status. This study, published after the Clinton administration's reform of 1996 abolishing "welfare as we know it" and thereby terminating the federal "entitlement" to AFDC, offers challenging evidence as to its potential effectiveness. A new federal block grant is to be administered locally by the states, offering time-limited benefits with considerable discretionary control. Much of this analysis looks at past and current performance and evaluates the paltry record of previous attempts at reform.

In part one: "The fixation on work rather than welfare," the authors offer a sustained critique of the New Right's thesis of "welfare dependency." They demonstrate how attitudes to the able-bodied poor are mired in the past with public fears of a "deviant" minority, whose apparent rejection of the work ethic stigmatises them as moral failures, thereby subjecting them to stringent social control and public censure. The stereotype of those "welfare dependent" is conclusively rejected: most work either legally or otherwise, the majority work their way off benefits, few are teenage mothers, a minority are African American, nor are large families the norm, nor indeed is dependency transmitted intergenerationally. In other words, it is not a "way of life" as the benefits are simply too low to survive on (for example, AFDC has been cut in real terms by 40 percent since 1970). In rejecting such moralising they argue that the real problem is poverty, a wider issue than simply those on welfare, who in fact comprise only one third of the poor.

The underlying cause of poverty is the collapse of the low-wage labour market offering full-time jobs paying a family wage, coupled with changing family structures (in particular the rise of one-parent households). In 1988, a quarter of all workers were contingent or part-time and subject to chronic insecurity with few benefits, a total still inexorably rising. Furthermore, the authors are deeply critical of pre-existing "demonstration programs" set up prior to the 1996 Act, which operate workfare schemes. Local welfare offices became mired in bureacuracy with conflicting goals: determining eligibility criteria, but now having to act as employment agencies requiring professionalism and a client relationship based on trust rather than the prevailing custodial attitudes. The system is undermined by switches of local political control and chronic underfunding. They advocate voluntary, not mandatory, work schemes within a changed local culture.

In part two: "New Directions," the authors offer their own prognosis. As their remit is now poverty and its harmful consequences and not simply welfare, they review alternative means of supplementing those on low wages. They recommend extending the earned income-tax credit as it rewards work, raising the minimum wage, and integrating benefits with earned income to avoid some immediate disincentives in taking up paid work. Extend health insurance to those 40 million Americans who have no cover, as an employment benefit, and all of this to be coupled with good quality and affordable child care for those who need it. Needless to say the proposals are costly and would be a major boost to public spending, but without a "politics of redistribution" the structural situation can only further deteriorate.

This is a scholarly examination of the current limitations of the American

model, providing positive and thoughtful recommendations for the future. For those concerned with such issues this is a text recommended without reservation.

South Bank University, London RICHARD DE ZOYSA

Werner Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, £35). Pp. 574. ISBN 0 19 505282 x.

In *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both*, Sollors develops some of the ideas he raised in *Beyond Ethnicity* and *The Return of Thematic Criticism*. This text's strength lies in its eclecticism: it draws on a variety of religious and ancient source texts – and ranges across continents – to trace stories of atavism, interracial marriage and the interracial family as tropes of nationhood. Sollors pursues a tradition of interracial literature and balances the inconsistencies and contradictions in a thesis that is informed and informative. The book comprises a series of penetrating and cumulative explorations of texts and contexts. As such, it is also idiosyncratic, however. A single motif like the fingernail as a "sign" or "peculiar indicator" of racial origins and distinctions is examined in a long chapter through stories by Victor Hugo to Robert Penn Warren and an exploration of the infamous Rhinelander case on which Nella Larsen based her novella *Passing*. An examination of the "tragic mulatto," a subject of much wider scholarship, merits a chapter also, and this makes for a somewhat uneven text on first reading. The reader is struck by Sollors' ability to pan wide or to move in for a close-up on key issues: the typologies of "passing" are scrutinised, for example, as are what he calls "allegories of modernisation" whereby identity is seen as essentially fluid and elastic, but constructions of family and race remain fixed, thereby contributing directly to social risk and anxiety around racial identity.

Early modern texts receive considerable attention, but it is in the exploration of nineteenth-century writing that the author comes into his own, tracing the movement from America's view of blacks as "alien" through to genealogical structures of race to "the calculus of color" and pseudo-scientific notions of race and racism. The latter marginalised blacks out of the human family via a system of exclusion which functioned to obscure class relations and a history of rights whereby white men were citizens and black men and women had been deemed property in slave times. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century stories of atavism – from the melodramatic to the polemical – in which internalised white/black hierarchies are explored, expose issues of citizenship, alienation and disenfranchisement.

Sollors argues that interracial family structures were "crucial in setting up a theoretical definition of "race" as "species." He describes the "objection to interracial generation" as a "centrepiece of racism" so that representations of mulatto characters usually site them as part of a serious ideological struggle. Sollors asserts that "certain representations of interracial families may evoke a sense of beginning, from which originate plots that may unfold by developing the consequences of these beginnings." He traces intermarriage back to foundation myths; to the Bible, the Talmud, the Koran and to Greek myths that resist the

assumption that humankind was originally white. He also provides a series of exegeses of Biblical stories – Adam and Eve in the Garden and Ham, whose story has been variously appropriated in efforts to sanction slavery and segregation. His intricate readings of myths and stories, like that of Inkle and Yarico, are fascinating, but what this reader found lacking was recognition of how this book contributes to contemporary debates about representation of racial identity with regard to other critics working in similar areas. Sollors writes very much in the tradition of Sterling Brown and Robert Bone on issues of stereotyping and identity but there is no mention of more recent work by Minrose Gwin, Robert Urgo, Laura Doyle, or Kenneth Warren, for example; none of their books appear in the bibliography nor do their ideas figure in discussion. It is, perhaps, most surprising that neither Ralph Ellison's nor Toni Morrison's elucidation of the significance of representations of African Americans in American literature receive particular attention. In addition Appendix A, a chronology of interracial literature, deserved more editorial attention: Alice Walker's *Meridian* is mistakenly attributed to Margaret Walker at one point and its publication date given as 1972 at another. Overall, this is an important contribution to scholarship in racial and cultural studies but it is left to the reader to locate it with regard to contemporary debates and discussions.

University of Hertfordshire SHARON MONTEITH

Fergus M. Bordewich, *Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the End of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1996, $14.00). Pp. 400. ISBN 0 385 42036 6.

Richard Nixon's declaration in 1970 that "the time has come to break decisively with the past and to create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions" marked the beginning of a new phase in federal/Indian relations. Nixon's policy was codified by the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 which established tribes as "sovereign political bodies" with independent powers of government upon reservations. Fergus Bordewich examines the impact of these developments upon Indian Country in the present, combined with an incisive commentary upon events in the past. The resulting portrait of tribal life in the 1990s is certain to provoke much discussion and even controversy over issues confronting Indians, their history, and relations to wider American society.

Bordewich's intention is to map out the ongoing "revolution" in Indian life, to "peel back some of the layers of distortion that blur our vision of American Indians" and challenge "the worn-out theology of Indians as losers and victims." To do so, he spent four years visiting Indian reservations, listening to a wide variety of opinion and collecting a number of stories. he interviewed cultural nationalists and integrationists, tribal leaders and menial workers, Native American entrepreneurs and alcoholics, academics, and white Americans within the jurisdiction of reservation boundaries. This collection of personal testaments constitutes a valuable reflection upon Indian/white relations on the eve of the millennium.

Each chapter synthesises contemporary developments with excerpts from the vast historiography upon Native Americans. Chapter one, for example, opens with the debate over how best to mark the site of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, moves to the Wiyot massacre of 1860, then discusses the enduring nature of Indian stereotypes, and concludes with a study of the Cherokee, "a story of destruction and lost opportunity" but "also one of persistence and renewal and of the ambiguous process of social and political transformation that has enabled Indians to adapt to life in modern America." Conflicts over water rights, the building of casinos upon reservations, educational achievements, archaeological remains, religious icons, and sacred lands are skilfully put within their historical context in subsequent chapters.

Not everyone will appreciate Bordewich's interpretation of the past; for example, his statement that the Lakota Sioux knowingly sold the Black Hills for profit is contentious. Nevertheless, his even-handed attempt to look beyond myths for a more objective assessment of controversial issues is an admirable one. This book asks important questions. What place do Indians have in modern America? How should the past affect present-day policy? Given high rates of intermarriage, just who *are* Indians in the 1990s?

Answers are not always convincing. Bordewich is concerned that the principle of sovereignty threatens the "long-standing American ideal of racial unity as a positive good," and approvingly quotes from Schlesinger's *Disuniting of America*. His recounting of corruption and incompetence by unaccountable tribal officials warns against dependence upon Federal financial aid. However, to then envision, albeit tentatively, "a multitude of politically unstable, tax-supported Lebanons, Macedonias, and Tajikistans in the American Heartland … where civil rights do not apply" is surely an exaggeration and a recreation of old stereotypes. Having illustrated the vitality of Indian culture and the economic resurgence many tribes have enjoyed, it seems strange to reinvoke the melting pot ideal.

Still, one does not have to agree with his conclusions to appreciate the depth of research, the fluent mixture of past with present, and the clarity with which Bordewich surveys the contradictory and chaotic mosaic of stories and communities which make up Indian Country. As an introduction to Native American studies, this engaging book will prove useful in raising a number of important issues.

Nene College DAVID BROWN

David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $49.95 cloth; $17.95 paper). Pp. 380. ISBN 0 8078 2351 1, 0 8078 4656 2.

The exceptionalist project of "American Literature" has paid little attention to discourses common to metropolitan and colonial cultures. Traditional English literary genres, like satires and epics written in end-stopped decasyllabics, survive only to be laughed at (the fate of Joel Barlow's *Columbiad*) or passed over in favour of shorter, more personal formats (the perennial reception of Anne

Bradstreet's work). It wasn't just the forms that seemed to recall a benighted era of cultural dependency but the importance of form itself – not to mention the priority given, everywhere from reviews to literary gossip, to the elegance of the medium over the interest of the topic. Which is why, as David Shields puts it, "belles lettres [became] the most profoundly dead of all the literatures produced in British America" so shortly after the Revolution.

Yet look at the phenomenon from the vantage point of the cultural historian rather than the literary critic. Shields's originality lies in reversing the usual priorities of "text" and "background," analysing the literature, together with other social institutions that served both to test and to codify colonial manners, not as the result of their historical occasion, but as its cause. Too distant to be influenced by court and theatre, colonial culture was formed by how people wrote and what they read in the papers, how they discussed commerce, literature and the other arts in coffee houses, taverns, salons, "tea tables" and colleges, how they joined and behaved in them (each had its own rules and usually gender-specific membership). And if that culture became increasingly republican in political thought and united in the wish for independence from the metropolis, the reason can be traced in part to the varied civil associations to which the colonists belonged.

Why? For two reasons. The first is that belonging itself was, as Timothy Breen has shown of trade boycotts against metropolitan manufactures, an inducement to, and reinforcement of, solidarity across distant and different colonies. The second is that clubs, coffee houses and other institutions of civil society were contributing to that stage of the Enlightenment that Gordon Wood has called "the domestication of virtue": that is, virtue as inculcated not in government (as classical republican theory would have it) but in society. This development, Wood stresses in *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, "was not nostalgic or backward-looking, but progressive. It not only helped reconcile classical republicanism with modernity and commerce; it laid the basis for all reform movements of the nineteenth century." In other words, after reading this intelligent, deeply researched and beautifully written book, even the old-fashioned exceptionalist may take some comfort in the realisation that what looks most British about colonial culture turns out to be most American.

University of Sussex STEPHEN FENDER

Lloyd L. Brown, *The Young Paul Robeson: "On My Journey Now"* (Boulder, Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1997, $24.00). Pp. 186. ISBN 0 8133 3178 1.

The author of this short book is identified in Martin Bauml Duberman's magisterial *Paul Robeson* (1989) as "a left-wing black writer" who later collaborated with Robeson on his autobiography. In *Here I Stand* (1958), Robeson praised "the gifted Negro writer Lloyd L. Brown for the warm understanding and creative quality of his work with me." *The Young Paul Robeson* is Brown's sensitive and moving evocation of the early years of a legendary African American who achieved fame as an athlete, actor, movie star and singer, and

notoriety as a racial militant, ardent womanizer and alleged Communist in the era of the Cold War.

Brown's persuasive contention is that the Reverend William Drew Robeson, a former slave, was the dominant (but not domineering) influence in the life of his precocious and engaging son. Indifferent – if not hostile – to his maternal family (his mother died when he was three years old), Paul Robeson identified his African American heritage "solely in terms of his father and his father's people in the South."

In 1915, Robeson entered Rutgers College in New Brunswick. Four years later, he graduated as "Robeson of Rutgers" – the most famous football player in America – having survived the racist taunts and brutal attacks of his teammates and pointed exclusion from campus life. In addition to a towering physique, the young Robeson possessed a formidable intellect and may have been the first football player elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Moving to New York City, Robeson formed friendships with such luminaries of the Harlem Renaissance as Langston Hughes, E. Franklin Frazier, Aaron Douglas, Countee Cullen and Gwendolyn Bennett. Less than enthused with his studies at Columbia Law School, Robeson joined the Provincetown players, and performed in Eugene O'Neill's *All God's Chillun* and *Emperor Jones*. He also played three seasons of professional football, tutored a high-school student in Latin, worked on the British stage, cultivated life-long interests in African American culture, and married Eslanda Goode – his long-suffering wife for 44 years.

During the 1920s, Robeson moved from the belief that artistic and intellectual achievements made him "a credit to the race" (a phrase favoured by his father) to a more engaged conception of service and leadership. But, as an anti-imperialist and socialist sympathizer, he attracted the attentions of J. Edgar Hoover and the American establishment – which were to culminate in the shameful public humiliations of the 1950s.

Brown relates that "various circumstances" following Robeson's death in 1976, "prevented my completion of a full-length biography." Instead, he now offers "this small work" as a tribute to "a great American … artist and warrior, genius son of the Reverend William Drew Robeson." Father and son are blessed in having Lloyd Brown as their recorder and celebrator.

University of Hull JOHN WHITE

Elliott V. Converse III, Daniel K. Gibran, John A. Cash, Robert K. Griffith, Jr., and Richard H. Kohn, *The Exclusion of Black Soldiers from the Medal of Honor in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1997, £21.15). Pp. 200. ISBN 0 7864 0277 6.

In 1993, the US army appointed a team of scholars to investigate lingering claims of racial discrimination surrounding the bestowal of the Medal of Honor upon black soldiers in World War II. The Medal, conferred in the name of Congress, is America's highest military decoration. Before World War II, at least one black soldier had received the award in every conflict since its creation during the Civil

War. Shaw University, a historically black college in North Carolina, was chosen to conduct the inquiry.

The report examines the vagaries of the nomination process for the Medal of Honor in Europe, the Mediterranean and the Pacific, and highlights cases where exceptional bravery on the part of black combatants might have warranted higher commendation. In particular, it describes the actions of the nine black soldiers who earned the Distinguished Service Cross, ranked second only to the Medal. But, between 1941 and 1948, there exists no official evidence that a single black soldier was considered for the top accolade.

The absence of black Medal winners, according to the authors, was "most definitely, but indirectly, the result of racial bias." Firstly, blacks were given inadequate training and, because of pervasive beliefs in their inferiority, were overwhelmingly confined to service units. Secondly, military chiefs were loath to reward those African Americans who, in spite of many obstacles to their efficient performance, managed to excel in combat. The report refutes subsequent army assurances that the centralized selection of Medal winners operated on a color-blind basis, and reveals that certain relevant documents had been destroyed.

The authors' conclusions should surprise no one. Explorations of segregation in the armed forces and the impact of institutionalized racism already exist, as do accounts of the military operations involving black units. Meanwhile, they fail to explain why blacks in previous conflicts should have received the Medal when a comparable racism prevailed. More might also have been said about the campaigns led by veterans' associations and the black press to secure recognition of outstanding black servicemen, but was likely deemed beyond the scope of this study.

Nevertheless, as a direct result of this investigation, and following precedents established by Generals Pershing and Eisenhower, seven black soldiers were belatedly awarded the Medal of Honor. The recipients included one tank commander, whose valor had not previously been acknowledged in any form. In 1997, President Clinton decorated the only remaining survivor, First Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker, in a ceremony at the White House, publicly acknowledging "his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" while serving the all-black 92nd Infantry Division in Italy.

University of Cambridge ANDREW M. KAYE

Randy Roberts and James S. Olson, *John Wayne: American* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, £19.95). Pp. 738. ISBN 0 8032 8970 7.

First published in 1995 and now in paperback, *John Wayne: American* inevitably suffers in comparison with Garry Wills' *John Wayne: the Politics of Celebrity*. Neither a critical examination of the films, nor a cultural study, the book provides a straightforward chronological biography. The authors score high for detail, with a valuable discussion of the early films, in which the formula was largely invariable: the hero (Wayne), his friend, the girl, the "brain-heavy" (a scheming no-good) and the "dog-heavy" (physically villainous and given to dog-kicking.)

Even so, there were some startling other roles on offer. Wayne narrowly avoided a series of films starring "Singin' Sandy" who strums his way into gunfights, and in *Westward Ho* actually played alongside the "Singing Raiders," a group of melodious vigilantes. As Roberts and Olson point out, Wayne made 65 films between 1930 and 1939, building up a huge audience of children and young adults in rural or small town America, who matured in the forties, fought in the Second World War or Korea, and migrated to the cities and suburbs only to see their sons die in Vietnam. This grassroots support was the foundation of Wayne's career as cultural icon, despite the quality of some of his films. *Wake of the Red Witch*, in which tribal orgies, a treasure trove, and a sub-Brontëan death-scene coexist awkwardly with a giant squid, is a case in point, though the trophy for most ludicrous Wayne movie is rightly awarded to *Jet Pilot*, in which Howard Hughes united his three obsessions – anti-Communism, women's breasts and flying. Despite a clearsighted estimation of his films, the major problem in Roberts and Olson's account is their tendency to be sucked into the legend. The young Wayne – avidly reading biographies of great men while working like a mule – is straight out of Horatio Alger. Thereafter (unlike feminists and anti-war protesters) "Wayne kept the faith" – in patriotism, traditional masculinity and individualism. Predictably, he also turns out to be all his mother's fault – with some justification. (A latter-day Rhett Butler, she proclaimed loudly that she did not "give a damn" about him.) Wayne's presidency of the Motion Picture Alliance is seen as merely placing him within the mainstream of American political rhetoric; HUAC "correctly targeted the leading radicals and Communists in the industry." The mass of details, however, tell a more complicated and incongruous story. When Laurence Harvey made a fervent pass at him, the "traditionally masculine" Wayne remained polite; getting *The Alamo* made was far too important to offend Harvey. Wayne treasured a bracelet presented to him in Vietnam by Montagnard tribesmen, who watched *Fort Apache* with him – cheering loudly for the Indians. Ostensibly hawkish, he never stood up to John Ford's dictatorial brutalities (unlike Ben Johnson who told him where to put his movie and was dropped for thirteen years). Ford was a liberal who said he wouldn't meet McCarthy in a whorehouse. Wayne was a McCarthyite. Wayne lost $700,000 in the 1959 Panamanian revolution (in good company; Margot Fonteyn's losses were also large and she was deported into the bargain.) Yet he later worked tirelessly for ratification of the canal treaty, dismissed Reagan's arguments as self-serving drivel, and sent a seven page paper on the topic to every US senator, promptly becoming the target of hate mail as a "Marxist stooge," "Commie bastard" and "pinko-liberal." It is in contradictions like these that the more interesting story makes itself heard.

University of Newcastle Upon Tyne JUDIE NEWMAN

Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998, £11.95). Pp. 176. ISBN 0 691 01719 0.

Kenneth Greenberg's *Honor and Slavery* is a highly enjoyable book. His aim is to uncover the hidden language of honor, to "translate" it into English so that we can glimpse something of the world of elite Southern white men.

White slaveholders were primarily masters. This was how they viewed themselves, and according to Greenberg much of the "honor culture" which is ascribed to slaveholders aimed to defend masterdom. White men projected an image of themselves which required acknowledgement from others, especially social equals. If that respect was not forthcoming duels were fought, death was faced and honor eventually satisfied. Much of the subtitle of this book outlines the various ways in which men defended or lost their honor. The giving of gifts and other benevolent actions were methods of controlling social inferiors – women, slaves and poor whites – especially where the reception of those gifts involved symbolic submission. Facing death with courage, either in a duel, in war or in the hunt was also a sign of honor and coming through the experience with bravery was an example of "mastering" death. Honor could however be lost by pretending to be what you were not, by showing cowardice or by being submissive.

Where this book is less satisfactory is in its account of a southern culture which encompassed all southern men. Nearly all the examples cited in this book refer to elite men, not to yeomen farmers or poor whites. It would have been fascinating to see if Greenberg could have identified some common language of honor which was understood by all white men, regardless of status. Was the culture of honor something which united all men, something which brought non-elite men into the language and ideology of slave-holding elite? Stephanie McCurry showed in *Masters of Small Worlds* that yeomen were brought into the elite culture to some extent by the language of evangelical Christianity. It would have been interesting to see Greenberg contribute to, or refute, parts of this analysis.

As an explanation for southern elite culture, Greenberg's book is easy to read, interesting and packed with amusing anecdotal evidence. It will be especially welcome at the undergraduate level.

University of Warwick TIM LOCKLEY

Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, £40 cloth, £13.95 paper). Pp. 152. ISBN 0 231 10879 6, 0 231 10878 8.

The question at stake in this intelligent little book is that of the diagnostic utility of the sentimental novel in America in understanding the culture's invention of itself as a democratic entity. Casting her answer in the currently popular terms of identity formation, Barnes argues that American popular fiction of the late

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is centrally engaged in building a democratic ethos grounded in the cultivation of sympathy. By teaching the reader to sympathetically apprehend the other through the vicarious imaginary of fiction this popular art form worked to bind the self with the other in democratic unity. However, by cultivating a democratic sensibility attuned to affinity, the fiction also paradoxically undermined tolerance of difference. In addition, the exclusive emphasis on the self and its sympathy ultimately enclosed the self within the self, with experience of the other reduced to exclusive and circular concentration on the quality of the self's performance of the appropriate sentiment. Once again the American reader is thrown back into an enclosed individualism, with the democratic political project damaged by the very literature which was design to promote it.

Barnes's argument is interesting, and, as the book moves through texts which have now stabilized as the canon of early American popular fiction (Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple*, Susan Warner's *The Wide*, *Wide World*, Maria Cummins's *The Lamplighter*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) some deft points are made about the ways in which the personal and the collective political body are figured in American writing from the late eighteenth century onwards. The book is useful, too, in its discussion of incest and seduction as obsessive tropes in sentimental fiction and of the analogies suggested by these tropes with the issues raised in the formation of early American democracy. Taken as a whole, this is an interesting and valuable piece of work. Its weakness is, simply, its scale. While there is not enough space here to provide the detailed weight of philosophical and historical specificity the argument demands, time is given to close readings of the fiction in ways which tend to become repetitive. The final impression is that of an essay which somehow expanded beyond its frame or of a monograph which should have been twice as long to provide the evidence it requires. Despite this problem, however, *States of Sympathy* is undoubtedly a thoughtful and engaged contribution to the debates surrounding the purposes and effects of early American fiction.

University of the West of England, Bristol KATE FULLBROOK

Thomas H. O'Connor, Civil War Boston*: Home Front and Battlefield* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997, £25). Pp. 313. ISBN 1 55553 318 3.

Thomas H. O'Connor has long been interested both in the town of Boston, where he lives and teaches, and in the Civil War. One of his earliest publications, *Lords of the Loom: The Cotton Whigs and the Coming of the Civil War* (1968), examined the reaction of Bostonian businessmen to the sectional crisis. This was followed some years later by a general study of the Civil War itself, *The Disunited States: The Era of Civil War and Reconstruction*. More recently he has turned his attention to Boston's Irish community, with his 1995 study *The Boston Irish: A Political History*. *Civil War Boston* represents an attempt to bring together many of O'Connor's interests – Boston itself, the Civil War, and the Irish in Boston – in a study which seeks to assess the impact not only of the Civil War on Bostonians but of Bostonians on the Civil War.

In the context of the Civil War, Boston offers the researcher a wealth of material, given that so many of its most prominent nineteenth-century citizens have come to be closely associated with that conflict: Frederick Douglass, Robert Gould Shaw, Clara Barton, Dorothea Dix, Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell and Julia Ward Howe, to name but a few. Yet, from a general reader's perspective, familiarity with the names does not necessarily help illuminate the issues. Perhaps in recognition of this, O'Connor has sought to impose some order on his subject by concentrating on four distinct groups within Boston, specifically the business, Irish-Catholic, African-American and female communities. His intention is to trace the changes that the war brought to each community's lives, work habits, ideas and political allegiances. Boston itself, of course, was physically removed from the conflict and although so many of its citizens fought in the war (indeed, the Bay State regiments were in the front line of many engagements) for the city they left behind the Civil War years witnessed prosperity and financial and structural growth as the city moved towards a new, industrial age. As O'Connor shows, the impact of these changes, together with the war itself, transformed both the city and its inhabitants.

O'Connor's controlled approach works up to a point. In places, however, the narrative moves too quickly in an attempt to cover both Boston in particular and the course of the war in general, sweeping the reader from Boston to the battlefield to Washington and back again in the course of only a few paragraphs. Consequently, the analysis of such issues as the Emancipation Proclamation, the raising of African-American regiments, and the northern response to the meaning of the war is often broader than it is deep. O'Connor does not question – as does Reid Mitchell in *The Vacant Chair*, for example – the nature of Julia Ward Howe's idealism as expressed in "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and describes it merely as an "inspirational vision" designed to raise morale. In any case, as O'Connor shows, here idealism proved inappropriate to the new American order that the war produced. Boston's businessmen soon found themselves cast adrift in the new cut-throat business world of men like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller. More positively, for the Boston Irish the war provided both a means of entry into American society and new economic opportunities. In contrast, however, the battlefield successes of the North's most famous black regiments, the Massachusetts 54th and 55th, did not translate into home-front opportunities for Boston's African-American community. In this case, the impact of the Civil War on Boston – as on America in general – was less dramatic than it might have been, and as many Bostonians had long hoped it might be.

University of Newcastle upon Tyne S-M. GRANT

King-Kok Cheung (ed.), *An Interethnic Companion to Asian-American Literature* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £45 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 414. ISBN 0 521 44312 1, 0 521 44790 9.

This book is an extremely useful resource for students of American literature and for mature scholars who wish to extend their understanding of the multi-ethnic

literatures of the United States. It is set out clearly in two parts, the first of which offers surveys of the primary (but not only) literatures by North American authors of Asian descent: Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, Vietnamese. This is an important point, because the book excludes literature written in languages other than English and which constitutes very different ethnic canons. The emphasis here is on the bodies of writing that engage directly with the experience of Asian ethnic minorities in the United States. King-Kok Cheung, in her illuminating editorial introduction, places issues such as these in a sophisticated theoretical context and in so doing demonstrates the complexity that now characterises the field of Asian-American literature. Moving away from treatments of cross-cultural identity and marginality towards constructions of ethnic and gender identity, Cheung shows how Asian-American literature is a far from homogenous field in terms of both primary literature and critical studies of those writings. She outlines the historical development of Asian-American literary criticism in very helpful ways to emphasise the shifting character of this important area of American cultural study.

Part One comprises Sau-ling Cynthia Wong's survey of Chinese-American literature; N. V. M. Gonzalez and Oscar V. Campomanes on Filipino-American literature; Stan Yogi's survey of Japanese-American literature; Elaine H. Kim on Korean American literature; Ketu H. Katrak on South Asian-American literature; and Monique T. D. Tru'o'ng's survey of Vietnamese-American literature. The historical and chronological accounts provided in this first part of the book are complemented and extended by the issue-based essays of Part Two. In the concluding part, Rachel C. Lee discusses journalistic representations of Asian Americans and literary responses to those in the period 1910 to 1920. Postcolonialism, nationalism and the emergence of Asian-American literatures is discussed in Stephen H. Sumida's essay. Shirley Geok-lin Lim takes up issues of immigration and diaspora, while Jinqi Ling considers issues of identity crisis and gender politics from the perspective of Asian-American masculinity. Donald C. Goellnicht reprises some of the issues broached in the introduction in his essay, "Blurring Boundaries: Asian-American Literature as Theory." The book concludes with an extremely valuable bibliography, a resource for all who want an introduction to the area of Asian-American literary study and those who want to extend their understanding of perhaps the better-known Asian-American authors, like the Chinese-American writers Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Amy Tan and Gish Jen or the Japanese-American authors Janice Mirikitani and Hisaye Yamamoto, to include other writers and those from other Asian ethnic groups. Each of the essays in Part One includes a bibliography relating to writers of specific ethnic literatures and at the end of Part Two these listings are collated and extended in the very helpful primary and secondary bibliographies.

This book offers a valuable resource to literary scholars in particular and Americanists in general. It is highly readable, very informative, and should find a place in every university library as well as on the reading lists for American literature survey courses.

South Bank University, London DEBORAH L. MADSEN

John Howard (ed.), *Carryin' On in the Lesbian and Gay South* (New York: New York University Press, 1997, $18.95). Pp. 402. ISBN 0 8147 3560 6.

Arlene Stein, *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, £35.00 cloth, £13.95 paper). Pp. 256. ISBN 0 520 20257 0, 0 520 20674 6.

These two quite different but equally excellent volumes both serve as examples of the high levels of accomplishment displayed in gay and lesbian studies in recent years. As the post-Stonewall generation comes of academic age in an intellectual atmosphere hungry for sophisticated reflection on and analysis of the last thirty years of homosexual experience, books of this calibre can legitimately expect to find a wide and receptive readership.

It must only be hoped that the inappropriately coy and folksy title of John Howard's edited collection of fourteen historical essays on homosexual life in the American South does nothing to deter this readership. These meticulously researched essays, which cover the period from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, are all of real interest. If it is difficult to select a single author's contribution for special praise, this is only because the standards displayed in all the essays are universally high. From the opening essay by Martin Duberman, which traces the recovery of sexually open correspondence between two gay men of influence in the 1820s, to the closing piece by Donna Jo Smith which considers the intersection of homosexuality and southernness in the construction of identity, all the contributions to the volume are attuned to the theoretical dimensions of their subjects as well as to the detailed and sometimes difficult archival work which make the essays possible. Most promisingly of all, many of the contributors are postgraduate students who write with a skill which signals the rise of a fine new generation of scholars in lesbian and gay history. And if, as is sometimes the case in these essays, the impact of region is treated as rather incidental, the overall contribution of the book is to begin to define a particular gay and lesbian experience of the South which is subtly different from that of other areas of the United States.

In *Sex and Sensibility*, Arlene Stein, one of the most important analysts of lesbian life in America, has produced what must be the definitive account of the ideological and intimate trajectory of the intersection of lesbianism and feminism from the 1970s to the 1990s. Working with equal finesse as a sociologically oriented oral historian on the interviews with forty-one women which provide the substance of the book, and as a theoretician of gender who is sympathetically attuned to the nuances of shifting political positions while maintaining the highest degree of lucidity and discrimination, Stein has made an essential contribution to the history of the feminism in the last fifty years. The major concern here is the legacy of the lesbian activism of the 1970s and the ways in which it changed fundamental patterns of lesbian lives, the ways in which those changes have persisted or faded in the experiences of individual subjects, and the ways in which the collective notion of lesbianism has been reshaped by these influential years. Finding social constructionism and essentialism inadequate means for theorizing the shifts in lesbians' accounts of identity, rejecting both

separatist and integrationist arguments as impossible, Stein's arguments are delicately balanced between recognition of the individual and recognition of the collectivity. As she traces the changes from the old stereotyped butch/femme dichotomy of lesbian bar culture, through the development of the lesbian nation and the rise of the political lesbian in the 1970s and 80s, and the recent dispersal into a therapeutically governed but more individuated lesbianism, Stein remains as attuned to the general shifts in American culture as she does to the lesbian experiences which form part of those changes. The result is a superb, multidimensional study which can only be regarded as a key text for students both of lesbian and of American culture.

University of the West of England KATE FULLBROOK

David Wellman, *The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995, £40 cloth, £16.95 paper). Pp. 364. ISBN 0 521 45005 5, 0 521 62968 3.

This detailed study of the working lives of the members of San Francisco's Local 10 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) deserves to be widely read. Historians interested in the fate of left-wing unionism in the post-war era will find much provocative material here, as will sociologists and other scholars concerned with the labour process. Wellman, who spent three years working alongside the members of Local 10, addresses both of these academic audiences. For the former, he provides "not a sad tale about the demise of radical labor in America" but an interesting argument about the persistence of class struggle unionism well into the late twentieth century. To the latter, he offers a beautifully crafted ethnographic portrait of the world of dock work and the alternative system of values that it sustains.

I suspect that sociologists will find greater satisfaction with this book than historians, for Wellman's argument about the ILWU's radicalism sits uneasily amongst recent writing on both the trajectory of industrial unionism in general and on longshoring in particular. While Wellman demonstrates beyond doubt the willingness of members of Local 10 to engage in job actions and work stoppages to enforce their contracts with employers, he too easily assumes that this militancy is indicative of a broader radical outlook. Moreover, he tends to equate the situation within Local 10 with the ILWU as a whole and, in certain key passages, with other unions that emerged from the Left-led bloc of the CIO. Not only does this reasoning overstep the evidence at hand, it cuts against the grain of most recent scholarship. Since Wellman does not engage with writers such as Bruce Nelson, Nancy Quam Wickham, Staughton Lynd, Roger Horowitz, Judith Stepan-Norris and Kevin Boyle, readers will find it difficult to critically evaluate his claims.

Still, *The Union Makes Us Strong* is an important book, even if it is not always convincing. Wellman's ability to document everyday work practices, to capture the logic and motivations behind workers' behaviour, and to skillfully present

longshoremen's language and testimony is a major accomplishment. His argument about the way in which collective bargaining agreements do not fully demobilise workers but, in certain ways, allow them to successfully contest management's authority is a major one that scholars will have to take seriously. Wellman's study reminds us that the struggle for control on the job did not end when the insurgent unionism of the 1930s gave way to the more bureaucratic style of the postwar era. How did this battle continue in different contexts? In different ILWU locals? In different industrial settings? These questions need to be answered.

University College London RICK HALPERN

Charles S. Watson, *The History Of Southern Drama* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997, $29.95). Pp. 259. ISBN 0 8131 2030 6.

Compared with the South's writers of fiction and poetry, dramatists, in Charles Watson's striking phrase, are "the stepchildren of southern literature." His own history of southern drama, however, chooses not to act upon this metaphor of frail or merely provisional connections among the writers it considers. Rather, the book confidently sets out a genealogy of dramatic production in the region which descends from plays of political inquiry in revolutionary Viriginia to the contemporary works of Horton Foote, Beth Henley, and others. Although the study sometimes takes the form of a narrative moving inexorably towards Tennessee Williams – who figures here as the summative presence within southern drama – Watson's account has, in general, an attractive scope and collective emphasis. Resourcefully, sometimes movingly, he recovers from dusty shelves such items as unperformed plays of the Confederate era. Indeed, Watson offers not only a much expanded canon of primary texts, but goes some way towards establishing the critical archive, too, with this notes referring, say, to contemporary newspaper reviews, or to unpublished doctoral theses from North Carolina or Louisiana. The materials extensively uncovered here, and the lines of connection drawn between them, are certainly such as to bear out Watson's claims for southern drama as "a valuable body of knowledge."

Nevertheless, the book is not without methodological problems. Most damagingly, Watson's own, very evident belief in the region's virtue, its "cultural wealth," leads him to undervalue texts which might complicate his models of southern drama and of the South more generally. Writing about plays by African Americans resident in the South, for example, he makes the at least questionable claim that "Black drama after World War I belongs to the Southern Literary Renascence as much as to the Harlem Renaissance." Similarly, newer dramatists like Henley are read only for their plays actually set in the South, with the risk that the shape of literary careers is falsified. Such centripetal emphases amount, at times, to a kind of cultural secessionism, whereby Watson attends assiduously to those texts that talk to one another or to the larger southern canon, but rather neglects plays which seek to establish affiliations that are possibly not regional but, rather, ethnic, nationalist, even internationlist. For all the generous scope of this book, then, there remains a need for more theoretically informed

studies that will place challenging plays in narratives other than those the South tells most persistently about itself.

Loughborough University ANDREW DIX

Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (London: Routledge, 1997, £45.00 cloth, £14.99 paper). Pp. 226. ISBN 0 415 13192 8, 0 415 13193 6.

Few historians at work today can be unaware of the challenges posed to their discipline by postmodernism. Although the "linguistic turn" has affected the whole of the social sciences, it has had a particularly pronounced impact within history, questioning the ability of traditional empirical inquiry to recover and represent the past. Yet many historians remain only dimly aware of the range and variation of postmodernist theorizing about the nature of historical knowledge. It is these scholars whom Alun Munslow addresses in this brief and highly readable textbook on the subject.

Deconstructing History opens by raising four key questions about epistemology, evidence, social theory, and narrative. It then considers the ways in which these questions have been handled by recent social historians before moving on to consider the challenges posed by structuralism, post-structuralism, and the grouping of literary critics known as new historicists. Munslow gives roughly equal weight to these theoretical currents, and situates their central ideas within debates over historical knowledge. His use of concrete examples and a consistently lucid prose style allows him to handle complex concepts in a convincing fashion and to avoid the jargon that makes much of the theoretical literature he discusses arcane.

The heart of the book is found in two chapters that critically ask "What is Wrong With Empirical and Deconstructionist History?" Here, Munslow distances himself from the bodies of thought he has explicated earlier and offers a defence of empirical study of the past that centres upon the four questions with which he commenced. Some readers may find these chapters overly formulaic, but they are balanced and thoughtful treatments of issues that too often are surrounded by polemic and invective. I suspect that postgraduate students, in particular, will welcome these contributions for cutting through the heated emotions and hyperbolic writing that characterises much recent writing on the postmodernist challenge. Chapters on Michel Foucault and Hayden White round out the volume.

In sum, this is a book that handles a difficult topic in a sensible and even-handed way. But its efforts to be impartial, at times, obscure Munslow's own belief that the historical mainstream needs to take these theoretical debates more seriously if it is to move forward. Embedded in this book is the beginning of an original argument about the way in which historical writing represents the past. One hopes that Munslow will direct his energies towards developing this argument in the future. For now, though, he has produced a volume on history and postmodernism that deserves a place on the shelf alongside Bryan Palmer's *Descent into Discourse* and Richard J. Evans' *In Defence of History*.

University College London RICK HALPERN

Lucinda Joy Peach (ed.), *Women in Culture: A Women's Studies Anthology* (Malden, Mass. and Oxford: Blackwell, 1998, £50 cloth, £15.99 paper). Pp. 457. ISBN 1 55786 648 1, 1 55786 649 **x**.

I gather, although it is not specified, that *Women in Culture: A Women's Studies Anthology* is intended for high school, rather than university students – it certainly recalls that old A-level sociology chestnut; Haralambos's *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. It contains some rudimentary, nevertheless helpful, editorial summaries of the field, a diverse selection of "readings" (the term itself carrying doctrinaire overtones indicative of a high-school primer) on such issues as motherhood, Madonna, and television, and copious lists of "Suggested activities" and "Questions for discussion." These assignments sometimes tend towards the banal ("Find two advertisements that include images of women used to sell a product [...]"), and finally become irritating. With up to 18 questions and 10 "Other activities" for each of the 10 chapters, one soon begins to ask how better the space could have been used; which other authors could have been included (Nancy Chodorow, Susan Sontag, Tillie Olsen?), or additional topics covered (sport or militarism?). Similarly, each chapter features an extended bibliography and resource guide which, although useful, are repetitive and could have been combined more concisely at the end of the volume.

Regrettably, *Women in Culture* does not include any clear articulation of what is meant by "culture/s"; indeed the editor professes a reluctance to engage with "cultural studies." Here "Women's culture" appears to be synonymous with "women's experience." The result is a catholic, even arbitrary, choice of material indicative of a plurality of female interests and a liberal selection policy (the volume opens with Sherry Ortner, proceeds through John Berger, Naomi Wolf and Starhawk (yes), and ends in up-beat style with Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise"). It is as though the editor, unable to decide where to draw the line, or how to explain her rationale, decided to forgo a line altogether.

However, a number of the readings are well chosen and introduced (particularly Johnnetta B. Cole's "Commonalities and Differences," Linda M. Scott's "Fresh Lipstick" and Terry Kay Diggs' "No Way to Treat a Lawyer"). The chapter on "Sex, Sexism, Sexual Harrassment, and Sexual Abuse" is the most valuable, and, not coincidentally, the place where the excerpts are most clearly and specifically grounded in American experience. Elsewhere, it is a problem that the particularly "American" quality of "women's culture" and its articulation – although implied – is neither contextualised nor interrogated. Similarly, the relationships between "American" and other "women's culture/s" or feminisms are not recognised and, in this volume at least, are left unexplored.

Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education JO GILL

Teresa A. Goddu, *Gothic America: Narrative, History, and Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, £40 cloth, £13.95 paper). Pp. 226. ISBN 0 231 10816 8, 0 231 10817 6.

"*American* Gothic" is a critical term that has always eluded easy definition. Should it be regarded merely as a loose collection of scattered local examples –

southern, frontier, early American, and other subgeneric variants – or are the trappings of terror so all-pervasive that "the tradition of the American novel" may be considered to be, in Leslie Fiedler's uncharacteristically cautious phrase, "almost essentially a gothic one"? As the title of Teresa Goddu's important new study suggests, her answer is closer to Fiedler's, yet her call for a thorough revaluation of the place of gothic writing in American literary history is predicated upon a break with many of his overly psychological assumptions. For Goddu the gothic marks the site at which the signs of America's irredeemably violent past erupt into the republic of letters, and its literary effects are all too vividly real, bringing back to life the horrors of a slave economy and the wholesale slaughter of indigenous peoples. Although she variously refers to the gothic as a "genre" or as a "complex historical mode," it most often appears as a special kind of rhetorical structure or discourse that permits unspeakable things to be spoken, and this means that Goddu is frequently concerned with texts that possess gothic elements but which would not normally be classified as gothic *per se*. Thus some unexpected examples can be found alongside *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and *Arthur Mervyn*: St. John de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* with its haunting image of a caged slave whose eyes and cheeks have been picked away by birds, for instance, or John Neal's novel *Logan* whose mounting scenes of carnage push the assertion of national identity to its limits. Goddu moves from early American narratives to case studies of Poe's engagement with national ideologies of race; the female gothic and the nineteenth-century marketplace; and the links between Harriet Jacob's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and gothic romance. And in her thoughtful introductory remarks on Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and her brief closing discussion of Toni Morrison and others, Goddu suggests that African-American writers have displayed an intense, though also deeply ambivalent, predilection for the gothic that is rooted in the difficult, perhaps finally impossible, endeavour to transform a painful history into "a usable past." But at this point her attempt to build a bridge between nineteenth- and twentieth-century writing suggests that a larger, even more nuanced, *Gothic America* is struggling to emerge from this short and densely argued book.

University of Southampton DAVID GLOVER

Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997, £37.50). Pp. 271. ISBN 0 8122 3399 9.

It is possible that in the port towns of the Atlantic seaboard, during the last decade of the eighteenth century, more Americans celebrated the French Revolution than the Fourth of July or Washington's birthday? The rites and symbols of public festivals both divided and united Americans in their celebration of their country's revolutionary heritage and new-found republican ethos. Dr. Newman's impressively researched and elegantly written interpretation of popular culture and political mobilisation is a major contribution to scholarship on the early American republic. His intellectual debt is not to the historians of "high politics" but to the likes of Alfred F. Young, Jesse Lemisch, Gary

B. Nash, and Paul A. Gilje, who have written on the lives of those ordinary and obscure Americans who took part in crowd action or joined parades or engaged in other such demonstrative activities. Newman ably and clearly delineates the continuities and discontinuities in ritual culture from the late colonial and revolutionary periods onwards, and provides a stimulating account of political consciousness during the 1790s: detailed attention is given to how Americans learned to celebrate Independence Day, the French Revolution and French victories in the Revolutionary Wars of America and Europe; its last analytical chapter is concerned with the symbolism and political emblems that informed "everyday discourse."

Not all Americans, of course, could either participate in or watch these rites, though many could read about them in the newspapers. But, to varying degrees, all Americans were represented in the festivals and street parades, or seized for themselves the opportunity to participate: white, black, rich, poor, male, female, and urban and rural; all claimed or reclaimed public space as a locale for the expression of opinions on some of the great domestic and foreign issues of the day.

Competition to control festivals, and thereby shape ritual culture, was a national partisan issue. It helped to divide Americans into Federalists and Democratic-Republicans. But it was the Democratic-Republicans, the party of Jefferson and the forebears of Andrew Jackson, who came to enjoy a "partisan hegemony" in determining how Americans commemorated the Revolution and the Republic. By 1801, when Americans thought of the Fourth of July they no longer, if they ever did, equated revolutionary idealism with an inclusive republicanism which crossed boundaries of race, gender, and wealth.

University of Stirling COLIN NICOLSON