Criticism

Volume 39 | Issue 2 Article 6

1997

Book Review

Criticism Editors

Shakespeare and the Jews by James Shapiro. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. Pp. ix + 317. $29.95.

The announced subject of James Shapiro's splendid new book is "what Shakespeare and his contemporaries thought about Jews" (1), but it is equally enlightening on the development of the Myth of Englishness and "what it meant to be English during a period marked by social, religious, and political instability" (57). Deeply influenced by the new historicism, Shapiro emphasizes the cultural power of formative narrative, for example the gradually solidifying stories of the expulsion of the Jews in 1290 and their presumptive "readmission" in 1656; yet by insisting on the significance of religion as a category of analysis, he expands new historicism's limited trinity of race, class, and gender, which tends to ignore a fundamental element of English thought in the early modern period. Based on an enormous amount of scholarship both primary and secondary, the book illuminates English history and cultural attitudes as the same time that it proposes a provocative new reading of *The Merchant of Venice* and ranges through literature from Marlowe to Maria Edgeworth.

Before turning to Shakespeare Shapiro describes a culture in which all forms of difference—Catholic/Protestant, nation/race, Jewish/Christian, even male/female—were contested and in constant danger of collapse. As the Spanish had found following the forced conversion of their Jewish populations, it is impossible to determine the truth of assertions of personal belief; one result was "false Jews and counterfeit Christians." Following the 1492 expulsion of the Jews from Spain, small Marrano communities were established in England, and contrary to conventional wisdom, "there were Jews in Shakespeare's England, though probably never more than a couple of hundred at any given time." (For a fuller discussion see David Katz, *The Jews in the History of England* [Oxford, 1994], to whom Shapiro acknowledges his debts, though he differs with Katz over how to describe the anomalous status of the Jews in the later seventeenth century.) Given these limited numbers, the question of Jewish difference—racial, religious, national, even sexual (one accusation was that Jewish men menstruated)—was surprisingly "hot," debated in sermons and in parliament. Even the natives of the new world were brought into this discussion, some explorers alleging that they were the lost tribes, their incomprehensible language a form of Hebrew.

One reason for the obsessive interest in the Jews was that English Protestants saw themselves as a newer version of God's elect: to define Englishness was necessarily to refer to Jewishness. At the same time, traditional accusations of economic, theological and physical crimes ascribed to Jews continued to circulate. In particular, early modern English writers were prone to consider ritual murder "the Jewish crime," in the words of Samuel Purchas. Some of Shapiro's most interesting speculations concern the psychological reasons for the continuing resonance of this libel. He proposes, among other things, that the belief that Jews abducted and murdered children was useful in explaining the disappearance of abandoned children, just as accusations of villainous usury projected English anxiety about the growth of economic exploitation after 1571, when the taking of interest up to 10% became legal. Furthermore, the allegation that Jews committed ritual murder to obtain

blood for their passover bread came uncomfortably close to Protestant England's discomfort over their "own Catholic and therefore cannibalistic past" (110).

Peculiar to England was an additional accusation that before murdering abducted male children the Jews circumcised them. While modern readers may instinctively reach for psychological interpretations, Shapiro demonstrates convincingly that for post-Reformation Elizabethans it was the theological implications, especially of Paul's "cryptic remarks" on circumcision, that determined the meaning of this ritual and incidentally "had an immeasurable impact on Elizabethan conceptions of Jews" (117). In brief, English Protestants equated circumcision with the old law and its supersession by faith; the proper circumcision for Christians was instead inward and of the heart. For literary critics no doubt the most suggestive section of Shapiro's book is that in which he extends this finding into a reading of *The Merchant of Venice*.

When Shylock first proposes to exact a pound of Antonio's flesh, "to be cut off and taken" in that part of Antonio's body that best "pleaseth" him, he does not further clarify the bodily location. Indeed, it is not until the courtroom scene that Shylock asserts his intention to cut from a spot nearest Antonio's heart. But for an Elizabethan, Shapiro claims, the threat to cut a pound of Antonio's flesh would have suggested emasculation. Not only is "flesh" the consistent sixteenth-century term for penis (Shapiro cites the Geneva Bible), but in one of Shakespeare's sources, Alexander Silvayn's *The Orator*, the Jew's intention to castrate is overt, as is the Christian's in a related anecdote that reverses the parties, recounted in Gregorio Leti's *Life of Pope Sixtus the Fifth*. Shylock's decision to cut from Antonio's heart is, then, "the height of the literalism that informs all of his actions," as he is cutting his Christian adversary "in that part of the body where the Christians believe themselves to be truly circumcised: the heart" (127). Antonio's demand that Shylock become a Christian is a metaphorical "uncircumcision": Antonio and Shylock "to the last seek out . . . symbolic acts that convert their adversary into their own kind" (130).

The Merchant of Venice has "emerged as a touchstone of cultural identification" (10) and Shylock as the prototypical figure of Renaissance Jewishness (see John Gross, *Shylock: A Legend and Its Legacy* [New York, 1992]). Nevertheless, Shapiro suggests, it was the economic strength of other resident aliens—French, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese—rather than Jewish usury, that really worried Londoners in the period of *The Merchant of Venice*. Civic authorities undertook a full census of aliens in 1593, and there was "a riot upon the strangers" (187) in 1595, not long before *Merchant of Venice* was produced. In fact, what makes Shylock vulnerable to Portia's legal sleight-of-hand is the law against resident aliens: as so often happens, the play "reproduces the practice of translating anti-alien into anti-Jewish sentiment" (189). And Shapiro is not hesitant about showing how such sentiment persists. Some for whom Shakespeare's age represents a time of pristine "Englishness" have objected vigorously to Jewish scholars who trespass "on the banks of the Avon," beginning with Israel Gollancz, the first Jewish professor of English literature in England and continuing, in one recent and vigorously anti-semitic list, through Stephen Greenblatt (Eliot Baker, *Bardolatry*

[1992], cited by Shapiro, 81). Shapiro sees such excesses as a manifestation of the "cultural anxieties that continue to circulate . . . around the twin poles of 'Shakespeare' and the 'Jews'" (83), though he also points out that the English of Shakespeare's own period, unlike the Spanish, never were guilty of pogroms, forced conversions, inquisition or other violence against the non-Christians in their midst.

The latter parts of Shapiro's book trace the repeated attempts, especially in the Whitehall conference of 1655 and the debate over the "Jew Bill" of 1753, to determine precisely the status of the Jews of England. Neither citizens nor aliens, many took on the anomalous status of "denizens." But sixteenth-century attitudes about "the racial, national and criminal nature of the Jews" (199) persisted, and in the mid-eighteenth century debate about naturalizing the Jews Shakespeare's play was once again enlisted. Further confirmation of Shapiro's reading of Shylock comes from some of the allusions to a "knife-wielding, circumcising, castrating Shylock" of this period (219).

In teaching *The Merchant of Venice* one is often faced with overly-reductive undergraduate interpretations based on a series of binary oppositions: Christian and Jew, usurer and generous friend, Belmont and Venice. Shapiro's study suggests that an over-arching question of sameness and difference, both for Shakespeare's play and for many of the Bard's contemporaries, was that between Englishness and Jewishness. This contrast raised in its most acute form the question of what, precisely, constituted a national identity. As a study of cultural formation Shapiro's enlightening book thus expands our familiarity with the thought patterns and gives us increased access to the central questions which troubled early modern Englishmen, not least of all Shakespeare.

Loyola University–Chicago Suzanne Gossett

Climate and Literature: Reflections of Environment edited by Janet Pérez and Wendell Aycock. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1995. Pp. 144. $30.00.

On the day I read this book the temperature where I live plummeted to 26 degrees below zero—not a record low but near it, and a stark contrast with the 103 degrees reached seven months earlier in July 1995. For the record, the average surface temperature of the earth in 1995 was 59.7, the highest registered since tracking began in 1866, with the following years running close behind: 1990, 1991, 1988, 1981, 1987, 1983, 1980, and 1989. As everybody knows who reads newspapers or watches television, the global warming of the last decade has recast small talk about the weather into an unfolding apocalyptic drama. In the early days of meteorology scientists conceived "climate" as a more or less stable regime, which they could represent by averages, while "weather" referred to fluctuating conditions. The geographer Gary S. Elbow reminds us, in an essay here on "The Endless Rains of Death and Desolation in García Márquez's Short Stories," that "climate refers to the conditions that would normally be expected to occur at some location

during a specific time of year" (80). What he neglects to mention is that climatic conditions have changed drastically in the three million years or so during which people have inhabited the earth, and that after millennia of either disregarding or depending on it, climate is no longer available as a symbol of predictability, eternal recurrence or even normal expectation.

Climate and Literature appears at a time when literary critics have begun to apply the insights of environmentalism and cultural geography to the analysis of literary texts, and when cultural studies has turned its attention to the possibility of a green cultural criticism. Not without flaws, the collection nevertheless deserves the attention of a wide audience. At their least interesting the essays tend simply to observe the weather, which in Latin America, we are told more than once, can get awfully hot and rainy. At their best, the essays suggest an exciting new direction for an entire field of interdisciplinary work, and the importance of comparative and ecological approaches to it.

Bob Dylan famously observed that "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." Yet specialized fields such as glaciology, dendrochronology, paleoclimatology have profoundly transformed our daily experience of the weather. While science shapes our understanding of climatic processes as they extend through space and time, computer modeling and satellite technologies, developed for studying the weather, have infiltrated other cultural realms. The study of chaos emerged in the 1960s with attempts to simulate weather patterns, and it was a meteorologist, Edward Lorenz of MIT, who introduced the idea of the "butterfly effect" in complex systems to explain how small differences in input become magnified as output (a theory widely disseminated through popular culture and films such as *Jurassic Park*).

This collection brings together thirteen essays that study the cultural impact of climate, focusing on "ancient and modern literary reflections of climates real and imagined" (2). The scope is broadly historical and the texts under analysis range from classical poetry to modern fiction and poetry in English, French, and Spanish. Climatological thought has a long history and the editors have wisely avoided locating the problematic in a single national context. In the opening essay Rosemary Nielsen and Robert Solomon carefully attend to water imagery in Horace's "Parade *Odes*," and connect fluctuations in water-states to "the possibility, especially during imperial consolidation, of renewed chaos on social, political, religious, and sexual scales" (10). Contrasting Horace's outlook, with its "rage for order" and fear of disintegration, to twentieth-century fractal geometry and chaos theory (which takes a considerably more benign view of turbulence), they study chaos as an evolving metaphor in the representation of nature. Another essay, by Stephen Newmeyer, takes up the writings of the medieval Jewish philosopher and poet Jehuda Halevi, who appropriated Greek climatological theories to promote a return to the Holy Land. What emerges from Newmeyer's fascinating account is an early expression of climatological determinism: Halevi considered the climate of Palestine especially salutary, making it the ideal site for the reestablishment of the Jewish people. Halevi's major philosophical work, the *Kuzari*, argues, in terms parallel to the case made by Greek and Roman writers for the superiority of their climates and

national cultures, that geography conditions identity: "There are places in which particular plants, metals, or animals are found, or where the inhabitants are distinguished by their form and character, since perfection or deficiency of the soul are produced by the mingling of elements" (23–24). From here it was a short logical leap to his assertion, which echoes a passage from the Talmud, that "the atmosphere of the Holy Land makes [one] wise" (24) —a theory that explains something of the intense longing that has characterized Jewish life in the diaspora.

The relation of cultural identity to a national space also comes up in Jack Jordan's essay on "Climate and Identity in the Literature of the French Antilles." Jordan divides the francophone literatures of the Caribbean into three periods. In the first, current between the 1840s and the 1930s, writers cast Martinique and Guadeloupe in the soft tropical glow we now associate with Club Med brochures. During the second period, and under the influence of the *negritude* movement, which grounded black cultural identity in African language and customs, the poet Aimé Césaire looked to Africa rather than to his native Martinique for an aesthetic and sense of identity. Later in his career, however, Césaire figured the Antillian landscape as a map of authenticity and identification. In a 1977 interview he described himself as "un homme de terre, de montagne et de feu," and continued: "In my sensibility the mountain [Mont Pélée] plays a very great role because I am a Martinican, and because at the horizon of the Martinican sensibility there is always the presence of the mountain" (118). Jordan shows how writers of a third, or "creole," period in the literature of the French Antilles rejected essentialism and embraced a regionalism that moved them "from looking for identity in an abstract, unifying universal to rooting it in a cross-cultural poetics, itself inseparable from the climate and landscape unique to the islands" (119).

The relation of climatological influence to the construction of national identity is explored in several other essays. Wendell McClendon's "Zola's Uses of Climate in *The Land*" isolates passages describing the physical environment in *La Terre* to make a compelling argument about the practice of literary naturalism. As McClendon shows, Zola's novel systematically mingles human and non-human nature: its unrelenting emphasis on the elements imputes a powerful agency to weather, and its portrayal of fictional characters turns subjectivity itself into a sort of climatic effect. *La Terre*, McClendon contends, induces in its readers a feeling of powerlessness, as if they were "witness to an immense and unjust natural disaster, non-human on the surface but in which human beings are clearly implicated" (51). In the world of the novel, natural "law," figured as a massive and mechanical cyclicality, forces puny human actors into compliance. The contributors to *Climate and Literature* sometimes slip into such a mode of thinking themselves. McClendon's contribution demonstrates both the strengths and limitations of this approach, its capacity to transform particular discursive features into something subtle and deserving of careful analysis, alongside a tendency to mystify the natural as an autonomous and eternal order. Raquel Romeu, for example, in an essay on the influence of climate in the fiction of Alejo Carpentier and Mario Vargas Llosa, argues that "the diversity of climates in Peru and other South American countries generally has resulted in a plurality of cultures, producing serious economic, political and even moral prob-

lems" (110). Without denying the importance of climate to food production and to resource and health-care issues, we need to read these factors in conjunction with the political and technological problems at the root of social injustice, rather than positing a direct monocausal relationship between weather and regional development.

The sole essay among the thirteen that turns directly to ecology for insight is one of the best, and concludes the volume: Luis A. Jiménez's "Afro-Cuban Culture, Ecology, and Climate in 'La comparsa' by Felipe Pichardo Moya." Jiménez draws on Eugene P. Odum's concept of the "biotic community" to read "La comparsa," a 1916 poem about carnival celebration. Jiménez cites Odum's textbook *Fundamentals of Ecology*, which played a major part in revolutionizing ecology in the 1950s and 1960s by foregrounding the concept of the "ecosystem." Odum's style of systems ecology is basically holistic, taking community organization as a basic structural unit, in contrast with a reductionist approach that explains wholes by reference to constituent parts. The value of such concepts to both social ecologists and "ecocentrics"—so-called red-greens and green-greens—is considerable. Jiménez's dual purpose in this essay is to demonstrate the origin of Afro-Cuban customs in African tradition, and to "illustrate how the collective feelings of the group are molded to a climatic and ecological unity" (129). Jiménez's essay succeeds admirably at the first task, but his discovery of climatic conditions "reflected" in the music, dance, and cultural practices of the Afro-Cuban community finally seems less satisfying. The essay deftly reiterates the premise of the entire collection, that climate is a given we can find mirrored in literary texts. Yet any direct correlation of regional and national cultures with biomes tends to occlude the non-climatic variables (political, ideological, and economic) that mediate our experience of nature.

What all of the essays reveal is that interaction between social and environmental factors, culture and climate, remains so tightly imbricated that we cannot separate one from the other. Ever since the French naturalist Buffon attacked American climate and moral capacity (and Thomas Jefferson rose to their defence), there have been attempts to link climate with cultural difference. The nineteenth-century promoter of Western expansion, William Gilpin, hypothesized the existence of an "isothermal belt" where higher cultures thrived, which followed a westward trajectory from Athens and Rome to Topeka and Denver. At the turn of the century the Yale geographer Ellsworth Huntington theorized differences among human races by reference to climatic factors, plotting on maps and graphs indices such as health, longevity, industrial output, and level of "civilization." In Huntington's racialized hierarchy, Britain and the Atlantic seaboard scored a perfect 100, while countries situated in the tropics ranked very low. New paradigms for studying the relation of climate to culture will avoid such transparent absurdities, but will still need to come to terms with the realization that climate is both anthropogenic and subject to severe overall variability. This collection reminds us that climate has a history, which can be read in novels and poetry as well as in landscape or statistical records. It opens vistas on an important topic just as our ideas about it are undergoing a revolution.

University of Iowa Alvin Snider

Disturbing Pleasures: Learning Popular Culture by Henry A. Giroux. New York: Routledge, 1994. Pp. xi + 202. $52.50 cloth; $16.95 paper.

Making Malcolm: The Myth & Meaning of Malcolm X by Michael Eric Dyson. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xxi + 215. $19.95 cloth; $10.95 paper.

A great deal gets written, and said, these days about the "public intellectual," and whether or not such a thing, or person, can still meaningfully exist, with the frequently stated corollary that if the times were better, so too would be the people who serve them. But is this really true, or is the whole so-called argument just another—perhaps more palatable—way of saying that "we" who make such claims don't like the intellectuals we've got, so rather than dignifying their presence with reasoned response, we'd prefer simply to define them out of existence? In other words, for the sake of a certain homebound comfort we would prefer not to do the intellectual work that comes too visibly to hand, so a pose of nostalgic know-nothingism (perhaps no pose at all) is more expedient.

In his new collection of essays, Henry Giroux returns to Adorno's injunction that "it is part of morality not to be at home in one's home" (147), and then offers a useful critique of the unawareness—regardless of how intentional—that informs much posturing about the question of intellectual work, and the institutional encounter with the "Other," which is the greatest public challenge now confronting America's academic middle class. Giroux's proximate text, in his discussion of intellectual homes, is the work of Paulo Freire, specifically Freire's pedagogy of "critical literacy" (141). Giroux differentiates between the locatedness of Gramsci's "organic intellectual" and the "homelessness" of Freire as a "border intellectual":

> Of course, this is not meant to suggest that intellectuals have to go into exile to take up Freire's work, but it does suggest that in becoming border crossers, it is not uncommon for many of them to engage his work as an act of bad faith. Refusing to negotiate or deconstruct the borders that define their own politics of location . . . . [and] From the comforting perspective of the colonizing gaze, such theorists often appropriate Freire's work without engaging its historical specificity and ongoing political project. (148)

This failure of engagement—or rather the argument against it—is key, and key to the concerns that animate not only the current volume, but Giroux's whole career: as scholar, teacher, public figure.

Henry A. Giroux is the Waterbury Chair Professor in Secondary Education at Pennsylvania State University; he is the author of numerous books and articles, and is well known as a public and impassioned presenter of his work. *Disturbing Pleasures* collects (in revision) pieces that first appeared in such journals as *Cultural Studies*, *College Literature*, *The Review of Education*, and *Cultural Crtique*. There are nine essays in all (one of which is co-authored with Roger I. Simon); each makes good on the subtitle, "learning popular culture." That is what Giroux is doing here: learning the popular culture that, after Adorno, is the "home" we must work critically not to be at home

in; the home that Americans make for themselves with results that redound upon the rest of the world. The topics range from fashion advertising to Walt Disney, photography to the privatization of public education, academic cultural studies to Paulo Freire. The discussion of Freire is particularly valuable, not only as a meditation on the possibilities of the "border intellectual," but as a cautionary reminder of how not to appropriate Freire's frequently over-popularized work. In other discussions—of Benetton advertising, or popular films (*Good Morning, Vietnam; Pretty Woman; Grand Canyon*)—Giroux shows himself an able reader, and teacher, of popular culture; it is here most vividly that he makes his case for a "pedagogy of representation" (89), and the responsibility intellectuals bear—particularly ones who are publicly funded—to undertake it:

> The challenge of a new cultural politics, one that takes popular and media culture seriously, is as much a pedagogical challenge as it is a political one. The issue for cultural workers is not merely to recognize the importance of cultural texts such as *Good Morning, Vietnam* and *Pretty Woman* in shaping social identities, but to address how representations are constructed and taken up through social memories that are taught, learned, mediated, and appropriated within particular institutional and discursive formations of power. (45)

Evident here, as throughout the book, is Giroux's commitment—for him as passionate as it is necessary—to the crucial relation between institutional work and public life: the one impossible in any meaningful sense without the other.

This commitment has led him more than once into conflicts, from which he has never shrunk; and it leads him here, inevitably, into a consideration of "cultural studies," which is the stage on which a great deal of academic politics and presumption get publicly acted out. "I want to . . . argue," Giroux writes,

> that cultural studies is still too rigidly tied to the modernist academic disciplinary structures that it often criticizes. . . . What it fails to do is to critically address a major prop of disciplinarity, which is the notion of pedagogy as a transparent vehicle for transmitting truth and knowledge. . . . The haunting question here is, what is it about pedagogy that allows cultural studies theorists to ignore it? One answer may lie in the refusal of cultural studies theorists to either take schooling seriously as a site of struggle or to probe how traditional pedagogy produces particular identities, how it constructs students through a range of social forms. (130)

To his credit, Henry Giroux has never shied away from such concerns; he would doubtless accept as honorable the designation of his project—like the focus of his career generally—as "pedagogical." And for those who have used that term to dismiss his work as *mere* pedagogy the present essays are sufficient to discredit such condescension, particularly among people who ought to know better, much better.

Like Giroux, Michael Eric Dyson is a scholar who has been subjected to

criticism not so much because of the work he has done, which is admirable, but because of the label that has been attached to it, and him—through no particular wish of his own. Dyson is frequently grouped, these days, with a number of other African American academics who are taken to represent—whether for or against—the last best hope of public intellectual life in the United States. (The example of Giroux alone is sufficient to challenge the authority and exclusivity of such claims, but facts often have little meaning in the domain of publicity, where labels take the place of reasoned inquiry, and where prejudice too easily supplants truth.) Fortunately for us, Professor Dyson—like Professor Giroux—is quite capable of making his own case, if given the chance.

That is precisely what he does in his second book, *Making Malcolm*, no less so than in his first one, *Reflecting Black: African-American Cultural Criticism* (University of Minnesota, 1993), which is a collection of essays and call-and-response-like "Improvisations." (Professor Dyson is also an ordained Baptist minister, as well as adept at rap lyrics; his writing is lively, diverse, "engaged" as Henry Giroux might say.) The topics of the first book are various, ranging from Michael Jackson to Toni Morrison, political correctness to gospel music, and including discussions of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X; the latter becomes the sole subject of Dyson's second book. *Making Malcolm* is not in any extended sense a biography, however; nor is it a critical study of the man's "life and works," in the usual sense. Instead, it is the account of a personal and deeply felt encounter between Dyson and another African American whom he never met in life, but whom he comes to know by working through the various "myths" crated around Malcolm:

> As I have matured, journeying from factory worker to professor, it is the Malcolm who valued truth over habit who has appealed most to me, his ability to be self-critical and to change his direction an unfailing sign of integrity and courage. But these two Malcolms need not be in ultimate, fatal conflict, need not be fractured by the choice between seeking an empowering racial identity and linking ourselves to the truth no matter what it looks like, regardless of color, class, gender, sex, or age. They are both legitimate quests, and Malcolm's career and memory are enabling agents for both pursuits. His complexity is our gift. (17)

As this passage suggests, the book is not only about Dyson's personal "meeting" with Malcolm; it is also about what has, and perhaps more urgently, what *could* occur if a more general, and historically informed, meeting were to take place, inasmuch as Malcolm's "complexity is our gift."

Like Henry Giroux, Michael Dyson comes from a working-class background. Subsequently, both men have been translated by the academy and its culture into an alternate domain of privilege; the work of each is inscribed knowingly and invaluably by that experience of leaving "home," the one a professor of education occupying an endowed chair, the other a professor of communication studies and Director of the Institute of African-American Research at the University of North Carolina. "To comprehend the full sweep of a figure's life and thought," Dyson writes, "it is necessary to place

that figure's career in its cultural and historical context and view the trends and twists of thought that mark significant periods of change and development" (63). This procedure, which Dyson terms "trajectory analysis," is one he submits himself to—tellingly—no less so than his subject, Malcolm X, producing a running commentary on the social construction of subject positions, with respect to class and race and—with special relevance—gender.

The longest section of the book, "X Marks the Plots: A Critical Reading of Malcolm's Readers," offers a concise and valuable overview of the various "Malcolms" that readers have constructed, each plotting a different "trajectory," either more or less informed and self critical, with these trajectories being organized generally according to four headings: ". . . Malcolm as hero and saint, Malcolm as a public moralist, Malcolm as victim and vehicle of psychohistorical forces, and Malcolm as revolutionary figure judged by his career trajectory from nationalist to alleged socialist" (24). What follows this summary discussion are four examinations of Malcolm in relation to specific topics: resurgent nationalism and rap; black film; Spike Lee's appropriation of Malcolm (which Dyson largely approves, proposing that "Never before in American cinema has an alternative black spirituality been so intelligently represented" [139]); and contemporary American politics, especially with regard to the dangerous predicament of young African American males. The book concludes with a hopeful, if brief, meditation on "turning the corner" away from racial divisiveness and crude stereotyping. Of particular relevance and value—both for its insights and also for its method—is the discussion of Malcolm's impact on rap music and hip hop culture. Here Dyson treats popular texts not as many commentators do—particularly those espousing politically trendy causes—as cultural souvenirs that attest to the collector's hip authenticity, but as legitimate forms of cultural inquiry, concurrent with his own. "For the past decade," he writes, "rap artists—who as informal ethnographers of black youth culture translate the inarticulate suffering of poor black masses into articulate anger—have warned of the genocidal consequences of ghetto life for poor blacks" (163). It is a warning we have ignored at our peril, with the ghettoizing of "popular" culture, which both Dyson and Giroux work against, abetting an ignorance as dangerous as it is familiar.

So, what to do? Both authors offer useful and insightful—sometimes inspired—suggestions that might be summed up using a term of the sociologist Richard Sennett, who wrote about the "hidden injuries of class." The injuries inflicted by class, together with race and gender as these have been variously constructed, are perhaps not so "hidden" now as they were more than thirty years ago, when Sennett devised his term. That this is so is surely to the good, and due in no small measure to the work of authors such as Dyson and Giroux, who act and write as public intellectuals without troubling unnecessarily about whether or not they may be operating without a license. Their commitment and honesty are license enough (although it is possible to wish that Giroux could write sometimes with more of Dyson's straightforwardness, and Dyson would occasionally allow himself more of Giroux's extended scope of argument). Now that the cat is out of the bag culturally, with respect to the injuries we have done to each other, victims and victimizers alike, it's anybody's guess whether the academy will be up

to the public challenge that its own over-eager rhetoric invites, or whether the professors will turn this moment of opportunity into one more internecine squabble the relevance of which remains purely "academic." If the latter happens, it will be against the strong counter examples offered by Michael Dyson and Henry Giroux.

Wayne State University Jerry Herron

Cultural Selection by Gary Taylor. New York: Basic Books, 1996. Pp. ix + 325. $26.00.

In fourteen vignettes chosen to represent a day in the life of Shakespeare for a recent two-page spread in *The New York Times Magazine* entitled "All Shakespeare, All the Time," the only scholar named is Gary Taylor. Why should Gary Taylor be selected as the single academic to receive media recognition in *The Times*? The moment illustrates the thesis of Taylor's new book: gaining access to public attention involves a struggle for control of the mechanisms that regulate cultural selection. Taylor's inclusion implies others' exclusion.

In 1961 the British leftist Raymond Williams spoke the phrase that launched a thousand canon revisions. Thirty-five years later the echo of Williams' concept "selective tradition" can be heard in Taylor's title *Cultural Selection*. But Taylor's assessment of the left's performance in our current culture wars is blunt. The left, he says, "lost the culture wars of the 1980s." A chief reason for defeat is the left's unwillingness and inability to engage the popular media, the point of entry into widescale public discourse and debate. Lack of engagement means that the left selects itself out of the competition before the battle begins, thereby giving up in advance. Taylor's involvement with the media is thus part of his point. His drive to cross the threshold into the public arena is directly linked to his desire to remedy the left's failure.

Some readers will dismiss Taylor's harsh indictment of the left as exaggerated. But legitimate qualifications to his argument should not distract from the basic accuracy of his charge. Here is a decided imbalance in the respective impacts of right and left in the public debate about culture. Comparatively speaking, William Bennett, Allan Bloom, Lynne Cheney, Dinesh d'Souza are household names. No equivalent roll call is possible on the left side. Gerald Graff's work has led to the formation of Teachers for a Democratic Culture, but the organization's newsletter, while important, remains so obscure that it does not register on the scale of public attention. The content of John Guillory's *Cultural Capital* concerns class inequality in the distribution of cultural privilege, but his style displays no desire to reach a wider audience.

As the examples of William Bennett and Lynne Cheney indicate, the power of the cultural right derives from its connection to Republican party politics. Again there is a vacuum on the other side. The most prominent instance of authentic affiliation with the Democratic party illustrates the di-

lemma. Arthur Schlesinger's *Disuniting of America* can provide no effective opposition because on cultural issues he is, according to Taylor's approriate label, "conservative."

If Gary Taylor has identified a major problem on the left side of the culture wars, then how successful is his proposed alternative? Taylor's solution, which focuses on access to major mass media, needs to be assessed on two levels. First, on a practical level, Taylor manifestly succeeds in breaking into the select circle of voices and ideas circulated by *The New York Times*, which reviewed *Cultural Selection* in both the daily and Sunday review spaces.

A short review of Taylor's career suggests how remarkable this breakthrough is, for his early reputation was made in the hitherto little-known field of textual editing. The stature of his work with Stanley Wells on the Oxford edition of Shakespeare is attested by its adoption as the text for the new Norton Shakespeare under the direction of Stephen Greenblatt. Taylor also co-edited with Michael Warren a collection on multiple texts of *King Lear* that initiated a major trend in rethinking principles of editing. But the specific cause of Taylor's emergence into public notoriety was the announcement of his discovery of a new Shakespeare poem. Plucked out of Kansas like Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz*, Taylor landed on the front page of *The New York Times*, complete with photograph and "Man in the News" profile, on November 24, 1985.

While this limelight treatment cannot have been entirely unwelcome, the sudden exposure must also have been a painful shock because of the controversy it ignited over the authenticity of Taylor's attribution of the poem to Shakespeare. Taylor learned the hard way about the media's power and this experience marks the decisive turning point in the development of his career.

Showing admirable resilience and resourcefulness, Taylor used his unexpected celebrity to reinvent himself and to launch a new career as a public intellectual as the author of *Reinventing Shakespeare*. This popularly written, accessible book is the best comprehensive account of the revolutionary changes in Shakespeare criticism and is far superior to the main conservative rival, Brian Vickers' *Appropriating Shakespeare*. Ironically, Taylor's triumph here proves that the left has not lost the culture wars across the board on every front, contrary to his sweeping claims in his latest book.

Cultural Selection represents Taylor's continued bid to establish himself as a public intellectual. The new book's greatly expanded historical, geographical and disciplinary scope raises the ante considerably. Amidst the wide-ranging commentary, Taylor returns frequently enough to his homebase to make one feel that he is writing a vast metaphysics of textual editorship when he eloquently delineates the contingencies and fragility surrounding cultural artefacts. Yet the all-out effort necessary for the difficult feat of carving out a public niche has left Taylor with insufficient time to reflect on the possible complexities, problems and limitations of the role of public intellectual.

Despite Taylor's style of explanatory decisiveness—his declarative one-liners hum with pith and zip—there is something curiously fragmented, tentative and incomplete about the overall argument. A case in point is the final chapter on Richard Nixon. The focus on Nixon is a logical extension of the

theme of the culture wars. Taylor sees Nixon's appeal to traditional values as the culture wars' starting-point; Nixon's victory inaugurates the right's dominance of the Presidency, the downfall and paralysis of the left. Taylor twice remarks on how the assassination of Kennedy, when Taylor was 10 years old, made it possible to reverse the result of the 1960 election. Moreover, the chapter can also be read as Taylor's intervention in the 1996 presidential election. We are left in no doubt how Taylor feels about Bob Dole's identification with Nixon. But Bill Clinton is present only in an epigraph. Taylor's silence on Clinton prevents him from addressing the problems on cultural policy within the Democratic party and he thus cuts himself off from a full consideration of conflicts on the left side of the spectrum.

A second difficulty is that Taylor's hyperbole about the left's failure causes him to ignore the very large exception of Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Much recent discussion of public intellectuals has emphasized black critics, with Gates justifiably seen as the leading figure. Gates's media savvy is part of his conceptual brilliance; his mastery of public presentation makes possible a substantive contribution to national public-policy debates, while his deftness makes it unlikely that Gates will be caught in Michael Lerner's unproductive, predictable bid with the Clintons over the politics of meaning. The absence of Gates in *Cultural Selection* is felt not only because he is a relevant model for the public intellectual stance to which Taylor aspires but also because of the topic of race. Throughout *Cultural Selection*, Taylor alludes tantalizingly but tangentially to racial matters, yet the issue of race never quite comes into focus. In one key instance, the issue is disturbingly thwarted when Taylor transforms Ellison's *Invisible Man* into a metaphor for the invisibility of the editor, thus effacing and circumventing the specific racial significance of Ellison's work. This is not to deny the validity of interracial communication that permits Ellison to speak for Taylor, and Taylor for Ellison, but rather to insist that the complicated medium of "lower frequencies" that enables such exchanges is not a system of perfect equivalencies in which one element can simply substitute for another, without explanation or analysis.

Gary Taylor has unquestionably succeeded in creating an opening—his own evolutionary niche—in the public sphere but *Cultural Selection* does not fully clarify how he will use the opportunity this consolidation of his celebrity affords him. The answer will not be provided by Taylor's current project as editor of the Oxford edition of Thomas Middleton. A full answer to the question of the direction toward which *Cultural Selection* is pointing must await its sequel.

Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute Peter Erickson

Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition by Mack Smith. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995. Pp. 269. $35.00.

The question of the nature and even the possibility of representation has dominated twentieth-century philosophy and literary theory. In painting and

the plastic arts, representation was abandoned early in favor of abstraction, which in turn has been called into question. But the novel, because its medium is language, could not as completely divorce itself from representation, although in the hands of authors such as Joyce, Beckett, Pynchon, and DeLillo it has certainly problematized the relationship between word and world. Nonetheless, as Mack Smith says, "a shift in realist paradigms has taken place in this century from an empirical, correspondence theory of signification to a foundational model emphasizing discourse and a coherence theory of meaning" (2). Coherence theory holds that meaning is generated by the internal order of a semiotic system, regardless of whether that system represents or corresponds to an external reality. Rival systems can be coherent while offering opposing or radically differing claims, as with the Ptolemaic and Copernican cosmologies.

The coherence model may not be the recent paradigm shift that Smith claims it is, at least within literary theory. Some would say it is present in Aristotle's "Poetics," particularly in his distancing of artistic probablity from actual possibility, that it is found in Sir Philip Sidney's insistence that poetry delivers a "golden" world, not "brazen" reality, and that the battle against correspondence escalates in Oscar Wilde's overt celebration of poetic untruth. And to the extent that the trashing of correspondence models is a twentieth-century phenomenon, one should say more than Smith does about its appearance in the early Formalists. But, in Smith's defence, he is not writing the history of a critical idea, he is offering a reading of various novels: *Don Quixote*, *Emma*, *Anna Karenina*, *Ulysses*, and *Gravity's Rainbow*.

Smith argues that each of these novels concerns itself with the correspondence-coherence opposition. Each novel embodies by way of textual ekphrasis—descriptive passages that refer to the issue of representation—the problems involved in the common notion that language can represent a realm of truth and facticity. But here a difficulty arises. Smith has claimed that the shift to a coherence paradigm is a twentieth-century phenomenon, but half of his book is devoted to finding the correspondence paradigm critiqued in novels that pre-date our century. He does not explain the paradox, although what he seems to mean is that the *theoretical articulation* of coherence theory is a twentieth-century phenomenon, but that novelists of the past anticipated it, just as many authors can be said to anticipate Freudian insights. In any case, Smith wants it both ways—coherence theory was discovered by twentieth- century philosophy, but Cervantes, Austen, and Tolstoy knew all about it.

What links these three to Joyce and Pynchon, in Smith's view, is a common (poststructural and postmodern) suspicion that social codes, language and "discourse" fail to penetrate or reveal the real and in fact often merely delude. One's judgment of Smith's book will depend in part on how carefully nuanced his readings of each novel seem to be. Personally, I did not feel greatly enlightened by his discussion of *Don Quixote*, which does not adequately move beyond the truism that Cervantes exposes the absurdity of Quixote's discourse on the real. Quixote's words do not correspond to reality —there is no news here.

The ekphrastic moments in *Emma* include Emma's drawing of Harriet and the word game that Emma and Elton call "charade." Smith's analysis of

these textual moments leads to commentary on Emma's mistaken representation of her social reality. That Emma holds some kinship with Quixote in this regard is, again, not a new critical insight. Smith is employing a new critical vocabulary to describe what used to be called the appearance vs. reality theme. More interesting is Smith's assertion that Austen's text presents, as an alternative to Emma's representation of the real, a sort of intuitionism that anticipates Tolstoy. "The text disguises the source of social truth by presenting it more as *a priori* intuitive realization than as an external code" (106).

The discussion of *Anna Karenina* moves nicely from an examination of ekphrastic moments, such as the descriptions of the paintings of Vronsky and Mihailov, to a discussion of Tolstoy's suspicion of social codes and discourses, which (predictably at this point in Smith's study) only delude in their pretenses to correspondence. Smith contrasts Tolstoy's critique of these codes with his representation, primarily through Levin, of a nonlinguistic apprehension of truth. "Tolstoy's text . . . seeks a more keen discursive correspondence to actuality by exposing . . . the faults of a coherence view emphasizing the linguistic structure of reality. The valorized correspondent discourse is one that would, if possible, dispense with language entirely" (138). Tolstoy is in the melancholy position of needing correspondence while recognizing that social codes merely cohere. Despite the fact that each novel seems to lead us to the same conclusion, that correspondence is an ever-receding ideal, Smith has found, by way of ekphrastic moments and the correspondence-coherence opposition, a fresh way of approaching the problem of Tolstoy's cynicism and intuitionism, which ultimately led to his rejection of his own fiction. Seemingly, Tolstoy came to recognize the contradiction between his skepticism concerning language and his actions as novelist.

At this point, it may sound as though the word "realism" in Smith's title is inappropriate, but Smith's position is that "realism is more than just a mode by which novels claim fidelity to actuality. It is a tradition in which novelists examine dramatically and narratively the central focus of philosophic realism, the relation of word to world" (157). This definition seems to allow realism to include its opposite or other—any fiction that can be read as a *critique* of realism. Some readers may see carelessness here, others will see something fashionably deconstructive.

If twentieth-century philosophy has invested heavily in the coherence paradigm, and Smith mentions a number of philosophers briefly at the start of his chapters on Joyce and Pynchon, one would expect the paradigm to emerge even more clearly in our century's fiction. In *Ulysses*, correspondence is denied by means of the multiple narrative styles by which "Joyce questions the possibility of objective knowledge separate from our modes of discourse" (161). Like *Anna Karenina*, *Ulysses* betrays a desire for correspondence, found most persistently in the later novel's musical motifs. In a long argument, Smith attempts to show that "the entire musical ekphrasis, extending and resonating throughout the text, is a semiotic system that constrains the indeterminacy of textual meaning by making the multiple intertextual signifiers refer ultimately to a signified representing consubstantiality and thus at least the comforting illusion of correspondence" (176). I leave it to others to decide whether the musical ekphrasis really accom-

plishes this wistful resurrection of the older paradigm that Joyce otherwise refutes.

Because Smith has defined, not uncontroversially, the tradition of realism as a tradition that critiques its own possibility, Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* is realism's crowning achievement. But realism has become its own opposite when Smith says that this novel reveals "postmodern language as an imprisoning system of internal coherence that has replaced an idealized correspondence with reality," although, yet again, *Gravity's Rainbow* reveals "a nostalgic longing for this relation" (202). In this novel, Smith's theme can be coaxed from an examination of ekphrastic descriptions of songs, myths, and artifacts, although the principal ekphrasis is the recurrent allusion to cinema, the frames of which "connote better than any other form the 'framing' of reality" that semiotic systems are guilty of when one no longer believes that they can represent reality objectively (215).

Did each of these authors really entertain such similarly skeptical and coincidentally postmodern attitudes toward language and especially toward intuition? Or is the signifier so inevitably free-floating as to take on whatever illusion of meaning each generation of interpreters wishes to impose upon it? Is Smith's book an example of the critic finding, in Norman Holland's term, his own "identity theme" in the literature under study? I am inclined to opt for the latter explanation. Smith's critical persona or identity is entirely postmodern, and there is a note of triumph in each of his demonstrations that one of the great authors of the past was a closet postmodern, as though we had witnessed the "outing" of Cervantes and Jane Austen.

Smith's study, then, raises a question: why is postmodernism so pleased to preside over the demise of reason and representation? And why, even as it privileges coherence theory over correspondence, does it so glibly rehearse formulas that lack coherence, such as the assertion that intuition can replace logic, which is merely a tool of oppression? In this postmodern turn from reason, science has often become the target, and Smith includes the required paragraph denying the objectivity of scientific knowledge, seeing "the history of science as the succession of conceptual schemes that create more-workable concepts of nature through which practical scientific and epistemological advances may be achieved—the conceptual scheme is measured not only by the adequacy of its approximations to nature but by the theoretical and technological answers that can be formulated by the kind and quality of questions it allows" (158). Although this is meant to convey a view of scientific discourse as something other than a correspondent discourse, the only phrase in Smith's sentence that makes sense (again, Smith would have it both ways) is the phrase that allows "approximations to nature." And how, indeed, could science be "workable" if this were not the case?

If it were merely a matter of specialists arguing among themselves about novels, the privileging of theories of knowledge that rob us of places from which to make judgments and know the truth could seem relatively innocent. But Smith's celebration of intuition and of the denial that our words can mean anything in particular is a symptom of a larger assault on reason in the humanities, an assault found, for instance, in the claims of some feminists that mathematics is merely a male discourse, or found in the claims of

some Afro-centrists that ancient Egyptians had flying machines and knew about quantum mechanics. If taken seriously by our students, such irrationalism could have disastrous consequences, and we should object to it even when it limits itself to seeing its own reflection in a handful of novels.

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Our Vampires, Ourselves by Nina Auerbach. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Pp. 238. $22.00.

Nina Auerbach's latest book blends literary analysis of vampire texts with a cultural reading of how vampirism infects our thoughts. *Our Vampires, Ourselves* offers a critical, and largely chronological, survey of vampire stories, beginning with a comparison of Byron's 1816 fragmentary tale introducing the vampire figure and Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819) and ending with Kathryn Bigelow's 1987 film *Near Dark*. Yet it would be a mistake to view *Our Vampires, Ourselves* as being only a history of vampires in literature, for it is at the same time "a history of Anglo-American culture through its mutating vampires" (1). This book is a fascinating and appealing historical study that is also a model of engaging cultural criticism.

Auerbach posits "that vampirism springs not only from paranoia, xenophobia, or immortal longings, but from generosity and shared enthusiasm": her own excitement concerning the subject motivates her argument (vii). The four textual chapters of *Our Vampires, Ourselves* are arranged according to a loose historical and typological chronology and focus on developing cultural paradigms of the vampire. There is a brief and personalized introduction that sets out the cultural issues to be analyzed, followed by the first chapter, which considers Romantic conventions regarding marriage and friendship in relation to various nineteenth- and twentieth-century fictional, theatrical, and film texts figuring the vampire as an intimate. The second chapter pivots around a discussion of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* comparing that work to F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* as a version of the animalistic Dracula. In her third chapter, Auerbach traces the various transmutations of psychic vampirism in fiction contemporary with and following Stoker's novel, including work by Stephen King and Anne Rice, and popular films, ranging from Todd Browning's, starring Bela Lugosi, to the Hammer films with Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing. The fourth chapter ambitiously charts out how the promise embodied in 1970s vampires gives way to the "depressed creatures" of the Reagan years (165). By examining how contemporary vampires are represented as typically dysfunctional, Auerbach convincingly demonstrates how horror stories reproduce and refract cultural tensions.

Auerbach's first chapter lays the groundwork for her argument by delineating the relationship between Byron and Polidori and analyzing the male friendships depicted in their relevant works as vampirism of the homoerotic kind. She goes on to describe the less-known theatrical adaptation of Polidori's story by J. R. Planché and considers how the technology of the ghost trap, "a pair of spring-controlled doors cut into the scenery," encouraged

audiences to perceive vampires as disembodied spirits (23). Another significant innovation introduced by Planché concerns his emphasis on the vampire's dependence on and association with the moon. Noting how cinematic treatments of monsters (vampires, wolfmen) make much of the moon, Auerbach contrasts the Shakespearean vision of the moon as it "licenses enchanted eroticism" (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) with the mid-Victorian idea that the "moon is the magic fusion among species, the balm that joins human to preterhuman, death to life" (25–26). Auerbach then shifts her discussion to the popular serial *Varney the Vampire*, whose author is presumed to be James Malcolm Rymer. Many of Varney's characteristics (that he is preternatural yet bound by human relationships, that he can transform victims into his own kind, that he is "an increasingly representative interloper in a predatory society") also surface in Stoker's novel and other versions of Dracula (29). Auerbach takes care to demonstrate Varney's similarities to other social predators in literature, such as Thackeray's Becky Sharp (of *Vanity Fair*) and Sweeney Todd (of George Dibdin Pitt's *The String of Pearls; or, The Fiend of Fleet Street* and the Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler 1979 Broadway musical), as well as Alan Raby, the title character of Dion Boucicault's drama, *The Vampire* (1852).

Turning from male relationships and identity formation, Auerbach concludes her first chapter by exploring the connections among Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), Coleridge's *Christabel*, and film adaptations of the story, notably *The Hunger* (1983: directed by Tony Scott and based on Whitley Strieber's novel). She carefully documents the transformation of the female vampiric relationship from fiction to film in claiming that "Carmilla is one of the few self-accepting homosexuals in Victorian or any literature" and that "homosexuality itself is figured as female" (41). Auerbach describes Carmilla's erotic attachment to Laura as Le Fanu represents it and contrasts this female model of vampirism with the male examples previously discussed, noting of Carmilla that "as a woman, the vampiric friend releases a boundless capacity for intimacy" (45). Carmilla's "vampirism . . . is an interchange, a sharing, an identification, that breaks down the boundaries of familial roles and the sanctioned hierarchy of marriage" (47). In contrast, twentieth-century cinematic treatments of female vampirism "repudiate the 'intimacy, or friendship' of their sentimental predecessors" (60).

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* continues the journey from intimacy to self-consciousness by insisting on his right of possession according to the hierarchy depicted in the novel, as the words "belongs to me" resonate (71). As Auerbach remarks, Dracula is "harbinger of a world to come, a world that is our own" (63). As one who "identifies only with a vanished conquering race whose token is not a mortal but an animal," Dracula "reshapes" himself "into his unrecognizable likeness," more like Keats' Lamia than Coleridge's Geraldine (64). Auerbach gracefully demonstrates the transformations of Stoker's *Dracula* in various film treatments of the Dracula subject, noting that "Murnau's *Nosferatu* and Browning's *Dracula* struggle to reunite the vampire to his mortal friend. . . . Both movies finally succumb to the coldness at the heart of Stoker's novel, the requiem of a tradition of intimacy" (78). Dracula is an isolated figure, who is unable to bond in the way of other male characters in the novel; he does not appear to infect other men with his vampirism

but makes pawns of infected women. Auerbach connects this vampire figure to Oscar Wilde in the dock, by citing Richard Dellamora's argument in *Masculine Desire* that legal restrictions regarding sexuality in the late nineteenth century changed "emphasis from sexual acts between men, especially sodomy, the traditional focus of legislation, to sexual sentiment or thought, and in this way to an abstract entity soon to be widely referred to as 'homosexuality'" (84). Auerbach asserts that modern film treatments of Dracula's erotic relationships with the female characters, Lucy and Mina, are often distortions of Stoker's emphasis on male homoeroticism.

The psychic vampires described in chapter three, characters in lesser known works like Alice and Claude Askew's "Aylmer Vance and the Vampire" (1914), George Sylvester Viereck's *The House of the Vampire* (1907), Fritz Leiber's "The Girl with the Hungry Eyes" (1949), Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Parasite" (1894), and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's "Luella Miller" (1903) "lurk at the sophisticated center of adult society" (102). According to the cultural values of author and audience, psychic vampires are more or less powerfully masculine, perverse, marginal, and/or parasitically feminine. As Auerbach notes, the Doyle and Freeman stories inextricably link psychic vampirism to "womanly dependence," to the old maid and the helpless wife (107). Homosexual and female vampires of this type are more interested in soul stealing than in bloodsucking. Without souls of their own, they hunger after others'. The common characteristic of psychic vampires is that they "thrive on revulsion," in violating common standards and revealing "the predatory underside of inspirational idealism" (109), for, as Auerbach so nicely puts it, "They refuse blood but they grow fat on human friendship" (109).

In the second part of her argument concerning psychic vampires, Auerbach discusses more recent fictions that reproduce and revise the Dracula tradition of "feeding" as alluring aesthetic representations. Moving from analysis of Bela Lugosi's foreign appeal to a consideration of other "captivating" monsters—Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's creature and King Kong, Auerbach demonstrates how they represent "'30s hopes and fears" of being foreign, formal, abnormal, and speechless (117). The 1960s Hammer films of Dracula, while promoting the powers of the sun to enervate vampires, admiringly represent the material advantages of vampires and rebelliously offer images of domesticity and womanhood under seige. Just as the Dracula myth presents new possibilities for the culture, historical events and discoveries provide the opportunity to reinterpret the myth: Raymond McNally and Radu Forescu's *In search of Dracula* (1972) linked the mythic vampire to the historical figure of Vlad Tepes, patriot and leader. The remainder of the third chapter analyzes how the revisionist history of Dracula inspires recent American film adaptations, notably *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1973 TV film starring Jack Palance), *Dark Shadows* (1966–71 TV series), and John Badham's *Dracula* (1979 starring Frank Langella). It is the fictions, usually those by women, that reexamine how vampirism promotes cultural interpretation and transformation; Auerbach looks at works by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Suzy McKee Charnas, Anne Rice, Stephen King, and Tanith Lee in considering how their protagonists reconfigure vampirism under specific historical conditions.

The fourth chapter of *Our Vampires, Ourselves* ambitiously weaves together

socioeconomic and political analysis of the Reagan years with textual explication of Hollywood vampire movies and popular fiction of this period and later. Auerbach regards *Love at First Bite* (1979) as "an authentic comic romance about vampires," while *Vampire's Kiss* (1989) and *The Lost Boys* (1987) reproduce 1980s tensions by acknowledging individual and social paralysis and the inevitability of resisting oppression. Brian Stableford's *The Empire of Fear* (1988), Kim Newman's *Anno Dracula* (1992), Anne Rice's *Vampire Chronicles*, Brian Aldiss's *Dracula Unbound* (1991), and other fictions are invoked as attempts to explore "vampire inertia" (170), gender identity, and political discontent in the age of AIDS.

The last part of the chapter, and the book, build to a provocative argument as Auerbach reinserts her personal experience into the narrative by relating her observation of two particular presentations at a 1993 Irvine conference on Queer Theory. Sandy Stone's and Sue-Ellen Case's incantatory performances represent problematic attempts to embody vampires and to reconstruct discourses of identity and body. Auerbach theorizes that "when reaction and AIDS seemed to petrify the future, critics longed for *im*permanence: Queer Theorists apotheosized a phantasmal, unsettled spirit. Even the countercultural vampire is a product, if a resistant one, of its age" (184). After a brief discussion of the role of Queer Theory in Jewelle Gomez's account of a black lesbian vampire in *The Gilda Stories* (1993), an account that allows for "the recovery of vampire homoeroticism" (186), Auerbach concludes her argument with an analysis of Kathryn Bigelow's *Near Dark*, a vampire film that takes a parodic look at macho violence in a Southwestern setting, although it ends on a patriarchically comfortable and sentimentally conservative note when the infected protagonist is successfully transfused, and therefore purified, by his veterinarian father. Auerbach is typically sensitive to the mixed messages conveyed: "If vampirism is a wasting disease like AIDS, its cure is a blessing, but if it contains immortality, secret strength, and forbidden identities, its domestication is a death more painful than Homer's," the child vampire who cries out for what he can't have as he shrivels and burns (192).

A recent *New Yorker* cartoon (June 17, 1996) depicts two aging, well-dressed men with fangs and capes in conversation; one man says to the other, "Look, we're three thousand years old. No one's going to hire us." What the cartoonist Bruce Eric Kaplan acknowledges is that vampires, like many others in an economy dominated by downsizing, have no future on the job market. Auerbach's penultimate sentence indicates that "vampirism is wearing down and vampires need a long restorative sleep" (192). Yet the transformation of vampirism does not necessarily mean the exhaustion of horror fiction and film, which appear to be thriving in a culture ripe for amusement.

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Boredom: The Literary History of a State of Mind by Patricia Meyer Spacks. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Pp. xiii + 290. $24.95 cloth, $18.95 paper.

We are always and irrevocably, it seems, in the era of the causal claim; the allure of the neat, sequential logic of cause-and-effect always beckons. In a world of semiotic fractures, literary expression is *about* its rhetoricity; in a world constituted by historical exigencies, the text is about its implicated status as context. But these predicated interpretations usually occur as a function of a linear sequence: as in much psychoanalytic performance, for example, causal origin is deduced from thematic connection, so that (to borrow a phrase from Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending*), we who exist "in the middest" may know ourselves and our cultural needs in the terms of a coherent narrative. Structure—even narratives of structure's dislocation—is all. Structure holds our attention, and explanation is what we all grasp after. And for Patricia Meyer Spacks, the stimulation inherent in cultural expression is the effect of the boredom dynamic's cause. This explanatory narrative, then, will keep us wide awake into the long night of book reviewing.

Boredom: The Literary History of a State of Mind brilliantly opens up a space in which to assess the critical phenomenon of descriptive narrative, even as it treads ever so uneasily on its ground; that is, *Boredom* offers a compelling reading not just of psychic alienation through the ages, but of its explanatory force. And any motif that explains, that carries predictive power, must be approached with the greatest caution. Fortunately, Spacks's pleasure in her subject's ubiquity sacrifices very little to the facile even as it reveals the trademark sign of its subject's menace. That is, in organizing a reading of western culture since the eighteenth century around a negative reflex (the need to counter dullness), it constructs a master narrative, a supremely fascinating insistence that its subject is so inclusive, it *must* be deeply implicated in all cultural movement. The force of her narrative sequence must hold our attention: what could be more urgent than the ghost that haunts our every utterance, our every reading endeavour, our every effort to pay attention. Of course nothing could be more urgent, because such a rubric subsumes everything, which is as much to say that the causal history of boredom is here posited *as* history. "All 'cultural advance' derives from the need to withstand boredom; literature is a single instance among many" (3). That is a tall claim.

But then again, there is none among us who cannot claim to be exempt from its force, and herein lies Spacks's marvellous resonance. Boredom raises a frightening spectre because "readers' capacity to declare themselves uninvolved threatens the writer's project as it menaces their own pleasure. All literary endeavour occurs in a context of conceivable rejection" (2). One can live with disagreement, even with fiery opposition; but to recognize oneself as boring is to have one's very existence effectively nullified, cancelled, not worth even the energy of conscious rejection. The quest not to bore, then, becomes a quest for survival, but only of a sort. If I have ceased to exist for you because my narratives put you to sleep, then I will find a place in which I can exist, I will leave, but only to resurface in another space, or maybe only in another form. Here, the reader nullifies the writer by declaring her too dull; but then the writer threatens the intellectual and imaginative integrity of the reader. With such dynamics in mind, Spacks traces an early nineteenth-century sensibility through Wordsworth's efforts to educate the public. Like many of his poetic peers, Wordsworth sought to make his readers

pay attention to the wonderments precisely of the everyday and of the marginal. In rejecting the sensation literature of his time and in writing the *Lyrical Ballads* in a form of studied pedestrianism, "what is important is, or should be, interesting, Wordsworth implicity argues, and conversely, what is interesting should be important" (114). In this, the poet was turning to an older meaning of the word "interest," one that equated the interesting with the important. And where Spacks finds hints and glimmers of doubt in Wordsworth's self-assurance, she is able to trace the emergence of a world in which communal values can no longer be confidently posited. All the same, in the Wordsworthian understanding here described, the responsibility to read well is the responsibility to be fully human: "Failure to respond to his text may imply human failure to respond to the needs and natures of others perceived as unlike the self" (115). My disappearance, then, can only mean your death to me. You are not an interesting listener if you can't stay awake. Finding me boring attests to your inferior reading skills.

Indeed, the very history of boredom—which in this narrative, is also the history of cultural advance since the eighteenth century—hinges upon the development of constructions of selfhood and the development of notions of subjectivity. Spacks deftly traces the ways in which the sexes "use" boredom for and within different ends. For eighteenth-century women novelists, "to constitute fiercely imposed misery as boredom's only alternative implies devious but intelligible social protest. The taken-for-granted probability of boredom in a woman's life provides the starting point for narrative—and perhaps for female anger" (62). In both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to be bored is to fail an essential test of human worth. By the nineteenth century, however, its meaning—especially for women—has somewhat changed. In a virtuosic reading of Maria Edgeworth's *Helen* (1834), Spacks observes that the characters portrayed as bored "fail not in thought but in feeling. Feeling attests character. The good woman's primary interest in other people demonstrates appropriate emotional orientation" (181). And then thinking of the implicit stance of muted protest in characters portrayed in Austen, Edgeworth and Charlotte Brontë, she concludes that "what they resist is the social prohibition for women of many forms of meaningful action. The struggle against boredom is one consequence of such prohibition. . . . Misguided or conventional in form, their resistance helps constitute their characters and the plots that contain them" (189).

Before the eighteenth century individuals got bored or were repulsed by tedium, to be sure; however, such responses were theorized in the terms of apathy, and more importantly, in the terms of a spiritual malaise that threatened the personal responsibility of the disengaged creature. Personal responsibility remains a vital motif into the eighteenth century, but it speaks to a differently inflected understanding of experience. It is a concentration on such inflections that focuses Spacks's historical narrativizing. For the eighteenth-century organization of the work force, and its concomitant increase in "leisure time," exposed a separation of work and leisure that humankind simply had not known before. Furthermore, with the decline of orthodox Christianity as the central ethic of society, individual rights, especially the right to pursue happiness *as* an individual, becomes paramount. The rise of individualism, according to Spacks's careful calibrations, coincides with the

consciousness—and therefore with the cultural history—of the threat of boredom.

Spacks's tone in this book, though often witty and certainly engaged (engagement, of course, being the very opposite of boredom) is not hysterical; she is interested in a social history that reveals as much about our changing conceptions of the social as it does about the recording of history. She does not take us through an overview of the existential agonies of expression or the crises of reception: fear of dullness is no Bloomean angst or submerged and displaced political manoeuvre. Instead, it is an all pervasive scaffolding on which hang the structural materials of modernity.

Spacks is a subtle reader, and so her historical narrative does not merely reduce culture to a progressive terror of inattentiveness. We must be clear about this, as such projects as hers are vulnerable to misrepresentation. For the most part, she bears this vulnerability well. As both cultural construct and cultural by-product, boredom's history raises urgent questions about our own historicity: as the author is at pains to point out, the social history of boredom is a history of how taste is constituted, of how importance and significance are designated, and of how ultimate value (as shifting a concept as that is) is articulated in the very announcement of what interests. If the eighteenth-century individual saw boredom as an ethical and moral flaw, one that must be remedied for the sake of the salvation of the individual soul as much as for its postulated community, then something crucially important is revealed about the status of shared values and communal norms. The postmodern condition of boredom, on the other hand, is in fact the aptest metaphor of our own age. In Spacks's reading, "Boredom as universal explanation and complaint reveals the scope of twentieth-century entitlement: Calvin's sense of a right to adventures, the teenager's right to 'be with friends *every single minute*,' the housewife's right to mental stimulation" (260).

We have a right to stimulation: this, at least, we know. For in an age of discontinuities and generalized uncertainty, one marked by "the end of history," the history we know ourselves to be sharing seems to be one in which we are bored but do not want to be. Hence the proliferation of critical and historical narratives of strange excitement, of academic books announcing an ultimate substratum of powerful force repressed beneath the fabric of quotidian complacency. We may be staid, repetitive, monotonous. We may produce too many books that tell our new secrets to ourselves. But our monotony is only the obverse of our sublimated Dionysian frenzy. Psychoanalysis, Romanticism's great gift to modernity, tells a story in which boredom masks aggression, in which it tells of a state of "instinctual tension" seeking an endlessly deferred release. Our very boredom (so the story goes) is thereby a subject that *explains* our deep selves, and our deep selves are of course very interesting.

Boredom as an organizing motif around which the development of modern culture can be studied is therefore compelling. Everyone should read this book, not least because it could not possibly bore. But as surely as boredom and its resistance can organize a cultural reading, so can desire. Likewise with belief, subjectivity, will to power, and more insistently these days, politics. This is not to suggest that Spacks is unaware of the responsiveness of

her boredom project to any of these issues. Still, it will be worthwhile to bear in mind that she has chosen boredom as a heuristic, and that her explanations sometimes work better as descriptions. This is not to cancel the effectiveness of those descriptions in providing a glimpse of humanity's development; it is only to caution that when description is converted into explanation, something more than just cultural history is going on. Cultural history, that is, is being constituted in the effort to define self-expression as a profoundly public fact. The particular history here given speaks to our present preoccupation with the status of communal norms, and the way in which their complexities may be made coherent—and therefore interesting—by becoming part of a sequential narrative. *Boredom* is a very welcome contribution to the community (academic) that labours alone and longs to speak to something other than the void. We are all, then, in Spacks's debt: our most private meditations respond, however subtly, to a collective ethic of human rapport, one in which to speak and to hear are continuous with the quest to engage in the highest endeavours of the creation of meaning.

University of Toronto Karen A. Weisman

Paper Bullets: Print and Kingship under Charles II by Harold M. Weber. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996. Pp. 302. $39.95.

Anticipating Michael McKeon's recent call to "historicize patriarchy," Harold Weber's *Paper Bullets* addresses two abiding disciplinary interests among scholars of the "long" eighteenth century: the emergence of print culture and the gendering of political authority. Only with the combined pressure of new historicism and cultural studies, though, has the field come to see these two interests as intimately imbricated. And it is to this newly recognized intersection that *Paper Bullets* seeks to speak. Weber contends, here, that "The transformation of the English monarchy during the seventeenth century was not simply played out against a backdrop of changes in the production, marketing, and consumption of printed matter, but was itself part of these changes" (5). In support of his contention, Weber offers his readers a commanding array of archival evidence including proclamations, statutes, pamphlets and trial transcripts, which compellingly document the crown's active manipulation of the Restoration press as vehicle for its own power. And for scholars of the period wishing to deepen their understanding of this particular aspect of Restoration political culture *Paper Bullets* holds much of interest.

Weber's project proceeds through five chapters conceptually organized around the book's two themes: "Representations of the King" and "The Language of Censorship," with the later section offering some of the most interesting evidence of Weber's central argument, particularly in terms of the crown's creation of authorship as a legal fiction through which it could more effectively control seditious print. But *Paper Bullets* also labors under conceptual inconsistencies and a kind of historical inattention that often makes its central argument dubious and the final two chapters' incisive payoff too long in coming.

Paper Bullets begins by meticulously and promisingly laying the groundwork for its investigation, deftly noting that "The implementation of the Restoration settlement inevitably revealed the unresolved tensions that had divided the nation during its mid-century upheavals, and created new conflicts as well" (14). Sadly, it does not fulfill its promise to give readers a more subtle and attentive account of Restoration political culture's internal tensions, nor does it clearly articulate the conceptual relationship between Stuart patriarchalism and emergent capitalism.

Paper Bullets' first section amplifies the disciplinary commonplace that Charles II's Restoration carried with it the full reinstatement of Stuart patriarchalism by adding to the familiar catalogue of high cultural representations an extensive repertoire of popular culture representations. But to a large degree this ground has already been covered by Tim Harris' meticulous work on London crowd culture. Moreover, Weber's approach to this particular facet of Restoration life lacks Harris' deft attention to complicating matters of party and class. Regrettably, Weber drops his analysis of the crown's relationship to the populace, which was for this reader one of the most enticing promises *Paper Bullets* makes in its introduction, in favor of heavily formalist analyses of escape narratives. For despite the often meticulous readings of this popular subgenre and his salient recognition that these tales of Charles II's delivery were clearly deployed as Royalist propaganda, Weber's formalist hermeneutic leads him to collapse important historical distinctions. Thus, for instance, we find no distinction made between *A Chronicle of the Kings of England* published in 1670 after the London fire and two Dutch wars, when public sentiment was beginning to be disgruntled with crown military and economic policy and had become more cohesive in its anti-Catholicism, and earlier versions of the escape narratives published during the Restoration's first blush. Although there may have been little formal difference between these narratives, they were almost certainly deployed to different effect.

Readers will find the second and third chapters vexed by similar conceptual inconsistencies. Focusing on the monarch's sacred and profane bodies, *Paper Bullets'* topic seems to slip away from Weber here in two chapters that should be pivotal to his argument and that take up material both relevant to the period and provocatively indicative of the way Restoration culture conceptualized monarchical power. In the first of these chapters Weber discusses the crown's strategic employment of the royal touch to heal scrofula and argues that almost as soon as printing gained currency it instrumentally expanded the public theater in which these rituals took place by codifying and disseminating representations of the crown's miraculous and divine power. The problem is that this ritual, though used by Charles II, was on the wane and, according to Weber, by the early eighteenth-century was regularly subjected to medical skepticism. Weber's central contention, here, that print "contributed to [royal healing's] assumption of a standard, durable, and invariable shape" (56), falls apart and looks like an anachronistic characterization since if permanence is an irreducible conceptual characteristic of print culture, we should expect those public rituals in whose permanence print was instrumental to be on the ascendancy in the same way that print

culture itself was during this period. Clearly, the King's body did not undergo such a transformation.

But perhaps the most disappointing chapter in *Paper Bullets* is the third, in which Weber discusses print culture's role in undercutting the crown's claim to divine right and patrilineal succession by proliferating pornographic representations of Charles II. Ostensibly, "The Monarch's Profane Body" promises to investigate the prevailing constructions of masculinity and the often subtle versions of sexual potency that underwrote patriarchalism. Weber notes a good portion of the historical work done on early modern sodomitical culture by Randolph Trumbach and others, but that work remains troublingly unintegrated (relegated to a note) and fails to include Stephen Zwicker's important work on Restoration patriarchalism in *Lines of Authority*. Most troublingly, this chapter anachronistically conflates sodomitical culture with homosexual masculinity. But beyond the historical inconsistencies, "The Monarch's Profane Body" doesn't do what it is poised so well to do brilliantly, namely bring the recent insights of gender theory to bear on Restoration political configurations of Stuart patriarchalism.

Paper Bullets' second section constitutes a marked departure from its first section. Here we see the impressive erudition and trenchant historical insight which the book's first section seemed to promise but failed to deliver, but which its author is eminently capable of supplying. Weber's overall argument would have been considerably more accessible and more convincing had he chosen to start his project with the fourth chapter which so lucidly exposes the triple intersection between gender, political power and print culture. At last turning to consider the press' polemical role in its own censorship, Weber elucidates the Stationers Company's transmogrifying relationship to Restoration law. Although "The Feminine Part of Every Rebellion" often blurs lines between legal authorities implying, for instance, that a 1680 judicial decision reaffirming the King's right to "prohibit all unlicensed newsbooks and pamphlets" (151) manifested crown authoritarianism, when in fact the appeal to "civil order" clearly invokes the constitutive principle of common law. Here I was disappointed only because a subtler touch would have allowed Weber to draw out the provocative insight that by the 1680's crown authority actively manipulated common law to bolster its besieged political authority, while in the first years of the Restoration Royalist propagandists habitually repudiated common law as the legal foundation of Parliamentarianism.

Weber's concluding chapter brings *Paper Bullets* into focus by investigating Stephen College's treason trial in Oxford. Providing a valuable perspective on print culture's complex relationship to political authority, Weber wisely emphasizes two points too seldom missing from other investigations of this problematic: print culture was not limited to London, and at this early juncture in its development the political stakes of print's cultural commentary were often fatally high for printers, publishers, and authors alike.

With sensitivity to its conceptual inconsistencies, *Paper Bullets* is on the whole, I think, a book worth reading for its historical work. Weber marshals an impressive array of primary materials in support of his investigation and in the book's concluding section those materials are sharply and incisively focused. *Paper Bullets*' major liability is the weakness of its conceptual frame,

which only comes into focus during the last two chapters, hampering its investigation of Restoration kingship and detracting somewhat from the massive historical work of the first section. Weber's argument here will and should provoke further conversation and increased attention to a vitally important conceptual constellation in early modern political culture.

University of Delaware Melissa Mowry

The Pleasures of Virtue: Political Thought in the Novels of Jane Austen by Anne Crippen Ruderman. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995. Pp. ix + 202. $21.95 paper, $57.50 cloth.

At this time when Jane Austen's stock is up, way up, Anne Crippen Ruderman's *The Pleasures of Virtue* reminds us why Austen's novels continue to please both close readers and viewing audiences of film adaptations. Austen repeatedly identifies, explains, and illustrates the pleasures of virtue through consideration of heroes and heroines who find noble thoughts and activities pleasant. First among these noble things is attachment to others, love, the tip-top of Keats's "pleasure thermometer" in *Endymion*, culminating in marriage in Austen's novels. But love is not all that constitutes happiness, for happiness naturally ensues for the morally virtuous, not as an inevitable reward but as an accident of the way Jane Austen's world works.

The old arguments of self versus society or self-interest versus community building that have encouraged recent critics to factor Kant into Austen's framework are put to rest while Aristotle's classical moderation becomes the ideal: "Austen, like Aristotle, implies that the pleasures of self-control are the truest pleasures" (8). Ruderman repeatedly recognizes that we have no evidence that Austen read Aristotle or his commentators, though, deep in the heart of her argument, she admits parenthetically that "It is tempting to say that Austen looks at the world in the way Aristotle does but from the perspective of a woman" (143). The specific virtues, suggested by Aristotle and fictionally illuminated by Austen, are prudence, sensibility, justice, proper pride, modesty, and moderation, the last being the key to Aristotle's definition of moral virtue: "A mean that lies between two vices, one of excess and the other of deficiency . . . . the mean is the most praiseworthy state." Through moderation of deep feeling by self-command, Jane Austen defends the enduring possibility of a human life that both benefits others and perfects oneself. Somewhat surprisingly, Ruderman notes that happiness is not dependent on marriage but on living a measured life of virtue acquired by habit; marriage follows naturally from a love that is salutary for society as well as for individuals because it is grounded on the virtue aimed at by both.

Ruderman provides a credible and creditable corrective not only to the new historicist approach that aims to locate in Austen's novels more politics than propriety but also to the feminist approach that converts relationships into gendered power plays. But because she is alert to both approaches, Ruderman controls her own argument by finding the precise mean between

these extreme views. Pitting Aristotle against Kant and Wollstonecraft against Rousseau, Ruderman reasserts a balance that has been lost in the rush of current arguments about Jane Austen as historian or as feminist or even, in the flap over Terry Castle's *London Review of Books* review of Deirdre Le Fay's edition of *Jane Austen's Letters*, as lesbian. Jane Austen remains in Ruderman's good judgment a novelist and a moralist, whose heroes and heroines acquire happiness because they have and continue to cultivate moral virtue.

This is no book for Janeites, those who love Jane Austen more than they understand her. Each of the four long chapters considers all of the novels, almost at once, so that occasionally the sensibilities of one capture the sense of another: "Frank [Churchill in *Emma*] might be asked the same question that Elinor Dashwood asks Lucy Steele in *Sense and Sensibility* after hearing of her engagement to Edward: has she any plan for marriage 'but that of waiting for Mrs. Ferrars' death, which is a melancholy and shocking extremity'" (SS 148). Frank Churchill knows no Mrs. Ferrars, of course, and a paraphrase of the point might serve better than does the quotation. When arguing for firmness of principle in heroines, Ruderman appropriates without credit Edmund's definition of Fanny Price, who is "firm as a rock in her own principles" (MP 351), as though equal to Jane Bennet who is, by the narrator's definition, "firm when she felt herself to be right" (P&P 59). But despite the copious quotation from the novels, Ruderman never loses sight of her own argument on the pleasures of virtue.

She proceeds systematically through education in virtue, where the focus is principally on *Emma* and *Northanger Abbey* to consideration of particular virtues. As she proceeds, she reconsiders why Mr. Knightley and Emma Woodhouse are a more suitable match than are Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, and why Emma does not choose Jane as her particular friend. The gallant Frank and elegant Jane have "a kind of selfishness that keeps them from being the true hero and heroine of the novel" (28). Emma's openness is preferred to Jane's reserve, Mr. Knightley's frankness and sensitivity to Frank's mysterious secretiveness. To be hero or heroine each must have taste, and taste is, in Austen's reckoning, what Austen often calls delicacy, "an ability to take pleasure in principled behavior" (37). The best characters take pleasure in the very act of resisting or overcoming their feelings, and the best characters always rise to be heroes and heroines.

Being hospitable, friendly, courteous, urbane, and open requires taste, and Henry and Eleanor Tilney demonstrate impeccable taste in contrast to the self-aggrandizing Thorpes. But the Thorpes are not villains so much as not virtuous. John Thorpe is unscrupulous, and Isabella is dangerously flirtatious; neither is worth Catherine Morland's friendship, even before she learns to think for herself. Unworthy of happiness, of lasting attachment, of love, the Thorpes lack sufficient virtue, and concern for virtue is the root of the capacity to love (49).

Love is based on friendship and friendship is, according to Aristotle and Austen alike, based on virtue rather than on pleasure or utility. Emma and Mr. Knightley, like Catherine and Henry Tilney, will stay together because they see virtues in each other. Marriage follows naturally when choosing a supportive friend for a life of continued perfection of virtues. Marriage

brings less duty than mutual growth. Self-sufficiency gives way to love, and love results in happiness. Emma and Mr. Knightley feel something "so like perfect happiness, that it could bear no other name" (E 432).

Blake says that "Prudence is a rich old maid courted by incapacity," but to Aristotle, a prudent man can "deliberate well concerning what is good and expedient for himself, not with respect to a part . . . but for living well in general" (76). A prudent woman of Austen's definition requires considerably more complex elucidation. Ruderman links Anne Elliot of *Persuasion*, Fanny Price of *Mansfield Park*, and Elinor Dashwood of *Sense and Sensibility*, all of whom have strong sensibilities, keen self-awareness, and old-fashioned prudence. All three lose their childhood homes and must move on amid family and acquaintances who do not wholly understand them. All succeed because all have a respect for propriety, an aspect of prudence, and because all have deference and discretion consistent with good taste and fine judgment. Just because a pattern or practice is conventional does not make it right, but often "respect for convention is more *reasonable* than defiance of it" (emphasis Ruderman's, 69). Elinor has more freedom of thought than Marianne; her self-control is greater than her self-indulgence. Elinor's self-control, "far from being lack of feeling, *increases* with her feeling" (emphasis Ruderman's 71). All of Austen's work argues that the "exercise of reason and virtue [is] a *fulfillment* of human nature, not a pruning of it" (emphasis Ruderman's 71). The added emphases in these sentences may shout the argument Ruderman wishes to make, but her point is ably made without the shouting.

Good marriages in Austen's novels are not based on money or security, and true love is not based solely on sexual attraction. Marianne Dashwood's often criticized marriage to Colonel Brandon is a match of the "*same kind* of romantic sensibility" (emphasis Ruderman's 79) that characterizes the match of Louisa Musgrove and Captain Benwick; both couples are grateful for being loved by someone else and both couples find happiness in marriages that show that "imprudence leads to a greater dependence on such conventions [as marriage] than does prudence" (79). .

Analysis of one virtue does not excuse Ruderman from reconsidering familiar arguments about the possible lack of virtue or success of characterization. Fanny Price, passive and priggish to some readers, provides Ruderman a perfect opportunity for rereading character. Fanny marries Edmund Bertram for love and for virtue which each facilitates and encourages in the other. Fanny's childlike innocence coupled with a tough spirit that makes her constant in her longing for virtue for herself and others more than compensates for her passivity and inwardness. She has both a desire for and a vision of virtue that earns her heroine status and final happiness. Yet she is neither smug nor self-righteous. Deftly and carefully leaving unsaid that it is wicked to marry one person while loving another, Fanny typifies moderation in her speech, behavior, and even in her gratitude for Edmund's eventual proposal.

Fanny and Edmund, cousins and nearly siblings in late childhood and adolescence, raise the spectre of sibling love rivalling that of conjugal love. Ruderman enters this battle eagerly, seeing the issue first from the perspective of women's friendship and then of sisters, one for another, and finally of

sister for brother. She moderates between the extremes with as deft a control as Austen herself, lodging in explanatory footnotes her awareness of all the arguments that have bent the texts to accommodate ideological readings, misprisions, and exaggerated claims.

Whether or not Austen knew Aristotle's various dicta on virtue, Rousseau's on education, or Wollstonecraft's on the rights of women, she illustrates again and again the pleasures of virtue, distinguishing proprieties from manners, judgment from conventions, and proper pride from egotism. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley, often accused of being proud, are appropriately high-minded, properly proud of their virtue, representing a mean between extremes of excessive modesty and vanity. Being neither social nor concerned with what others think of them, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley speak less than they act, and they act for others rather than for themselves. Virtue rather than money and power sets off these heroes and earns them the gratitude of men and women alike. Religion undergirds the morality of Austen's heroes and heroines, but virtue is never solely a matter of religious faith or dogmatic obedience, not even in *Persuasion* or *Mansfield Park*, the most explicitly religious of Austen's novels. Individual morality supersedes evangelical or Anglican fervor, for virtue or its lack is practiced devotedly not devoutly. Moderation even in religion makes for happiness on earth.

The Pleasures of Virtue elucidates Jane Austen's characters in opposition to the prevailing political thought of Austen's time. But the result is a timeless exposition of the human capacity for reason and virtue that leads to happiness, to the principal pleasures of life. Being constant to principles may require self-sacrifice, but none of Austen's heroes or heroines are saints. Instead they are decidedly human, courageous in speech, generous in action, and rewarded by happiness for having virtue. This essay is a fine study of moderation and a promising first book from a scholar who practices the moderation Jane Austen herself endorses.

Smith College Patricia L. Skarda

The 'Lucy Poems': A Case Study in Literary Knowledge by Mark Jones. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995. Pp. 336. $55.00.

The subtitle of Mark Jones's new book, "A Case Study," is something of misnomer in that it does not merely illuminate a specific problem in literary knowledge, it sheds light on the entire field of literary study. If Wordsworth's lyrics about or over the subject of "Lucy" provide a site of interpretive doubt rather than knowledge, and therefore offer an ideal locus for the study Jones undertakes, these lyrics (as well as their interpretive history) also provide the impetus for a thoughtful re-situation of the interpretive imperative and its consequences. *The 'Lucy Poems': A Case Study in Literary Knowledge* is for this alone a remarkable book; but for Wordsworthians it will also prove a dense and richly rewarding one. It is, in fact, one of those rare books that provokes in the reader the wish to have written it him- or herself.

The question that initiates the problem is: why are we so invested in the

'Lucy Poems'? But certainly a more primary question grounds it: how did the 'Lucy' grouping come to be the present one, since it is not Wordsworth's own? These questions together structure the problem: the editorial investment is not entirely separable from the critical investment, both of which respond to but are not the inevitable projection of authorial investment. It is the very mystery that the 'Lucy Poems' represent that allows different claims to materialize around them, to turn the insubstantial into a centering and iconic keystone for the field. The 'Lucy Poems' are important to literary studies not because they are so very good, but because so much can be read into them, a richness that was certainly intended by their author but which is often broadened to even greater critical, philosophical, and literary weight and substance. Mark Jones sets up his case study to comprehend the historical as well as the present reception of the 'Lucy Poems,' their grouping and currently accepted ordering, and their uses for critical interpretation and theory.

Wordsworth's 'Lucy Poems' became cemented during the mid-nineteenth century as consisting of the following poems in the following and familiar order: "Strange fits of passion," "She dwelt among th' untrodden ways," "I travelled among unknown men," "Three years she grew in sun and shower," and "A slumber did my spirit seal." These five poems provide, along with Keats's six odes and Coleridge's conversation poems, the touchstones of Romantic period studies, the poems we can teach to our students as embodying the mystery and artistry of the literary imagination. These are our disciplinary fascinations, love affairs that we transfer to students often without the accompanying reasons that justify such passion. And this is a compounded and textured love we hold for these works, composed of what our own teachers have taught us about loving texts as much as of what we ourselves have discovered. The loyalties multiplied in our literary passions can be too cherished for us to want to question or analyze their cost basis, and so it is fortunate that Jones sets about demystifying them and their attraction for us. Because we can no longer uphold the kind of Victorian and early Modern purviews that reified and biographically identified the artwork, those projects that first endowed the 'Lucy' grouping with such value, we need to understand the history and the context of those earlier projects, and consequently the condition of our literary love. "The important question, finally, is not whether a given grouping is right, but what the readerly activity invited by Wordsworth's text can reveal about the functions of both provocation and response" (12). The puzzle is a considerable one: these are poems that discourse about interpersonal love but that are tacitly about artistic love, evoke textual love from their readers. How vulnerable are we to this triangulated passion, one which is the mediated product of generations of editors, scholars, theorists-in short, an institutional rather than purely poetic feat? And what do the institutional conditions of this love cost us, particularly at the intellectual level?

Jones argues that our relation to the 'Lucy' texts, a relation I have been assigning an affective nature although he does not, is a case in point of "the modern literature institution's will to knowledge." The 'Lucy Poems,' that is, open themselves up in such a way that they demand interpretive intervention, thus facilitating the process of "legitimat[ing] 'English' as a 'discipline'

capable of producing 'knowledge,'" because the indeterminacies of the 'Lucy' texts were always suppressed through the interpretive process in order to produce such knowledge. Put another way, our affective relation to the 'Lucy Poems' has such power over us because the cost basis is integral to the value of our discipline; we love the thing that has the power to grant our activity institutional, social, and political value; we love to expend its richness to both taste that power and the lovely mystery of its suppressed articulation. On the other hand, the indeterminacies of the 'Lucy' texts also give us some pain since they will not reduce to sheer knowledge, and the more freedom we allow ourselves interpretively over these texts, as Jones points out, the less we are able to contain and define our 'knowledge.'

Jones not only engages the enigma of the 'Lucy Poems' in itself and within criticism, but he broadens the problem to the academy by wondering how the sociopolitical critique of the institution today by a critic like Terry Eagleton, for instance, takes into account the historical reception of the 'Lucy Poems.' These were poems composed in a period that saw the "Rise of English as a modern institution, but it also [saw] the rise of 'theory' and considerable changes in the specific practices of criticism," and Jones urges that these three be viewed not disparately as Eagleton does, but "as cognate functions" that sit in relation to larger social contexts, particularly democratizing ones (55). So, too, the change in the early judgmental and analytic Reviews to the more subjective and interpretive Magazines of the nineteenth century might perhaps map out a similar critical response to literature today as we ourselves move between interpretation and analysis in our critical writing; moreover, the shift "epitomizes the liberalization of 'the institution of criticism' since the romantic period" (59). The recurrences, fascinating as they are, that the case study of Lucy reveals in institutional practice, rationale, and self-propagation, are spun out not in order to refute Eagleton but to set him straight. As valuable as this is for us (and as much as we might wish him to push it further), Jones confines his critique to clearing the ground for his study of Lucy, subjugating it to her.

But who is Lucy? That, finally, becomes the centering question for Jones, and it is the one that causes him most trouble in this otherwise elegant book. As he points out, Lucy cannot be the grandmotherly figure of "Dear Child of Nature" with her "old age serene and bright"; whether a young woman or a child, she must be eternally young. Representing the immortality of youth, Lucy signifies (or perhaps *is*) that quality of the child that makes death inconceivable. Or, she signals the youth in immortality as represented by one who dies young. Both of these conceptualizations of death or not-death are vessels for the mystery we weave about life and spirit by way of an emotional nexus that allows us to bind these into some kind of certitude that is strong enough to contain mystery and doubt, but at a distance. Lucy is the container for this certitude and this doubt in the Wordsworthian canon; Keats's odes and Coleridge's conversation poems offer more formal, less figurative kinds of containers. But the figure is an extremely powerful medium, which is what allows critics to go beyond the authorial project of the 'Lucy' poems. The pre-sexual being, in this case the female with her cultural connotations for the desiring reader, represents potential rather than experience, and because of this convention we accept Wordsworth's consignment of this

mystery to the young girl—whose figurative or literal death is the only way to stabilize the mystery she contains.

So far so good, but Jones never fully accounts for the substantive difference between the 'Lucy' figure of the five editorially agreed-upon poems of the 'Lucy' grouping, and the young girls caught in a similar life-death nexus in poems Jones mentions as near 'Lucy' poems such as "Louisa," "Among all lovely things my Love had been," and "Lucy Gray." Nor does he account for why certain poems are not considered in the context of the elusive 'Lucy' quality, such as "We Are Seven," with its similar death-enmeshed maiden, "'Tis said that some have died for love," where the speaker and maiden are more fully realized figures and the title is very similar in tone, or even "The Sparrow's Nest"—for given the sheer weight of consideration placed on the Lucy configuration, it is not enough to dismiss a poem from consideration for using a name other than "Lucy." That is to say, the 'Lucy Poems' sit at the center of an economic circulation of desire and mystery that we value over thought and analysis. Obviously, it was never Jones's task or intention to discover other 'Lucy' poems, but we need to understand even more clearly just why these five poems and no others belong to the canonical grouping. I do not argue with Jones's conclusions, but rather with his not helping us understand clearly enough why we are so wed to these particular lyrics and no others.

Another difficulty arises out of this first one. Although Jones does call "Louisa" a "borderer" poem to the 'Lucy' grouping, he doesn't pay enough attention to borderers themselves—neither the border poems to the Lucy grouping and what they have to tell us, nor to the border quality of Lucy herself. Nor does he consider the "Border" geography that the Lake District neighbors, or even the border state of alien subjectivity that both William and Dorothy Wordsworth experienced during their ghastly winter in Goslar. Wordsworth's play *The Borderers*, even if only by its title, should be a pointer to these other considerations.

Finally, what leads Jones to ignore the importance of the border modality is his refusal to engage psychological or psychoanalytic critical theories, and he therefore ignores the psychological properties of the Wordsworthian imagination—not in terms of the psychobiographical, which he rightly, I think, rejects, but in terms of understanding border states, border beings, and Wordsworth's own projections of the imaginative imperative. It is his resistance of this aspect of the social that leads Jones to misread a crucial passage in Geoffrey Hartman's *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1878–1814* which discusses border modalities and which, had Jones allowed it, would have shed light on the irksome question of Lucy's ontology. Jones finds Hartman's analysis to be "wavering" because he does not name a physically real Lucy, but what Jones refuses to take seriously is Hartman's reference to Lucy as an "intermediate" or "boundary being." "This wavering [between 'being' and 'modality']," Jones remarks, "might be supposed to wean us from strictly biographical identifications" (88). But Hartman's point is that once we come to view the poems more familiarly, we see that she is not a being so much as a "modality" who has the potential to remain spirit, or to become humanized much in the same way that the emergent poet has the choice of becoming a practicing poet or of letting his creative self die off in an easy death in

nature. This question of a psychologically comprehensible intermediacy is very much related to the formal question of poems that are intermediary to the 'Lucy' grouping. Wordsworth was clearly very interested in the concept of border states, whether physical, formal, psychological, or spiritual. Clearly, Jones uses Hartman in this passage on Lucy to show how the institutional imperative co-opts criticism, but to dismiss the question is not only reductive, it limits the insight of Jones's very accomplished institutional critique. Clearly Jones has invested in the physical and social rather than psychological (or psychic) reality of Lucy; by subjugating everything in his study to her, he buys into her reality in a way that Eagleton might well criticize in return.

My complaints about Jones's refusal to take the border state seriously should not be taken as any reason not to read and deeply appreciate this book. Jones is very generous with his insights, offering nearly one per page. Wordsworthians should read this book: for those who are not and never will be Wordsworth enthusiasts or specialists, this book offers an institutional history and critique that can be widely applied within literary studies, and that is worth reading for its own sake.

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Feminist Conversations: Fuller, Emerson, and the Play of Reading by Christina Zwarg. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995. Pp. x + 302. $39.95 cloth; $16.95 paper.

Margaret Fuller is best remembered for her influence on others and her conversation rather than for her writing. The tendency among feminists today is to resurrect Fuller's literary writings, but except for *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, her writings are not memorable. Much of it, particularly *Summer on the Lakes*, is slow reading embellished with examples of her vast frame of reference and excellent education (which she liked to flaunt). Fuller's poetry is flat and her lines are apt to be stilted. Fuller does not really know how to tell a story, which is why her writing is most accessible in her journalism and literary reviews. Fuller said that as a Transcendentalist, "she had an active mind frequently busy with large topics" (Letter 1837 to Caroline Sturgis). This is aptly descriptive. For Fuller, conversation was a congenial means for self-expression; for Ralph Waldo Emerson, her most famous friend, conversation was an outgrowth of the sermon and the inherent style of the familiar essay at which he was adept. One could say that they both thought in conversation, but Emerson wrote his out, while Fuller spoke hers, and lost them in air. The loss is ours, and I especially wish that Fuller were available on video tape or CD Rom.

For twenty-five years, feminists and other readers of American literature have been carefully analyzing Fuller's literature and personal correspondence trying to place her in a context showing her importance as writer, theorist, and influence. Christina Zwarg finds fault with some literary critics who, she says, have not taken Fuller as seriously as she does, but her study

Feminist Conversations hits the right chords and "seriously" examines Fuller's impact. Her thesis is that Fuller's thought and writing was a determined attempt to gain power by embracing opportunities not open to women, to break from tradition, and to reduce the trappings of patriarchy: in short, to see, feel, and think like a woman. It is difficult to get at Fuller's genius without discussing her life, and because Zwarg's discussion of Fuller's life is scanty, Fuller's invigorating and often unpredictable personality is largely absent.

Fuller was the editor of *Dial* (1839–1842), the best and most effective conduit for American Transcendentalism. After leaving the editorship, she traveled and produced *Summer on the Lakes* (1844), which led to a job as literary critic at Horace Greeley's *New-York Tribune* (1844–1846). Fuller opted for independence, and moved to New York, where she produced her best, if not most vivacious, writings—approximately 250 reviews and general social criticism. Additionally, she worked at recomposing *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) and collected her reviews in *Papers on Literature and Art* (1846). Given her death at age 40, she was astonishingly productive, a dynamo of sorts. But her writing is often just not that good. Zwarg puts it rather clumsily when she says that Fuller tried to liberate "her genius from the artifice of artistic character by negotiating a new understanding of the relationship between public and private worlds, indeed by negotiating a shift away from the unsatisfactory categories of artist and genius together" (254).

Zwarg attempts to broaden our awareness of Fuller's achievement by devoting considerable space to Fuller's youthful works: her translation of J. W. Goethe's *Torquato Tasso* (completed in 1835) and Bettina von Arnim's *Günderode* (1842). Zwarg thinks that these works are undervalued, for Fuller provides a "feminist component to translation" through which she set out to change the literary and cultural systems of her time. This argument asks for too much leniency. Fuller's essay "Bettine Brentano [von Arnim] and her Friend Günderode," published in *Dial* (1842) tells much about her relationship with Emerson and less about von Arnim's relationship with Goethe, whom she idolized. Fuller rejected the classic hierarchical male/female relationship. This was the signature of her feminism, and she used this argument in her "Conversations," the lecture series that she was conducting in Boston at this time. Later, she developed this argument effectively in *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. Zwarg tries hard to make a strong case for Fuller's feminist translations, but one can also argue that translation was a dead end for Fuller, since both the *Tasso* and the *Günderode* were left unfinished and unpublished in her lifetime.

Zwarg deepens the linkage between Fuller and Emerson:

> Fuller met Emerson as he was pulling away from the church, renouncing the power of the clergy. At that point, she appeared to be moving in the opposite direction, attempting to gain power by embracing opportunities normally closed to women. But this reading is a superficial account of their difference. . . . Both were determined to break from tradition and both tended to define the break in linguistic terms; Emerson rejected the limited tropes of Christianity and Fuller rejected the limited tropes of society . . . . both maintained a faith in the subversive

> powers of the literary text to support their goal. The problem came when he [Emerson] had to reconcile their shared aspirations with the grammar of sexual and gender difference as it was managed by the culture. (41–42)

Zwarg shows, successfully on the whole, how Fuller's friendship and the letters to him charged Emerson's imagination. They met in 1836; Fuller was 26 and Emerson was 33. He was then completing *Nature*, and there followed a personal and epistolary relationship that lasted until Fuller's death in 1850. Ironically, the friendship continued on as Emerson edited and wrote a literary tribute to Fuller, *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli* (1851). Zwarg devotes much space to a discussion of Emerson's manner of dealing with the text and Fuller's death. When Fuller died, Emerson wrote "I have lost in her my audience." He was deeply touched by her pathetic death. Fuller was en route from Italy when her ship foundered off the coast of Fire Island. She, her husband Giovanni Ossoli, and infant child Angelo were drowned. Emerson dispatched Henry Thoreau to the scene, but all that Thoreau could obtain was a button he ripped from a jacket he thought belonged to Ossoli.

In 1840, Fuller wrote about her relationship with Emerson: "His friendship is only strong inference and he weights and balances, buys and sells you and himself all the time. I love to keep the flower shut till my breeze and then open its blushful bloom to the friend alone. He would wait till esteem was challenged. I till the chain of affinity vibrated" (Jan 22, 1840). The metaphor here has a sexual undertone. Zwarg thinks that the relationship was platonic, but she makes the point that there was always something in it that kept Emerson on edge. She mentions (several times) that Emerson had a sense of panic when learning that some of Fuller's personal letters had been found washed ashore after the shipwreck. Actually, Fuller had secured their correspondence with a friend in Italy. But Emerson sensed that his freedom of expression might embarrass him.

Fuller generally looks away from America as a source of literature. Her writings are peppered with quotations and references to the Europeans and classical mythology; less frequently is an American author, except for Emerson, used as a resource. Notations by commentators busily explain references that prove Fuller's wide range and extensive knowledge of the classics and European literature, but references to American authors dealing with American themes are less frequent, and she tends to dismiss them. Europe was Fuller's Mecca. She looked East across the Atlantic even when she toured the prairies of Illinois and described them in *Summer on the Lakes* (1844), recording a trip along the Great Lakes from Buffalo to Chicago and the prairies beyond. Fuller liked the prairies best. Because this is one of Fuller's full-scale published works, it is treated with a seriousness that it probably does not deserve. *Summer* is not good travel literature and generally lacks a sense of place. Fuller's complaint that Washington Irving's descriptions of the region "lack breath and glow, the charming minute traits of living presence," apply more severely to Fuller's own text. Zwarg emphasizes the American aspects of *Summer* and makes it seem a better book than it probably is by reading it as an example of the double strategy, story and feminist argument. The themes for her book tell it all: the hardship and isolation of women in the

new communities, cultural dullness, the generally negative influence of commerce on character, the contrast of Indian life before European settlement and its present squalid condition. There are some scenes in which Fuller informs the reader of what she sees and feels, but I suspect that the natural scene never charged Fuller's imagination. During the trip, she was always thinking and making connections for revising "The Great Lawsuit: Man *versus* Men" which was to be published in the July 1843 issue of *Dial*.

It's my guess that Fuller's talk about her summer on the lakes was much more enlivening and dynamic than what she wrote. *Summer on the Lakes* begins at Niagara Falls where Fuller seems to have worked hard to register the feeling of awe associated with a scene of natural sublimity. In the end, Fuller decided that the rapids below the falls in moonlight best satisfied her romantic spirit. This is backward, until you accept the possibility that Fuller was not thrilled with the whole episode. *Summer on the Lakes* is not in the same league as Harriet Martineau's *Society in America* (1837) which Fuller strongly criticized because Martineau criticized Transcendentalism as being faddish and called Boston the headquarters of cant. Zwarg suggests that Fuller's reaction to Niagara Falls is a textbook esthetic experience (wonder followed by awe). But she thinks that Fuller feminized the experience by recalling the dread of Indians attacking defenseless women. Zwarg links Fuller's vision of awe with the subject of John Vanderlyn's painting "The Death of Jane McCrea" (1804). This is a good match-up, but given Fuller's penchant for elaboration, one wonders if she invented this vision during the writing process. Zwarg is too kind to Fuller's *Summer*, though she is closest to the mark, I think, when she points out that "nearly a third of the work is a lengthy description of her reading during her trip and later, as she was composing the narrative." (102) In fact, Fuller did much post-trip reading for her travel book in the Harvard Library. Joan Von Mehren notes that Fuller was the first woman to be granted the privilege of using the library and that the sight of a woman in the reading room must have been shocking to the male students.

Fuller's public speaking, unlike Emerson's, was conducted largely behind closed doors. Fuller's "Conversation" conducted for the women of her circle in Boston and Cambridge were never published. They were for women only, and only one "Conversation" permitted men to attend. The "Conversations" seem to have been attempts at participatory lectures: Fuller would discourse on a selected topic, and then, having inspired her audience, she would try to engage them in a dialog. The conversations were conducted between 1841–1844. Even Emerson, who praised her writing, thought that "her powers of speech throw her writing into the shade." On the other hand, Horace Greeley thought very highly of Fuller's writing, and after the publication of *Summer*, he signed her to a contract as critic and cultural columnist, which continued when Fuller traveled in Europe from 1846–1850.

Zwarg's study is concerned with giving Fuller her due and reevaluating her contribution to the culture and letters of her time and the present. Fuller is not a marginal figure, and Zwarg tries to understand Fuller as a feminist and conventional critic. She has succeeded, and in the process has written at least two books in one: a text that is feminist and a scholarly apparatus that is conventional. The two books coalesce largely thanks to an inspired deci-

sion to place the footnotes, which are succinct and helpful, at the bottom of each page.

This study is more about Fuller and less about Emerson. One of Zwarg's aims is to persuasively demonstrate Fuller's "mutually empowering, and interactive" literary relationship with Emerson. Was Fuller merely Emerson's Muse, or was she Emerson's Minerva? Without providing a definitive answer, Zwarg explains that Fuller was both, and the rest I leave the reader of her study to untangle. Emerson looms large throughout. Ironically, Zwarg gives him the last word. The last section of the text is a discussion of the *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli* which Emerson edited and to which he wrote a major piece. It was his way of making his peace with Fuller and mourning her death. It was also an attempt at securing Fuller's reputation and laying to rest the scandal of her romance with Ossoli: "Emerson discovered that the audience for his projected *Memoirs* was rather suspicious of Fuller's liberation in Italy and grateful that she failed to liberate the United States in the same fashion. The recovery of her liberating powers, which Emerson believed in, given his sense of the intellectual crisis in America, was complicated by the culture's reading of those powers as merely erotic, echoing in a vulgar way his own sense of their potential efficacy" (240). Zwarg also shows that Emerson's "Woman" (a lecture before the Boston Woman's Rights Convention 1855) and the essay "Fate" (published in 1860) were composed with Fuller in mind. The process by which Emerson combined his sense of loss and composed his own work is neatly developed by Zwarg, and she makes a strong case for accepting that here especially Fuller's "life becomes integral to the figurative play and historical intervention of his work" (240). Zwarg shows how Fuller influenced Emerson as a person in conversation and as muse for his creative writing. Her final example adroitly points this out. In his journals, Emerson wrote, "A personal influence towers up in memory the only worthy force when we would gladly forget numbers or money or climate, gravitation & the rest of Fate. Margaret, whenever she came, fused people into society, & a glowing company was the result. When I think how few persons can do that feat for the intellectual class, I feel our squalid poverty" (294). When he finished "Fate," this passage became less personal and more universal and conventional: "Only one way is right to go; the hero sees it, and moves on that aim, and the world under him for root and support." Zwarg's point is that the shift in wording, making Margaret a universal hero, is evidence of Emerson's advocacy of Fuller. Zwarg wonders how many of Emerson's readers would recognize the veiled reference to Fuller. How many modern readers make the connection? Herein lies part of the problem of defining Fuller's influence. It is not easily or immediately recognized and must be demonstrated. This is a task that is worth the effort.

Zwarg is on sure ground when she discusses Fuller's influence on Emerson's *Second Series* (1844). She is kind to Emerson's feminist perspective and thinks that "his uneasiness looks considerably more alluring when we consider the range of issues at hand in the project of defining a feminist perspective for the conduct of life." (128) The light of mutual influence is brightest between *Second Series* and *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, and she thinks that in the *Second Series*, Emerson consciously used Fuller as a shaping figure

and Charles Fourier, the social reformer, as the catalyst (132). In their discussions of the problem of marriage and social reform, Fuller and Emerson accepted Fourier's contention that society is degraded by demeaning women through the patriarchal structure. At the time both read and studied Fourier, Fuller and Emerson grew unexpectedly close partly as the result of the death of Emerson's brother Charles and after the death of his son Waldo. Zwarg thinks that Emerson's grief brought him to consider Fourier's idea that reasserting the original "passionate attractions" in human nature one can thwart social prejudice and reform. The confluence of influences led Emerson, Zwarg contends, to be susceptible to Fuller's arguments, particularly in his advocacy of the rights of women.

Zwarg says that Fuller "initiates her 'feminism' through her reading—which is to say, through the activity of translation and literary criticism, shifting only then to a theory of history as an *act* of reading . . ." (8). Zwarg complains, wrongly I think, that Bell Cale Chevigny's *The Woman and the Myth* (1976) is old-fashioned literary criticism and is not feminist enough. On the other hand, what is one to make of Zwarg's attempt at contemporary criticism when she states that "The ensemble we call Fuller (her life and work) reads like an indecipherable text because she participated in its production"? Fortunately, Zwarg makes sense of Fuller's texts, though she might have given more information about Fuller's life—information that is available in several recent biographies particularly Charles Capper's *Margaret Fuller, American Romantic* (1992) and Joan Von Mehren's *Minerva and the Mouse* (1994). Zwarg's concern is to show that Fuller meant to provide a radical theory of feminism through all of her reading and writing and that this "provides a clue to her significance for our understanding of Emerson's development and theoretical foundations of feminist criticism today." (8) Is Zwarg feminist enough? Is Fuller feminist enough? I think that the answer to both is yes.

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