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Reviews

Vicki Abt and Leonard Mustazza, *Coming After Oprah: Cultural Fallout in the Age of the TV Talk Show* (Bowling Green, OH: Popular Press, 1997, $20.95). Pp. 205. ISBN 0 87972 752 7.

These days it is hard to tune into daytime or late-night television without coming across a TV talk show of some kind. From *Oprah* to *The Jerry Springer Show*, the range is stunning. So, too, is the range of topics on these shows, including everything from racism and domestic violence to alien abduction and vampirism. But how did today's TV talk shows develop? Why do guests agree to "star" on them? And better yet, why do we watch them? In short, what impact has the age of the TV talk show had on popular culture, and how, in turn, has popular culture contributed to its success?

In *Coming After Oprah*, Vicki Abt and Leonard Mustazza deliver a comprehensive cultural study that tackles precisely these kinds of questions. Looking at talk television as a "microcosm of American popular culture and the commercial interests that manufacture and sustain it," Abt and Mustazza argue that "the transformation of TV talk shows over time is the quintessential illustration of the ways in which material culture … affect our cultural narratives and symbols and, through them, changes the *social construction of reality*." And, as this book effectively demonstrates, these changes are having visibly corrosive effects on the values and practices of contemporary American society. What *Coming After Oprah* makes clear is that we can no longer afford to dismiss talk television as innocuous entertainment.

From the outset, *Coming After Oprah* strips away the glamour and soft lens of the American talk show world and its medium to reveal a grim picture of commercial greed, corporate conspiracy, and psychological manipulation. In the process, the book examines recent US television history. It charts the talk show's trajectory from the early days when Oprah Winfrey ("Queen of Trash") pioneered confrontational TV right through to today's glut of "electronic confessionals." It considers why the material of talk television has become increasingly gaudy and outrageous over time. And it analyses the rules and objectives of the "game." Throughout, Abt and Mustazza carefully contextualize their discussion in recent American trends in mass media, corporate finance, and government broadcasting policy. The result is that *Coming After Oprah* develops a much-needed cultural history for a media phenomenon living so much in the "now" that it all too easily erases any sense of a past.

One pressing issue which falls outside the scope of this study, however, is the impact of American talk television outside the United States. Around the world, though especially in Western Europe, American TV talk shows are rapidly gaining in popularity. Abt and Mustazza have much to tell us about the American

public's voyeuristic tendencies when it comes to watching itself on TV. But what, for example, are the wider implications of exporting sensationalized visions of one cultural tradition for voyeuristic consumption by another one entirely? In the end, *Coming After Oprah* represents an important contribution to the critique of American popular culture and its media of representation. Yet the book also speaks of an ongoing need to look at American talk television not just at home but also abroad.

Edinburgh University CHRISTOPH LINDNER

Douglas Ambrose, *Henry Hughes and Proslavery Thought in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997, £42.75). Pp. 226. ISBN 0 8071 2080 4.

This discussion of the life and thought of Henry Hughes is part of the process of rehabilitation that is helping to restore the reputation of the intellectuals of the Old South. The work of Eugene Genovese, Michael O'Brien and others has been highly influential in persuading scholars that the Old South had an intellectual life of considerable vitality and that the proslavery argument, in particular, should not be dismissed in the way that was once fashionable. A leading beneficiary of this revisionism has been George Fitzhugh of Virginia, who was once believed to be virtually alone in defending slavery in the abstract, that is to say, without reference to race. We now know that Fitzhugh was in fact one of many who undertook this defence; among the others was Henry Hughes of Port Gibson, Mississippi.

In this well-constructed and thoughtful discussion, Douglas Ambrose notes that the Old Southwest has been rather neglected in this revisionary process: attention has focussed rather on the older states of the South Atlantic. Hughes's location may shed light upon some of his specific ideas, his rejection of the past, for example, "as a guide for present and future actions." The Mississippian instead looked to a future in which the state would play an all-important role in social organisation. Slavery, which Hughes referred to as "warranteeism," required an active, highly interventionist state rather than the *laissez-faire* system so favoured by such luminaries as Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. Indeed Hughes, as Ambrose clearly demonstrates, actually hoped that, with proper supervision and co-ordination from the state, society could improve and indeed actually attain perfection. In general, of course, Southerners embraced traditional notions of original sin, partly to beat back the attacks launched from the North against slavery. But Hughes's example shows that the Old South in this respect, as in so many others, was far from monolithic.

The lack of surviving sources, particularly covering the last years of Hughes's life (from the mid-1850s to his death in 1862) mean that a full-scale biography is not feasible. However, Ambrose has made full use of Hughes's letters, his diary and his writings to make a significant contribution to our knowledge of this, until recently, neglected figure.

University of Hull JOHN ASHWORTH

James Annesley, *Blank Fictions: Consumerism, Culture and the Contemporary American Novel* (London: Pluto Press, 1998, £12.99). Pp. 175. ISBN 0 7453 1090 7.

The despair found in the angst-ridden fictions of Dennis Cooper, Douglas Coupland, Brian D'Amato, Jay McInerney, Sapphire, Susanna Moore, Lynne Tillman and others is subjected to an accomplished interrogation by James Annesley through chapters whose titles reflect the compulsions besetting contemporary western culture; "Violence," "Sex," "Shopping" and "Labels." He recognises that it is easier to identify blank fiction as a sub-genre rather than to read into it distinct interpretations of the contemporary American scene. Perhaps this is why his short but polished investigation adheres closely to consumerist and materialist issues, and does not overly involve itself with the existential, consciousness-relating elements implicated in the darkness of the fiction. Lack of involvement is implicated in the subject-matter itself. In Bret Easton Ellis's *Less Than Zero*, there is suspicion that part of blank fiction's macabre fascination is down to the characters being unable or unwilling to explain their own disaffected actions, obsessions with drugs, sex, violence, and the conspicuous consumption of material goods. Although Annesley observes their behaviour through some well-known critics (Frederic Jameson, Scott Lash and Pierre Bourdieu to name a few), the text does not over-embellish its post-modern credentials but sees blank fiction as much more than a reflection of Reaganomic imperatives. Indeed, the debate becomes heightened whenever Annesley combines the political context with the commodification of signs. He also charts similar reactions to material decadence found in the *fin de siècle* literature of the 1890s and texts such as Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. The present generation of writers, however, in their depiction of violence, vicarious pleasures and drug use, do not see decadent extreme experience as an escape from commodification, but rather, "in blank fiction pleasure is explored more in ways that illustrate the extent of commodification's encroachment into human experience than to offer any relief from it." Blank fiction, Annesley explains, points to a world where the fetish of the commodity itself, its brand name and its place in the materialist hierarchy, actually outweighs the pleasure of consumption. As a result, the characters are dependent on their consumptive power which in turn becomes their means to securing an identity. However, because they are economically determined, identity becomes evanescent and lives lapse into meaninglessness.

It will, perhaps, never be clear whether the alienation narratives that Annesley so shrewdly criticises are the inevitable products of late capitalism's "cultural logic," but this excellent text will help establish blank fiction as a fast-developing area of study.

University of Central Lancashire RICHARD HINCHCLIFFE

Nona Balakian, *The World of William Saroyan* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1998 £38.00). Pp. 294. ISBN 0 8387 5368 x.

The World of William Saroyan is properly so entitled. Before it is a biography or a critique, it is an evocation of a *world*, the one which Saroyan made over in his mind to inhabit and time and time again to recreate in one form or another. The book has in effect two authors, for Nona Balakian, who was a good friend of Saroyan and is pictured with him in the frontispiece, died in April 1991 in the final stages of its writing, so that the manuscript remained to be lovingly completed some six years later by her sister, Anna. In both original inspiration and continuing, devoted labour, it is therefore very much an Armenian affair, albeit Saroyan "was consciously more American than Armenian in his early youth."

Because Saroyan's "world" was first and foremost a cast of mind, or an emotional stance, or an insistent way of being, there is here relatively little systematic, biographical information. That his father had been a missionary-educated Presbyterian minister may shed light on the son's proselytizing idealism, though not on his cheerful sentimentalism; that after his father's death he spent time in an orphanage amongst other unfortunates from diverse ethnic backgrounds must have encouraged his simultaneously melting-pot and multicultural Americanism; but, quaintly, most significant of all may have been his attendance at Fresno's Emerson School, where, as Saroyan himself observed in old age, "I became, in a very real sense but in total ignorance, Emerson himself, Ralph Waldo … a preaching writer, and an American one." The people's Emerson, perhaps, rather than one of Emerson's people.

Of the book's eight chapters, three are focussed upon the short stories which established his name in the latter half of the 1920s, and three upon the prolific outpouring of plays and playlets in the 1940s and 1950s. Balakian's accounts of individual stories are detailed and illuminating, with fine, apt turns of phrase such as a description of one story's "pitch-perfect vernacular." She rightly, if conventionally, situates Saroyan in the demotic company of Twain, Anderson, and Lardner, but, since her main purpose is celebratory rather than evaluative, she does not dwell on what Saroyan lacks in comparison – Anderson's unwilled awe and sense of mystery, for instance, or Lardner's dark-hearted, satirical ruthlessness. (It is surely misguided to take "Lardneresque" to be a synonym for "lighthearted," as she appears to do.) In the case of his dramatic writings, she finds them less informed by anything Aristotelian than by the aesthetics of the ballet and the musical, in which connection there is an entertaining reference to his visiting Harlem's Apollo Theater alongside Vincente Minelli.

Doubtless Saroyan is at present underrated and unjustly neglected. A number of his stories still read and reread well, enough to make a volume of his selected best, such as that issued long ago by Faber. But the whole, straggling, overgrown *œuvre* needs drastic pruning to survive in any appreciable, pleasing form. Balakian, however, is not much concerned with such kinds of invidious discrimination. Clearly at home in Saroyan's world and sharing his world-view, she extols above all his "genial" (an adjective widely employed) spirit and his perennial, humanistic optimism. As she concludes: "The belief of the young that they are

exempt from death survived in Saroyan into old age: 'I thought they would make an exception for me,' he muttered on his deathbed." Less Armenian or generally American than very Californian. (Hush, Ambrose Bierce, Robinson Jeffers, James M. Cain, you were not *born* in the Golden State with its glittering spoon by your cradle. You brought your knowledge from elsewhere.)

University of Essex R. W. (HERBIE) BUTTERFIELD

Martha Royce Blaine, *Some Things Are Not Forgotten: A Pawnee Family Remembers* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, $50.00). Pp. 274. ISBN 0 8032 1275 5.

Garland Blaine (1915–1979) grew up both Pawnee and English speaking, a truly bicultural yet at the same time a quite singular American life. On the one hand, he was heir to his people's four tribal bands, the Chawi, Pitahwirata, Kitkahahki and Skiri, and their richly endowed (and sustaining) creation stories, memories and shamanism. On the other, he worked for thirty years as Production Control Analyst on a salary from the US Airforce in Oklahoma City. His own role as lifelong archivist and mover in Native politics culminated in his becoming Head Chief of the Pawnee in 1964.

By personal history, thus, as by avocation, Blaine serves as a powerful link between the Pawnee originally sited in their mudlodge homes of Nebraska and Kansas, but whose history, in common with that of more than thirty other tribes, was brutally changed by Federal removal in 1874–75 to the "Indian Country" which in due course became Oklahoma. The Pawnee, like other Natives, were nothing if not hard put to survive, whether through land loss brought on by the finaglings of frontier-induced Dawes and other "allotment" acts, disease, the non-payment of promised Federal annuities, local fake "legal guardianship," and much drift and loss of numbers. Barely a quarter survived. On the other hand, as Blaine himself bore living witness, they were, and remain, an enduring Native people, against odds still in being, still possessed of their own unique historic inheritance.

Some Things Are Not Forgotten threads into the one narrative an act of spousely homage by Martha Royce Blaine, extracts from Blaine's own compendious Oklahoma diary–memoir and other notes, and, unfoldingly, an ethnographic portrait of the Pawnee across no less than ten remembered generations. The stopping-off places give off a striking human resonance and eventfulness: a first-known ancestor like Ti-ra-wa-hat ra-ra-hu-ree-sa-ru (or "He Who Reveres The Universe") born in 1670 or the grandfather Wichita Blaine who became a US Pawnee scout; family memories of Wounded Knee in Pine Ridge in 1890 and the Ghost Dance revivalism as led by the Paiute, "Wovoka," otherwise known as Jack Wilson; James G. Blaine, Harland's father, as a product of the Carlisle School who played baseball for the "Nebraska Indians"; and Blaine's own accounts of Pawnee culture through its deity-system of Tirawahat, its childrearing practices, sacred bundles, Buffalo Society ceremonies, "Doctor"

and "Bear" dances, and, as fascinating as anything, its language system. This is a book, a record, as timely as it is informative.

Nihon University, Japan A. ROBERT LEE

Stewart Burns (ed.), *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997, £43.95 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 359. ISBN 0 8078 2360 0, 0 8078 4661 9.

Although recent additions to the growing literature on the Montgomery Bus Boycott are beginning to offer somewhat diminishing returns, Stewart Burns' documentary history is nevertheless a valuable contribution. Ideal as a teaching aid, this skilfully edited and attractive book contains a helpful overview of events, a detailed chronology, and powerful photographs.

The documents embrace the full range of characters and organisations involved in the year-long protest. The voices of ordinary citizens from both races are well represented, sharing the stage with the likes of Dr. King and Mayor W. A. "Tacky" Gayle. Interviews with black domestics and car pool volunteers are balanced by the reactions of the city's bus drivers and by readers' letters to the *Montgomery Advertiser*. Equally, Burns has included supporters and opponents of the boycott on both sides of the colour line. More familiar figures also appear, yet their perspectives are fresh and insightful, especially through the diary of Bayard Rustin and the letters of support from Lillian Smith to King.

Overall, the range of sources is impressive: the minutes of meetings held by the Montgomery Improvement Association; correspondence between Virginia Durr and the Highlander Folk School; and the court testimony of African-American bus passengers describing their experiences of discriminatory treatment, not least the teenager Claudette Colvin who refused to give up her seat in March, 1955. Perhaps the most fascinating material collected by Burns is a series of oral interviews conducted by Anna Holden, a white teacher at Fisk University who recorded opinions from all sides of the dispute. Among her subjects are two senior leaders of the White Citizen's Council; as their meeting progresses, it is Holden who ends up facing persistent questioning regarding her attitude to interracial marriage.

In his introduction, Burns emphasises the co-operative efforts of the black community necessary to force democratic change, from church ministers to the winos who guarded the car pool fleets at night. In particular, he points to the key contribution of Montgomery's female activists, both the Women's Political Council and those who provided food for the mass meetings. Yet, while the unity of black Montgomery and the fusion of religious and non-violent influences animated the boycott, J. Mills Thornton's older interpretation still merits consideration. Almost twenty years ago, he pointed out the distinction between the effectiveness of the legal challenge to the city's segregated transportation and the boycott, which originally aimed to reform but not replace Jim Crow seating.

University of Cambridge ANDREW M. KAYE

Samuel Chase Coale, *Mesmerism and Hawthorne: Mediums of American Romance* (Tucaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1998, $34.95). Pp. 197. ISBN 0 8173 0896 2.

From this book's title, the reader might expect a historical materialist study like those we have seen in the past fifteen years, which explore relations between the canonical texts of the American Renaissance and the popular culture in which they were produced. Coale's project, however, does not involve him in any detailed analysis of the cultural history of mesmerism and its related phenomenon, spiritualism, in 1840s and 50s America, or why it should have evolved at this particular historical moment or how it operated and was perceived. His research includes several contemporary books on the subject, but quotations are tantalizingly brief.

Instead, this study is very much in the tradition of classic Hawthorne criticism of the 1960s and 70s in its view of Hawthorne's "dark" vision (not particularly specified) and in its concentration on recurrent images and themes. Since Hawthorne's texts do operate partly through the reworking of key images, this study is useful in identifying the ways in which the discourse of mesmerism is indeed present in his fictional language. Coale's thesis is that, in spite of Hawthorne's unambiguous expressions of revulsion against mesmerism in letters and journals, mesmerism became not only the central theme in his writing but also the method of his writing. Mesmerism "provided a secular, psychological and materialist explanation for his own metaphysical and spiritual speculations, nurtured in the dark domain of the Salem of his imagination and fiction." Furthermore, Hawthorne's romances "re-enact" the mesmeric process; romance "constitutes a form of mesmeric expression" in and of itself, working on readers "just as" the mesmerist magnetizes and manipulates his subject.

I have problems with this. Coale acknowledges but never addresses at length the central contradiction that, if Hawthorne thought mesmerism immoral, why should he want his fictions to employ the same techniques, always supposing we accept that fictional and mesmeric processes could be identical. Secondly, do we read Hawthorne like this? Accounts by both contemporary and late twentieth-century readers and critics, together with theories of readership, suggest that even the most enthusiastic reader is never a passive subject, but is actively, rationally and consciously in dialogue with many levels of the text. Long sentences, repetition and an emphasis on iconic objects won't produce hypnosis. What, too, of the audience, always the third party at a mesmerist's performance on his subject (see the 1837 illustration on the title page)?

Lancaster University ALISON EASTON

Josh Cohen, *Spectacular Allegories: Postmodern American Writing and the Politics of Seeing* (London and Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 1998, £40 cloth; £12.99 paper). Pp. 169. ISBN 0 7453 1212 8.

In analysing the postwar fiction of Mailer, Kosinski, Coover, Dixon, Didion and Ellman, Josh Cohen's study considers the human gaze upon the postmodern culture of spectacle not just as a process of consumption but also as

"lived … experience," integrally invoking reference to pivotal social, economic and cultural struggles. His study stresses the ways in which postmodern representations of looking upon spectacle can be alert to this material dimension and, indeed, should be viewed as interventions. This is particularly the case in the terrain of gender, within which masculinised seeing, as it (con)fronts the unreadable "feminised mass cultural landscape," is portrayed as experiencing an inevitable disruption. Its controlling, repressive impulses are subverted by the image sphere of "the society of spectacle" (Debord) in a way that cannot adequately be modelled as "feminine" seduction. Rather (adapting Benjamin) the gaze possesses a "porosity" undermining any assumption of masculine self-sufficiency. Postmodernism's allegorical treatments of proliferating spectacle, one of the "specific conditions" of the Cold War and its "penetration of lived experience by corporate capitalism and its various cultural apparatuses," become "'catastrophic' interruptions of visual authority," albeit recurrently negative and anxious ones.

In this process, Cohen, following Kellner, re-exposes the ultimate shortcomings of Baudrillard's attempt to liquidate the subject/object distinction. He is also taking a different tack from that found in Deborah Madsen's exploration of allegory. Where Madsen takes a historical perspective on postmodern allegory's exploitation of a gap between appearance and reality, Cohen's approach is more resolutely (and coherently) theoretical. His model of the porous postmodern gaze is dialogical and, to an important extent, indebted to Marxist traditions. For Cohen, political agency remains on postmodern American writing's agenda, despite the pressures imposed by the society of the spectacle, whilst his contention that postmodern writing offers narrative "enactments" of its "failure to make sense" of "shifts in the history of capital" separates him less from the approach of Richard Godden than he appears to believe. Cohen locates this "failure to make sense" in the problem of treating the ephemeral instability of commodified cultural forms, where (in David Harvey's phrase) "images dominate narratives." However, in analysing representations of this failure, Cohen recurrently separates out the economic and the semiotic within their (apparent) fusion in postmodern spectacle. The result is a compelling, densely argued study, in which postmodernist allegory comes to be regarded as a means of dealing with the break-up of consensual ideology in an America inaugurated by Reaganism and (in doing so) resisting the cultural "incommensurability" that results.

The readings Cohen advances build convincingly upon this theoretical base, as when exploring how Mailer's writing represents mass culture as "a constitutive force in the spreading 'womanization' of America, and its attendant fracture of the masculine ego's integrity." Sometimes this base could have been a little broader. Cohen thus might have introduced the theorisations of Sinfield concerning latency and of Sedgwick concerning the homosocial when analysing how, in *Harlot's Ghost*, Dix's offer of his anus stimulates an ambiguous erection in Harry. Or, similarly, when considering Kosinski's "cinematographic" representations of rape, Bristow's exploration of the proximateness of misogyny and homophobia beckons unheeded. However, this occasional failure to confront issues of sexuality is fully compensated by theoretically informed, rigorous and

perceptive readings; Cohen's exposition of the cinematographic in postmodern fiction and of LA as the "paradigm allegorical space of postmodernity" are exemplary. One can always quibble: why explore "The phantom of the movie palace" and not the remainder of *A Night at the Movies*? But this should not discourage anyone from reading this slightly daunting book. It amply rewards the effort. Don't let the rather idiosyncratic selection of writers it focuses upon deter you.

The Nottingham Trent University R. J. ELLIS

Paul K. Conkin, *American Originals: Homemade Varieties of Christianity* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $55 cloth, $18.95 paper). Pp. 336. ISBN 0 8078 2342 2 (cloth), 0 8078 4649 X (paper).

Paul Conkin, who teaches American history at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennesee, provides here an introduction to and analysis of a series of religious groups that are all "home-grown" in the United States: the Stone–Campbell movement (Disciples of Christ, et al.); Unitarians and Universalists; Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses; Mormons; Christian Science and Unity; and the Holiness and Pentecostal movements. Not surprisingly, since he covers a great deal of ground here, Conkin relies mainly on extensive reading in secondary studies of these traditions, and presents a careful, lucid, and frequently insightful account in each case. He dispenses with the usual apparatus of footnotes and instead concludes each chapter with a thorough bibliographical essay.

Conkin focusses primarily on *doctrine*, an approach that has its uses but also its limitations. His central insight is that all of these groups, for all their disparate character, share one common feature: a repudiation of the formulations of the ecumenical councils of the early Christian centuries and the orthodoxy derived therefrom, and a concomitant drive to return to the early church for a fresh start – a variation, perhaps, on the "American Adam" theme. The subsequent development of new doctrines based on a fresh encounter with the apostolic church is traced in considerable and reliable detail.

The main problem with Conkin's work is that the author shows little systematic interest in the social matrices in which these home-grown traditions arose. The insights he provides on social origins are generally helpful, but far too few in number. In the afterword, while commenting on some of these groups' commonalities, he suggests that "one can speculate on the reasons" for them. But he doesn't. Similarly, he makes little effort to speculate on the *Americanness* of these distinctively American religions. Why did they originate in New rather than Old World climes?

As it stands, *American Originals* is an insightful and valuable guide to an important American phenomenon. One wishes that the author had ventured a little further into the *why* as well as the *what*.

Miami University PETER W. WILLIAMS

Judith Fryer Davidov, *Women's Camera Work: Self/Body/Other in American Visual Culture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998, £24.95). Pp. 494. ISBN 0 8223 2067 3.

If "photographs are artifacts with a continuing life," Judith Fryer Davidov provides an acute reading of the ways in which the camera work of key female photographers – Gertrude Käsebier, Laura Gilpin, Consuela Kanaga, Dorothea Lange, and Imogen Cunningham – construct histories that rethink linear models of male photographic influence, and that negotiate and represent otherness. Davidov is careful not simply to replace a canon of male photographers with a set of female luminaries. She posits and examines a "network" of women photographers, as opposed to patriarchal "lines" of influence beginning with Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Weston. Her main subjects are joined by time, place, friendship, and, significantly, variations of outsiderness. Gilpin was a lesbian, Lange was lame, and Cunningham thought herself "ugly as a mud fence." Davidov is concerned with marginalization in various ways: in terms of the practice of photography in a culture that belittles women's work, as experienced individually in the personal lives of the female photographers she treats, and how marginality served to inform and influence their photographic representations of "aberrant bodies."

Women's Camera Work begins by theorizing the nature of photographic histories, using Lange's *Migrant Mother* to consider the politics of appropriation and circulation and Cindy Sherman's *History Portraits* to illustrate the constructed nature of cultural and historical meaning. Establishing a basis for reading photographic images using gender as an analytical category, Davidov examines different types of women's camera work – pictorial, ethnographic, documentary, and experimental. The book is helped by a significant number of visual examples, and this rich illustration enables connections to be made between images that might otherwise remain opaque through pure textual description.

While Davidov states that she does not want to sentimentalize women's work or suggest a universal category called Woman, she often sets up comparisons between male and female photographers. Gilpin's photographs of the Navajo are compared favourably to the work of Edward Curtis; Lange's images of Japanese internment are placed beside those of Ansel Adams (photographs which Lange herself called "shameful"); and the human and natural forms pictured by Imogen Cunningham are compared in effect and approach to the work of Edward Weston. A critical bias is perhaps inevitable in a book seeking to retrieve and position the cultural work of images taken by women. If female photographers are given charisma, however, Davidov rarely celebrates their achievements uncritically. The success of *Women's Camera Work* is, indeed, the scrupulous and sensitive consideration of the lives of both the photograph (as text) and the photographer (as practitioner) in a culture that has often marginalized both.

University of Nottingham PAUL GRAINGE

Jude Davies and Carol R. Smith, *Gender, Ethnicity and Sexuality in Contemporary American Film* (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997, £12.95). Pp. 156. ISBN 1 85331 174 X.

This is an up-to-date examination of recent critical approaches to identity politics and American cinema in the 1990s. Part of a BAAS series designed to offer critical introductions to major issues in American Studies, this book grounds its arguments in a number of close readings of politically challenging films such as *Falling Down* and *Malcolm X*. But, rather than limit their analysis to looking at the ideological implications of established Hollywood products, Davies and Smith also offer a counterpoint to Hollywood by providing fresh readings of alternative and low-budget films – such as Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* and Marlon Riggs's *Tongues Untied* – that have become key to staging the politics of plural and multicultural identities on the American screen.

Unlike a number of introductory texts, Davies and Smith are not satisfied with merely summarising past criticism, but actively intervene in recent debates in an effort to advance them a step further. If a major project of criticism has been to interrogate "negative images" on the screen, and "to expose the bogusness of Hollywood representations of integration – equality, community, and national identity," this book now hopes to supplement past criticism through the task of "unpacking multiple representations of separatism and inclusiveness" in US film. This study neither reduces the complexity of recent political criticism nor treats it as sacred. Avoiding drawing reductive conclusions about representations of race, gender, and sexuality while persistently questioning well-meaning but frequently essentialist critical views, the authors go on to tease out some of the more subtle cultural implications of seemingly simplistic texts like *Pretty Woman* or *Disclosure*.

Its three central chapters examine the construction of white masculinity, African-American identity, and queer politics; in each case they provide a clear overview, take issue with the critics, and offer some interesting case studies. The first chapter traces the recent career of archetypal angry white male Michael Douglas, mapping subtle shifts in his screen persona, from sleazy family man/antifeminist commando in *Fatal Attraction*, to *Falling Down*'s vision of a self-divided-white-male adrift in a multicultural lost paradise. Chapter two discusses recent issues in African-American representation, focusing largely on Denzel Washington's star persona, while chapter three maps the diversity of 1990s lesbian and gay images through such films as *Swoon* and the melodrama *Philadelphia*. In each case, the authors' tendency is to move away from homogenising portraits of American identity while simultaneously avoiding an uncritical or premature celebration of postmodern diversity.

Davies and Smith are aware of the possibility that "multicultural" projects might occlude the need for a greater attention to specificity in defining the very different ethnic, gendered, and national identities of the US. As a result, they have wisely limited the parameters of what might have become an overly ambitious project, offering precise examples in three clearly delineated areas while providing the groundwork for further study in the highly contested arena of identity politics.

University of Essex JEFFREY GEIGER

Marvin Dunn, *Black Miami in the Twentieth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997, £23.95). Pp. 414. ISBN 0 8130 1530 8.

Based on interviews, memoirs, newspapers and statistics, psychology Professor Marvin Dunn provides a lucid, balanced history of Miami's diverse, black population. Organized chronologically, the book demonstrates that from its establishment in 1896 Miami comprised blacks from America and the Caribbean, while migrations of blacks from Cuba and Haiti in the last third of this century increased the city's heterogeneity. In recent decades, black solidarity has evaporated because African Americans have, mistakenly, regarded new immigrants, of whatever colour, as competitors for jobs, minority programmes, services and public assistance. Miami also reflects national trends in that a third of its black population is uneducated, confined to inner-city ghettos and mired in poverty, while the remainder gradually advances economically and residentially, and a small elite of the affluent has developed as a result of civil rights successes and affirmative action.

Dunn's analysis of early Miami confirms a familiar southern, urban pattern. Whites disfranchised blacks, exercised violent control through police brutality and the Ku-Klux-Klan, and forced them into small, overcrowded areas with overpriced rents, poor sanitation and disease commonplace. Despite these conditions, blacks created a vibrant community life. Segregation enabled black businessmen to prosper by serving the emerging neighbourhood of Colored Town that enjoyed its heyday between the 1930s and 1960. In the early 1960s, a massive expressway sliced through the community, displacing its population and destroying the business district, already under threat from desegregation as some blacks spent their money elsewhere.

The decades-long, peaceful dismantling of Jim Crow laws in Miami began with direct action protests at the end of World War II. Both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) had active chapters. The working class dominated the movement that had clergymen as its main leaders. Whites proved most resistant to school and residential desegregation, neither of which have been substantially achieved. Police brutality sparked four riots and many other disturbances between 1968 and 1989.

Dunn excels at statistical analysis and narrative. He does not explain the class dimension of the civil rights movement, and compresses the movement's history into hagiographic profiles of selected leaders and lists of victories. Dunn did not consult the papers of the NAACP and CORE, or personal papers. He notes that many whites joined CORE sit-ins, but he does not explain why, or the seeming ease with which white businessmen conceded desegregation.

University of Derby MARK NEWMAN

Susan L. Field, *The Romance of Desire: Emerson's Commitment to Incompletion* (Cranbury, NJ and London: Associated University Presses, 1997, £27.50). Pp. 189. ISBN 0 8386 3738 8.

The "romance" of Susan Field's title is her way of characterising Emerson's representation of the relationship between self and other, where that "other" is variously nature, other people, himself or even his contemporary readers. Scholars have written persuasively about the importance of the romance as a literary genre and style of discourse to writers of the American Renaissance. But Field is using the term differently, to describe a kind of relation rather than a style of articulation. This is the "original relation with the Universe" of which Emerson writes; Field explains: "I call this relation the romance of desire, because desire inspires romance fraught with risk and mystery and passion." Emerson's work, then, is the writing of a romance that is the romance of the self–other dialectic in which his life engages. This dialectic provides the other key term in Field's title – "incompletion." The confirmation or recognition of self that comes from engagement with the "other" of nature, community or reader is ephemeral and needs constant renewal. It is, therefore, as a relation necessarily incomplete. The lack of closure characteristic of Emerson's "life romance" gives rise, in Field's view, to an epistemology of caring and individual responsibility. The engagement with difference and refusal of closure promotes in Emerson's writing a heightened appreciation of instability and a corresponding ethic of caring. It is in this context that Susan Field reads Emerson's work in relation first, to Idealism, then to key contemporary feminist theorists (Nancy Chodorow, Carol Gilligan, Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray), and finally in relation to key antifoundationalists like Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish and Jacques Derrida. In Field's reading, it is the systemic nature of feminism and antifoundationalism, rather than the ideas of individual thinkers, that separates Emerson's achievement and keeps his work from being subsumed within contemporary critical thought. The presence of Stanley Cavell does hover over this book. Field often invokes Cavell's work on Emerson and Thoreau as a touchstone to orient her own readings. Her book is very readable, approaching a kind of personal testimony in some passages. At a time when students find Emerson's writing important but difficult to read, Field's book makes a useful contribution to the effort to make Emerson both appealing and relevant.

South Bank University, London DEBORAH L. MADSEN

Peter A. French, *Cowboy Metaphysics: Ethics and Death in Westerns* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997, £17.95). Pp. 162. ISBN 0 8476 8671 x.

It is hard to say whether John Wayne or Clint Eastwood ever considered their ethical position as Western gunslingers. It is interesting to think that some of the most familiar cowboy quips and clichés, from "taking a stand" to "giving a damn," carry a philosophical dimension, however. Peter French uses the Western film genre to examine a series of philosophical themes, from the question of belief, to the nature of courage and pride. Most important is the issue of death. *Cowboy Metaphysics* is concerned with the lessons that might be learned from a

specific film genre concerning "the relationship between one's conception of death and the moral position one adopts."

The exploration of ethical questions through popular culture is a refreshing approach. Who would not be intrigued by a chapter with the title "Aristotle Contemplating the Dying Duke"? *Cowboy Metaphysics* is promising in conception but suffers from a lack of methodological focus. It is not clear at times whether French is making philosophical points *through* the Western or making points *about* the Western by examining its philosophical assumptions. The book is sold as both "philosophy" and "cultural studies." The confusion, and conflation, of these different types of discourse is evident in the form, as much as the selling, of *Cowboy Metaphysics*. This leaves the book vulnerable to attack, notably for its wild leaps between Epicurean philosophy and Western camp-fire wisdom.

French may be an astute philosopher but he is a crude culturalist. *Cowboy Metaphysics* tries to establish an ethical system specific to the Western. This would be more convincingly argued if French had a less static idea of the Western as a genre. Although examples range from *High Noon* (1952) to *Unforgiven* (1992), he shows little sense that generic conventions and ethical presuppositions have cultural contexts and may change over time. Richard Slotkin has discussed at length the development of American frontier mythology and the substantial modification of the Western film genre as it has responded to particular ideological needs. In examining the world of the Western, French misrepresents its consistency, depending on a limited number of what he calls the "better Westerns" to make his case. While the Western may well provide a "veritable laboratory" for the demonstration of ethical positions and theories, *Cowboy Metaphysics* is too selective in its examples, and too rigid in its sense of genre, to sustain the conclusions it makes about the "philosophical and cultural foundations of the ethics of the Western."

University of Nottingham PAUL GRAINGE

Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830*. (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998, $49.95 cloth, $16.95 paper). Pp. 284. ISBN 0 807 84681 3.

This volume is the product of a long-standing friendship between these two distinguished scholars, and judging by the result, their publisher will be hoping that it will not be the last. Although the religious beliefs and practices of African Americans have hardly been neglected over the years, there is still a considerable amount to be learned from the study of church records about the South's "peculiar institution." What is innovative about this book is that it focuses, more than any previous volume, on the attitudes of African Americans themselves towards religion in general and Christianity in particular. Moreover, taking a long view of religious development, the authors show how many religious practices observed among eighteenth-century slaves actually originated in Africa and were retained in the Americas, even if they later had a Christian veneer on top.

Both authors are keen to stress that African Americans accepted Christianity

at their own pace in both the South and the Caribbean. While some scholars have attributed the general failure of Anglicans to evangelize the enslaved population before the American Revolution to the opposition of slaveowners, Frey and Wood argue persuasively that the Anglican message was only of marginal interest to slaves, and hence it was their, and not their owners, decision to decline conversion.

This situation changed with the rise of Baptists and Methodists after the Revolution. Instead of seeing the Great Revival as being led by white missionaries, Frey and Wood argue that missionary activity was nearly always governed by the attitudes of African Americans and what they would tolerate. Through the detailed use of church records and contemporary accounts, the authors show us that slaves had a much more central role in the organization, running, financing and even the building of bi-racial and black churches in the South and the Caribbean than was previously thought.

This detailed and well-written book refocuses our attention on the actual participants in the black revival after 1780, and encourages further study of the meaning of slave religion in the post 1830 environment and in the trans-Appalachian states. It is an important contribution to the historiography.

University of Warwick TIMOTHY J. LOCKLEY

Richard Godden, *Fictions of Labor: William Faulkner and the South's Long Revolution* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £37.50, $59.95). Pp. 288. ISBN 0 521 56142 6.

This book is a profound historicist reading of three texts – *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), and *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, published as *The Wild Palms* (1939) – in which the greatest proportion of space is justly allocated to *Absalom*, probably Faulkner's most complex and disturbing novel. Godden claims that the three novels "secrete" a history of Southern labor relations – itself shadowing forth a history of race relations – from *circa* 1827 to the decade of their writing, a decade during which the labor system that gave them birth finally underwent fundamental change as a result of Federal legislation, thus concluding a "long revolution" from slavery, through other forms of bondage, to "freedom."

Faulkner's fiction in the thirties – which, as the helpful Introduction clarifies, Godden sees as written from the perspective of the world the masters' made – submerges within it ultimately disabling anxieties: first, that the master's "mastery is slave-made" and that, therefore, "he and his are blacks in whiteface"; and, second, that, as a result of the long revolution, the bound have slipped their yoke ("black labor and white owner have become unbound in the New Deal South"), leaving the master wrestling with a truly traumatic identity crisis. The echoes of Hegel here, elaborated with particular force in the discussion of *Absalom*, are deliberate. In making this case, Godden exhibits a notable grasp of not only recent writing by historians on Faulkner's family lineage and its relation to Southern history, but an excellent and very much "working" knowledge of the historiography of slavery and the slave trade, and several other relevant periods and topics. This means that the readings of the texts are firmly

grounded in empirical data. At the same time, as readers of the author's earlier *Fictions of Capital* would expect, his analyses are informed by the tradition of Marxist theory.

Godden's historically based argument is compelling, and I wish only that he had stretched the book's coverage to include *Go Down, Moses* (1942). What is most impressive about *Fictions of Labor* is that its important overarching thesis is propounded with minute attention to the texts themselves. Godden's method, unlike those of some other historicist critics, grants agency to the author and the author's characters, while at the same time showing them as full of "the pre-plots of their time," truly formed and informed by their culture but dynamic and changing in myriad ways, from the political and legal to fashion and popular culture.

Indebted primarily to the Russian linguist Valentin Volosinov, but also to Paul Ricoeur, Frank Kermode, and others, Godden finds Faulkner's texts even more replete with "wordplay" than the most assiduous of New Critics. He subjects not just the obvious terms, but also seemingly more "innocent" expressions, to detailed, learned and, usually, rewarding analysis. One of the most interesting of these maneuvers leads us to unlock the word-hoard secreted in the "pass" of "blood", tracing their treasured lines back to the originary stories in the Bible. One cannot do justice to this kind of analysis in a brief review; suffice it to say that some, just some, of these investigations seem a trifle too ingenious to ring true. More to the point, sometimes their exhaustiveness is wearying. At the same time, the fact that one longs for relief *is* the point: these texts, according to Godden, are shot through at every level with the same concerns. They are obsessive precisely because they are revisitations of scenes of trauma, the trauma of labor relations in the South.

In marked contrast to many other close readers, Godden's determined stress on history means that, no matter the obvious depth of his appreciation of Faulkner's "choked, subverted, underarticulated and yet imperious prose," he dispenses with the allure of the merely aesthetic and judges both *The Sound and the Fury* and *Jerusalem* to be novels that not only resist resolution, but actually crack apart under the weight of their historical freight. Godden vouchsafes no parallel "judgment" in the case of *Absalom*, but my guess is that it would be positive. He provides a series of takes – some, it has to be said, labyrinthine – on many other features of the novel, including structural devices that one might, mistakenly, have believed exhausted. And always he bears down on the traumas of class formation – whether predicated, in the case of the masters, on denial *or* acknowledgment of its own origins and maintenance.

University of Leeds MICK GIDLEY

Clark Griffith, *Achilles and the Tortoise: Mark Twain's Fictions* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1998, $34.95). Pp. 284. ISBN 0 8173 0903 9.

Achilles and the Tortoise is a carefully crafted series of essays on selective texts by Twain – "The Jumping Frog," "Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Connecticut Yankee*, *Puddn'head Wilson* and "Those Extraordinary

Twins," *Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts*, and other less well-known stories such as "Some Fables for Good Old Boys and Girls" and *Which Was It?*. But these essays circle round the same set of topics and the unity of the book results from such a skilful interweave. In particular, Griffith focuses on the notion of twinning and its crucial importance in Twain's work: twinning both as "cosmic conspiracy" and as "parable of power and servitude." One might have thought this a subject that had been done to death, but Griffith gets fresh and stimulating mileage out of it. He describes the dark twin, Luigi, in "Those Extraordinary Twins," as one who will "invade the village [Dawson's Landing], enthrall it … and then with his blond brother in tow depart again, leaving behind a darkness and accursedness that are more total than ever before." This provides both an entry to a new way of understanding the plotting of the twin narrative, *Puddn'head Wilson*, but also a paradigm for the way twinning works throughout the whole range of Twain's fiction. For the underlying thesis of the whole book is that "moving and moving to go nowhere" (except toward an increasing sense of repetition and fixity) is the basic condition of Twain's writings. All the various twinnings he gives us, even from the very start of his literary career, "point in lock step to false expectations, disillusionment and death without dignity." And it is such an understanding which, in Griffith's view, forms the very condition for Twain's humour to work. Comic theory is, indeed, another key topic in the book, with Twain identified with "the aesthetic of the sick joke" – where distinctions between laughing *at* and laughing *with* are undermined, and where "laughter is generated by the … spectacle of being fated and helpless."

To emphasise the above areas is, though, both wrong and right. Griffith does a lot more than this in his book. There is, for example, very interesting material on literary realism and its dilemmas (though dialogue with Michael Davitt Bell's recent book on this subject would have been rewarding). He gives, too, an informative account of Twain's apparent long-term intellectual debt to George Sumner Weaver and his theory of the "enhumored" self. Throughout, Griffith makes stimulating comments on writers of the period and on the generic models which Twain negotiates. He concludes his study strongly by himself twinning Twain with Melville and teasing out the connections between these "secret sharers, purveyors of essentially the same dark vision."

It is, however, the repeated stress on "moral and social futility" which explains the focus of my review. And I have a lingering sense that the book's strong *thesis* – that the dialectic inherent in the complex interchanges, fractures, and unities of the twinship motif are resolved in disillusionment and helplessness, the predominance of the dark twin – may short-change Twain's comic achievements. Bruce Michelson's words, "Mark Twain's … was a mind that resisted the delusion of categories, as constructs that dissect to do murder," sound a note of warning to any such final containment. But this slight unease should not take away from the considerable achievement of this book. It is an important contribution to Twain studies and a thoughtful, provocative, and learned critical text.

University of Nottingham PETER MESSENT

Judy Hilkey, *Character is Capital: Success Manuals and Manhood in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $17.95). Pp. 210. ISBN 0 8078 2353 8, 0 8078 4658 9.

Judy Hilkey has made a noteworthy contribution to the study of ideology in the US through her re-examination of the success manuals of the late nineteenth century. Hilkey focuses on the ways in which their authors defined character and manhood not only as a means to success, but as success itself. Consequently, women were excluded by the corollary assumption that equated failure and feminine. (From this women could aspire to any degree of success only by attempting to adopt a masculine identity.) Drawing upon the work of Peter Filene and others, Hilkey tracks changes in the definition of manliness necessitated by the economic transformations wrought by the new industrial order, and argues that the manuals should be seen "as part of the cultural apparatus that helped legitimize and establish the hegemony" of the new order.

In their advocacy of values based on the traditions of the self-employed and the small-scale entrepreneurs of the pre-industrial past, the writers paradoxically avoided the fact that "the new economic man was an employee" and thus only "a mere shadow" of the powerful businessmen of their own age. As Hilkey suggests the uses of ideology to bring about systemic legitimation, and indicates her debt to Gramsci, et al., she expresses her determination to "take [these theories] as givens" rather than, within her own book, to prove them. Perhaps her work would have been all the better, however, if there had been a greater degree of integration of theoretical structure and explication of the manuals. Nevertheless, she does argue convincingly that the advice offered by the manuals "seemed designed to blunt the pain of some of the more distressing changes of the modern age in part by either denying or disguising their implications." On the other hand, Hilkey has perhaps too readily dismissed, as part of the "consensus" school of the 1950s, the work of the historian who originally introduced her to the success manuals. In fact Irvin G. Wyllie, in his *Self-Made Man in America* (1954), had already told us that "when the business class had attained power it used the success rationale to maintain its superiority and consolidate its control."

But, even if Hilkey's study is not quite as revisionist as she claims, she does offer many additional insights, not only in the area of gender, in her interesting and well-written book.

California State University, Long Beach JACK STUART

Graham Russell Hodges, *Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1665–1865* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1998, $29.95 cloth). Pp. 238. ISBN 0 945 61243 5.

One of the least studied aspects of American slavery is its role in the life of the rural North. Monmouth County, in up-state New Jersey, just across the Raritan estuary from Staten Island, typified the small-farm economy of the Middle-Atlantic states. Its settlers were a heterogeneous mix of English, Dutch,

Huguenot, Scotch-Irish and blacks, the latter constituting roughly 10 per cent of the population. The great majority of these, at least until the 1830s, were slaves. In 1804, the state legislature passed a bill providing for the emancipation of those born after that date when they reached their twenties. Thus the measure did not begin to bite for two decades, and slavery, albeit in an attenuated form, lingered on almost until the Civil War.

Contrary to what is often assumed, slave life on small farms was not necessarily easier than on large plantations. Working alongside owners was as apt to engender hatred as affection. Scattered as they were across the countryside, slaves led lives of social isolation. Establishing families was difficult. At best they were able to congregate with others of their kind only on Sundays, when they met at church. Most were employed as agricultural labourers raising grain, Indian corn, oats, flax and buckwheat or tending stock; others worked as domestic servants. A few were skilled as blacksmiths, carpenters, coopers or fishermen. In short they did much the same sorts of things as indentured servants and wage labourers, only without the financial reward or prospect of eventual freedom.

The picture that emerges is of a population living in a state of material and intellectual impoverishment. How the slaves felt about this can only be inferred. On the basis of the conditions described one might imagine them leading lives of unrelieved misery. Hodges, however, prefers to think of them as a plucky, even heroic, lot, making the best of things and turning "slavery's imposed limitations into facets of a richly melded African and American culture." Whether, circumstances notwithstanding, they managed to do this may be questioned. Forced labour is not normally conducive to high morale, still less cultural attainment. Nevertheless, some of the qualities of resourcefulness he attributes to them were shown in their resistance to the power of the regime under which they laboured. The most notable such example was that of "Colonel" Tye, formerly a Monmouth slave called Titus, who led a series of daring raids into the county during the Revolutionary War. Others, however, remained remarkably passive, as was the case with their descendants, some of whom went on living in conditions of virtual servitude well into the present century.

University of East Anglia HOWARD TEMPERLEY

Warren R. Hofstra (ed.), *George Washington and the Virginia Backcountry* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1998, $34.95). Pp. 265. ISBN 0 945612 50 8.

This set of essays explores Washington's activities on the western frontier in Virginia and the impact of the people and settlement of that area on his career. They investigate formative episodes in Washington's life and relate them to the later, more famous public career of the first president of the United States. Dorothy Twohig sets the scene with an essay on the making of George Washington, emphasising his self-reliance, independent spirit, military prowess, innovations as a planter, and presidential achievements. She argues that Washington's frontier experiences, dealing with men, supplies, and support, and his attitudes towards the political establishment of his day, were a microcosm of

the problems he confronted as commander in chief of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Bruce A. Ragsdale discusses the opportunities open to Washington as a planter cultivating tobacco before the Revolution, and summarises the secondary literature on the business and social outlook of the eighteenth-century Virginia gentry. Three contributions concentrate on back-country Virginia. Robert D. Mitchell examines Washington's problems in handling local government and militia behaviour in the backcountry, and shows how the outbreak of war in western Virginia in the mid-1750s broke the isolation of that region and consolidated Washington's connections with Frederick County. Warren R. Hofstra traces Washington's difficulties with local militia in backcountry areas, emphasising the stronger attachment many settlers felt to their own communities rather than to the institutions of county government around which the defence of Virginia had traditionally been organised. In a critical vein, J. Frederick Fausz concentrates on Washington's employment and exploitation of the Native peoples of the Ohio country during the era of the Seven Years War. The book concludes with three assessments of the significance of Washington's backcountry ventures for his evolving career. Philander D. Chase charts Washington's backcountry surveying and landholding interests, showing how he used this experience to incorporate the western country into the political and economic life of the nation while he was president. John E. Ferling surveys Washington's experiences with the Virginia Regiment, arguing that his experience of organising an army was crucial for his success in the War of Independence. Don Higginbotham views Washington as both a localist and nationalist, someone who supported the deferential values of Virginia planters against British politicians in the 1770s, and then willingly relinquished power for the good of the nation on two occasions, in 1783 and 1796. These brief summaries should indicate the variety and interest of this useful book. Washington's backcountry affairs are probed critically. A complex picture of an individual whose identity underwent considerable change over the course of a lifetime emerges more strongly from this collection than from many other studies of George Washington.

Brunel University KENNETH MORGAN

Lothar Hönnighausen, *Faulkner: Masks and Metaphors* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997, $45). Pp. 320. ISBN 0 87805 998 9.

Lothar Hönnighausen's *Faulkner: Masks and Metaphors* is an exhaustive, not to say exhausting, study of "the ruses and the roles with which William Faulkner masked himself and his characters." Using everything from photographs and interviews through to a selection of major novels, the author effectively constructs a Faulknerian poetics, examining the various public personas that Faulkner adopted through his career and going on to show how this mask-building continued into his fiction to become a crucial linchpin in the reading and writing of his world. Some patience is needed in the gradual development of Hönnighausen's model, for, while the opening discussions of Faulkner's portraits and comments, and of the theorists that the author is to use – Nietzsche prominent among them – are of value in themselves, one sometimes feels as

though treading water until the wider importance of the argument becomes evident in the readings of the fiction itself.

Thankfully, the product of this meticulous preparation is a rich analysis both of Faulkner's relations to his characters and narrators, and persuasive readings of individual works that greatly inform the overall project. Having laid his ground, Hönnighausen goes on to investigate the manifestations of the writer's masks within the work, examining prominent narrative figures such as Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, and, most importantly, Quentin Compson. To look for Faulkner in such characters is nothing new, of course, but it is in the alliance of this with readings of his use of metaphor that the value of Hönnighausen's perspective comes through. By considering both individual instances of extended metaphor in such texts as *The Sound and the Fury* and *Light in August*, and the links between them and the fulfilling of "an essential prerequisite of metaphoric transfer" on the part of the reader in the construction of character, Hönnighausen shows how the strength of Faulkner's interrogation of his region is founded in its transformation of Southern mythology into a multiform and interactive *process*, culminating in fine readings of *Absalom*, *Absalom!* and *The Hamlet*.

This is not a book for the uninitiated, in terms of both argument and presentation. A fairly intimate knowledge of Faulkner's own life and family is presumed – people are referred to on first-name terms, without introduction – as well as extensive familiarity with the texts and existing criticism. One sometimes feels as though the author is speaking to a select club of "we critics" of whom Faulkner is "the master," against which an occasional tendency to state the obvious and overemphasise points grates a little. This can easily be forgiven, however, as can the sometimes over-programmatic approach, for, not unlike its subject's novels, *Faulkner: Masks and Metaphors* is a dense, painstaking, almost brooding affair, ultimately rewarding through its combination of intricate analysis and demands upon the reader.

University of Essex OWEN ROBINSON

Guiyou Huang, *Whitmanism*, *Imagism*, *and Modernism in China and America* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press; London: Associated University Presses, £28.00, 1998). Pp. 166. ISBN 1 57591 011 X.

Guiyou Huang was born in China in 1961 and grew up there during and after the years of the cultural revolution, until he moved to the United States in 1989 to work towards a doctorate and embark upon an academic career in that country. He is thus perfectly equipped to conduct this study of American and Chinese literary interaction. This cross-fertilization takes the form, first, of Whitman's impact upon and importance for Chinese writers and political intellectuals; secondly, of the exemplary models certain ancient Chinese poets provided for Ezra Pound and other Imagists; and, thirdly, of the reciprocal influence of that Chinese-moulded Imagism, so soon after its own apparition in the West, upon Chinese literary modernism of the 1920s.

Whitman's work began to be known in China in 1919, as part of the ferment of Western thought and art, from Shelley to Marx, from Baudelaire to Nietzsche,

exciting the post-dynastic intelligentsia. Initially, it was his language and free verse that were inspirational for vernacular modernizers, both communist and nationalist, though it would be his visionary camaraderie, albeit conceived in a bourgeois and capitalist state, that would later find him a place amongst the Maoist literary elect. Pound's fascism, of course, precluded him from such acceptance and celebrity, for all his sinological learning, and he was banished from the shelves by leftist critics, together with the aesthete Wilde and the decadent Eliot. It is significant that Pound's foremost early admirer, the vernacular poet, Hu Shi, became a leading nationalist and anti-communist, whose books were everywhere burned after 1949.

Unsurprisingly, it will be what Guiyou has to reveal about Chinese literature and the Chinese literary world that will be of most interest, because least familiar, to readers of this journal. His perspective upon American literature will here and there appear eccentric. A brief article in a 1916 issue of the *New Republic* by the twenty-year-old John Dos Passos is accorded an authority that its young author might not have expected these eighty years later. "Pound's dislike of formal dress" is perplexingly considered to be a characteristic of his that "reflects an antagonism to modernity, a tendency that eventually pushes him toward the ancient art and poetry of Asia." And that Whitman, Twain, and Hemingway have been popular in China, "rather than Ezra Pound, Edith Wharton, or Pearl Buck," might not seem, in the case of at least one of those latter figures, as Guiyou assumes it would, altogether "absurd to American readers and critics."

Conversely, those more or less ignorant of modern Chinese literature will be grateful for introductory guidance to such various poets as Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, Guo Moruo, Lu Xun, Tian Han, and Ai Qing, to whom Neruda paid an ironically royalist compliment when saluting him as "the Prince of Chinese poets." For the Poundian and the reader of American poetry generally, the most instructive chapter will be that in which Guiyou examines the influence on Pound of *shanshui* (mountains and water) poetry, which originated in the fifth century in the work of the *tianyuan* (fields and gardens) poet, Tao Yuanming, to blossom most gloriously some three hundred years later in the poems of Wang Wei and Li Po. (Where Pound was drawn to Li Po, it would be Li Po's great friend and contemporary, Tu Fu, that Kenneth Rexroth would so movingly render.) All save one of the poems in *Cathay* are from the *tianyuan* or *shanshui* tradition, and Guiyou commends the young Pound for his "insightful understanding of Chinese *shanshui* poetry despite his inadequate knowledge of the language." As for the later canto 49, even when "considered from a Chinese poetic perspective," it "stands out as a short masterpiece of *shanshui* poetry and imagism."

Through the energetically active years of his middle life Pound was, of course, famously Confucian and provocatively anti-Taoist, but Guiyou finds both the young *shanshui* poet and the aged recluse, all but vowed to silence, to be essentially Taoist. So, too, was Thoreau by Walden Pond, like Tao Yuanming cleaving to nature: Thoreau, whom a Chinese communist would praise for his critique of "the commodity relations of capitalism soaked in the blood and sweat of the laborers." As always, in the great writers there is something for everybody.

University of Essex R. W. (HERBIE) BUTTERFIELD

Michael H. Hunt, *Lyndon Johnson's War: America's Cold War Crusade in Vietnam, 1945–1968* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997, $11.00). Pp. 146. ISBN 0 8090 1604 4.

One of the central issues that any student of the Vietnam imbroglio must address is the extent to which the war can be regarded as Lyndon Johnson's personal crusade or to what extent it grew out of general US containment policy. Michael Hunt, a distinguished scholar whose reputation has been made as a specialist on Sino-American relations, attempts to deal with this critical issue in what is an interesting short introduction to the war. Hunt argues that Johnson "must bear primary responsibility" for the war, although he accepts that US intervention "was the product of a string of formal presidential decisions, of which Johnson's happens to be the last." To challenge this view, one would point out that the US already had a deep-rooted commitment to defending the Republic of Vietnam by November 1963, when LBJ took office, and that it is unlikely that any president would feel comfortable in breaking that commitment. Moreover, many of the ideological concerns that influenced him, such as the Munich-based belief that aggression had to be faced down, were commonplace amongst all the US ruling political class. Finally Johnson, who was remarkably ignorant of foreign affairs for a politician so assured in the domestic arena, relied on advisers who shared and enthused the ideological predilections of the post-war containment era. In short, Hunt's central assertion that Johnson must take primary responsibility is questionable. Responsibility belongs to all the post-war US decision-makers who committed US power to protecting the colonial powers and often parasitical local elites against popular movements that were often not initially pro-Communist or sympathetic to the Soviet bloc.

That being said, this book has much to commend it. It is well written and introduces the most important themes of the war in a simple, cogent manner that makes them explicable to the general reader. The importance that Hunt gives to events in Vietnam itself is also refreshing. Despite claims by Nixon and others that the war was lost in Washington; the reality is very different. The RVN's inability to develop a stable economic, political or social base was central to its defeat. Hunt clearly understands and expresses this.

Overall this book is a useful addition to the historiography on the war and should be included in any list of recommended introductory texts.

University of Warwick KEVIN QUIGLEY

Sanford M. Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, £29.95). Pp. 345. ISBN 0 6910 1570 8.

Jacoby assesses the scope and character of welfare capitalism through a focus on the activities of Eastman Kodak, Sears Roebuck and Thompson Products. Local or company-specific developments are linked to the wider roles of company executives in shaping national policies. The book is buttressed by a profusion of archival materials and secondary literature: the footnotes run to 68 pages.

Jacoby's theme is that welfare capitalism has been a consistent presence, sustained by American executives' persistent desire to minimise the influence of unions and government, but also by its capacity to gain workers' support.

The first chapter surveys the historiography of welfare capitalism and chapter two reviews trends in welfare work from 1900 to 1930. Jacoby offers the idea of "vanguard" and "laggard" welfare capitalist firms as a means of distinguishing degrees of commitment. Chapters three to five deal in turn with the three companies, supplying a deft sense of their workforce, managements and the aims, effects and limitations of different forms of welfare. Kodak offered stable employment and benefits to a homogeneous white workforce in Rochester and encountered few union organising efforts. Sears Roebuck pursued a more assertive anti-unionism, deploying questionnaires to detect disatisfaction and outside consultants to execute anti-union campaigns. Thompson Products was a later entrant, initiating its policies in the 1930s, but sustained company unionism and turned from a personalised welfare approach to more formal systems in the 1940s. In chapter six, executives from each firm are placed in national roles. Thompson executives led campaigns for the Taft–Hartley Act and moderated the National Association of Manufacturers' total opposition to state welfare. Marion Folsom's role in the development of Social Security policies is revisited and there is a survey of Robert E. Wood's support for new forms of behavioural management methods and diverse right-wing groups. A short final chapter explores the post-1960 decline of independent unions, regional dispersion of manufacturing and the emergence of forms of team-working, which Jacoby sees as one of the few tenets of modern welfare capitalism that was not anticipated by his "vanguard" firms in the 1930s.

The book is impressive in its scholarship, fluently written and will repay the attention of all interested in US labour, work practices and the role of corporations in the twentieth century. The thesis is persuasive in terms of the significance of welfare capitalism and its link to broader business efforts to influence public policy. The one disappointment is that the discussion, at least that based on the rich archival materials, dries up around 1959 or 1960. The treatment of the 1930s ploughs well-tilled fields, albeit in an insightful way in less considered places, but Jacoby's expertise and abilities might have shown us even more if applied more closely to the 1960s and 1970s.

University of Glasgow MIKE FRENCH

Peter Karsten, *Heart versus Head: Judge-Made Law in Nineteenth Century America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997, $55.00). Pp. 490. ISBN 0 8078 2340 6.

When I was a law student in the United States, I overheard one of my better-read law professors say "don't read Horwitz." I assumed he simply disagreed with that historian's "new left" stance. Karsten argues there is more to dislike in Horwitz than simply his perspective. He realises his impressive book is the part of a widening attack on much of Horwitz' argument as well as what he calls "the reigning paradigm" in the writing on the history of American law.

He defines this paradigm as arguing that the development of American law is based on economic considerations. He sees this as underlying the work of Willard Hurst, Lawrence Friedman, Richard Posner, Horwitz and others, many of whom are listed in his 150 pages of endnotes. He recognises that these authors reach different conclusions about who was responsible, the benefits and the effects, but he challenges their belief in the importance of economic forces. Based on his own work and that of a large number of monographic studies that support his critique of the paradigm, he argues that the judges of American state appellate courts followed colonial and English precedents (what he calls the "Jurisprudence of the Head") except when they saw the overriding need to carve out a humane exception (what he calls "the Jurisprudence of the Heart"). In other words, they followed the dictates of either precedent or humanitarian concern for the individual and were, generally, much less concerned with the economic transformations around them than previously thought.

Karsten is careful to make clear what he is not studying. He is not looking at statutory law, including criminal statutes, passed by the state legislative and executive branches, nor is he examining the bar, and the federal judiciary rarely appears. He lays out the nine areas of substantive law (in contract, property and tort) he is studying in the chapter titles and is not drawn beyond them. But he relates developments in eighteenth-century English law and earlier to challenge Horwitz' argument that state justices created new doctrines (for the benefit of industry) instead of merely following precedent. He also makes interesting and important observations about the regional differences in American legal development – that the New England and Mid-Atlantic states were much more likely to follow English precedent, while the Southern and Western courts were much more likely to innovate to protect worthy individuals. This is not going to be the last word, however, only an important stage in an historiographical battle that looks set to run for some time to come.

University of Kent at Canterbury GEORGE CONYNE

Richard A. Keiser, *Subordination or Empowerment?: African-American Leadership and the Struggle for Urban Political Power* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, $39.95). Pp. 244. ISBN 0 19 507569 2.

Subordination or Empowerment? joins the academic discussion of urban politics (black mayors and other manifestations of 1970s and 1980s African-American incorporation) to that of black leadership, an historical and sociological perennial. Keiser extends the political science of those like Browning et al. in *Protest is Not Enough*, who focussed empirically on minority incorporation and coalition building, and adds a Weberian analysis of leadership.

Local black leaders fit uneasily into three types – clientelistic–subordinate (accommodationist), separatist–messianic (black nationalist, etc.), and coalitional-incrementalist – and they emerge as creatures of electoral conditions, not creators. Case studies of Chicago, Gary, Philadelphia, and Atlanta demonstrate that where there was competition for black votes coalitional-incrementalist leaders "flourished" and delivered "empowerment." In noncompetitive con-

ditions – where "dominant" parties or coalitions regularly won elections by substantial margins and African-American votes counted for little – separatist and accommodationist leaders survived, locked together in a "negative dialectic" resulting in continued black subordination. This is a mechanistic thesis, which rests on cephological analysis, although much in the urban political history (in the four case-study chapters) reveals a potential for less reductive argument. Leaders such as Atlanta's Hosea Williams attempted proactive creation, using protest *and* coalition building techniques.

Questions arise about definition and measurement of empowerment and subordination. Are they a zero-sum game, as Keiser regards them? For every black police recruit gained there might be one less white cop, but reduction of police brutality, which Keiser uses as an independent measure of empowerment, is not so easily conceived as a loss of white power or protection from crime.

Is racial conflict simply a condition? Keiser regards conflict as necessary to mobilize minority voters (without Lester Maddox as an "enemy," black Atlantan leaders would not have overcome the negative dialectic and fashioned an empowering coalitional regime), and elsewhere as a factor in keeping African-Americans subordinate (where other ethnic minorities are in antagonistic coalitions). Other analysts treat race in a more dynamic way.

If this book disappoints, it is perhaps not so much because of its unsuccessful argument or such questions as above, but rather because American politics have moved on. A book based on a 1989 doctoral dissertation and focussed on such *dramatis personae* as Richard Daley and Harold Washington, Wilson Goode and Frank Rizzo, Richard Hatcher, Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson, and Lester Maddox, can't compete against current events. This notice is written in the week of 1998's midterm election, a long time in politics, when the first black woman Senator lost her seat, the Speaker of the House resigned, and municipal financial autonomy was restored to Washington, DC. When this review is read, Newt Gingrich, Carole Braun, and Marion Berry will have joined the cast of *Subordination or Empowerment?*, no longer names for political thinkers to conjure with.

Lewes, Sussex GEORGE REHIN

Christopher J. Knight, *Hints and Guesses: William Gaddis's Fiction of Longing* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997, £43.95 cloth, £19.95 paper). Pp. 302. ISBN 0 299 15300 2, 0 299 15304 5.

Christopher Knight suggests that he writes in conditions different to those experienced by previous monographers of Gaddis. No longer known only by a small, cultic readership, Gaddis has figured centrally in many recent evaluations of twentieth-century American fiction: hence Knight describes his own position here as that of "a critic responding to a writer assumed to be canonical." This quite proper conceiving of Gaddis's importance motivates him to bring unprecedented research and scholarship to aspects of the four novels. Never before, for example, has a critic offered such careful consideration of the significance of early Flemish painting drawn upon by *The Recognitions*. Similarly,

the amplitude of Knight's study allows him to examine such minutiae as, say, particular educational theory featuring in *J R*, or creationist thinking satirized in *Carpenter's Gothic*.

For all the enlightening detail which it generates, however, the canonical approach evident in this book may still disappoint enthusiasts of Gaddis. Knight is inclined at times to treat the novels too reverently, reading them in the light of their own most overt interests or in the very terms which Gaddis himself has supplied in interviews and essays. *Hints and Guesses* thus rather reproduces the writing that it considers, instead of finding an autonomous critical language for speaking about Gaddis such as is exemplified in John Johnston's bold – if flawed – study, *Carnival of Repetition*.

Knight produces a well-aimed blow against this precursor, when he writes that Johnston's fascination with textual play runs the risk of making Gaddis sound like the "best student" of Deleuze and Kristeva. We should certainly welcome the new book's contrary intention to foreground "Gaddis the social satirist." Yet Knight's attempt to socialize Gaddis's fiction in this way seems only partially successful. In the first instance, his criticism moves somewhat prematurely to "extramural" topics of ethics and politics, without considering how these are mediated by Gaddis's quite extraordinary textual performances. A more formalist dimension to Knight's study would have helped here: after all, the social menace of, say, commerce in *J R* is precisely that it cannot be held apart as a clear object of satire, but infiltrates the novel's own compositional procedure. Secondly, Knight tends to mistrust the social as the ultimate level of interpretation: rather in the manner of Frye, he enfolds political Utopia within the religious, and thereby takes away some of that urgent topicality he rightly wishes to claim for Gaddis.

Loughborough University ANDREW DIX

Angus Mackenzie, *Secrets: The CIA's War at Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, $17.95). Pp. 241. ISBN 0 520 20020 9.

In 1970, Angus Mackenzie launched *The People's Dreadnought*, one of many underground papers protesting against the Vietnam War. When he was distributing copies he was arrested and questioned, released but subjected to repeated harassment. This book is the ultimate result of that experience, an investigation into the CIA's illegal activities in domestic espionage. The story begins around 1967, when CIA activity increased in direct proportion to President Johnson's anxiety about the Vietnam War. A top secret project was launched named MHCHAOS, run by Richard Ober, director of the CIA's Special Operations section. Given the extreme sensitivity of this project, which meant that written records were kept to an absolute minimum, it is astonishing that Mackenzie could gain access to any information at all. He did, however, and his study quotes chapter and verse of then secret documents throughout his account. The CIA and FBI (whose equivalent project was named COINTELPRO) infiltrated student and other organizations for advance warnings of demonstrations and other planned actions. Then their attention shifted to preventing,

or rather trying to prevent, the publication of revelations like Philip Agee's *Inside the Company*. Up to this point Mackenzie makes it clear that the CIA had played a major part in co-ordinating the domestic surveillance activities of the FBI and other agencies. Secondly, the nature of classifiable material was vague and wide open to agency abuse.

Around 1973, Mackenzie's history broadens away from the Vietnam War into the growing public disquiet about CIA practices. In that year, a monthly, *CounterSpy*, was launched with continuing financial support from Norman Mailer, dedicated to exposures of domestic spying. In 1974, the existence of MHCHAOS was first leaked to the press, and Mackenzie sees this event as one of the main triggers of the Congressional investigations of the CIA. Here a constitutional conflict begins to merge, which Mackenzie traces through the administrations from Carter to the present, between Congress and the Executive. Broadly simplifying, Congress wanted to preserve its access to all and any information, while the Executive – and the Iran *Contra* scandal is only one motivating instance – wanted to extend secrecy contracts to make federal employees promise never to disclose classifiable information, which in practice meant any information. A number of measures, like George Bush's Publications Review Board, were thus designed to censor or block publication of books and to plug leaks. Some of these secrecy contracts, however, would prevent employees from giving evidence to Congress and so were themselves blocked. One might expect that the end of the Cold War and Bill Clinton's promise of open government would have changed the situation for the better, but the ironic coda to this study shows that even more documents are being classified, partly because Clinton wants to preserve the confidentiality of White House affairs. *Secrets* makes an important if grim contribution to our understanding of the domestic workings of the CIA and will complement earlier accounts of its MK ULTRA wind alteration and related projects.

Liverpool University DAVID SEED

Susan D. Moeller, *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sells Disease, Famine, War and Death* (London: Routledge, 1999, £16.99). Pp. 390. ISBN 0 415 92097 3.

> "All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players"
> (Jaques, in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*).

Moeller provides a detailed, emotive and sometimes disturbing study of the consequences of the media's coverage of international disasters on the American public. Focusing on contemporary events in the past twenty years, Moeller produces a number of case studies that illustrate the power of the media's representations of international crises: including the Ethiopian famine, the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the outbreak of the Ebola disease in Zaire, and the "ethnic cleansing" in Kurdistan, Bosnia and Rwanda.

The players, in Moeller's train of thought, are the moguls, businesses, and industry insiders that shape the American public's sense of world events. The

proliferation, sensationalism, market orientation, and invisibility of the media, Moeller argues, all work so as to "overload" the viewer's perceptions of international crises, leading to a "compassion fatigue" in which the viewer is inured to the horrors that are represented in images of disease, starvation, war and death. This process is popularly known to many as "desensitization."

Moeller concentrates on the image rather than the written word: how the image, once in its own cultural and social context, is Americanized and made palatable to the formulas of broadcasters, if only to be assimilated, digested, and then finally forgotten. Rather than liberating the image, Moeller's cross-cultural study argues that the colonization of international disasters is little more than a global McDonaldization. The "compassion fatigue" that the American media both suffer from and reproduce, in other words, leads to a homogenization of meaning and the inertia of the American public. Capitalism and the post-modern image are combined, it seems, in order to reduce the viewer to little more than an apathetic and unconscious spectator of world events.

What, though, is Moeller's solution to "compassion fatigue"? In suggesting a panacea, Moeller is both a pluralist and an individualist:

> Compassion fatigue signals the public's weariness with the menu. The public is saying: "Enough. We don't want what you are giving us"... The solution is to invest in the coverage of international affairs and to give talented reporters, camerapeople, editors, and producers the freedom to define their own stories – bad and good, evil and inspiring, horrific and joyous.

The above extract, perhaps touching the heart and the analytical vein of Moeller's book, inspires the reader with its humanism as well as provokes an unwanted skepticism. After all, are the American public as oblivious to the images of the media as Moeller and others claim? Is the medium still the massage? Or is it just easier to approach the American public, as peculiarly both the media and Moeller do in their own ways, as a passive structure and without any agency? Are Moeller's "four horsemen" – the media's coverage of war, famine, disease, and death – only false idols?

The vitality and catharsis that sustains Moeller's approach, in essence, informs us of the very real possibility of a stifling and bureaucratic media as well as challenging readers to begin to ask their own questions on the ethics of representation.

BENJAMIN T. GRAY

Cary Nelson, *Manifesto of a Tenured Radical* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997, £15.75). Pp. 243. ISBN 0 8147 5797 9.

"[Chuck] says he's stopped planning on ever getting a tenured job. Ron just got a job with a pharmaceutical firm," writes a graduate school contemporary of mine, himself employed outside the profession, of the fate of two of our peers. Cary Nelson in his *Manifesto of a Tenured Radical* addresses the jobs' crisis in Humanities departments in the United States that has led to the end of the careers of these bright young men.

Nelson laments the collapse of the job market in the early and mid-1990s when retiring faculty were replaced, not with tenure track positions but with adjuncts and part-timers. Nelson, rightly, appreciates that the corporate downsizing that has afflicted the American job market over the past ten years is now affecting universities. And he understands that for a faculty openly committed to the Left, here is a test of conviction: a chance for his colleagues to put their money where their mouths are.

How then have these "tenured radicals" responded to a situation where currently in History, for example, 41 percent of tenured faculty are aged over fifty-five, while only 4 per cent are under thirty-five? Not very well, according to Nelson, who portrays a smug, disinterested faculty "in denial" as their Ph.D. students work year on year eking out a living part-time competing for an ever-diminishing supply of tenure track jobs. Nelson's portrayal of his colleagues is damning indeed. Their conduct of interviews for positions which usually attract four hundred candidates is apparently disgraceful. He rails at examples of fake job searches (when there is a sitting candidate) and at expensive demands for hundreds of candidates to supply writing samples which are then shredded unread. Nelson has uncovered an example of how one scholar was interviewed at a prestigious university as a "courtesy" and "as a mark of respect" when there was no job: "they thought he would be grateful to receive such a honour."

Another school cancelled a job but went ahead with planned interviews because "they thought it might be interesting to meet the candidates." Such an Alice-in-Wonderland response becomes cavalier when Nelson reports that these days when he speaks one-to-one with job candidates they "always break down and plead for the job." Nor are women spared the egregious sexism that marked the sixties and seventies. One interviewer told a female candidate a few years ago in the middle of an interview that the department had been "hiring so many women lately that… it feels like wall to wall p***y."

As the situation grows worse, the beleagured graduate students and Ph.D.s without jobs have, according to Nelson, only the support of pompous pieties from those at the head of the profession. Former MLA President Sander Gilman has insisted that part-timers and graduate students are "simply younger colleagues." While feminist academic icon Sandra Gilbert has suggested that graduate teaching assistants should think of teaching rhetoric like a stint in the Peace Corps "it makes the world a better place; do not expect it to lead to a permanent job; feel fulfilled by the experience and then get on with the rest of [your] life." And then, presumably, let them eat cake. Yale Dean Thomas Apppelquist, gleefully proclaims that "Graduate students enter as students but leave as colleagues of the faculty." Nelson combatively replies that these people have "often been cast of late as [defenders] of the oppressed but apparently unpaid graduate students or adjunct teachers with no future are either not oppressed or inequities are easy to overlook or undervalue when you are complicit in them."

This is strong stuff. But how typical are Nelson's examples? One senses, occasionally, an element of score-settling, particularly in his attack on several prominent Leftists in Yale History Department that, at times, borders on the libellous. Yale has, in fact, led the way in scaling down its hugely successful

History graduate program in response to the crisis, while, to take one example, the number of Ph.D.s coming out of a far less prestigious midwestern History Department year on year is now double what it was ten years ago; their department placed one of its Ph.D.s last year.

One has to wonder also whether interviews are routinely so inappropriately handled as he suggests. And his emphasis is too heavily on the ersatz world of the Modern Language Association: if one follows deconstructionist theories that deny there are absolute truths, then there can be no absolute morality; therefore, we should not be surprised that, in a world where anything goes, an academic underclass has been formed. Over the last four years, the American Historical Association, an organisation sufficiently unconfined by theory to take action, has formed a task force on Adjunct and Part-time Faculty. The AHA, anyway, means business. The callousness Nelson portrays does not reign in every Humanities discipline or department. Still, Nelson's book is as good a warning as any to us of the danger of complacency. He is that rare thing in the betenured American Professoriate: a man who has had a life and knows the score. It follows, therefore, that as a major contribution to the higher education debate in the United States, this work deserves wide attention in this country.

University of Sussex KEVIN WHITE

Oscar Reiss, *Blacks in Colonial America* (London: McFarland and Company, 1998, £40.50). Pp. 293. ISBN 0 7864 0339 x.

It is a long time since I have read a book on a scholarly subject which has been so poor. The author's stated aim, of writing a one volume account of black life in early America, is entirely laudable, which only goes to make his total failure to live up to this promise all the more disappointing.

Much of this book is merely a narrative of dates and events, with little attempt at analysis or critical insight. While this approach may have had some value if it had brought together competing secondary material in a meaningful way, the author's almost total refusal to read anything on this subject published since 1990 leads to discussions which are stale and out of date. How can a chapter on the daily life of plantation slaves completely omit the explosion of scholarship on the informal economy led by Philip Morgan and Ira Berlin? How can an analysis of the religious life of slaves ignore the recent work of Sylvia Frey amongst others? The discussion of the slavery debate in Georgia ignores the most complete account by Betty Wood, and even more criminal is the complete absence of a gender dimension to this study. While the ignorance of recent scholarship is extremely worrying, what is even more bizarre is the omission of older, but key, works relevant to the discussion. For example, the chapter on the slave trade shows no evidence of having read Philip Curtin's book, and the discussion of slave rebellions has clearly not been informed by close reading of Peter Wood's masterly study of the Stono Rebellion. Even those authors who are cited are often misspelled in the notes.

Although bibliographic omissions are glaring, the author's prose also shows a singular lack of historical training. He has a tendency to read primary sources

uncritically, even when the bias of those written by Southern slaveholders cries out for qualification and criticism. Moreover, for a book ostensibly about black life in Colonial America, far too much discussion focuses on the post-Revolutionary period. One chapter on the Colonization Movement contains almost nothing from the eighteenth century.

Part of the blame for this book must lie with the publishers, who have failed in their duty to ensure that the work was of a sufficient standard to be inflicted on a discerning audience. In sum, this is a terrible book, which cannot be recommended to any student of slavery or of Early America.

University of Warwick TIMOTHY J. LOCKLEY

Larry Richards, *African American Films Through 1959: A Comprehensive Illustrated Filmography* (London: McFarland and Company, 1998, £58.50). Pp. 312. ISBN 0 7864 0307 1.

This book provides a comprehensive listing of African American films for the years 1895 through 1959, which includes production credits and frequently also either a short synopsis of the film or a contemporary review mainly from African-American newspapers. Richards definition of African-American film is usefully fairly loose, including films created especially for African-American audiences with African-American casts but extending also to include predominantly African-American cast films that "try to represent the African-American race (e.g. *Pinky*)" and films that have an African-American as its top star. Included are not only feature films but also trailers, shorts and documentaries, across independent production, Hollywood studio production and production by the US government. Alongside the information on these films, Richards presents also a valuable number of appendices, including lists of actors' credits, film companies, director credits, producer credits and films by year. This latter chronological list allows us to see quite clearly the emergence of films from within the African-American community from 1915 onwards, linked, as Richards suggests in his very brief introduction, to the response to D. W. Griffith's racist epic *The Birth of a Nation* (1915).

One of the most interesting aspects to emerge from Richards' admirable and painstaking archival research for this project is a series of film posters that would have been used to advertise these films at the time of their release. These are presented with wonderful clarity in the text. This really is fascinating stuff, opening up these aspects of the commercial intertexts of the films for scholarly attention, and certainly fulfilling Richards aim to make this material and information available "to the public in a visually appealing, easy to read, and understandable form."

Richards research here, then, has rescued much of this information and visual material from the dustbin of history and made it available both to the public and to scholars who will, let us hope, go on to use this in writing these films back into cinema history. Perhaps, then, the value of this will lie partly in the revisions to the canon of film history that it will suggest. It also filled me with an urge both to see more of these films, and Richards use of the Library of Congress catalog

number is useful here, and to find out more about them. Top of my list will be the intriguingly titled *Are Working Girls Safe?* (Ebony Film Company, 1918).

University of Kent LEE GRIEVESON

Steven J. Ross, *Working-Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998, £21.95). Pp. 367. ISBN 0 691 03234 3.

In "Working-Class Hollywood" Steven J. Ross provides an enjoyable, thorough account of political aspects of movies and movie-going in the US in the first three decades of this century. His study offers a broad view of the early cultural and historical development of US cinema as a popular art form and does so without sacrificing detailed analyses of cinema audiences, producers and products.

Ross begins by noting the acceleration in industrialisation and consequently profit-making in the US in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He reports that, between 1890 and 1920, US workers were able to wrest some of the profits of industry from employers through union action, which also won them shorter hours and, correlatively, greater leisure time. The resulting situation of increased production and consumption facilitated the development of a movie industy whose products were shown to workers in neighborhood Nickelodeons, converted vaudeville dives and seedy movie-houses from 1905 until the First World War, and in plush movie theatres and picture palaces from then on. Broadly speaking, movies' styles and production values matched the changing circumstances of their exhibition. Pre-war films were low-budget and factual or melodramatic, post-war films were expensive and romantic. This transition corresponded with the increasingly successful industrial management and expansion of a group of movie studios run by shrewd producers (Adolph Zukor, William Fox, Harry Warner), the establishment of popular cinema chains often owned by those studios (Fox, Warner) and a gradually more solvent and aspiring audience keen to sample the experience, or at least the fantasy, of middle- and upper-class life that luxurious cinemas and glamorous films offered them.

The strength and sophistication of Ross's analysis, particularly apparent in his account of pre-war cinema, lies in its registration of complex political interaction and conflict at and between all points of cinematic production presentation and consumption. Early films were produced by groups of quite different political persuasions such as labour unions, commercial production companies, liberal reform agencies, employers associations and women's organisations. As well as belonging to different genres (documentary, melodrama, romance, social drama, comedy), films advocated various responses to contemporary social and economic tensions including anti-unionism, radical class action, non-violent protest and negotiation. The presentation and reception of movies was no more uniform. Early movie-houses served numerous local communities and catered for both casual and formal association. Particular cinemas were frequented by any or all of a number of groups that included Italian immigrants, Jewish immigrants, African Americans, socialists and suffragists.

Ross's account of early cinematic politics includes the cataloguing and

description of hundreds of films of quite different political emphases. For example, he records and assesses the radical films of D. W. Griffith (best known, of course, for the "brilliant but racist" *The Birth of a Nation*) and Frank Wolfe. He shows how the former's *The Song of the Shirt* (1908) and the latter's *From Dusk to Dawn* (1913) dramatised class conflict and promoted social and economic equity by contrasting the lives of rich capitalists and poor workers. Descriptions are also provided of conservative films like *The Nihilists* (1905) and *The Dynamiters* (1911) in which "socialist and anarchist men are depicted as Eastern European foreigners with disheveled hair, wild beards and bulging eyes that shine with madness." In line with his narrative of the increasing influence of commercial and broadly middle-class cinematic interests, he stresses the later predominance of aspirational fantasies like *A Daughter of Luxury* (1922) and *Orchids and Ermine* (1927) in which struggling or destitute women become the unexpected beneficiaries of the attentions of dashing suitors with enormous fortunes. Ross's smart glosses of these "cross-class" romances provide a characteristically informative and entertaining end to this valuable work of cinematic history.

University of North London MARTIN MURRAY

Paul Salstrom, *Appalachia's Path to Dependency: Rethinking A Region's Economic History 1730–1940* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994, £11.98). Pp. 204. ISBN 0 8131 1660 3.

Whether folk are being uprooted for a new dam in *Deliverance*, or Starling leaves the mountains in *Silence of the Lambs*, the image of Appalachia as a backward hillbilly region still persists, and academics still argue over its legacy of poverty. Since Kennedy's televised West Virginia campaign revealed that almost Third World conditions existed within an hour or two of Washington DC, various explanatory models have been offered to explain how once self-sufficient people became dependent upon federal programmes as destructive to the land as to themselves. Salstrom's impressive synthesis addresses Appalachia's emerging dependency, from early European settlement through to the New Deal. Using insights from across the US, Appalachia's transition from a self-sufficient economy is traced through labour-intensive mining and extractive forestry, to federal involvement across the southern mountains. Finding a colonial model inadequate, Salstrom has developed a more sophisticated model of dependency to address the complex interaction between population growth and industrial development, located within the context of local factors that worked in favour of external institutions such as railroad and land companies, while doing little to encourage the emergence of locally based communities, companies or financial institutions that could harness external intervention to local needs. Disadvantages that had their origins in the difficult terrain were exacerbated by the workings of the market, and the diffused nature of local political systems did little to reinforce any local advantages. Given the widespread interest in the market revolution that brought so much of the US within the sway of capitalist relations, legitimised, outside the South, with the promise of increasing levels of prosperity, Appalachia is of interest as the most widespread deviant case, particularly

noticeable given that most, thought not all, of its inhabitants were most definitely white Anglo-Saxon Protestant, living within a social system quite unlike that of the caste system of the southern lowlands. And, whereas others have seen Appalachia's unique position as dependent ultimately upon essentially cultural factors, Salstrom argues that it was economic relationships that lay at the heart of Appalachia's growing predicament. The peculiar way in which monetary obligations, and particularly the provision of local credit facilities, developed within groups not used to operating within money-based relationships, came to distinguish Appalachian development from that of the American Midwest or modernising Japan. The argument is persuasive, lucid and intelligently aware that an appropriate analysis would be one that recognised the need to integrate national, regional and local perspectives, that used variously available theoretical perspectives to enhance rather than contain analyses, and which was aware of the dangers of oversimplification. Salstrom has produced an imaginative and provocative piece that will inform further work for many years, for it presents a point of view that deserves such an impressive presentation. If the past is ever to inform the present, it will be this kind of analysis that will make it happen.

Keele University STEPHEN F. MILLS

Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, £19.95 cloth). Pp. 363. ISBN 0 6910 2980 6.

Schmidt invites the reader to recognise the centrality of religious experience in modern holidays despite their growing consumer dimensions. Looking at various complex transitions from folk ways to mass consumption, Schmidt traces the fading, atrophying or re-emergence of various traditions within modern festivals and fairs. Though new national holidays reflected changing patterns of consumption, they operated within a year still marked out in overtly religious terms. St. Valentine's Day became a massive marketing opportunity for Hallmark, while Christmas rites merged to form something often new and novel, even while being co-opted by the emerging world of big city stores.

The author is to be commended for arguing that to assume a straightforward trajectory into an ever more secular response to the world is to miss the ways the sacred and the secular have combined and recombined until the two categories have long since dissolved together. Unprecedented consumer abundance, for most if not all, seems to confirm the blessed standing of the republic at home and abroad in a peculiarly American *mélange* of the holy and the profane. Yet Schmidt recognises that ordinary people are not merely passive receptors of commercial pressures, making their own rituals, that others, churches or corporations, might seem to control. Commercialism could be contained and harnessed to family needs through a continual negotiation that was highly gendered, for women were deeply engaged in the creation of traditions that tempered the more carnivalesque elements of the streets, just as they contained the more commercial demands of the stores, the newspapers and the catalogues.

However, to study "the buying and selling of American holidays" and then

ignore the most popular holidays, the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving, seems problematic. There is also a lack of any significant interest in wider theoretical concerns, the argument being based on a disarmingly attractive form of common-sense revelation, with no tortuous jargon, nor any sense of trying to impose someone else's theoretical model upon the material, a self-denying ordnance that cuts its analysis off from certain comparative perspectives. This places a lot of weight upon Schmidt's initial justifications, and then a greater weight upon his materials and images, as if such cultural traces speak for themselves. That said, this is an excellent example of this kind of analysis, somewhat of a *tour de force*, being a lot more successful than many more theoretically aware studies.

This wonderfully researched, lucidly written and richly illustrated study is a delight, whether to read through or to delve into. Bringing together business, religion, and gender to explore the commercialisation, and thus Americanisation, of high days and holidays, it stands as an excellent example of how American Studies can be more than the sum of its parts.

Keele University STEPHEN F. MILLS

Michael Schuldiner (ed.), *The Tayloring Shop: Essays on the Poetry of Edward Taylor in Honor of Thomas M. and Virginia L. Davis* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997, £30.00). Pp. 222. ISBN 0 87413 623 7.

A Prefatory Note to this book informs us that Professor Thomas Davis set aside a room at Kent State University "in which he placed at the disposal of his graduate students his collection of Taylor materials." A sign on the door of this room, we are further informed, read "The Tayloring Shop." All six essays in this book are products of this Tayloring Shop in that they are the work of former students of Davis, and each essay bears (to a greater or lesser degree) the imprint of Taylor's scholarship in, and deep knowledge of, Puritan New England. Though an admirable erudition to have been exposed to as a student, it results here in a rather uneven book. Davis's assumptions about seventeenth-century poetry and culture are everywhere evident, as are his methodological approaches to literary criticism. The book, therefore, feels a little out of step with its time. It consolidates much existing Taylor scholarship rather than breaking any new ground in critical readings of Taylor's poetry.

Divided into three sections of two essays each, the book deals with *The Preparatory Meditations*, *Gods Determinations*, and Taylor's *Minor Poetry*. The strongest – and most interesting – two essays are Raymond Craig's "The 'Peculiar Elegance' of Edward Taylor's Poetics," and Jeffrey A. Hammond's "'Diffusing All by Pattern': Edward Taylor as Elegist." Craig's analysis of *Preparatory Meditations* is an elegant combination of scholarship and critical reading, which unearths some of Taylor's source materials in order to interrogate the role of poetry in his culture. In examining the sometimes fraught relationship between the words and the Word in Taylor's poetics, it seeks, as Craig puts it, to "reveal the 'poetry' of the Word." This in itself reveals an approach to Taylor's poetry that is refreshing against the seemingly narrow and dusty scholarship of most of the other essays in the book. As with Craig's essay, the

strength of Hammond's essay is its attempt to "reconstruct" the assumptions about poetry and its power that would have been held by Taylor and his audience. Hammond provides rich information about elegiac conventions from Milton's *Lycidas* onwards, and goes a great way towards demonstrating how Taylor's use of such conventions derives from, and helps propagate, a Puritan view of poetry as a vehicle for the transformation of "death ... from a sad disruption of New England's mission into its glorious goal."

Overall, though, the scant attention given to questioning the role of poetry in New England Puritanism – surely a problematic concern – makes this a book of dry scholarship rather than lively critical debate about one of America's most important early poets. The narrowness of focus, and the myopic attitudes this seems to endorse, mean that this Tayloring shop is, for the most part, a closed shop.

University of Wales, Swansea NICK SELBY

Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, £32.95). Pp. 238. ISBN 0 8032 4664 1.

Gerald Vizenor's latest collection of essays is a provocative mixture of anecdote, theory, history, mythology and neologisms, continuing his significant challenge to ideas of Native American identity already available in prose, film and reportage. For Vizenor, the assertion of the *indian* (just one of his playful coinages) only occurs at the expense of the native whose absence is central to the oxymoron of Vizenor's title: the "fugitive pose." The *indian* is a stationary simulation, posing for the external quantitative definition of the social science thesis, a work of modernity from which the native is ever elusive, fugitive from categorization. Vizenor suggests that the *indian* will not be found by extensive anthropological studies, nor archeology nor photography nor any of the social sciences. All that will be found therein is that which confirms master narratives of dominance, distinctions based on the binarisms of civilisation and savagism and the solitary marginal noble savage. The sources to which the contemporary *indian* could turn in order to establish potential origins or the permanence of a native identity are unstable "translations," without referents and without a past. Vizenor's sophisticated argument is that the native consists solely in the trace structure emitted by the dialogical interaction of cultures over time. He suggests that history and tradition cannot act as a cohesive centre, merely as false trails of cultural purity enacted in the language games of dominance. Tradition, writes Vizenor, tellingly, is a "dialogic immediacy," not the history of a presence, but the present of an absence. He borrows heavily from the language of Bakhtin and Derrida in a manner that may not enamour him to many First Nation critics, but without compromising the rigour of his essays.

Vizenor's strategy is elusive, mirroring the fugitive pose of his title. Take, for example, his coining of phrases such as "natural reason." This would appear to be anathema to Vizenor's project, containing resonances of authenticity. His use of the term, however, is evasive, positioning it in different contexts as support for

other terms, such as the aforementioned native, as well as trace, survivance, trickster and persona. The meaning of natural reason becomes crucial to an entire network of concepts that are triggered by its enunciation, yet destabilised by its ambiguous significance. Natural reason is thus the slippery limit of a variety of terms, a point that refuses integration into Vizenor's discourse, preventing reification. Instead, these often playful but always serious writings present the challenge of a permanent critique to entrenched positions.

University of Nottingham DAVID GREENHAM

Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism 1937–1957* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997, $39.95 cloth, $16.95, paper). Pp. 259. ISBN 0 8014 8292 5.

According to Penny M. Von Eschen, the 1940s were a kind of "golden age" of Pan-Africanism when black intellectuals and journalists in the United States, Britain, West Africa, and the Caribbean articulated a universalist vision that linked black struggles with all struggles to achieve democracy and independence. Later on, these internationalist perspectives declined as the African-American press, muzzled by Cold War censorship during the Truman administration, focused more exclusively on national issues of oppression. This retreat from solidarity with other oppressed peoples was accompanied by a change in African-Americans' understanding of racism, for "race" and "color" were no longer viewed as the result of slavery and colonialism but as explanations for them. By viewing racism as merely a psychological problem or a characteristic of backward peoples, the black press argued that this "disease" could be eradicated by Western-style "modernization." Thus, in the shift from internationalism to nationalism and the accompanying reinterpretation of racism, Von Eschen finds the end of Pan-Africanism and its potentially redemptive connection with the struggles of other peoples.

Though internationalism may have been in its heyday during the 1940s, American leaders and organizations were not always as radical or "internationalist" as Von Eschen implies. She hails a Council on African Affairs (CAA)-sponsored conference as being reflective of early 40's anticolonialist activism, but participants there looked to the United States to promote industrialization of the African economy and, from the book's description, only a few Africans actually attended the conference. Thus, even though the CAA claimed that development schemes must give "primary consideration to the interests of the African peoples," their leaders represented the same kind of elitism and ethnocentrism found in Western-sponsored modernization projects today: they assumed that they knew what was best for the African people.

In addition to an interesting history of the African-American press between 1937–1957, Von Eschen's book is a sobering reminder of the fragility of coalitions of diverse people and the limitations of the visions of leaders, who are constrained by their own class and national interests. Her book also raises profound questions about the state of journalism today. How many contemporary reporters play a "dual role as journalist and activist" like George Padmore did

in the 30s and 40s? Without a vigorous dissenting press due to the increasing concentration of print capitalism in the hands of a few corporations, what are the implications for democracy?

New York University LAURA DULL

Tony Waters, *Crime & Immigrant Youth* (Thousand Oaks, CA and London: Sage, 1999, $29.95 cloth, $17.95 paper). Pp. 233. ISBN 0 7619 1684 9, 0 7619 1685 7.

The sociological focus in the United States has shifted in recent years and new disciplines have flourished, perhaps growing up with the crops that slaves used to tend. The nineteenth-century's preoccupation with class and capital has transformed to the policy-driven concern to control the "deviant" in society. This change of attitudes in surveying certain segments of the population is implied and condoned in Waters' text, delivering us to the late twentieth century at the forefront of which is the new discipline of criminology. The new focus and the crux of Waters' study is now a sociological incursion into ethnicity, deviance, and immigration.

The data that Waters draws upon is extremely thorough in regarding the immigration of several populations into the United States in the last hundred years. From records of the influx of groups such as Laotians, Koreans, Mexicans, and Molokan Russians, Waters examines the convoluted relationships between migration, identity, and "youthful immigrant crime." In addition to a highly sophisticated quantitative study, Waters embellishes his methodology with the life histories and personal accounts of immigrants and their families.

The comparison of the migration process for different ethnic groups is certainly helpful to Waters, allowing him to break from more established approaches that delineate the life of the immigrant as being ruled by scapegoating and socio-economic factors. By a comparative study, a shift in focus is achieved that allows Waters to touch upon a variety of issues: for instance, the importance of intergenerational conflict in creating deviance; the possibility of anomie in third-generation immigrants in American society, cultural misunderstandings of the law and legal processes; the gender and age variables that predispose the immigrant to criminal activity; and, related to the last point, the "baby booms within some immigrant populations that result in rising rates of youthful crime," allegedly pertaining to the high incidence of crime among young males.

While the central thrust of the analysis is neo-liberal, the conclusions that are reached by Waters are strangely pessimistic. Waters dismisses, albeit with careful steps, the roles of educators and reformers in favour of controlling criminality by using a mixture of techniques: first, by incorporating internal checks that are available among immigrant groups themselves; second, by increasing the scope of vision that is involved with the predictive power of demographic statistics and divining allegedly "at risk" groups.

While Waters' study of immigration and crime is detailed and modern, part of the new wave that concerns itself with the criminology involved with specific populations, the dynamic of the text is somewhat Malthusian and bio-political.

Waters also avoids a specific commentary on the differences of immigrant and refugee issues in the United States. Much more importantly, racism is brushed over to leave no black in the star-spangled flag, to paraphrase the title of a book by Paul Gilroy. The new focus and the growth of new disciplines in sociology, studying the long history of immigration that has built the United States, perhaps forget the importance of looking back at the roots of the American soil.

BENJAMIN T. GRAY

Margaret Earley Whitt, *Understanding Flannery O'Connor* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997, £10.50). Pp. 261. ISBN 1 57003 225 4.

Flannery O'Connor, in the posthumous collection of critical essays, *Mystery and Manners*, provides brief commentary upon the art of writing. O'Connor states: "There are two qualities that make fiction. One is the sense of mystery and the other the sense of manners." O'Connor's own writing reflects this belief in the "mystery" of existence manifested through the concrete "manners" of time and place. The publication of O'Connor's concise account of her writing prompted renewed and revitalised interest in her work and, as Whitt states, "became the chief lens for O'Connor interpretation." In *Understanding Flannery O'Connor*, Whitt adopts this same interpretative position: "To understand O'Connor's fiction is to accept the intricate blending, the complex weaving of manners and mystery." So, in the first chapter of this comprehensive overview of the entire O'Connor canon of short stories, novels, occasional writings and published letters, Whitt immediately provides an answer to understanding Flannery O'Connor. This critical paradigm of mystery and manners fully informs the structure of Whitt's own study of O'Connor, which combines careful elucidation of the figurative meaning of her work with biographical information and precise first publication details. Whitt's explication of the symbolism of the fiction is performed with a rigour that reflects O'Connor's own belief in the purpose of the writer – to "penetrate matter until spirit is revealed in it."

In *Understanding Flannery O'Connor*, Whitt surveys O'Connor's work with both intensive textual study and extensive, though standard, contextualisation of the writer's southern and Catholic heritage. This draws upon the elaboration of several thematic elements of O'Connor's work – her concern with mother–child relationships, contemporary southern race issues and, primary to Whitt's study, O'Connor's use of religious symbolism. The chronological structuring of the eight chapters, that devote equal critical attention to O'Connor's early writing and her more mature work, often results in the repetition of material. Yet this also reflects the purpose of this volume as an introduction and companion to tentative first readings of O'Connor's fiction. *Understanding Flannery O'Connor* is one of a series of guides to contemporary American fiction intended for both the student and the non-academic reader. Yet, whilst Whitt's study provides access into the texts, it also fulfils O'Connor's own apprehension of literary study: "Every time a story of mine appears in a Freshman anthology, I have a vision of it, with its little organs laid open, like a frog in a bottle." In *Understanding*

Flannery O'Connor, Whitt performs a textual vivisection to satisfy even the most methodic reader.

University of Warwick SARANNE WELLER

Fareed Zakariah, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998, $29.95, £23.50). Pp. 200. ISBN 0 691 04496 1.

Readers are apt to find Fareed Zakariah's choice of title puzzling. There is, after all, nothing unusual in the fact that, having acquired wealth, a country should choose to make its presence felt on the world scene. As is demonstrated in Paul Kennedy's magisterial *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1987), this is a recurrent phenomenon. Nations that achieve wealth generally acquire international responsibilities along with it. Dr. Zakariah, who pays tribute to Kennedy, is well aware of this. What was unusual in the case of the United States, he argues, was rather the extraordinary length of time that elapsed between the nation's achievement of economic pre-eminence, which dates from the 1880s, and its emergence as a fully committed player in the world arena, a role it adopted only after World War II. But this again will not surprise readers of this journal, or anyone else for that matter. America's isolationism, her late entry into the two world wars and her persistent reluctance to convert her economic strength into international influence through the exercise of military power are among the major themes of twentieth-century history and are featured in every textbook dealing with the period.

Where Dr. Zakariah's account differs from these, and from the more specialised studies, too, is with regard to the *reasons* for this dilatoriness. The one most frequently cited is America's uniquely privileged geographical position. This was the factor singled out by George Washington in his Farewell Address in which he called on his countrymen to pursue a destiny separate from that of Europe. Others have drawn attention to the richness of America's natural resources and the vast tracts of land available for settlement in the West. Endowed with virtually everything they needed in a material sense, and with a whole continent to subdue, was it surprising that Americans were reluctant to embroil themselves in the endemic wars and rivalries of other continents – until, of course, thanks principally to technological change, these began to threaten the security of the US itself?

Without entirely dismissing these arguments, Dr. Zakariah does, however, show that all is not as straightforward as it is commonly made to seem. Internal expansionism was not the same thing as European colonialism. Skirmishes with Indians were hardly the stuff to stir the heart of a true imperialist. Technological change, as often as not, rendered the US *less* vulnerable. As a "realist" he assumes that economically successful nations necessarily seek to expand their spheres of influence or, more precisely, that that is what their leaders seek to do. In this respect America's leaders were no different from those of other nations. Successive presidents and their administrations were every bit as expansionist in their aspirations as their European counterparts. Many of the views attributed to

them, and supported by quotation, are astonishing. So confident was Secretary of State William Seward of the US's destiny to continue expanding southward that he devoted serious thought to the possibility of making Mexico City the capital of the new federation. Others harboured ambitions scarcely less grandiose. What distinguished them from European imperialists of the day was not the modesty of their aspirations but the lack of a central government apparatus capable of harnessing the economic strength of the nation in such a way as to serve their expansionist interests.

Taking the period 1865 to 1908 as his example, he analyses 54 international episodes with a view to determining what it was in each case that determined the outcome. What he finds is that the capacity of administrations to mobilise support for their plans increased significantly over time. This was not, he makes clear, on account of worries concerning national security, which remained minimal, but rather because of the way power was shifting from the states to the Federal government and from the legislative to the executive branch. The question thus arises as to what brought about this development. To explain how this normally happens Zakariah quotes Charles Tilley's dictum that "war made the state and the state made war." But, in the case of the US, it was not an *external* threat that led to this accretion of power, but rather the *internal* threat to economic and social order arising from the advent of modern industrialism which, in turn, transformed America's relations with the rest of the world.

Its title notwithstanding, this is a novel way of looking at America's rise to global power, although perhaps not quite as revolutionary in its implications as its author suggests. To pick on the fact that nineteenth-century US administrations lacked the executive authority routinely wielded by their European counterparts is to cite only one of many possible variables. After all, the American system of government itself reflected the peculiarly favourable circumstances enjoyed by the early republic, in particular the opportunity to do without a powerful executive, a large defence establishment and the taxes required for their support. Nevertheless, by dispensing with notions of unusual virtue and drawing attention to the way the American system of checks and balances constrained the expansionist ambitions of the executive branch, Dr. Zakariah usefully points up the limitations of the traditional view of the US as a reluctant participant in world affairs.

University of East Anglia HOWARD TEMPERLEY

Sally Zanjani, *A Mine of Her Own: Women Prospectors in the American West, 1850–1950* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, £30.95). Pp. 375. ISBN 0 8032 4914 4.

Western women's historians have produced so much material in the past quarter century that it is now inconceivable that the history of the American West could once have been written without acknowledging the activities of numerous women who farmed, ran commercial enterprises, taught school, were social reformers or were involved in building communities. Yet some sections of Western history – trading, trapping, mining and lumbering – are still considered

masculine not only because of the numerical dominance of men, but also because they are associated with heavy, often exploitative labour, an arduous life style and cavalier adventuring.

A Mine of Her Own seeks to change perceptions of this masculine terrain by recovering female prospectors who searched for fortunes in the century after the California Gold Rush. Examining 77 prospectors and an additional 19 miners in their often gruelling and isolated endeavours in a West stretching from the deserts of the Southwest to the frozen wastes of Alaska and the Yukon, Sally Zanjani suggests that women, too, were tough enough to pioneer in rugged territory. Though convention decreed that women's place was definitely not searching for minerals in remote areas, enough individuals were sufficiently bold to imply that, if nothing else, the West was open and large enough to allow variety. These female prospectors, often single, widowed or divorced, loved pioneering, enjoyed the landscape, relished their independence and hoped to make their living, if not their fortunes. Their financial success was varied. There were some competencies, but often these entrepreneurs mined part-time and depended on their other activities, like running restaurants and boarding houses or farming, to keep going.

A Mine of Her Own is a labour of love which could only have been "mined" by as much grit and determination as the female pioneers themselves displayed. Stirring adventures of the copper queen Ferminia Sarras, of Lillian Malcolm's journey to Nome or of Alice "Happy Days" Diminy's diggings in Tule Canyon sit side by side with titbits of information about prospectors whose lives appear only occasionally in local newsheets or early reminiscences. It has obviously been a formidable task to weave materials together to produce a book with academic credibility. Indeed, in parts the volume remains a series of epic sagas tenuously connected by references to historical concepts like the domestic ideal or pioneering. Certainly the epilogue suggests some tentative generalisations, but for the most part the book remains a series of adventure stories. These are valid and interesting, but their impact on the rewriting of Western history will be limited.

University of Nottingham MARGARET WALSH

Kevin J. Mumford, *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, $57.00/£40.00 cloth, $20.00/£13.95 paper). Pp. 238. ISBN 0 231 10492 8, 0 231 19493 6.

The single historical thesis at the basis of this thoroughly researched book is, to quote from the Introduction, that "underlying the major events in the history of black/white sexual relations – the famous marriage, the sexual scandal – there lies a rich history of black/white sexuality. *Interzones* proposes that these interracial relations on the margins remain central to understanding the character of modern American culture." In order to corroborate his thesis, the author provides a fascinating chronicle of the role of vice districts in New York and Chicago as "interzones," that is urban areas crucial for the shaping of racial categories and

cultural attitudes. Indeed, the interzones were the undesired outcome of social Progressivism, urban spaces in which vice, in the shape of black (and white) female prostitution and homosexuality, flourished in taxi dance halls, brothels and speakeasies. Thus interzones come to be spatially and ideologically defined as areas of sexual, social and cultural interchange. However, one should not get the idea that this book is only about the oppression experienced by the people who lived in these vice districts; in fact, far from simply adding to the myth of the Roaring Twenties, this book tries to posit the origin of the popularity that such places and their life style enjoyed, at some point, in a remarkable sense of resilience and agency demonstrated by its ordinary inhabitants. Unfortunately such moments of popularity, which were to prove so inspiring for many writers and artists, did not last, and soon the interzones were to become a source of national anxiety. In one of the last and best chapters, "Slumming, Appropriating the Margins of Pleasure," Mumford concludes that, thanks to the cultural forms produced in the interzones and then disseminated through a whole series of interracial, bohemian appropriations, the origins of American modernism can be located "in African-American culture and social practices." Indeed, modernism was an urban phenomenon and it was the modern avant-garde who often appropriated urban spaces like the interzones in its critical response to contemporary conservatorism. However, one should not forget that African-American culture was certainly predominant, but by no means unique in the vice districts. The book ends with a brief theoretical discussion of notions like race, racialism and sexual racism, paying particular attention to the difference between racialism and sexual racism, a difference which seems to be at the basis of the author's own historical thesis throughout the book. Overall, *Interzones* is an interesting addition to the ever-growing list of works dealing with questions of race and ethnicity; its merit lies not in the originality of its topic, but rather in the way in which it brings together, often in minute detail, racial prejudice, sexuality, political reform and urban geography.

University of Nottingham ANNA NOTARO

Helen Papanikolas, *A Greek Odyssey in the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nelvaska Press, 1997, £16.95). Pp. 327. ISBN 0 8032 8747 x.

George A. Kourvetaris, *Studies on Greek Americans* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, £33.60). Pp. 282. ISBN 0 88033 377 4.

Helen Papanikolas begins her narrative by describing her childhood in the small Utah town of Helper during the 1930s. Part autobiography, it shows the usual immigrant tensions between allegiance to the old country (insisted on by the conservatives in her community) and the desire to embrace the new world. Probably fed by her unrestricted reading, this account provides a wealth of "thick description" of the lives of the Greeks – the autumn ritual of making tomato paste, the arrival of the "Karagiózi" (the puppet theatre) and so on. Helen's

community formed part of an astonishingly varied patchwork of other groups of Chinese restaurant owners, Slav businessmen and Italian workers. Her own experiences supply the springboard to reconstructing the lives of her parents from their last days in Greece to their voyage to America and subsequent journeys west. Assembled from documents and oral reports, these two converging biographies shed new cultural light on a community constantly moved on in search of work, and the life of the father is a particularly impressive achievement given the then gender separation within Greek society. One role model for Helen Papanikolas might well have been the Athenian journalist Maria Economidhou who travelled around the USA in the 1910s writing reports of the hardships endured by the Greek railroad gangs. For most of the jobs available were heavy manual work, such as the construction of a waterline or mine labour, and it was in the latter that trouble blew up in 1922. That year, a miners' strike led to a wave of hostility where anti-unionism and suspicion of the "alien" became indistinguishable, one of the Salt Lake City newspapers declaring that "Greeks were unfit for citizenship." Years after the strike, the Greeks were still being harassed by the Ku Klux Klan.

Where Helen Papanikolas combines narrative and a shrewd eye for the detail of social and domestic life, George A. Kourvetaris' volume supplies a context for *A Greek Odyssey*. He assembles twelve essays on Greek-American ethnic identity, supplying useful background history of the diaspora communities of Constantinople and Egypt which, after years of economic nationalism, have been reduced drastically in the first case and almost erased in the second. Using questionnaires within two Greek parishes of Chicago which invited subjects to rank features of ethnic identity, Kourvetaris shows a broad occupational shift from service industries to the professions. In a number of these essays, a predictable pattern keeps emerging of first-generation emigrants retaining the kinship structures and cultural values of Greece, the second generation challenging these (in a refusal of arranged marriages, for instance). in third and subsequent generations, identity is preserved through the retention of names, Orthodox observance, ethnic food and visits to Greece. Greek films of the 1960s regularly show a fabulously rich relative bringing largesse from America. Partly this is a pattern of assimilation, but that pattern has itself been affected by historical developments. Greek emigration to America is basically a twentieth-century phenomenon, and a constant one right into the postwar period, so ethnicity has been "graduated"; since the war, general changes in American society have fed through to the Greek community, increasing assimilation, gender equality and independence for children. Kourvetaris draws attention to two issues of particular interest: the role of the church and the Greek language. The former traditionalists, especially of the first generation, insist that the Greek Orthodox Church (nation-based like the other European Orthodox churches) should be grounded in Greek ethnicity. Later generations (the "environmentalists"), however, insist that it should merge with the larger Orthodox community. With the language – the "lifeblood of ethnic identity and consciousness," according to Kourvetaris – the situation is more complex. If the second generation rejects Greek, can that process ever be reversed? Later generations might force their children to attend special classes in the language from a sense of duty, but it remains an open question as to how

successful this might be. Kourvetaris concludes his collection with speculations on how the survival of Greek-American identity might be secured institutionally.

University of Liverpool DAVID SEED

Peter J. Parish (ed.), *Reader's Guide to American History* (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997, £95). Pp. 880. ISBN 1 884964 22 2.

Scholars needing a handy, up-to-date guide to the facts and figures of United States History, including its colonial antecedents, need look no further than Thomas L. Purvis's *A Dictionary of American History* (Blackwell, 1995), which, despite a quirky penchant for minor military campaigns, is a reliable, concise guide to the main events, personalities, political parties, major pieces of legislation, and peoples of North America. But where does one look for a single volume devoted to the main currents in the interpretation of these features of American society? The answer is the book under review. In a hefty, handsomely printed tome, Peter J. Parish has assembled an Anglo-American team of contributors to summarise the main historiographical arguments on a wide range of topics, some specific and limited in scope, others more broad and general, that have contributed to the making of the modern United States. Entries range from less than a page on the conservationist Gifford Pinchot to ten pages, broken up into sections, on US foreign policy since World War Two. Contributors' entries discuss prominent books in the secondary literature of each topic; there is no room for commentary on primary sources or collections of printed material. The coverage is reasonably wide, stretching chronologically from the sixteenth century to the Reagan presidency. Politics, diplomacy, social structure, immigration, all major wars, important legislation, presidents, cities, slavery, women's history, and leading personalities are all included. So, too, is sport, with entries on basketball, baseball, and (American) football. Economic history, though covered adequately, comes a poor second to political topics: there is little in depth on the centrality of great staples such as tobacco and rice to the history of the early Chesapeake and the lower South. The editorial decision to omit most cultural history is, I think, wrong: the absence of entries on Jazz or the American musical leaves the reader without recourse to the literature on artistic enterprise in American history. Yet a great deal of material is included, and many will be grateful for the clear summaries of interpretations of numerous themes and public figures. Some contributors go beyond merely summarising the existing literature to suggest the need for a modern reappraisal of their topic; examples are the pieces on Stonewall Jackson, Edward Bellamy, and Warren G. Harding. The entries are arranged alphabetically, with authors discussed clearly identified by capitalising their surnames. The volume is enhanced by provision of a thematic list, booklist index, general index and cross references to related topics. I have already used it quite a lot to catch up on the current state of play on American public figures and periods that I will never have the time to master thoroughly;

and I would recommend it to other historians who want to brush up on areas of American history beyond their specialist expertise.

Brunel University KENNETH MORGAN

Joseph Tilden Rhea, *Race, Pride and American Identity* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1997, £16.50). Pp. 163. ISBN 0 674 56684 5.

The author is a professor of sociology at Arizona State University who asserts that his short study "is not about race in American history. It is not about the mistreatment of Indians or the oppression of blacks." Rather, he maintains it is a study of collective memory and the way in which "public history ... promotes negative views of a group, or simply excludes it from consideration" and the harm that this does to those who are excluded. This exclusive public history is controlled by universities and museums, and these become contested sites with the emergence of what he calls the "Race Pride Movement" after "the collapse and fragmentation" of groups that had spearheaded the civil rights protest.

There are some positive features to this slim volume. For example, Rhea, unlike Terry Anderson, is willing to admit that the siege of Wounded Knee had positive outcomes. He correctly stresses that Asian Americans failed to unify. Despite the initial success of Japanese Americans in their campaign about the internment they suffered during the war, Asian Americans failed to develop a sense of community, made more difficult by post-war immigrations, especially from Korea and Vietnam. He is correct to contrast Native American over interpreting Custer and the past to the failure of Latinos to revise the history of the Alamo.

However, what he calls "patriotic history," or history as written by white folks, is an unfortunate choice of phrase because it is clear the author does not want to imply that these groups were unpatriotic. He concedes the American Indian Movement had its origins in the urban ghetto, not on the reservation. Perhaps AIM and other Indians were "particularly successful in their efforts to influence American popular memory" partly because they exploited the white man's concept of the Noble Savage and guilt for past mistreatment. His strictures about the success of Asian Americans and their failure to find a unifying history and identity might also be applied to American Indians. After all, the Hopi are surrounded by the Navajo, but these are two groups who have been enemies for centuries. The urban nature of AIM meant that too often they ignored differences in culture among Native Americans.

His discussion of Race Pride among blacks is very disappointing. There is only a cursory examination of the long history of black nationalism. Many leading figures are simply ignored. Perhaps the most troubling thing is this attempt to create a race pride movement. If such a thing exists, then it is all the more surprising that there is no reference to white pride groups such as the Aryan Nations.

University of Ulster WILLIAM T. MARTIN RICHES

James Sidbury, *Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia, 1730–1810* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £16.95). Pp. 292. ISBN 0521 59860 5.

In *Ploughshares into Swords*, the history of Gabriel's Conspiracy in Virginia in 1800 receives a thorough rereading. A sophisticated and creative act of historical reconstruction, the book examines both the cultural processes and social practices that shaped the criss-crossing black and white Virginian worlds in which the planned rebellion developed and gained meaning.

Charting the emergence of racial consciousness in eighteenth-century Virginia, Sidbury highlights the disruptive historical and political forces (of the American and Haitian revolutions, large-scale conversion of slaves to Christianity and the westward shift of the state's slave population) that lay behind creolization and the slaves growing sense of "corporate identity." The first Africans in the new world of the Old Dominion demonstrated a high degree of linguistic, religious and cultural diversity, but, by the middle of the eighteenth-century, slaves were actively adapting to their circumstances in Virginia and forging "plantation-based identities." From this first effort at local organization, through subsequent battles over work-rates, struggling to protect community members and responding to geographic, demographic, religious and political changes, Virginians of African descent broadened their collective identity and began to presume "kinship with all other black Virginians." The Revolution on Saint Domingue added a new racial confidence (a trope of "Frenchness" with which enslaved "Virginians communicated ideas about freedom and revolution"), but also a further layer of complexity (a black Atlantic self) to black Virginians developing "mix of identities." Here, Sidbury detects not only a double consciousness within black Virginians at the end of the eighteenth-century, but also "a doubleness internal to racial consciousness." Sidbury's analysis of Gabriel's conspiracy clearly indicates the inherent tension of these "cross-cutting identities," providing a fuller understanding of this key moment of slave resistance.

Undertaking a detailed multilayered analysis of patterns of daily life and labour in Richmond, Sidbury offers another "window" on the world of black identity formation in Virginia. The state's growing political and commercial centre offered new opportunities for black Virginians to fashion their own "cultural spaces," promising a degree of autonomy and security unheard of in the environment of plantation slavery. Pointing to the process of "cultural appropriation," Sidbury also examines the means by which enslaved Virginians reconstituted the meanings of highly charged symbolic elements of both their own and their "master's cultural universe" (seizing upon powerful icons of authority such as weaponry and horses and transforming "tools of servility" – ploughshares indeed – into "weapons of liberation"). Finally, by examining "hidden transcripts" of Gabriel's Conspiracy in folk memory and fiction, Sidbury suggests that the "rebellion" inspired many later attempts to complete the liberation of African Americans. Likewise, in *Ploughshares into Swords*, Sidbury successfully stirs the historical imagination and demonstrates narrative strategies contemporary historians cannot afford to ignore.

Liverpool John Moores University STEPHEN C. KENNY

James P. Smith and Barry Edmonston (eds.), *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic and Fiscal Effects of Immigration* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1997, £40.95). Pp. 434. ISBN 0 309 06356 6.

At various intervals in American history, the subject of immigration has been a controversial political subject and a topic of intense debate. This has been particularly true throughout the 1990s. To help policy makers better understand the effects of immigration, in 1995 a bi-partisan congressional Commission on Immigration Reform asked the National Research Council to form a team of experts to analyze the influence of immigration on the size of the US population, the economy, and government finances at all levels. Two years later this team published a comprehensive study on the effects of immigration on the US.

The most significant finding in *The New Americans* is that, although immigration has a tremendous effect on population growth, in general it does not have a negative impact on the US economy. Examining the relationship between immigration and the US job market both theoretically and empirically, this study argues that, since immigrants are productive participants in the US economy, but paid low wages, native-born workers benefit. The only negative impact is on the wages and employment of competing native workers. The book also shows that immigration has a positive fiscal impact at the federal level. Since most immigrants arrive in America at a young working age, and many have a high level of education, they have a positive fiscal impact. Any negative fiscal effects of immigration are specific to particular regions with a high concentration of immigrants.

As the experts who have written this study recognize, their conclusions have important implications. If immigration has little negative effect on the American economy, then more needs to be said about why the public mood is increasingly opposed to immigration. Unfortunately, the book only offers speculative explanations when it suggests, for example, that "the recent hardening of attitudes may be due to the widespread media attention paid to the issue of illegal immigration." Yet, despite this explanation, this study does not adequately explore the specific effects of illegal immigration.

Still, *The New Americans* offers some very important insights. But readers must be aware that it is intended for policy makers. The study is extremely dense, full of complex equations and jargon that may leave many frustrated. Those who have the patience to sift through the material, however, will come away with a new and thorough understanding of the complex issue of immigration in the United States.

New York University DANIEL P. KOTZIN

Paul M. Sniderman and Edward G. Carmines, *Reaching Beyond Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, £9.95) Pp. 191. ISBN 0 674 14578 x.

One unfortunate side-effect of the success of the black desegregation struggle has been the exacerbation of class stratification in the black community. Whereas members of the middle class have made dramatic upward social progress, those poor blacks without the economic and educational resources to take advantage

of legal changes have found themselves unable to escape the vicious circle of poverty and institutional racial discrimination. When one considers the current assault on the already tenuous American welfare net, this vicious circle appears even more robust.

Reaching beyond Race contributes to the ongoing debate about the dilemmas of race and class in American society by presenting new opinion-poll research, on the basis of which the authors call for a new approach to the problem of minority group poverty. The results make for interesting reading. Racial prejudice, the authors confirm, is an enduring phenomenon in America, but it is not the dominating force behind opposition to those besieged aspects of the welfare system. In the case of affirmative action, for example, opposition is apparently most often predicated on the feeling that individual merit rather than race should be the determining factor in employment and other recruitment, rather than on simple racial animosity towards minority groups.

On the basis of these results, *Reaching beyond Race*, in its pivotal chapter "Color-Blind Politics," adds to the clamour for a "new" approach in grappling with the problem of minority group poverty. What America should be striving for, the authors argue, is a colour-blind politics that justifies assistance to all its disadvantaged citizens on the basis of fairness, rather than to blacks and other minorities simply on the basis of their membership of a certain racial group. In this way, the divisive politics of race is removed while assistance to impoverished members of minority groups is maintained. The central empirical support for this argument is the "Color-Blind Experiment," which demonstrates far greater public support for assistance which is universally justified and targeted, rather than racially justified and targeted.

The opinion-poll project completed for *Reaching beyond Race* makes a worthwhile contribution to the race debate, but the interpretative argument put forward by the authors reproduces the errors made by other advocates of colour-blind politics. Colour-blind politics is not, as these advocates claim, a radical new approach without precedent. The Knights of Labor, the National Labor Union, the Populists and the CIO each endeavoured largely in vain at one time or another to forge effective inter- or bi-racial coalitions around a colour-blind politics. During the past quarter century, reticence has been the watchword in the dealings of successive administrations with racial affairs. Serious attention to the issue of race is already absent from US politics, and this absence has coincided with the accelerated decline of poor blacks' welfare. Side-stepping race, as these experiences have demonstrated, does not yield the results that *Reaching beyond Race* envisions.

University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne WILL NAYLOR

Mark Stoll, *Protestanism, Capitalism, and Nature in America* (Albuquerque, N.Mex.: University of New Mexico Press, 1997, $50.00 cloth, $24.95 paper). Pp. 276. ISBN 0 8263 1780 4, 0 8263 1781 2.

In an overt challenge to Lynn White Jr.'s classic essay blaming the present-day environmental crisis on the dualistic and anthropocentric Christian world view,

Mark Stoll's *Protestantism, Capitalism, and Nature in America* chronicles the influence of religious thinking – specifically Protestant Christianity – on major figures in American intellectual, economic, and environmental history from the colonial period to the present.

Divided into two parts, Stoll devotes a short first section to an examination of Protestant thought as it relates to concepts of nature. Giving Max Weber's interpretation of the spirit of capitalism a new twist, he argues that Protestantism has a dual legacy: capitalism and environmentalism. Although Christian scripture gave human beings dominion over the Earth, Neoplatonism, natural theology, millenarism, and the biblical theme of wilderness encouraged a more sympathetic relationship with nature. The Protestant tradition not only created a culture that supported individualism, democracy, and discipline – the defining characteristics of a capitalist society – but it also promulgated ideals of stewardship, moral responsibility, and respect for God's creation – the central components that would coalesce into the multidimensional environmentalist ethos that developed in the United States and other Protestant countries.

The bulk of the book, comprising the second section, constructs an intellectual canon of sorts to illustrate the role of Protestantism in shaping American attitudes towards nature. Following the standard outline of American intellectual history, beginning with Puritanism and moving through the Age of Reason, Romanticism, the Gilded Age, Progressivism, and the Modern Era, Stoll traces the conceptualization of nature expressed by representative advocates of a Protestant world view ranging from Puritan poet Ann Bradstreet to present-day literatus Annie Dillard. Biographical sketches vacillate between established environmental thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, and Aldo Leopold, and renowned proponents of the capitalist ethos such as Benjamin Franklin, William Gilpin, James J. Hill, and James Watt among others.

The focus on biography at times reinforces the opposition between capitalism and environmentalism, diluting the overall argument. There are also noticeable absences: Henry David Thoreau, Theodore Roosevelt, and Rachel Carson, for example. Although the selection rationale for this canon of environmentalist thought is never fully explained, this collection of intellectual biographies serves as an interesting codification of the complex and, at times, contradictory impact of the Protestant tradition on American attitudes towards nature.

University of North Carolina at Wilmington MARGUERITE S. SHAFFER

John Street, *Politics and Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997, £13.99). Pp. 212. ISBN 1 56639 603 4.

If you read the blurb of this book you will be disappointed; if you read it accepting it for what it is, a book which probably began life as a lecture series, it is an interesting read, intended presumably for an undergraduate audience. However, both structure and content cause me to doubt whether this would be an appropriate use for this text.

Essentially this book is an extensive, annotated bibliographic survey of the research undertaken in popular culture. It gathers together all the arguments

made by other critics, explains their positive aspects and their flaws, and suggests a number of examples which the reader might wish to explore in greater depth, but, although Street repeatedly claims to be making a new argument, I failed to find it. This was particularly evident in the conclusions to each section which purported to clarify how his elements fit together, but, in fact, merely alluded to links which might or might not exist without actually specifying what the argument about these links was.

This brings me to a second point: the nature of evidence. From his first two sentences, Street clearly belongs to the school which believes that if it says something long enough and loud enough it must be true. Equally, he seems to believe that a collection of anecdotes makes for comparative evidence, whereas, without any justification for his choices, the broad scope of evidence appears merely superficial as the book darts around the world. This is not helped by the equally superficial approach to evidence: examples are thrown in to speak for themselves with little attempt to justify the choices or to deconstruct the text or object. Street draws material from a number of cultures without the text ever actually becoming comparative and, although granting a cursory nod in the direction of cultural difference, his approach allows him glibly to sweep together examples from all over the globe and assign them a sameness which needs closer analysis. It means that the book does not usefully fit into any regional course, but nor is this superficiality suitable for a course in comparative cultural studies (a list of film titles does not analysis make). When he does pause to look closely at an example (see chapter six on the local politics of popular culture) the evidence is drawn solely from one source. Further, although Street repeatedly makes reference to the use of culture by politicians, he fails to examine closely any case studies, again relying on quotations from others and unexamined events and anecdotes.

Despite the above, I would like to be able to recommend this book as an introductory synthesis, but unfortunately it is often unhelpful in its allusions – reference to the "nineteenth century" singer Thérèsa who offended the "Empire" is not going to help any student ignorant of French history; snobbish – the unqualified assertion that a £15 CD is more accessible than a free museum – and poorly written. To give just one example: "Popular culture does not always provide a source of defiance or whatever."

Middlesex University FARAH MENDLESOHN

Thomas J. Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996, $35). Pp. 375. ISBN 0 691 01101 X.

In July 1967, the wave of racial violence that was then sweeping the cities of the northern United States reached its bloody climax on the streets of Detroit. After six days of rioting, forty-three people lay dead and hundreds more injured.

Scholars have traditionally attributed the decline of the American city to white reaction against the ghetto uprisings of the 1960s. In this groundbreaking case study, Thomas Sugrue provides a compelling reinterpretation of the origins of

the urban crisis. According to Sugrue, the deterioration of the inner cities was not so much the consequence as the cause of the race riots. As early as the 1940s, the decline of local industry and the white exodus to the suburbs started to have a devastating impact upon African Americans, ensnaring them in the overcrowded and disease-ridden world of the ghetto.

During the Second World War, the defence industries provided black Detroiters with unprecedented economic opportunities. Yet, no sooner had the Allies secured victory than African Americans discovered that their services were surplus to requirements. Systematically excluded from primary sector employment, they struggled to secure even unskilled jobs. When Detroit suffered a series of major recessions in the 1950s, its manufacturing industries were compelled to cut their work forces or shut their plants completely. Blacks bore the brunt of industrial decline. Although efforts were made to improve their economic prospects, they were entirely ineffective. In an era when any criticism of American capitalism could be construed as an expression of Communist sympathies, reformers were unwilling to attack corporate policy.

Although the US Supreme Court had struck down restrictive covenants in 1948, the decision had little meaning for those blacks who could not afford to relocate to the suburbs. When the more wealthy African Americans did attempt to escape the confines of the inner city, they encountered bitter and bloody resistance from alarmed white residents. The neighbourhoods into which African Americans attempted to settle were often populated by working-class immigrants for whom home ownership was a powerful symbol of their social and economic status. These families saw in the ghettos a stark prophecy of what would happen to their own neighbourhoods should they allow African Americans to move in next door. With their own livelihoods threatened by the decline of the local economy, they sought to safeguard their precarious investments, increasingly through the use of violence and intimidation. Race relations in Detroit were already in dangerous decline long before the riot of 1967.

Thomas Sugrue has produced a compelling analysis of the racialisation of poverty in postwar Detroit. Although otherwise excellently researched, the book might have benefited from the use of oral interviews in order to illustrate more vividly the impact that deindustrialisation has had upon the everyday lives of African Americans. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* is none the less an outstanding piece of scholarship, deservedly showered with awards, including the 1998 Bancroft Prize.

University of Reading CLIVE WEBB

David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1997, $45 cloth, $16.95 paper). Pp. 364. ISBN 0 8078 4691 0.

Winner of the prestigious Jamestown Prize, David Waldstreicher's book is an exciting and important study of the development of American nationalism. A member of the American Studies faculty at Yale, Waldstreicher is part of a cohort

of early Americanists who have discovered that parades, festivals and public performances can enhance our understanding of revolutionary and early national America. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes* "is about the festive innovations through which Americans of the early republic practiced a divisive politics and a unifying nationalism at the same time."

Waldstreicher is well versed in the theoretical foundations for studies of nationalism and public performance. However, in what is more of a strength than a weakness, he refuses to get mired in definitions and abstractions, preferring to explore how nationalism actually developed and was experienced by first- and second-generation citizens in the parades and performances that filled their festive calendar. One of his most interesting conclusions is that, although celebrations of such as George Washington and his birthday and Independence Day were focal points for intense partisan politicking, "celebrations and printed accounts of them embodied and emboldened a nationalist ideology that made consensus the basis of patriotism."

Thus, as partisans of the Federalists and the Republicans struggled "to claim true American nationality and the legacy of the Revolution," they created a nationalising process, a series of venues and events in which the nation was embodied for the ordinary folk who paraded, cheered and drank toasts. Yet this is more than a story of political parties, for race and gender, and to a lesser extent class, all figure in Waldstreicher's interpretative framework. One might have wished that he had pursued his contention that "Spread by print, the unruly rites of rebellion could serve as ruling rites of assent." Yet, in his concluding chapter on race, Waldstreicher is at his best, exploring how the enhanced sense of nationalism that developed in large scale public parades and festivals had a profound impact on free African Americans in the North. While urban free blacks fashioned their own celebrations, many white Americans modelled their own nationalism and festive culture in a self-consciously racist manner, to the degree that the American Colonization Society "is best understood as a response to the black and white antislavery activists who used the forms of national celebration to challenge slavery after the Revolution."

Waldstreicher's is a very readable, extremely competent, thought provoking book, which should be read by all who have an interest in the development of American nationalism.

University of Glasgow SIMON P. NEWMAN

Robert Wojtowicz, *Lewis Mumford & American Modernism* (Cambridge University Press, 1996, $18.95) Pp. 236. ISBN 0 521 63924 7.

Surprisingly, the centenary of Lewis Mumford's birth (1895–1990) has not met with an outpouring of scholarly reappraisals. Perhaps the extensive researches of Donald A. Miller when producing an outstanding biography of Mumford in 1989 may have discouraged similar commentators, so that the textual criticism of Robert Wojtowicz, given its self-imposed limitations, is most welcome.

Wojtowicz sets out to review most of Mumford's writings, largely in chronological order. This is extremely helpful for students new to Mumford's

canon who need guidance both about the content and development of Mumford's ideas and how much he was indebted for them to his Scottish predecessor, Sir Patrick Geddes, whose book *Cities in Evolution* (1915) began with the "Oath of the Athenian Youth" in which they dedicate themselves to respecting their civic duties. However, the author neglects to acknowledge the equally important influence of Samuel Butler on Mumford's writing. For those already familiar with his work, some of Wojtowicz's remarks appear repetitious and scarcely innovative. For example, most would agree that, while Mumford's early efforts as a dramatist may have honed the directness of his style, they hardly affected his developing aesthetic.

The most important section of this book deals with Mumford's two major works about the city, *The Culture of Cities* (1938) and *The City in History* (1961). Wojtowicz brings out the changed perspective between these dates. Whereas Mumford had been doggedly optimistic in the thirties, even to the extent of believing that mankind was now "in a position to transcend the machine," his views became tempered into a severer moralistic approach twenty-three years later in the post-nuclear age. Mumford had begun to question whether "the useable past" remained a valid concept, though admittedly he had an undeniable admiration for the contemporary eclectic work of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.

Sadly, Wojtowicz's conclusions are perfunctory. Is this a sign of a workmanlike thesis converted into a book? We are left to conjure the continuing importance of Mumford as a socio-philosophical architectural critic who had some vision of holistic integrity. But it would be a brave writer who would forecast Mumford's significance in the twenty-first century. His views on regional developments would seem in tune with current thinking away from national prerogatives. Indeed, one of his first essays in 1916 was titled "A Regional Policy for Manhattan." However, Wojtowicz has made some of us look anew at the writings of this remarkable man whose civic duties were never in doubt. Others may follow.

The Open University DEREK POLLARD

Rafia Zafar, *We Wear the Mask: African Americans Write American Literature, 1760–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, $17.50). Pp. 249. ISBN 0 231 08095 6.

In scholarship dealing with African-American literature, the critic invariably comes up against the following issue: by tracing the interactions between African-American texts and the Western classical tradition, is one failing to recognize the aesthetic specificity and uniqueness of these texts? Indeed, is it possible to identify culturally distinctive aspects of African-American literature and culture, as critics such as Houston Baker have attempted to do? If an African-American writer utilizes the literary genres of the dominant culture and writes for a predominantly white readership, is he/she selling out?

Henry Louis Gates, though he has on occasion flirted with the notion of a specific and identifiable African-American identity, has attempted to elude an essentialist concept of the black literary tradition by foregrounding its inherent

double-voicedness. Rafia Zafar, in *We Wear the Mask: African Americans Write American Literature, 1760–1870*, enlarges on this idea, analysing the ways in which early African-American writers appropriated pre-existing genres in order to engage with the texts of their European-American contemporaries. While rhetorical tactics such as masking and veiling have been seen in terms of tragic victimhood in the context of twentieth-century African-American literature, Zafar views them (in relation to ante-bellum texts) as eminently pragmatic strategies of empowerment which enabled these writers to reach a national readership.

After an excellent introduction, in which she anticipates howls of outrage from the Politically Correct brigade and skilfully defuses their possible arguments one by one, Zafar analyses early African-American writing in some detail. In the following chapters, she looks at diverse writers and genres, with discussions of the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, the captivity narratives of Briton Hammon and John Marrant, the slave narratives of Henry Bibb and William Wells Brown, the "success story" of Frederick Douglass, the sentimental autobiographies of Harriet Jacobs and Harriet Wilson and the accounts of Elizabeth Keckley and Eliza Potter.

Zafar writes lucidly and well. Her chapter on Wheatley, a writer who is often unjustly maligned by the obtuse, is particularly perceptive and intelligent, as are her analyses of Jacobs, Keckley and Potter. In the discussion of Hammon, Marrant, Bibb and Brown, one might wish that she had gone into issues linked to mediation and authorship in greater detail. As well, though the chapter on Douglass is good, it is a bit long on textual paraphrase. This notwithstanding, Zafar's insights are fresh, innovative and fearless, in an area which is all too often characterized by patronizing sycophantic readings. *We Wear the Mask* is a sophisticated and pragmatic contribution to the study of ante-bellum African American texts, and should be considered essential reading for those of us working in the field of early American literature.

University of Glasgow SUSAN CASTILLO

Michael P. Zuckert, *The Natural Rights Republic: Studies in the Foundation of the American Political Tradition* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996, £20.38). Pp. 298. ISBN 0 268 01480 9.

Title and sub-title indicate the emphasis and extent of this attempt to link political analysis and historical change in an exposition of the intellectual origins of American Independence. A series of lectures demonstrates the benefits and dangers inherent in the fashioning of interdisciplinary studies. Much depends on the basic commitment of the reviewer: to this historian, the question that arises is not one of any misuse or misunderstanding of plentifully cited historical monographs, but rather of the much more amorphous issues of approaches and assumptions. Such a divergence is immediately forthcoming in the opening chapter – "On the Declaration of Independence" – which leaves the impression on a student of events who is not primarily a pursuer of ideas, that Jefferson, had he studied the texts of his predecessors more diligently and received a twentieth-

century Graduate School education, would have composed an altogether more rigorous proclamation of national grievances and rights. Little or no recognition is accorded to the time available to him, the press of circumstances, or the employment of concepts that may have lacked congruity but combined to exert an extraordinary and enduring appeal. Not all compositions of political rhetoric need fulfil the requirements of a doctoral dissertation.

A somewhat similar ground of dissension emerges when the divergences of the Declaration from the Mayflower Compact are discussed. The historian may respond along the lines of "about one hundred and fifty years and an enormously enlarged society." Change rather than continuity will seem most evident. Interest mounts when that aspect is approached. The ensuing discussion of the relationship between the ideas of Locke and mid-eighteenth-century ministerial writings deserves careful attention, for here the passage of time and intellectual change are brought together in rewarding fashion.

This study commands attention and stimulates disagreement. Rather that, one concludes, than a safely acceptable, bland summary of "self-evident" truths.

Wimbledon PETER MARSHALL

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

Kenneth M. Cameron begins this survey of a century of American historical films with a question: how good are American films as history? At the close he asks: can these films be used to teach American history? Much of the intervening text is concerned then with a judgement on individual historical films, a genre defined by Cameron as films with a "framework of fact" that include at least one real-life person and real-life event, which usually reads like this: a description of the film, one or two brief comments as to how it differs from the events depicted (or how the clothing and guns – Cameron is clearly a gun expert – used are anachronistic). This inevitably concludes with statements like this: *Annie Oakley* (1935) "puts myth above truth in the name of entertainment," or that a series of films made in the 1950s about the American Revolution "suggest that the reason for doing history has been forgotten," or that, in a discussion of *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* (1957), "history might have been better served by using some of the footage to explore the historical context."

There are fundamental problems with this. Within the overriding commercial aesthetic of Hollywood that aims fundamentally to offer entertainment that would prove harmless to all audiences (including audiences in other countries), history will almost inevitably be rendered as a backdrop against which stories of individual heroism or love will be set (one needs only to think of a recent film directed by the author's namesake, *Titanic*, to be reminded of this). "If you have a message," Sam Goldwyn is reported to have said, "send it through Western Union." The relegation of history to backdrop in American film is not simply or straightforwardly a commercial issue; history in film is mediated through conventions and through a regulatory framework. Cameron briefly notes a court case brought against the producer of *The Spirit of 76* (1917) where a federal judge

ruled that a "truthful representation of an historical fact" was censorable. Such a decision in fact dates back to 1909, when a judge in the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that even if films represented "the American historical experience" they could still be "immoral and obscene." Cameron does not include this, or any more details on the 1917 case, but this is crucial for an understanding of the representation of history in American film. Film, by 1915, was distinguished from the press and did not have First Amendment rights; it effectively had to offer harmless entertainment and not stray into the partisan representation of historical or political events or it could be subject to various levels of governmental control. This definition of cinema was further formulated with the Production Code in 1934 and the history of this, and its effect on the representation of history in American film, is a major absence in this book. In short, there is a critical historical dynamic to the representation of history in film elided by this study.

This book will be most useful then as a developing point for further research. In the midst of it a number of interesting issues do emerge – for example, on the shift in subject matter in historical films; on the positioning of women in these films; in the occasional remarks on how historical films have been linked at certain moments to the consolidation of national identity; in the scattered comments on intertextual sources for some of the historical films; and so on. Perhaps in the end Cameron's concern at the enmeshing of history and fiction in American film can be seen to have its own historical dynamic, as this becomes an issue for popular and critical debate in an age when images from real-life can be seamlessly meshed with fictional material.

University of Kent at Canterbury LEE GRIEVESON

Karl Kroeber (ed.), *Traditional Literatures of the American Indian: Texts and Interpretations* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, 2nd edn, $16.95). Pp. 159. ISBN 0 8032 2733 7.

In the teaching of Native American literature, traditional oral narratives are all too often given short shrift. The obstacles which these texts offer to teachers and students alike are well known. Many of these narratives were originally recited and recorded in languages for which there exist neither grammars nor dictionaries, nor in some cases living speakers. In some cases, the only access to these tales is through clumsy translations made by anthropologists. As well, most Western readers are unfamiliar with the cultural traditions from which these texts emerged, and thus perceive them as "primitive" and alien.

For all these reasons, *Traditional Literatures of the American Indian: Texts and Interpretations* is a welcome contribution to scholarship on Native American literature. In his excellent introduction, "The Art of Traditional Indian Storytelling," Karl Kroeber (drawing on the work of folklorist Alan Dundes) describes the three parameters that determine the significant forms of oral narrative: *texture*, or the features of verbal form; *text*, a single telling of a tale; and *context*, the specific social situation in which the story is told. It is in the interactions between these three elements that one is able to comprehend the meaning and artistry of the story in question. Such an approach is not unique to

Native American narrative; indeed, in the Western tradition, we do the same when we read a translation of Homer.

The essays which follow give the reader a fascinating glimpse into the Native American oral tradition. Jarold Ramsay, in "From Mythic to Fictive in an Orpheus Myth," examines the literary features of the Nez Perce narrative, "Coyote and the Shadow People." He points out that foreshadowing, rather than suspense, is the device most often found in Native American story-telling, as the audience would be expected to know the outcome of the tale. The figure of Coyote, the Nez Perce Trickster, is a singularly appropriate one for the ironic prefiguring apparent in this story; after all, the reader, whether Nez Perce or European, is aware that he will not outwit death in the end. In "Narrative Form as a 'Grammar' of Experience: Native Americans and a Glimpse of English," Dell Hymes points out patterns of vocabulary, syntax and word formation that are similar to Western literary conventions such as rhyme and measured verse. Dennis Tedlock, in "The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation in American Indian Religion," discusses the concept of text and its application to the analysis of oral narratives. In the excellent essay "Poetic Retranslation and the 'Pretty Languages' of Yellowman," Barre Toelken and Tacheeni Scott describe the reception of this Trickster story by a Navajo audience in order to examine the interaction between the structure and texture of the tale. Finally, Linda Ainsworth discusses the Wintu myth in order to determine the role of myth-making and myth-telling in comprehending particular cultural formations. The book concludes with a useful bibliography for introductory study of traditional oral narratives.

This excellent collection, carefully prepared and painstakingly edited, is an invaluable contribution to Native American studies, and will awaken readers to the beauty and complexity of these often neglected narratives. Karl Kroeber, in his introduction to the volume, states: "It is our scholarship, not Indian storytelling, that is primitive, undeveloped." His book demonstrates that this certainly cannot be said of his own work.

University of Glasgow SUSAN CASTILLO

Alfred Arteaga, *Chicano Poetics: Heterotexts and Hybridities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £32.50 cloth, £11.95 paper). Pp. 185. ISBN 0 521 57370 X, 0 521 57492 7.

"That Chicano poetry upsets the authoritative lines of American literature and of the American self makes for a type of poetry that requires the consideration of the discourse and power relations that form its context," Arteaga asserts. *Chicano Poetics* is, consequently, his attempt to provide this consideration. Employing a critical framework perhaps best revealed in the subsection title "How the Poem Means," Arteaga focuses not so much on *what* the poem says but on *how* it comes into being. Since, moreover, "the poetics of chicanismo are such that they locate the work of the poem in the working out of the individual," his study devotes much of its time to a meticulously researched consideration of the manner in which the Chicano subject "comes about through the interplay of different social

'texts', analogously, through *heterotextual* reproduction." Using, as his starting-point, literary selections which illustrate his thesis, Arteaga accordingly examines the numerous hybridities that play out within the "Body, Place, Language" of the Chicano. The (post-)colonial historical and political "texts" which have occasioned the Chicano's mestizaje are examined, for instance, as are the linguistic "texts" which result in the "polyglot style of quotidian Chicano discourse" and the "texts" of sexual politics – all of which, in the complex life of the borderlands, continually work to "propagate identity." And the study's focus cannot, after all, be on the end result – *what* the poem means – for a point which it is keen to make is that the "poetics of hybridization opposes finalization in principle."

In creating *Chicano Poetics*, it is perhaps unsurprising that Arteaga should himself use "a language of languages," but many readers may find this problematic. Not all of the poems and excerpts which begin each of the book's four sections are in English, for example, and, whilst pain is taken to provide translation in the body of the discussion, this does not always hold true for the endnotes. Additionally, the literary style itself alternates between the dense terminology of critical theory and a far more accessible phraseology. That the critical rhetoric could prove daunting is a shame, for ironically it may throw up a border of its own which some will find too complicated to negotiate. None the less, *Chicano Poetics* is a fascinating addition to the burgeoning corpus of Chicano literature, roving, as it does in its investigation, across an impressively broad sweep of literature and literary genres, from the "chiastic poetics" of protofeminist Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in the seventeenth century to the presentation of "post-pomo" contemporary poets like Juan Felipe Herrera and Alfred Arteaga himself. Certainly the book does its best to ensure that "chicanismo is presented as an active working out of factors, past, present, and future."

University of Wales, Swansea CANDIDA HEPWORTH

Philip Lambert (ed.), *Ives Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £40.00). Pp. 300. ISBN 0521 58277 6.

Nicholas Tawa, *Arthur Foote: A Musician in the Frame of Time and Place* (Lanham, Md. and London: The Scarecrow Press, $58.50). Pp. 489. ISBN 0 8108 3295 x.

Although it is difficult to do justice to either of these books within a short notice, it should be said at the outset that both of them amply attest the plural condition of American music studies in the 1990s. That such diversity (of methodology and reception history) was not always the case is a theme softly sounded in *Ives Studies*, which is a collection of essays avowedly dedicated to the rehabilitation of "a most complex man" and a "stunningly original body of music." In this objective the book takes its place alongside a significant body of Ives scholarship which has appeared since the mid-1980s. Indeed, as in J. Peter Burkholder's excellent essay, "Ives Today," which closes the book, *Ives Studies* itself provides a superb insight into the scope and purpose of this scholarship.

Ives Studies is divided into three main sections (with the Burkholder essay functioning as an afterword for "Envoi"): "Tradition, revision and chronology"; "Historical and biographical contexts"; and "The *Universe Symphony*." Each of these sections, but especially the first one, is more or less concerned with providing a satisfactory context for Ives and his music on two levels. The first of these has to do with Ives's continuity with the musical past; the second has to do with the physical evidence of Ives's own music manuscripts. Robert P. Morgan, for example, offers a close reading of the song "The Things Our Fathers Loved" in order to situate Ives firmly in the European tradition by which "Ives, more than Mahler or Schoenberg, grasped the full implications of his historical moment, responding in a way that subsequent history has shown to be prophetic." Morgan's persuasive argument would seem to be that the heterogeneous nature of Ives's music bespeaks not what Elliott Carter described in 1944 as "a rather spasmodic development," but instead what Morgan terms a "profound aesthetic orientation," especially in the context of tonality and the common practice tradition. Throughout the book, indeed, this concern for Ives's standing as a composer both at home in and radically at odds with his European heritage is strikingly apparent.

In a different but related way, Gayle Sherwood's exhaustive re-dating of Ives's choral music, which is explictly based on the precedent and the methodology of similar studies of Mozart, Beethoven and others, "supports Ives's reputation as a compositional innovator." This essay in part repudiates the undermining of Ives's reputation which Sherwood (along with many other contributors to the book) countenances in Maynard Solomon's 1987 essay, "Charles Ives: some questions of veracity." Solomon's investigations certainly occasioned nothing less than a controversy in Ives scholarship, and the book under review is in large measure concerned to resolve it. The means of doing so is often businesslike and painstakingly demonstrative (as in the Sherwood piece) rather than argumentative or rhetorical: Geoffrey Block's scrutiny of the *Concord Sonata* and H. Wiley Hitchcock's pragmatic consideration of editorial techniques as applied to Ives's songs allow both scholars to respond in an authoritative way to the suggestion that the composer "jacked up the dissonances" of his music or silently modernised his songs in the aftermath of European (musical) modernism. Both, indeed, reject this assertion. Hitchcock concludes as follows: "'[Was Ives] silently modernising' his music? Not at all: we are confronting a composer who is restoring in the 1930s details of his original scores of the 1900s, having decided that his arrangements of them in the 1920s had unnecessarily simplified and weakened them."

I can note only in passing the brilliantly paired essays by Larry Austin and the editor on Ives's (recently) completed *Universe Symphony*, and the three essays which comprise Part Two of the book. These latter, in fact, might well be a good place to begin for certain readers of this journal, in so far as they widen the discussion considerably to foreground Ives the man, especially in Judith Tick's biographical and political exegesis on Ives and "direct democracy." Stuart Feder explores Ives's "lifelong fascination" with Henry David Thoreau (and not only as a vital preliminary to the last movement of his Second Piano Sonata), and Wolfgang Rathert offers a thoughtful reading of "potentiality" as a central idea

which redeems Ives's music from the "enigmatic" status which has been its mixed blessing for so long.

The volume as a whole is extremely well edited by Philip Lambert and it embraces a plural vigour of approaches which can only enhance the reputation of its subject. A note on the contributors (notwithstanding the information contained in the last essay) would have been useful.

Nicholas Tawa, who is mentioned in *Ives Studies* for his expertise on the generation of American composers which preceded Charles Ives, has written an outstanding biographical and critical study of one of these in *Arthur Foote: A Musician in the Frame of Time and Place*. The difference between history now and music then is the musicologist's stamping ground, and Tawa explores this space to recover for students of American musical culture "one of the most important American composers in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and of the first two decades of the twentieth century." Foote (1853–1937) was a contemporary of other, better-known American composers including Horatio Parker (who taught Ives), and Edward MacDowell, and of European figures such as Dvorák, Grieg and Puccini. An admonitory sentence in the preface to this book makes it clear that "He shared with these composers the tonal system and common practice developed over three centuries that none of his generation was inclined to reject."

This observation makes for a useful "advertisement to the reader," as if Tawa somehow recognizes that Foote's long obscurity (this is the first full-length study of his life and music) rests in part on his irrelevance to the modernist wave of American composers which followed him. Irrelevant or not, the subject of this study "exemplified the artist who is well integrated into his community." Tawa traces Foote's American ancestry, his debt to and immersion in New England society, his boyhood in Salem, his musical studies in Boston and in particular his training with John Knowles Paine at Harvard and, after graduation, with B. J. Lang in Boston.

Thereafter the book establishes with notable clarity not only the genesis of Foote's maturation as a composer firmly rooted in European traditions of craftsmanship, but also the social context in which this occurred. Nevertheless, the warning note sounded at the outset is never very far away: "It may be that after so much commendation of experiment and excess in the twentieth century, simplicity such as Foote's is getting to be an attractive alternative for mature and cultivated music lovers… It is not enough to have the works of more recent composers like Aaron Copland and Samuel Barber, fine as they are. We need to go back further to the roots of American art music, roots that we have so assiduously and mistakenly tried to pull up." I take it that Tawa means by this that musicology has tended to impose on American music a kind of retrospective modernism, or at least an acid-test of pioneering engagement, by which all of its stands or falls. If he diagnoses this tendency accurately, there can be no doubt that this book will do a great deal to correct it. I mean no disrespect when I observe that, like the music of Foote himself, this is an old-fashioned study, in so far as it is well made, impeccably researched and pellucidly written. These are qualities which undoubtedly enhance the heady mixture of American musicology in the 1990s. Even more importantly, the net result of Professor Tawa's endeavours is

that a missing chapter in the history of American musical culture has been handsomely and compellingly restored.

University College, Dublin HARRY WHITE

Scott Bravmann, *Queer Fictions of the Past: History, Culture and Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, £37.50 cloth, £13.95 paper). Pp. 174. ISBN 0 521 59101 5, 0 521 59907 5.

An attempt to contribute towards what the author hopes will be an ongoing project of "queer cultural studies of history," *Queer Fictions of the Past* also forcefully argues that it is specifically post-foundational theoretical tools which are best equipped for such a project. At its heart lies a desire to explore the relation between the "fictive" elements of historical representation and the strains placed on other interlocking forms of identity politics by metanarratives of a common gay and lesbian past. This has implications both for what is described as "queer heterosociality" (the social and political interaction between gay men and lesbians) and for the status of racial and ethnic claims within gay political movements.

After theoretically positioning his own work in relation to some of the most important earlier efforts to address these and related issues (Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Diana Fuss, John D'Emilio) Bravmann embarks upon critical readings of two of the most influential aspects of queer historiography. It is at this point that the broader argument comes into focus and the more innovative dimensions of the study become fully apparent. The first of these readings examines and draws out the contemporary political significance of the exalted status of Greece within the lesbian and gay past. The author is troubled by the grip that Greek antiquity – the genealogy of which "is itself a retrospectively fabricated fiction" – continues to exert over the gay and lesbian imagination in the West. The Eurocentric, imperialist and masculinist bias of the Victorian historian–scholars largely responsible for this state of affairs, it is argued, must be more acutely scrutinised given the questions such factors raise for feminist and non-white constituencies within gay movements. Likewise, the point is made *en passim*, intellectual "access" to ancient Greece has been and remains denied to the bulk of working-class gay men. Numerous other important points are raised, particularly in relation to the attempts by such scholars to desexualise *paiderastia* or love between Greek males. The section closes with an important reappraisal along similar lines of Sappho and the cult of Lesbos in the wake of the emergence of ethnically diverse lesbian communities in the West.

Bravmann then moves on to explore what he regards as the "surplus of signification" which now informs attempts to remember "Stonewall" (the protests which followed the police raid of the Stonewall Inn during the summer of 1969 in Greenwich Village). In particular this chapter is concerned with foregrounding the tensions inherent in reconciling the specificity of Stonewall as a riot predominantly orchestrated by men, a significant component of whom were non-white, with the desire, expressed via parades and public celebration, to stress

inclusivity and unity within a broader gay and lesbian community. The commercial pressures which equally facilitate this general appropriation of Stonewall are also highlighted and situated carefully within an intriguing and important discussion of the democratic public sphere. The discussion of the place of traditional liberal distinctions between private and public within queer political theory is particularly trenchant and suggestive for political theory in general.

Bravmann concludes with several studies of fictional texts which he perceives as efforts to radically reconceive the ways in which queer histories are understood. The arguments and analysis offered in this final section appear more familiar than those outlined previously. *Queer Fictions of the Past* is none the less the most distinctive contribution yet to the widening of queer history as a field of inquiry. As such it also presents – in its stress on the fictive, the contingent and the partial nature of the identities which this project must give voice to – an alternative vision of the future unencumbered by the type of political certainties which have hitherto defined the past and the way we think about it.

University of Nottingham ANTHONY HUTCHISON

Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean, *American Culture Studies: An Introduction to American Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997, £45.00 cloth, £14.99 paper). Pp. 312. ISBN 0 415 12797 1, 0 415 12798 X.

With almost every successive word, the title of this book accumulates more problems than it is able to solve. Campbell and Kean seem throughout to be making their remarks in the context of American Studies. Yet they neither set out a rationale for the discipline nor consider its lack thereof. The essence of this discipline seems to lie in its concentration on "popular" as well as "high" cultural products. This democratization of the text, laudable in its way but hardly new, does not constitute a method: it proposes that we read more, not that we read better. In practice, moreover, I didn't always feel that I *was* being asked to read more. On occasions, I even wondered whether I was even being asked to read *enough*.

The central problem with this book is that it seems philosophically opposed to mobilizing its materials effectively. The authors occasionally appear to suspect that ideas and arguments are tools of "dominant discourses." For the most part, the animating thesis gives way to a blandly episodic treatment of topics and texts. "Culture" is understood in terms of, and approached by way of, artefacts. Without a more sustained sense of "culture" as an ensemble of beliefs, values, aspirations, histories and ideas, "cultural studies" remains merely taxonomic, an intellectually impoverished survey orchestrated by a tedious insistence on "difference." In Campbell and Kean's work, "difference" is less a way of opening interpretation than a maxim whose truth must be repeatedly proved, less a way of voicing ideas than a moralistic formula.

It is striking and perhaps significant that "difference" – a commonplace of Clintonism – is here offered as a "radical" critique of American ideology. The authors' claims to radicalism rest on a number of assumptions, two of which are worth examining in more detail: the first, that one can "see with the eyes of the

Other,'' emerges in a section entitled ''Out of Slavery.'' Campbell and Kean write that ''what *we* will show, in the words of Manning Marable, is that this 'identity is not something *our* oppressors forced upon us'" (my italics). When does ''radically'' seeing ''with the eyes of the Other'' become more like putting words into the mouth of the Other? Following a discussion of Vizenor, Silko and Native American identity, Campbell and Kean write that, ''as long as the stories survive and are passed on, the native peoples retain their traditions, history and identity, reminding them of their roots in the land, which ... constitutes their sense of self.'' Maybe. In the specific context of Native American writing, however, attention should have been given to the often desperately *compensatory* quality of this rhetorical option. When Campbell and Kean adopt the idiom of retention they do so without irony, and thus not radically but sentimentally. It is all very well to celebrate resistant voices, but beyond a certain point the discourse of cultural transmission privileges those who narrate at the expense of the silenced.

Keele University T. J. LUSTIG

Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region Religion and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997, $34.95). Pp. 321. ISBN 0 252 01906 7.

The outward and temporal form that these ''Houses of God'' generally adopted conformed to the prevailing aesthetic, whatever traditions for worship took place within them. In this way a Puritan meeting-house, a nonconformist chapel or a synagogue, shared a common design ethos derived from eighteenth-century London. The great exemplar was James Gibbs's St. Martins in the Fields (1722–26) which was to re-emerge, a generation later, in New York City in the shape of St. Paul's Chapel (1764 and 1794) and the numerous white-painted timber churches of New England. As fashion evolved and moved on, so America adopted in sequence the neo-classical, the Gothic Revival, Richardsonian Romanesque and Frank Lloyd Wright ''modern.''

The great problem for Williams is the sheer scale of his undertaking in relationship to the modest size of this publication. The author has space only to enumerate rather than elucidate. We are offered five sentences on Robert Owens' New Harmony and two on the Touro synagogue in Newport, R.I. (built 1759–63). Even as a catalogue, stylistic labels are used in such an idiosyncratic way as to severely circumscribe the value of the book. In describing the English school of Baroque of the late seventeenth century and the Palladianism of Burlington as neo-classical, the uninitiated could be led to believe that they are both neo-classical.

Nevertheless a picture emerges which suggests that America's tradition for transmission was of greater importance than any single architectural idiom. Consequently the few exceptions, in which a stylistic convention or structural necessity has become characteristic of a region, now stand as American icons in an almost literal sense. The board-and-batten churches of the Midwest are celebrated in the background of Grant Wood's *American Gothic* (1930), whilst the

adobe churches of the South West are confirmed on the retina by Ansel Adams's photographs and Georgia O'Keeffe's canvases.

In general, the regionalism of America's *Houses of God* is less evident in its physical features than in the tenets of its people. Although only $7\frac{1}{2}$ of the 105 black and white illustrations are of interiors, it is when these are discussed that the author begins to get to grips with his subject, as for example his reference to the four liturgical "stations" of pulpit, communion table, lectern and font of Anglicanism.

Despite the oversimplification of brevity, we are offered some enjoyably recondite details – the use of selenite for glazing, the "biretta belt" of the high Anglicanism of the upper Midwest, a "megachurch" with its "worship centre" seating 7,000 and Robert Bellah's notion of the "civil religion" of the USA, exemplified in the town planning of Washington DC.

John Judkyn Memorial, Bath JAMES AYRES

Christopher Gair, *Complicity and Resistance in Jack London's Novels: From Naturalism to Nature* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997, $89.95). Pp. 242. ISBN 0 7734 8719 0.

In *Complicity and Resistance in Jack London's Novels*, Christopher Gair asserts quite reasonably that the subject of his investigation "has never been a fashionable author amongst critics of American literature." This is true, and Gair's study is an important early step in developing a new audience for Jack London. In undertaking this task, Gair has decided to present the reader with a number of different critical approaches to London's novels. While all of these preoccupations share a concern with the representation of social conditions and the rendering of language itself, some investigations are fully realized and other concerns leave further questions that, one can assume, Gair wishes his readers to pursue themselves.

Gair makes the compelling argument that London's works may be read as vital representations of turn-of-the-century American society. Traditionally, because such an approach to cultural studies has raised related issues of biographical criticism, similar readings have concentrated unduly upon London's contradictory engagement with the world around him. Gair does not escape this trap entirely here. He apologizes for London's racism, for example, by pointing out that the novelist never attempted to conceal his shortcomings, these limitations of thought that can be seen to pull equally upon the reputation of other writers like Frank Norris.

More satisfactory, however, is Gair's discussion of London's class consciousness. Simply admitting that while London was an ardent socialist, he stubbornly kept servants and rode first class, Gair follows through with a vibrant reading of *The Iron Heel* (1908), his subject's "most famous revolutionary" work. Discounting the attempts of past critics to read inconsistency in London's apparent desire to filter his own views through multiple narrators here, Gair establishes that the manipulations of point-of-view convincingly develops class conflict. One can only lament how, on occasion, Gair is so quick to refer to

secondary sources that he skimps on plot background, something needed desperately in a study with such breadth.

Throughout, Gair's concern with language is most convincing. In the reading that is central to this work, that of London's story "South of the Slot" (1909), Gair highlights how London subverts the naturalistic convention of diminishing the "other" in this case by denying the linguistic hegemony of the bourgeoisie, here reducing them to babble and silence. Such readings that engage the text directly are most satisfying, leading the reader to consider anew the achievement of the American novelist. So, while this study is far from the final word on Jack London, it is a strong move towards an expression of the American canon that, we are told, first inspired Christopher Gair to adopt London as a subject of enquiry.

University of Lethbridge, Canada CRAIG MONK

Eric J. Dean, Jr., *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997, £23.50). Pp. 315. ISBN 0 674 80651 4.

Eric Dean's book considers one of the central preoccupations of contemporary life: the reaction of individuals to unpleasant events and the "risks" attendant on them. He compares the experience of the Vietnam War with the Civil War in an attempt to elucidate the concept of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He challenges the stereotype – largely promoted by the news media and tendentious motion pictures – of the Vietnam War as a "surreal quagmire." Typical soldiers of this war are not well adjusted or patriotic, but twisted psychotics, venturing enthusiastically into the jungle to commit their daily atrocity. None of these men are the "boy next door," unless that door leads into a lunatic asylum. The Vietnam War is unique, so the message runs, because huge numbers of veterans returned after their ghastly experiences with PTSD. Such a portrayal contains all the elements of a ceaseless soap opera: the "agony of Vietnam"; atrocities, futility and miscalculation in a foreign war; and when the troubled veterans return home, they are scorned and spurned. Indeed, there is even a disco version of this sorry tale, which portentiously declared that 800,000 veterans are "still at war."

All of this is the more extraordinary because about 85 per cent of Vietnam veterans served in the support arms and saw nothing more dangerous than the interior of an office. Yet PTSD is a controversial area. Memories of traumatic experiences are nurtured by psychotherapy, and might lead to compensation in a court of law. The debate over "recovered memory" many years later of child sexual abuse indicates how treacherous the ground is. Psychiatrists themselves are far from united on how PTSD develops and to what extent recollections of a traumatic experience lead to a precise disorder. Although Dean has written a book of uncommon intelligence, and handles his diverse themes skilfully, he perhaps does not advance his case by choosing Civil War veterans, rather than those of the Second World War, to contest the uniqueness of the Vietnam experience.

One can see why he selected it. The Civil War has a unique place in American annals: it is picturesque and splendid and is often re-enacted by dedicated buffs; there might be suffering but there is no "agony" here. Civil War veterans, it has been claimed, quickly readjusted to civil life, welcomed back by grateful citizens. Even in the defeated South, the achievements of Confederate veterans were sanctified in the legend of the "Lost Cause." Dean's careful research challenges this comforting picture. He makes effective use of the records of 291 Union veterans who are admitted to Indiana asylums after 1865. He stresses the sheer physical burden of Civil War soldiering (which involved 90 per cent of soldiers in the combat arms), the likelihood of being wounded, or falling victim to disease. He shows that, after exposure to frenzied combat. Civil War soldiers sometimes exhibited symptoms resembling PTSD.

Perhaps this conclusion is not as noteworthy as Dean supposes, except within his contemporary context. His book is really two books in one with only a tenuous link between the dual elements. Civil War veterans are remote in time, and their contrasts with veterans of the 1970s are more striking than their similarities. There are obvious difficulties in comparing armies which expect soldiers to develop PTSD with those which did not even acknowledge it. Dean realizes this, but he sometimes forgets to take such differences into account. Occasionally, his discussion is excessively earnest and prone to special pleading. His belief that some 300,000 deserters were suffering from PTSD is based on no evidence, and terms like "it seems likely," "probably," "one wonders," or "impossible to tell" litter his discussion. Dean's statistical sample is too small to enable him to draw firm, general conclusions. Yet, though his account might not always persuade the specialist, his real target lies elsewhere. If he forces the purveyors of "instant" stereotypes of war and the veterans that serve in them to think about their glib assumptions, then he will have performed a signal service.

King's College, London BRIAN HOLDEN REID