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Book Reviews

The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740 by Michael McKeon. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. Pp. xi + 529. \$29.95.

The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832 by Jon P. Klancher. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987. Pp. xi + 210. \$25.00.

Postmodern literary history has always been plagued by the difficulty of conceiving discursivity in diachronic forms. Recently, though, we have seen increasingly sophisticated ways of resolving the problem that often resort to dialectical models—particularly those of Bakhtin and Voloshinov. Michael McKeon's *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* and Jon P. Klancher's *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832* both address the historical constitution of literary discourse in dialectical terms, and in the process, both works make major statements about the history of literary forms. These and other recent studies suggest that the marriage of theory and history, after a prolonged and self-absorbed honeymoon, is now producing a generation of systematic and substantial revisions. The work we are now getting no longer simply challenges the "standard" works of literary history in polemical ways; it threatens instead to replace them with a new history that is as securely documented and cogently narrated as it is theoretically innovative.

Michael McKeon's work has unabashedly epic aspirations. It seeks to be nothing less than a comprehensive revisionary account of the novel's beginnings, using a dialectical theory of genre to supercede generic models that are either statically archetypal (Frye) or simplistically evolutionary (Auerbach, Watt). The revisions this makes possible are not minor. Besides rejecting traditional assumptions, largely derived from Watt, that the novel can be defined aesthetically in terms of its "formal realism" and ideologically through its claims on a rising middle-class audience, McKeon also challenges polarized theories that see the novel either as a fully unified generic category, on the one hand, or as a site of ageneric incoherence, on the other. Instead, relying largely (but not exclusively) on Bakhtin, McKeon argues that genre must be understood as a complex historical process, and as the site of dialectical tension caused by particular intellectual and social crises.

In this way, McKeon hopes to explain a number of problems that have vexed monological perspectives, problems like the persistence of romance elements in the novel, or the presence of "formal realism" in various literary forms pre-dating the novel, or the difficulties of defining social categories like "middle class" as the "social addressee" of literary form. It is on account of his relational model, too, that McKeon places the origins of the novel not in Defoe or Fielding or Richardson, but further back, in a cultural discourse that is inherently self-contradictory because it had to negotiate conflictual attitudes toward epistemology and social order that define modern experience. McKeon examines a wealth of early narrative material—apparition narratives, spiritual autobiographies, travel narratives, criminal biographies—in addition to his discussions of Cervantes, Bunyan, Defoe, Swift, Richardson, and Fielding, in order to uncover this tensional discourse, demonstrating along the way that there was an explicit and vigorously contested theoretical

articulation that preceded the emergence of the novel, contradicting the general view that the origins of the novel are innocent of theoretical debate.

It would be impossible, in the space of a short review, to do justice to McKeon's labors, for he ranges over vast seas of historical and cultural material—from Sophocles to Shklovsky, from latitudinarianism to Lucan to literacy rates, and with extended detours through the Greek Enlightenment and the twelfth-century Renaissance. This sometimes bewildering, but often stimulating historical range, and the sinuous complexity of his argument itself—sometimes pursued, I must say, at tiresome length—make it impossible and unfair to reduce his work to a bald set of premises. But McKeon's central position is fairly easily summarized, and it will be controversial enough that summary is inevitable. In McKeon's account, during the span of this "early modern" period, a dialectical pattern of negations, or reversals, is developed in two separate spheres, epistemological and social. In the realm of epistemology (what McKeon calls "questions of truth"), "romance" emerges for the first time as an abstraction—defined as a form of knowledge based on cultural authority—only so that it might be critiqued by "naive empiricism." But "naive empiricism," in its turn, is caricatured and critiqued by a skeptical position which, rather than straightforwardly rejecting empiricism, shares its principles of objectivity, but extends them to the point that their limits become apparent. Though the skeptical critique also shares in empiricism's rejection of romance, it oddly returns to romance through the pattern of this double negation, and echoes the romance appeal to versions of "truth" that are not verifiable through the evidence of the senses. McKeon argues further that theories of realism grew up specifically to mediate this unstable dialectic (in which each position collapses very easily into its opposites). Novels presented themselves not as "history" but as "history-like," thus avoiding the literal truth claims that would annoy the skeptic, while still conforming to conventions that differentiate realism from romance. In fact, this epistemological dialectic ultimately prepares the ground for theories of autonomous "aesthetic" knowledge. "Truth" finally becomes fetishized as "realism" only to yield to the validated power of the creative imagination.

In the field of social relations, an analogous crisis involves the relation between power, status, and merit (what McKeon calls "questions of virtue"). An "aristocratic" position (like romance, newly emergent as a category at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and, like romance, constituted negatively) asserts the coincidence of lineage and traditional forms of authority based on honor. But "progressive ideology" critiques this position, pointing out the "status inconsistency" of rank and individual merit—the gap between internals and externals—and shifting discussions of honor in the seventeenth century from rank to "goodness of character." A "conservative" critique also arises at this same time, however, and attempts to explode progressive ideology not by refuting its critique, but by revealing the further status inconsistency engendered by an individualist social system based on claims about merit. Once again, this conservative ideology—paralleling the double reversal of skepticism in regard to romance and naive empiricism in the realm of epistemology—returns to share some of the elements of aristocratic ideology even as it refuses belief in the inherent virtue of rank. That is, conservative ideology argues for the purely instrumental utility of traditional

forms of social order, without abandoning its skepticism about both aristocratic and progressive ideology.

McKeon argues that it is an illusion to think that any of these various positions pre-date each other, or that the novel is the product of one or another evolutionary "stage" of these two dialectics. Rather, each dialectical position is contemporary with and implies all the others. And the central contention of his book is that the novel arises as a cultural instrument for representing and mediating these interdependent oppositions. Individual novels may locate themselves somewhere within the range of these two dialectics, but all novels are always subject, ultimately, to the unstable play of dialectical reversal. The power of the novel at this point in cultural history is not that it affirms one epistemological or social position over the others, but that it allows writers to conceive questions of truth and virtue in terms of each other, and is thus able to confront intellectual and social crises simultaneously. In McKeon's view, the novel as a genre develops to explore these fundamental analogies between ways of knowing and social order. It is uniquely equipped to do so because its temporal structure is capable of enacting these convoluted displacements sequentially.

This is obviously an argument with tremendous explanatory power. It allows us to conceive the novel as both an unstable and a limited process at the same time. It also allows us to understand the time-honored controversies surrounding the eighteenth-century novel as expressions of the various dialectical reversals that make the novel possible, rather than as a struggle over the emergence of a unified new form. For example, McKeon is able to show persuasively how the apparently glaring differences between Richardson and Fielding (and, to a less institutionalized extent, between Cervantes and Bunyan, or Defoe and Swift) on questions of naturalism, of ideological bias, or of morality, are, in fact, contained within a single dynamic pattern of displacements. McKeon is at his best when showing how easily the positions of Richardson and Fielding—whose bitter disagreement he cites as the final cultural consolidation of this dialectic—are subtly reversible in their early work, and how the two writers actually exchange many of these positions in novels written after 1750. In general, McKeon is enormously successful at revealing how the dialectic he traces exerts its influence on early narrative.

With any claims as ambitious as McKeon's, one is bound to have disagreements, and the value of McKeon's argument is likely to be demonstrated in the many debates it will inevitably fuel. Perhaps the most persistent question that will dog this book will concern the kind of "idealism" that Terry Eagleton has been castigating in much recent American criticism. While rightly, I think, pointing out problems in identifying the novel as a stable set of formal categories or as the property of a narrowly-defined set of readers, McKeon places the novel too firmly instead within a purely semiotic register that always threatens to rise above "real history" altogether. McKeon, I should point out, tries very hard not to do that, and we do hear a good deal about such specific elements of material history as the seventeenth-century typological revolution, or the demographic crisis of the late seventeenth century that causes excessive "patriline repair," thus provoking the skeptical perception that the "honor" belonging to rank was being inflated. Still, the hermetic coherence of McKeon's dialectic tends to diminish these and other historical

causes as incidental developments. What is really at stake is a "crisis of cultural signification." Not only does McKeon's argument slight questions of historical causality, but it also collapses the history of the period he studies, and it further defeats attempts to align categories like "progressive ideology" with any social grouping or interest whatever. While McKeon is careful to point out how particular writers shape dialectics for their own ends, in his readings of particular works he is always insistent that the dialectic takes over, and plays itself out in an interminable series of syncretisms. Ultimately, individual interests and positions dissolve in the inevitability of the double reversals: Richardson "is carried further than he ever meant to go," finally expressing both conservative ideology and epistemological skepticism despite himself; Crusoe's island shares both progressive and aristocratic characteristics; and Fielding ends up affirming conservative "instrumentality" to defend progressive legal institutions. Admitting at one point that he may be accused of pursuing "unfalsifiability" through all these reversals, McKeon tries to shift the problem onto the nature of the cultural crisis he documents. But the formalist character of this history is embedded in McKeon's dialectic itself. Finally, McKeon's dialectical approach makes it difficult to see the continuity between these "origins" and the novels that come later. McKeon argues that, after the 1740s, instead of a literary development built on these origins, there is a discursive break. Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century novels leave this particular dialectic behind—an assertion that can only leave us wondering how essential McKeon's origins are to the novel "as a genre."

A central issue left in the wake of these particular problems is the kind of authority McKeon invokes for his own interpretive strategy. That is, McKeon presumes that his resolutely textual method reveals the historical significance of the novel by opening it to his dialectical reading strategies. But a more historicizing approach might call that strategy of reading itself into question. Such is the case with Jon P. Klancher's *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, which presents itself as a contribution to the sociology of culture by specifying historical sites of interpretation. While his ambitions may seem slighter than McKeon's (as whose would not?), Klancher's approach illuminates some of the problems McKeon evades and successfully resolves them, leaving us with a work that is no less significant and in some ways even more original.

Klancher uses recent semiotic and social theory to go beyond the narrow textuality of "reception theory," and also to challenge the Romantic scholar's assumption about the existence of ideal readers, an assumption Klancher claims is latent in romantic ideology. Klancher's argument is much more historically specific, though. He argues that after the break-up of the relatively homogeneous eighteenth-century reading audience, bound together by mechanisms of patronage and by classical rhetoric, the decades at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth were marked by radical uncertainties among writers about their reading public. The fact that no single, unified public could be assumed often compelled writers to try to "create" their audiences. Klancher argues that this deliberate project of audience formation is crucially related to the emergence of social classes in the modern sense, that audiences developed an awareness of social class precisely by acquiring self-consciousness as readers. These audiences have par-

ticular interpretive tendencies, and semiotic mentalities, Klancher argues, that are best understood in relational terms. And one specific result of this dialectical fragmentation and consolidation of reading audiences is the production of strikingly different forms of collective awareness, since these audiences always mediated between their own class position and some class-bound notion of collectivity as social transcendence. "Classlessness" as an ideal in the early nineteenth century is always rooted in particular forms of class consciousness.

Klancher's argument is partly a challenge to Marxist theory, in that his audiences are not classes of producers and consumers, but semiotic classes—classes of interpreters. Klancher refuses to make the mistake of "deducing social composition from political and cultural compositions." Audiences are produced by many groups, institutions, and semiotic practices, and they are always (following Bakhtin) created by interlocking representations of each other. However, Klancher avoids the semiotic idealism of much post-Marxism by recalling that the struggle over signs always "constitute strategies in real wars." The book's extraordinary subtlety comes from Klancher's recognition that particular audiences can be identified, even though they always remain mediated, and never can be observed "in themselves." Rather than simply writing a taxonomic study, then, Klancher explores the various transcodings and displacements that constitute his audiences, even as he avoids semiotic idealism by noting the social conflicts that compelled these dialectical revisions.

Klancher focuses not on all audiences, but on four in particular: the newly self-conscious middle-class public, a nascent mass audience, a polemical radical readership, and specific institutional readerships (primarily the clerisy). Much of the study is devoted to the role of periodicals—that "unread" writing that acted so effectively to shape early nineteenth-century audiences. Klancher argues that a number of crucial changes took place in periodical writing around 1790, reflecting the rise in unknown reading publics. For one thing, the "democratic" reciprocity between reader and writer existing in the eighteenth-century periodical is replaced by a new sense of distance. For another, periodicals in general are conceived less as a pragmatic instrument of the pre-existent "public sphere" than as a means of imagining social formations, of representing collectivity. Once again, it is unfair to try to summarize Klancher's intricate discussion, but some idea of the dialectical interrelationships between audiences he discovers can be grasped through even a basic summary. In the creation of middle-class readerships, for example, the positive strategy of periodical writers was to evoke an expansive mental power as the key to collective self-representation, such that public discourse is figured as the language of intellectual desire. Their complementary negative strategy was the promotion of abilities to read signs correctly so as to avoid being imprisoned by class-typing. Thus, middle-class audiences learned to recognize themselves as the group of classifiers who avoid being classified themselves, who try to stand outside the social order by textualizing it. For the mass audience, on the other hand, images of the crowd are figured in terms of individual types, which are validated as benign embodiments of the desire for commodities. Class differences are similarly accentuated, then, but in this case only to reveal the common "humanity" within

urban desire, in such a way as to take the fear out of the mass audience's experience of melting into the crowd. Klancher argues that it was largely because of the formation of this kind of benign mass self-consciousness that in the 1830s the mass journal could effectively be used as a force against the radical press's attempts to change social roles.

Klancher's book is important for many reasons—among other things, for its argument that it is no longer possible to read historical texts as if they had been written for contemporary interpreters, and for its articulation of a range of sites of collective discourse that, as Klancher points out, have been radically narrowed for us today. If readers are troubled by his work, their difficulties may often involve stylistics rather than intellectual disagreement. Klancher is scrupulously careful not to leave us with the kind of teleological plot that might permit either idealizations or demonizations of historical formations, but his argument is, nevertheless, often needlessly desultory. More seriously, he often oscillates between large, sweeping generalizations and extremely close readings, which results in a blurriness of focus, and an unexplained rationale for his selection of prose extracts, as well as an absence of any description of the range of material covered in various nineteenth-century periodicals. One of the problems readers will no doubt have, then, will be an uncertainty about the representativeness of the material he has chosen to examine. Klancher is also forbiddingly cryptic. He makes heavy demands on his own readers by alluding to complicated arguments in a dense phrase or two, or by basing crucial turns in his argument on theoretical positions that he cites only in passing. Klancher is extremely well-read and well-informed, but he does little to smooth the way for more "unwashed" readers.

To place my reservations, major and minor, in context, I must repeat that both Klancher and McKeon provoke the kinds of questions that any contemporary cultural history must raise. They have threaded the difficulties of subject and method admirably well, and given us works that will alter our thinking about the novel and about reading. We can only applaud arguments made so cogently, as well as learn from the revised history they offer.

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Images of Power: Medieval History/Discourse/Literature edited by Kevin Brownlee and Stephen G. Nichols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. Pp. 253. \$12.95.

The eleven contributors to this volume of essays set themselves the task of ironically rethinking "significant aspects of medieval and Renaissance discourse as related to history, literature and linguistics" (p. 3). In this, they are heeding the words of Walter Benjamin, which are alluded to in the title. For Benjamin, recalling the past is a political act that "involves us with images of peculiar power," images that engage us in a dynamic dialectic process. Thus, the contributors consciously set themselves apart from an earlier generation of scholars, for whom medieval literature was a static construct to be described and categorized, but not contested.

There is much contestation in this group of essays. The best of them suggest powerful new models for analysis and interpretation. Several, however, exasperate by stylistic flaws which seriously interfere with comprehension or by their lack of rigor.

In his introduction ("History, Literature, and Medieval Textuality"), Brian Stock explores the possibilities for "serious cooperation" between history and literature. Stock identifies several factors that favor such a collaboration, both within and outside of the domain of historical research. These factors include a renewed attitude of self-questioning, historical relativism and critical models (Marxism, reception theory, intertextuality etc.) which deny the autonomy of the text and insist on its social and historical context.

Stock raises the question of power in society and its relationship to textual culture. Using the examples of the Waldensians, he explores the relationship between the individual and the larger group, and how they use texts for literary and social purposes. Through this illustration, Stock argues persuasively for a combination of literary and historical techniques. Moreover, his essay serves as an effective introduction for the first series of articles, "Allegories of History."

In the initial essay ("Fission and Fusion: Mediations of Power in Medieval History and Literature"), Stephen Nichols argues against a dichotomy between epic (which focuses on another time) and romance (which focuses on another time and space). He chooses to explore the space between the two. This intermediate ground is filled by crusade preaching, which acknowledges both genres, but has its own space-time. Crusade preaching represents a powerful discourse that can alter present and future events and can mediate the conflict between an idealized cultural-linguistic norm and the actualization of these norms in society. Nichols illustrates his thesis by an analysis of Giraldus Cambrensis's *Itinerarium Kambriae* and Geoffroy de Villehardouin's *Conquête de Constantinople*. While he convincingly demonstrates the "presence of the now" in the *Itinerarium*, Nichols' brief description of crusade preaching in Villehardouin seems more like an after-thought. The comparison between the two works bears development; also worth exploring in more detail is the linguistic structures which generate power in crusade preaching.

Eugene Vance's article ("Chrétien's *Yvain* and the Ideologies of Change and Exchange") explores the increasing influence of a profit-motivated economy on the theology and literature of the twelfth century (which recalls Nichols' brief remarks concerning the language of economic exchange in Villehardouin). Using Chrétien's *Yvain* as his "proof text," Vance successfully argues that the importance of such elements as credit, contracts and punctuality in the romance derive from the developing mercantile economy of Champagne.

The last essay in this first section, Nancy Freeman Regalado's "*Effet de réel, Effet du réel*: Representation and Reference in Villon's *Testament*" proposes a new reading for the poem. She rightly points out that previous critics' preoccupation with the *effet du réel*, of the relationship between the historical world and Villon's work, have led to fruitless attempts at historical reconstruction and fragmented readings. Regalado chooses rather to concentrate on the *effet de réel*, or the reality effect, which "creates within our representation an impression of reference" (p. 64). Her point is particularly

apposite: by privileging the latter, we are actively engaging the text, whereas over-attention to the former treats the text as an historical artifact or curiosity. We look forward to a fuller development and application of this insight.

Section II, "Imaging the Text," begins with R. Howard Bloch's close reading of the thirteenth-century *Roman de Silence* ("Silence and Holes: The *Roman de Silence* and the Art of the *Trouvère*"). While admitting that it is a canonically minor work, the author contends that the romance is a "keystone in the anthropology of the High Middle Ages" (p. 81). Drawing on Alain de Lille's *De Planctu Naturae*, Bloch investigates the link between grammar and sexual difference (which is violated through the impropriety of *Silence's* name), between desire and language (as illustrated, to use one example, by the *troubadour's* desire to fill the silences or *trous* in speech) and poetry and power. Bloch's reading makes explicit cultural and linguistic paradigms which have implications for our understanding of literary texts and the communities they represent.

Michel Zink's article ("The Allegorical Poem as Interior Memoir") analyzes the nature of allegory and its medium, the dream, in the initial section of the *Roman de la Rose*. After an historical survey of the nature and use of allegory in Classical and medieval philosophy and literature, Zink concludes that the *Rose's* originality lies in its use of allegory to express the narrator's own subjectivity (as opposed to its commonplace use to express movements of the soul in general) and in the role attributed to the past, memory and the present as they inform the allegorical vision. Although Zink makes his point, this study could benefit from a closer reading of the text, to counterbalance the heavily historical-comparative discussion.

In his study "The Powerlessness of Writing: Guillaume de Machaut, the Gorgon, and *Ordenance*," Alexandre Leupin claims to be "measuring the space or the lack of connection between two seemingly incommensurable terms: the essence of power and the essence of poetic language; with tying and untying the knots of their articulations and their disjunctions" (p. 127). Unfortunately, this reviewer found his study to be inarticulate and disjointed, exhibiting major stylistic flaws that made comprehension, let alone evaluation, difficult. Leupin favors self-consciously enigmatic and paradoxical statements, which often intrude on the discussion in the form of abrupt parenthetical comments, and a continuous glossing of his own metalanguage. While a proofreader's oversight no doubt explains the omission of the final footnote, the missing note further signifies the many gaps in Leupin's analysis. (While on the subject of proofreading, some glaring errors appear in the text, e.g. *Villhardouin*, p. 22 and *ennunciation*, p. 129).

The final essay in the second section recalls Nichols' and Bloch's contributions. In his study of the *Heptaméron* (*The Heptaméron and the Foundation of Critical Narrative*), John D. Lyons explores the articulations between the divine order and the observable world, speech and silence, the individual and authority and discourse and history. Lyons argues that past critics have privileged the frame narrative as the vehicle of truth, whereas one must consider both the discussion of the frame narrative *and* the novella in order to resolve the oppositions listed above. Lyons' lucid analysis of these two elements proves his contention quite nicely.

The final major division, "Allegories of Discourse," contains studies by

Kevin Brownlee ("Discourse as *Proueces* in *Aucassin et Nicolette*"), Bernard Cerquiglini ("The Syntax of Discursive Authority: The Example of Feminine Discourse") and Suzanne Fleischman ("Evaluation in Narrative: The Present Tense in Medieval 'Performed Stories'").

Brownlee traces the progressive relocation of the concept of *proueces* ('feats of prowess') in his essay. While the prologue associates this term with Aucassin, Brownlee exploits the narrative structures of telescoping and *dédoublément* to identify the true loci of *proueces*: Nicolette (diagetically) and the author (extradiagetically). In doing so, Brownlee furthers our understanding of authorial power, the identity and interaction of the protagonists and the function of discourse in the *chante-fable*.

Cerquiglini's analysis of feminine discourse is characterized by impressionistic judgments, gross generalizations and unsubstantiated claims. He devotes the majority of his study to the Old French adverb *mar*, "of which certain uses are so directly mingled with the feminine voice as to constitute a genuine figure for this evocation" (p. 189). This assertion seems particularly counterintuitive, since *mar* is so prominent in epic discourse, nearly always from the mouths of men. To substantiate this claim, we would expect a precise delimitation of the corpus under consideration, both by genre and by time-frame, a rigorous classification according to semantic, syntactic and pragmatic criteria, and statistical evidence which reflect these variables. In the absence of conclusive linguistic validation, we cannot accept Cerquiglini's contention, and reject even more strongly the ideological reasons alleged to explain the disappearance of *mar* from the lexicon.

Fleischman's masterful article serves as an (unintended) foil to the previous study: well-organized, copiously documented, rigorously argued, it is a model of linguistic scholarship. Fleischman contends that the alternation of past and present verb forms in Old French is not gratuitous. Instead, tense-switching occurs in predictable environments and with predictable function. Her analysis is based on current work in pragmatics, discourse analysis, narrative and performance literature. It demonstrates how these fields can further our understanding of generic conventions and configurations.

This brief review can only hint at the variety of methodologies, lines of inquiry and insights which this volume contains. While one should not discount the contributions of the individual authors, the significance of this collection lies in a consideration of its whole: that medieval discourse is pro-teiform and dynamic, dialogic and self-questioning; and that this realization authorizes our continuing *engagement*.

John Rainolds's Oxford Lectures on Aristotle's "Rhetoric," ed. and trans. Lawrence D. Green. Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1986. Pp. 472. \$49.50.

John Rainolds was a major scholar, Protestant theologian, preacher, polemicist and educator under both Elizabeth and James. As Greek Reader at Corpus Christi, Oxford (1572-78), and later President of the same College (1598-1607), his student-protégés included John Lyly, Stephen Gosson and Richard Hooker. He is best remembered for his role in the Hampton Court Conference "where he secured [James I's] authorization for a new translation of the Bible" (p. 10). Rainolds devoted much the last "three years of his life to that project. The group of translators at Oxford was responsible for the prophets of the Old Testament, and they met three times a week in Rainolds's lodgings, even when he was in his final illness" (p. 39). Among his many polemic pamphlets, *Th'overthrow of Stage-plays* is of particular interest to students of the anti-theatrical tradition.

Early in his career, as Greek Reader, Rainolds lectured on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. These thirty lectures are the earliest English study of Aristotle's text and provide a major inquiry into the nature of language and the authority of argument within a psychology of imminent revelation through faith. Lawrence Green's is the first translation of these Latin lectures into English. His service to Renaissance studies should invite gratitude from students of history, education, rhetoric, literature, philosophy and religion.

Green's introductory essay provides an exemplary inquiry into the intellectual, pedagogic, social and rhetorical contexts for the lectures. The documentation which supports his reading is a rich and judicious bibliographic survey of the theory and practice of university humanist pedagogy under the Tudors. Green himself provides the best perspective on why a modern edition of these lectures is an important publishing event.

Rainolds's lecturers are unusual in the history of English Renaissance rhetoric in that they are theoretical discussions intended for an educated academic audience attentive to the wealth of contemporary scholarship on the Continent. Most of what we know today about rhetorical theory . . . has been reconstructed from . . . handbooks on logic, rhetoric, and poetics. But practical handbooks . . . were usually intended for training in early education rather than for the university . . . The scarcity of native sources [of the formal study of rhetorical theory has] led scholars to rely upon Continental rhetorical theorists in order to understand English theory, and the resulting picture has not always been balanced. As more materials become available, we find that we . . . are captives of earlier scholarly biases; and in no case are these problems more apparent than in the relations between English rhetorical theory and Renaissance humanism. (pp. 12-13)

With the "new historicist" methodology typically focused upon discursive practices, a primary text of this caliber should quickly become the source of considerable critical attention, especially since Rainolds's lectures are, on the one hand, a handsomely argued theory of discourse and a praxis of that theory on the other.

This is not the place to engage a reading of the lectures. Of interest to me, however, is his systematic attack on Aristotle's categories. Unlike Bacon and his disciples like Charles Butler, who attack Aristotle as a trope for scholasticism's untested adherence to tradition, Rainolds's quarrel with Aristotle results from the secular and civic exigencies out of which Aristotle's inquiry into persuasion authorized itself.

Two profound differences between Aristotle's situation and Rainolds's open the gaps through which Rainolds enters into Aristotle's text in order to reconstitute it in conformity with his militant Protestantism. First, Rainolds opposes Aristotle by situating rhetorical persuasion as a function of the pedagogic environment, not of polis or state. Second, Aristotle's analysis of argument and persuasion is structured within a closed system of civic debate (subject matter, speaker, persons to be persuaded). Rainolds, on the other hand, will not affirm any description of persuasion which does not take into account divine revelation through human agents; thus, for him emotion is indispensable to persuasive discourse, whereas Aristotle saw emotion as a secondary level, a part of eloquence, not argument. For Rainolds, emotion is not ornament laid over argument; it is the medium through which revelation will pass from divine will through speaker to hearer. "Emotion, therefore, is a natural commotion of the soul, imparted by God for following good and fleeing evil" (p. 143). These two primary quarrels and the relentlessness with which Rainolds marshals his case provide perhaps the most articulate sixteenth-century analysis of discourse and persuasion in England.

Besides his exemplary introduction, Green provides the Latin text facing the English, with passages from the Loeb Classics edition of Aristotle interlaced wherever Rainolds's citations are abbreviated. (His audience had had copies of Aristotle in hand while hearing these lectures.) With minor exceptions, the translation is vigorous, felicitous and idiomatic, but the post-Lockean term "common sense" (p. 141) even within quotation marks invites anachronistic associations.

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Donald N. Mager

Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon by Ernest B. Gilman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Pp. xii + 227. \$19.00.

Just past the middle of this challenging and stimulating but ultimately flawed study of the relationship between the visual and the verbal in Renaissance England, Gilman makes a move that raises the central issues and the central problems of his work. Examining Quarles' *Emblemes*, Gilman posits that "[i]n the Catholic emblems from which Quarles departs, the connection between the visual and the verbal remains untroubled; for Quarles, . . . it is intensely problematic" (p. 114). Later, Gilman will link the "Protestant polemics of the Reformation" with their critique of images and the "Derridean assault on the 'logocentric' tradition" (p. 190). Text as artifact forming a "painted face" is thus subject to a critique which "must chisel into the pre-textual and intertextual crevices of language."

The problem here, of course, is that if one takes the "Derridean assault on the 'logocentric' tradition" at all seriously, then one knows that there is no text which is exempt from the desire for presence, or from the slippage into a free play of signifiers. I can think of no reason, either, to exempt visual artists from the aspiration to make their works transparent to the presence of truth, or to remove their works from the play of (visual) images that dissolves composition into fragments and echoes, the *bricolage* of the workroom and the studio.

There thus can be no "untroubled" emblem against which an "intensely problematic" one can be contrasted. Nor can we posit so easily an historic occurrence of a critique of images which would conveniently divide Catholic artists from Protestant ones. The Reformation's critique of medieval Catholicism revealed serious problems which were addressed by both the emerging Protestant traditions and the post-Tridentine Roman Catholic Church. Thus the art, whether visual or verbal, of post-Reformation artists was different from medieval art and not a mere continuation of a prior state of things.

Thus we need to be clear about the shape and direction of Gilman's argument. It is, at one level, a variation on one traditional plot of the age in which the Renaissance is posed as a constructive movement in contrast to the destructive urges of the Reformation. Thus we have in Gilman the evocation of "monuments of Italian Renaissance culture" (p. 14) and the companion notion of Italy as a place where "*pictura* was . . . thoroughly appropriated by *poesis*" (p. 26) so that one can have Catholic emblem books in which "the connection between the visual and the verbal remains untroubled." On the other hand, the Reformation in England is characterized by waves of iconoclasm which bespeak a profound unease with the visual and a preference for the verbal. This means in verbal texts a conflict between the visual and the verbal, a "battle between *pictura* and *poesis*" (p. 59).

Gilman's thesis is that "for the major writers of the period, this confusion (over the role of the image in art) is a creative confusion, and that the conflicts raised by the image debate are not simply reflected in their work but help to shape it in interesting and powerfully generative ways In [the works of Spenser, Donne, and Milton] the simultaneously glorious and dangerous potential of the poem to become a speaking picture becomes part of the poem's meaning, and it is to them that we turn for the most ambitious imaginative strategies for producing and exploring that meaning" (p. 46). What is especially strong about Gilman's work is found in the chapters on each of these writers in which for each poet numerous passages which reflect ambivalence about sight as a reliable sense, or the visual as a helpful form of imaging, or the visual element as an enriching aspect of the verbal text are catalogued and explored.

For Spenser, therefore, the "poetic dilemmas so conspicuous in the work are formed around the theological dilemma of the poet as a speaker of the word confronting and correcting the iconic power of his own language" (p. 83). Donne becomes a writer who divides a private space filled with images from a public space which acknowledges their dangerousness; this spiritual schizophrenia manifests itself in texts in which a self is torn by "strong magnetic forces working on him by attraction and repulsion at once" (p. 124). Milton's blindness, with its compensating "superior inner vision" (p. 171),

becomes a motif literalized in *Samson Agonistes*, ending as it does with the (off-stage) destruction of a theatre. In *Paradise Lost*, the whole poem moves from vision to narration, from images (of heaven, paradise, and hell) used in awareness that "illusions are the property of Satan" (p. 160) to the retelling of the salvation history that Adam and Eve enter into as they leave the garden.

In these discussions, Gilman is often challenging and insightful, noting passages that often have not been given their appropriate importance and interpreting poetic tone in new ways that must henceforth be taken into account. His image of these poets as working at a crossroads between the visual and the verbal is a profitable and productive one. His examination of the ways in which critics often divide between those who respond to the visual and those who emphasize the verbal, especially in the cases of Spenser and Milton, is important and will lead, I hope, to more self-awareness on the part of interpreters of these poets.

What troubles me, finally, about Gilman's book is the frame into which these discussions and explications are placed. Something was indeed going on in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in regard to the relationship between the religious, the visual, and the verbal. Yet whatever that was was an extremely complex psychological and cultural movement. There were legitimate issues to be addressed, such as outright fakery in magical icons and exploitative "miracles." There were also instances of mob behavior which were manipulated and exploited by contending political forces. Medieval buildings were stripped of their devotional images, yet haphazardly and with some replacement or restoration, else nothing would have been around to be destroyed over the hundred-year span of the iconoclastic movement.

Whether this translates into a fundamental psychocultural shift (as Gilman must postulate to move so easily from the attack on medieval images to the anxiety about visual images in verbal texts) is another matter. This was also one of the great ages of achievement in the non-verbal arts in England. New musical settings of the English Prayer Book rites filled the churches with sound. Portraits and paintings crowded the walls of castles and manor houses. The presses turned out books filled with woodcuts and engravings by the thousands. English iconoclasm was thus not an absolute, but a movement in an often contradictory context. That, too, needs to be part of a study of the poetry produced in the age of the English Reformation.

North Carolina State University

John N. Wall

One Foot in Eden: Modes of Pastoral in Romantic Poetry by Lore Metzger. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1986. Pp. xix + 274. \$25.00.

It is not often in the field of Romanticism that one can welcome an almost unprecedented work on an important topic. But Lore Metzger's new study of pastoral in Romantic poetry is just such a book. It is common for critics in

prefaces to overstate the need for their studies but Metzger almost understates the novelty of her own undertaking. To be sure, the many and powerful examples of Romantic pastoral have been addressed by synoptic critics like Abrams, Bloom, and Hartman yet it remains a remarkable fact that there has been no extended study of the pastoral in Romanticism before the present book.

One Foot in Eden was a long time in the making and a certain patience in reading is evident in every one of its eight chapters. Following a theoretical-historical introduction, the text proceeds through a series of close readings of poems by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats, readings which are deeply informed by a sure sense of literary history. (An exception to this is her rather cavalier dismissal of eighteenth-century pastoral as "lifeless and trivial.") The introduction places Metzger's study in a sub-genre of Romantic scholarship which reads English poetry in the light of German Romantic or Idealist theory, a tradition extending back to A.C. Bradley and forward to the work of Abrams, de Man, Hamlin and a number of younger critics. Metzger's tutelary genius is Schiller, especially the Schiller of *Naive and Sentimental Poetry*.

A focus on genre is in practice often exclusive of historical considerations but Metzger's study, rather like much of Fredric Jameson's work, shows how it is precisely a certain generic continuity that permits one to see more clearly what is historically specific about any single example. Metzger's reading of Romanticism is informed at every turn by a nuanced understanding of the history of Classical and English pastoral, as well as of the historico-political context of Romantic poetry. She is sensitive to the peculiar resonance and force of modern pastoral in the early nineteenth century with the advent of the French and the industrial revolutions, when the meaning of "nature" had to be rethought for philosophy and reinvented for literature.

A considerable virtue of Metzger's study is the way the rubric of pastoral operates in the various readings elaborated. "Pastoral" serves as a guiding thread through the Romantic texts but Metzger allows the text priority over the critical category, rarely reducing the reading of a poem to focus myopically on pastoral and nothing else. Her chosen texts are by no means limited to poems whose generic label would be "pastoral" and one of the most illuminating aspects of *One Foot in Eden* is the repeated demonstration of how a pastoral moment may function in a text that no one would want to call a pastoral, like *The Prelude* or *Hyperion*.

Schiller proves of most use to Metzger for his account of the idyll as a future-oriented pastoral, capable of being enlisted by the Romantics in any number of historical and political programs. The pastoral is hardly a thing of the past, so to speak. Following Schiller, Metzger claims for the pastoral, especially in its "naïv" form, a moral and pragmatic function, not just an aesthetic one. In an age when literal pastoral settings were increasingly unavailable to urban poets, Schiller's was a call for a modern pastoral. This modern pastoral responds to its historical vocation with a certain mythical naivete which is, above all, linguistic. Of Blake's "Introduction" to the *Songs of Innocence*, Metzger writes: "The lyric creates the illusion that word and act, appearance and reality, spirit and matter, meaning and sign, are all firmly, inextricably fused in this pastoral syntax" (p. 47). Similarly, her splendid reading of "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison" exposes the ruses of Coleridge's sy-

necdochic strategies, all part of his grand attempt to make language appear simultaneously divine and natural. In this regard, Metzger's readings parallel the work of Paul de Man, whom she names along with Rosalie Colie, as one of the two *genii loci* of her work. Given this acknowledged debt, it is curious that de Man is never once cited. It is true that de Man rarely wrote explicitly on pastoral. But Metzger might have made something of de Man's reading of the pastoral (in his essay on Empson and the New Criticism), where he contends that the fundamental condition of pastoral is the divorce between nature and mind (not identical to the distinction between nature and art), an opposition never formulated as such by Metzger. At times, Metzger's attention to rhetorical detail is as perspicacious as de Man's, especially in her reading of Coleridge's lyrics. But she is ultimately much more of an enthusiast for the claims of the Romantics to a certain linguistic transcendence. She can write, for example, in concluding her reading of "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison": "By successfully capitalizing on the sentimental strength of transcending the limits of sense experience though the freedom of the imagination, he opens vistas and achieves an idyllic moment in which the finite and infinite coalesce" (p. 59). This is a far cry from de Man's most succinct statement on pastoral: "What is the pastoral convention, then, if not the eternal separation between the mind that distinguishes, negates, legislates, and the ordinary simplicity of the natural?" [*Blindness and Insight*, 2d. rev. ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p. 239.]

The poetry of Wordsworth forms the center of Metzger's attention, with four chapters devoted to detailed readings of "Michael" and, less predictably, *Home at Grasmere* and passages from *The Prelude*. The fourth chapter entitled "The Rhetoric of Pastoral Inspiration" is something of a misnomer, since the opening pages of *The Prelude* discussed there have little to do with the pastoral tradition, even broadly understood. But the chapter does include one of the very few good readings of the prophetic character of *The Prelude's* beginning, especially on the relation of choosing a theme and being chosen as a poet. For the most part, criticism of this section has contented itself with platitudes, whereas Metzger is attentive to the complexities of Wordsworth's scene of inspiration. Equally good, though less new, is her tracing of the complex transactions of mind and nature and she comes closest to a de Manian discussion of the inadequacy of the subject/object dichotomy as a comprehensive model for the criticism of Wordsworth's poetry. Better still is the ingenious reading of Book 10 of *The Prelude*, particularly the episode of Coleridge in Sicily. Here Metzger teases out the place of literary and psycho-historical intertexts, the literal topos of Sicily being an overdetermined locus of the pastoral tradition. Coleridge's arrival in Sicily provides the point of departure for a rich Wordsworthian meditation on nature and the "nature" of poetry.

Metzger's book closes with two chapters on Keats, the first focussing on a pastoral moment in *Hyperion* and the second reviewing the major odes for their explicit and implicit rewriting of the pastoral tradition. The reading of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is full and exacting and helps situate Keats' pastoral in relation to the other Romantics. Most impressive in these final chapters is the precision with which Metzger identifies the function of Keats's mythological deities, careful not simply to assimilate them to vague, precon-

ceived notions derived from Lempriere or elsewhere. The patience of Metzger's reading allows for a nuanced statement of what is striking and original in Keats' mythological revisions.

One Foot in Eden is the first serious and sustained study of Romantic pastoral and it will not doubt serve as a point of reference for any further work along these lines. Metzger is clearly a gifted and sympathetic reader of Romantic poetry, perhaps too sympathetic at times, as the poets very often get the benefit of the epistemological and linguistic doubt. In the end, her work is closer in spirit to Colie than to de Man. But regardless of her critical position, the attentiveness of her readings and their inclusion in a solid theoretical framework will be valuable to any reader of Romantic poetry. There remains of course much work to be done on Romantic pastoral: the elegy, for example, gets relatively short shrift here. *One Foot in Eden* is more suggestive than definitive, given the chosen strategy of exemplary readings over literary-historical survey, but that is precisely what should be asked of a first book on a subject that deserves many more.

York University

Ian Balfour

Dickens and the Dialectic of Growth by Badri Raina. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986. Pp. xiii + 172. \$27.50.

Dickens and the Dialectic of Growth presents a developmental analysis of the cultural forces and corresponding personal conflict which impelled and shaped Dickens' art. This potentially intriguing investigation sets itself the task of defining "the quality and scope of movement within the 'ideological field' constituted by Dickens' oeuvre" (p. 8). While the postulate of a single, stable "ideological subtext" underlying all of Dickens' novels might initially seem questionable in regard to writing as exuberantly varied in tone, generic stance, and subject as Dickens', the possibility of such an "historically illuminating" picture certainly seems deserving of our full receptivity. Unfortunately, Raina explains early on that "'there is too much at stake'" (p. 7) for his investigation to be bound by the limitations of poststructuralist or Marxist theory, and the scant support offered by his "limited exegeses" of the novels suggests that he cares little for the close textual analysis of formalist criticism as well. As willing as we might be to suspend our critical disbelief for the sake of a worthy cause, the problem comes to be not so much the theoretical lapses in the discussion as the lack of any systematic theoretical grounding whatsoever, an omission which finally leads the argument to founder on its own unexamined and contradictory assumptions.

To give the discussion its due, the introduction does seek to create a "recognizable critical space" (p. 4) for the essay. The author quotes from Derrida, addresses a noted Marxist analysis of Dickens, and brings in some interesting, if not very carefully explained, quotes from Althusser, Jameson and Eagleton along the way. But in claiming that Derrida sees no possibility of dismantling "the notion of the self" (p. 6), Raina misunderstands and dismisses a project which is crucial not only to deconstruction, but also to his own ar-

gument. He shortchanges what he describes as Marxist "culture-criticism" as well, by choosing as his target T.A. Jackson's argument from 1938.

This evasion of specific confrontation with more recent and sophisticated materialist approaches isn't surprising, since his own efforts to define a "prior historical or ideological subtext" are based on grounds one could hardly characterize as historical. Rather, his examination proceeds by following "the plotted fates of a series of surrogates in the novels" (p. 9) and "the adjustment that Dickens makes to a composite self-image in the fiction" (p. 16). The progression of the social destinies of these surrogates allows us to view the evolution of Dickens' conflict between his aspirations to the "fruits of bourgeois culture" and disdain for "bourgeois Victorian insensitivity" (p. 13). The only historical evidence offered in support of the hypothesized correspondence of cultural forces and Dickens' novelistic projection of his internal struggles is an autobiographical fragment cited from a letter to Forster in 1847 and the preface to *Oliver Twist*.

The essay grounds itself instead on the equation of Dickens' psychic drives and those of major characters in his novels, an assumption which leads to remarkable conclusions. This focus is especially unfortunate in that it sidetracks the argument from the helpful ideological criticism it sometimes provides. Raina elucidates, for instance, the parodic usage and critique of institutionalized capitalist discourse at all levels of human interaction in *Oliver Twist* and *Dombey and Son*. His insight in regard to the dual economic and sexist implications of Dombey's re-naming of Polly Toodle is especially striking: "In Polly's contractual position [Dickens] sees the reified commodity status of labor, and in her transmutation from Polly to Richards he makes the point about alienation both along capitalist and sexist lines" (p. 67). Such analyses are exceptional, however, and noticeably set aside from the central aim of tracing the evolution of Dickens' self-image throughout his works.

One of the ill effects of the attempt to trace Dickens' psychic development in his art—an effort unhindered, as one might expect in view of Raina's avoidance of theory, by the delineation of a psychoanalytic model on which it might be based—is the inadvertent condescension with which Raina passes judgment not only on the novels, but also on Dickens' conscious and unconscious drives. *Oliver Twist*, we find, was written "from a hysterical sense of threat" (p. 30), and all of Dickens' work before *Dombey and Son* was damaged by the personal "urgencies that dictated the paranoid and arbitrary resolutions of the fiction hitherto" (p. 65). These novels are flawed because of Dickens' unconscious impulses in some cases, and compromised by too much conscious control in others: young Martin's transformation in *Martin Chuzzlewit* is rendered inauthentic by the sense that it was "authorially managed" (p. 61).

Raina's resistance to a consideration of the difficulties of determining singular, stable meaning—opting instead for the view that "within any given culture signifiers are recognizably *fixed* at various synchronic stages" (emphasis mine) (p. 5)—leads his discussion to confounding and inconsistent assumptions about the integral status of characters and the relation of author to text. Dickens' characters, for instance, are granted a three-dimensional life of startling proportions. Little Nell has her own coherent set of feelings and desires, upon which Dickens insensitively intrudes: "Dickens' self-distrust in

The Old Curiosity Shop is evidenced by his inability to avoid suffusing Nell with a pity that she herself neither feels nor demands" (p. 63). At other times, the characters are not in antagonistic relation to, but coterminous with Dickens and his desires; Raina in fact refers to them as hyphenated quantities, often partaking of a common culpability: "David-Dickens shows no recognition of the reflexive applicability of the circumstance" (p. 96).

The omission of a consistent postulate of authorial control of language and its effects also leaves the reader mystified as to when textual ramifications are to be seen as our production or as Dickens'. Raina picks and chooses according to the needs of his thesis, accusing Dickens at times of working to "muffle" or "camouflage" his characters' guilt, and at others of being unable "to limit for us the ugly implications of certain patterns" that reflect upon his self-surrogates. Insights which don't fit Raina's idea of Dickens' development at the time, such as the indictment of capitalist appropriation to be seen in Uriah Heep's defense of his career, are marked to Raina's credit rather than Dickens': "Not that Dickens' view here entirely coincides with my statement of what we *can* take away from the novel" (p. 101).

The understandable urgency of Raina's effort to alert us to certain oppressive ideologies engenders not only these arbitrary assertions but a markedly narrow and defensive attitude as well. Generic principles which don't fit his particular materialist view, such as the miraculous wish-fulfillment of comedy and romance, are not allowed interpretive consideration. Hence, the possibility that Boffin shows a comic and complete recovery from his role-play as miser in *Our Mutual Friend* can't be seriously considered, since, in Raina's view of socioeconomic influences, Boffin must "in reality . . . disintegrate through exposure to money" (p. 134), despite the lack of textual evidence cited to that effect. And, needless to say, for other critics to see the principles of fairy tale at work in a Dickens' novel is a clear sign of bourgeois bad faith (p. 158). Raina's references to analyses which disagree with his own often suffer, in fact, from the suggestion that they are politically uncommitted or obtuse, and arch comments such as "whatever that means" (p. 162, n. 4) sometimes cap his quotation of an opposing argument.

The ultimate misfortune of Raina's effort is that its admirable aims finally turn on themselves. The desire to make an argument of significant personal and social relevance for those who find themselves in "a like historical predicament" to Dickens' leads him to an emphasis on the individual which inevitably undermines the awareness he seeks to promote of the deterministic effects of cultural forces. An absorption with the individual and his or her inner tensions could be seen as the snug core of the middle-class, capitalist values that Raina opposes. (This focus also suggests the reason, we might note in passing, for the treatment of characters as independent entities who either struggle or collude with their author to achieve their personal ends.) Instead of moving toward reform or revolution, an individualist orientation points us toward the achievements of personal will and initiative, and the resolution of internal conflict. Not surprisingly then, the culmination of his analysis is a celebration of the portrayal of Pip in *Great Expectations* as "achieving . . . an authentic self" (p. 110). While this "self" is one expanded to include a higher valuation of "human relatedness," such a conclusion does little to address the issues of "historical necessity" (p. 126), as Raina admits

with some chagrin. He sees this not as the fault of his entire approach, however, but as the unavoidable effect of Dickens' naive intention, graciously adding that it would be "churlish to undervalue" this accomplishment nonetheless.

Indeed, it does feel churlish to criticize a "personal book" and "required discovery" for a scholar seeking helpful ideological understanding for his fellow readers of the Third World. *Dickens and the Dialectic of Growth* demonstrates all too effectively, however, that an analysis which overlooks its own problematic assumptions because its aims are too important to be disturbed is likely to yield an argument not only unconvincing in its means but antithetical in its results.

University of Colorado

Cathy Comstock

Representation and Revelation: Victorian Realism from Carlyle to Yeats by John P. McGowan. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986. Pp. vi + 206.

For a short period during the heyday of the new criticism, "realism" was no longer an issue. An occasional important study (almost always, of course, in relation to the novel), like Ian Watt's *Rise of the Novel* (1957) or Harry Levin's *Gates of Horn* (1963), affirmed the importance of the idea in the history of literature, but the main stream of criticism regarded realism as a discredited style and did not consider it problematic at all.

But that period was an aberration. "Realism," whether or not the term itself had been used, has been a preoccupation of literature and criticism throughout their histories. The question of whether and how literature "represents" is not an easy one, as the curious recent history of the argument testifies. Perhaps ironically, post-structuralist criticism, while waging war against representationalism more totally and radically than Plato, have brought the word "realism" and the practices associated with it back to the center of critical attention. It is not that realism is epistemologically and morally dangerous, or that it is a tired copyism that degrades and deflates art, but that it is literally not possible. Language must always and everywhere be "about" itself, and not about the world it tricks readers into believing it represents.

The anti-representational and anti-referential thrust of modern criticism gathered its energies from the self-deceived enemy it posited, naive realism. To make its own case, it had to explode what it pretended was the norm of the old days, the realist practice of unproblematically representing "reality." Such practice had to be demystified, denaturalized, and shown to be a mere construction of language. But in an inevitable twist, modern criticism has often moved from attempting to outsmart authors who thought they were being realistic to dissolving the putative naive realism by demonstrating that great and even not so great writers were cleverer than we thought—they knew that they were working with words, not things, and that words mark difference as much as they evoke things.

The deconstruction of the Victorians, then, has revealed a world of proto-

deconstructers. They seemed to have known already what contemporary critics have been trying to prove, that the actual practice of realism, taken to be the project of representing a non-verbal reality, was and is impossible. The major difference turns out to be the way the Victorians felt about the impossibility; they do not share our contemporary critical exhilaration. In any case, the post-structuralist raid on the Victorians has been fruitful. It has forced us beyond thematics and formalism to a fuller recognition of the tensions and contradictions in Victorian narrative art, and particularly in respect to its awareness of the medium of language itself. One can no longer read the Victorians without taking into account our post-structuralist critiques of narrative, language, and representation.

John McGowan, in this his first book, does take the post-structuralist tradition seriously: his debt to that tradition and particularly to the work of Derrida and Foucault is, he says, "obvious throughout this study." But, he adds, "my discussions set themselves against much of the literary criticism carried on in Derrida's name" (p. 22). Against the myth of naive realism, the straw man that needs to get knocked down, McGowan affirms that the writers he discusses were not "unaware of the inevitability of mediation"; moreover, he argues, they tried to understand the implications of that inevitability and to find ways to use it to build structures that might satisfy desire" (p. 23). The terms of McGowan's engagement in the subject have been set by the post-structuralist project. And he exemplifies one of the most valuable consequences of that project, that critics have been forced to go back to the Victorians and to recognize that they cannot be addressed *de haut en bas*, but that their imaginative and intellectual range and flexibility were quite as sophisticated as our own.

In the long run, this book returns to the questions of realism, or, as McGowan puts it at the start, to the question of how the Victorians attempt "to connect mind with world" (p. 1). The key terms of McGowan's argument are "representation" and "revelation," rather old friends of students of nineteenth-century literature. The mirror and the lamp, the merely mimetic as opposed to the creative or intuitive, have tended to structure nineteenth-century aesthetic discourse, as well as discourse about that discourse. And if there is anything disappointing about McGowan's very intelligent and knowledgeable study it is that a great deal of it, despite the engagement with what seem immediate critical issues, has just a touch of familiarity about it. The first chapter, for instance, scrupulously rehearses Locke and Coleridge on mind and the imagination, appropriately to set up the framework inside which McGowan will set his interesting studies of D. G. Rossetti, Carlyle, Ruskin, Dickens, George Eliot, Browning, and Yeats.

The book is familiar, too, in that while there can be no question that the terms of the problem have been established in the context of post-structuralist debate, it really isn't at all clear how much the details of that debate have actually influenced the way McGowan reads. While he credits Derrida with the antinomies around which he builds his argument, he doesn't, for example, attend to the way the deconstructionist argument denies such antinomies. And as one reads the intelligent analyses of works and writers, even where—as in the reading of *David Copperfield*—McGowan specifically credits Derrida for shaping his argument, it is difficult to see the kind of self-reflex-

iveness, and play with language (over and above preoccupation with it) that would mark deconstructionist readings. The readings make sense, that is, but seem too dutifully to argue for their own modernity.

McGowan finds in each of his writers a tension between the commitment to representation (which entails a recognition of language as a mediator and thus a distancer of reality) and "revelation," that direct encounter with the real that assures its reality and transcends language. McGowan convincingly argues that the Victorians constantly sought that unmediated vision, but were forced to settle for the mediation of representation. And while he stresses the sense of loss that comes with this compromise, he wants to argue—and here he is at his most original—that they come to discover "benefits" in indirection that provide compensatory satisfaction. McGowan seems to me entirely on the right track in finding in the Victorians a "deep uneasiness with the adequacy of their chosen medium" (p. 22) in their quest for a reality that will satisfy the urgency of subjectivity and the demands of community.

The odd beginning with Rossetti (which I still do not find entirely satisfying) allows McGowan to describe what he takes to be the most extreme case of the Victorian impasse—the failure to break from the mediation of language into the redemption of revelation. He keeps Rossetti on this side of the Aesthetic movement, arguing that there is in his work an urgency for reality that makes him incapable of finding an ultimate satisfaction in art, which can at best offer sporadic illumination.

A more appropriate place to begin is with Carlyle. Here McGowan quite rightly insists on a deep distrust of language and fiction. Carlyle is one of the most important of the Victorians because in his work is played out the tension between the Victorian compromise with language and representation and the obsessive quest for a transcendent other, a presence that will authorize and sanction. Carlyle's play with symbol and with language focusses and in a way formulates the Victorian crisis of "reality." One only begins worrying about realism when the nature of the real is in question, when its possible determination is in doubt. Carlyle is the voice of the fall into consciousness and the early Victorian problematizing of the real. And McGowan's handling of this aspect of Carlyle is very useful. His emphasis on Carlylean indirection, even the obfuscating of apparently clear and simple ideas in a prose and a symbolism that aspire to impenetrability, valuably locates a Victorian recognition of the inaccessibility of the real in history, in time.

The division in Carlyle between a belief in the power of "Naming" and the inevitable distancing of language becomes a model for the tensions McGowan finds in other Victorians, writers ostensibly on either side of the empiricist divide. Perhaps his most surprising and interesting chapter is on Dickens, in whom he successfully tries to locate a fall from an attempt at naive realism, "in which all mediation . . . is rendered unnecessary" (p. 109) and which entails a full recapturing of the past, into an acceptance of representation, with its fall into time and difference. While I find it difficult to accept McGowan's argument that Dickens unfavorably places metaphorical language and languages of indirection (despite his own profligate use of them) against the admirable plain style of a *Copperfield*, he is certainly right about the questioning of language that goes on in his treatment of his variably voluble characters. David Copperfield, at any rate, may be described as

learning the "difference" between the yearned for past of his mother's embrace and "later representations" of it—in Dora, say, or even in Agnes.

McGowan's reading is intelligent and ingenious here, and his later demonstration that George Eliot, despite her deep embedding in positivist and empiricist thought, needs and ultimately exploits a reality prior to knowledge and language, is complicated and interesting. The whole frame of "representation and revelation" allows McGowan to do some very interesting readings, to show that novelists and poets were dramatizing what theorists like Carlyle and Ruskin were explicitly worrying, and even to make connection between Carlyle and Yeats, as the outer limits of the nineteenth-century encounter with this dualism.

While I feel occasionally a strain to reshape the world of nineteenth-century literature into the structures of contemporary debate, McGowan's insistence on the difference is useful and, from my point of view, indispensable for any serious application of post-structuralist thinking to the Victorians. McGowan has a sense of history, and even if this, too, like all history, must be a construction more than a discovery, it seems to me requisite for coming to terms with the Victorians' refusal to accept the separation between art and life. This refusal marks the difference between the Victorian poets, historians, and novelists McGowan treats, and Yeats, the subject of his final chapter. And it was a refusal, McGowan shows, that the Victorians sustained in a very pre-structuralist way, against the representations their own extraordinary writing seemed ineluctably to force. McGowan does justice to the Victorians and, even where he covers familiar territory, shows again why realism is a subject that won't go away.

Rutgers University

George Levine

Dimensions of Science Fiction by William Sims Bainbridge. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986. Pp. 278. \$20.00.

Who are those people who read science fiction, the ones who know Captain Kirk's every line and go to those strange conventions, the Boskones and the WorldCons? William Bainbridge seeks to describe these folk and their ways by means of quantitative sociology. Though from one fan's perspective, at least, his book suffers from some curious omissions and misemphases, *Dimensions of Science Fiction* renders an intriguing if partial sociological portrait of SF fandom.

After sketching the boundaries of his domain, the twentieth-century American science fiction (SF) "subculture," Bainbridge provides an introduction to his approach in which he defines the sociological terms and describes the collection instrument. Bainbridge's tool for surveying this social territory was a complex questionnaire that tested respondents' preferences for various writers. It also recorded basic data about the respondents' own educational background and their general attitudes toward a variety of themes. Most of the data (some 409 responses) were collected at Iguanacon, the 1978 world SF convention held in Phoenix, Arizona. Bainbridge corroborates these findings

with material drawn from earlier and different surveys, including information from 79 people at the 1975 Boskone SF convention in Boston, 130 editors and associates of SF and fantasy magazines in 1974, and 81 members of the Northeast SF Association in 1973.

In the main sample, respondents were asked to rate their preferences for over a hundred popular SF and fantasy writers, and this data provides the base from which Bainbridge develops his factor analyses of the subculture's dimensions. These "ideologies" represent general attitudes, and the tested responses range from feelings about the physical sciences and technology to those on social reform, religious or philosophical consciousness, and political orientation. By correlating respondents' attitudes on these matters with their author preferences, Bainbridge arrives at a social and generic topography of this cultural territory that is quantitatively defined and objectively based.

No monolithic entity, the SF subculture consists of three different and competing factions, the Hard Science Fiction, New Wave, and Fantasy ideologies. Individual fans may, of course, belong to more than one group; and Bainbridge is careful to claim only general accuracy for his descriptions of each cluster. Despite this caution, distinct identities emerge. The Hard SF faction shows itself devoted to the physical sciences, hard facts, and logical reasoning. This group tends to avoid emotional issues and promotes problem-solving, technological development, and discovery, celebrating the sheer wonder and adventure of the New. Respondents associated writers like Hal Clement, Isaac Asimov, and Robert Heinlein most strongly with this orientation.

Those who read and write New Wave SF, in contrast, are more critical of science and technology, often on social, moral, and ecological grounds. They prefer the softer sciences (anthropology, sociology), tend to focus on emotional, psychological, and philosophical concerns, and seem especially interested in aesthetic complexity and formal innovation. New Wave people carry their interest in reform beyond art into social and political arenas, as well, and they tend to be more liberal politically than their Hard Science brethren. This is not surprising since many of these writers and readers are feminists, including Ursula Le Guin, Harlan Ellison, and Joanna Russ, for example.

Unlike these two factions, in its promotion of magic and romance, the fantasy ideology demonstrates its participants' indifference to the actions of discovery and reform so important in the Hard and New Wave SF camps, according to Bainbridge. Eschewing the "real" worlds of nature and humankind, this cluster pursues escape into dream and myth from the domains of mutability and hardship. Here we find writers like Tolkien (representing the sword-and-sorcery contingent) and Fritz Leiber (from the horror-and-weird crowd); and Bainbridge sees this ideology as one that promotes art for art's sake.

In the last quarter of the book, Bainbridge turns from his cartographic labor to assess the impacts of the SF subculture on the rest of American life, discussing in turn its promotion of science and technology (especially the American space program) upon which Bainbridge has written in *The Space Flight Revolution*, (1976), and the women's movement. The book ends with Bainbridge's general description of the central motivations driving the SF subculture: these people express their desire for an art that provides enlightenment and points toward transcendence.

Bainbridge clearly enjoys SF and its people, and he renders them sympathetically. In general, he sees the SF fan as intelligent, interested in educational innovation and social reform, and supportive of women's rights. SF fans tend to be dissatisfied and somewhat isolated from their communities; they have above average educations and incomes. In other ways they are as various as the rest of the population: politically diverse, though slightly to the left of center, they are generally a-religious, but with profound spiritual and moral concerns. Some of them like SF that is very technological; some like occult and horror stories; some like space opera; some like philosophy. Bainbridge is especially good on the fans of the "Golden Age" in American SF, a period from the late 30s through the 50s. He has a knack for the apt anecdote or quotation to illustrate or give flesh to his exposition, and this lends a human sparkle to some otherwise dry passages.

Nevertheless, I have some reservations about the project, especially its data base. It is helpful to see roughly 700 fans and professionals in the aggregate, and a delight to hear again some of the early enthusiasts as they champion the genre. But as Bainbridge would be the first to admit, the country he set out to map has a rapidly shifting surface. In the face of such a dynamic geography, it is a little disappointing to see that the dimensions described here are all nearly 10 or more years old. This temporal distance heightens the threat of mere topicality that attends any quantitatively based literary research, in spite of the implicit advantages of documenting real readers' attitudes rather than the well meant but idealized images of "the reader" that we often get in reader-response criticism. Bainbridge's data are not strictly current, and this fact must challenge the insights he offers us about today's readers of SF. Bainbridge provides us more of a historical composite than a contemporary picture.

More telling is the relative narrowness of Bainbridge's samples, because such selection carries with it several major dangers. Despite his own approval of SF, Bainbridge implicitly reinforces the impression that SF people are part of a social and cultural ghetto, that they remain consciously distinct from the "norm"; and Bainbridge underscores this unfortunate impression when he touches upon the similarities between the religious and political interests of SF folk and groups like the American Shakers (chp. 6). The second result of this selectivity is that it excludes those enthusiasts who do not attend the conventions, not only the occasional and less gregarious readers, but also the academic ones. Information about these readers could substantially alter Bainbridge's general characterizations of SF people.

Another more serious result of excluding the academics is that the study generally dismisses the already significant body of SF and fantasy scholarship, a lack especially glaring in the presence of Bainbridge's extensive presentation of fan-lore. Much of this work would have particular bearing upon Bainbridge's analyses of the fiction's history, its generic structures and themes, and its associations with other literatures, folklore, and mythology, not to mention its theoretical interrelationships with the social sciences and humanities. Those new to such scholarship can consult the "Year's Scholarship in Science Fiction and Fantasy," edited annually by Marshall B. Tymn in *Extrapolation*. But to give his argument context and balance, Bainbridge ought to have included some recognition of relevant scholarly work, such as (to be

very selective) Casey Fredericks, *The Future of Eternity* (1982); Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1983); Robert Myers, ed., *The Intersection of Science Fiction and Philosophy* (1983); Patrick Parrinder, *Science Fiction* (1979); or Gary K. Wolfe, *The Known and the Unknown* (1979).

As usual, ignoring the scholarship has its price. There are the occasional slips of mere fact, as for example, when Bainbridge describes Philip K. Dick, who died in 1982, as "a leading contemporary writer" (p. 214). More substantial are the repetitions of insights already common in the critical literature: after all, it is not very fresh to see SF divided into various sub-genres and to account for these divisions in psychological or cultural terms.

In addition, and perhaps coming from his general disregard for fantasy, Bainbridge usually ignores existing definitions and historical relations among the generic sub-types he describes. Most SF scholars agree, for example, that fantasy is the antecedent genre for SF, its formal and thematic foundation; yet in Bainbridge's scheme, fantasy becomes a marginal district of the central SF subculture. It is not that Bainbridge's placement fails to make sense in terms of his sociological presuppositions, but that he doesn't indicate how different this view is from existing perspectives. Moreover, not drawing upon these existing theoretical explanations leaves Bainbridge rather flat-footed in his attempt to account for the strong demographic presence of fantasy in the data.

Similarly, Bainbridge misapplies to fantasy the phrase "art for art's sake." His usage fails to take into account the historical definitions of the phrase (it does not principally imply inaction or escapism, nor is modern fantasy mainly "ornamental"). Finally, in neither the survey itself nor in his analysis of the data does Bainbridge even nod in the direction of the other closely-related types of fantasy narration elsewhere in literature (such as metafiction or magic realism), and he similarly neglects all earlier and non-American cases. It would have been enlightening, for example, had Bainbridge reflected upon Darko Suvin's results in *Victorian SF in the UK* (1983).

Still, within its narrow range, *Dimensions of Science Fiction* does much of what Bainbridge originally attempted: it gives us a solid, well-defined quantitative study of SF fan culture. For fans like me, it will reaffirm our general impressions: SF promotes science, technology, intellectual consciousness and the analytical mind; it speculates upon the future; and like any genuinely intellectual endeavor, it combines the startlingly new with the comfortably familiar by situating old problems in new contexts. Bainbridge lends the authorization of hard data to our generalities about SF and American life. He also gives us an idea of what a quantified study of reader response might look like, and in this he anticipates major new trends reader analysis. But his study is only a beginning. We will want bigger, more accurate maps from him in the future; and we will insist that this one not be read alone.

Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, trans. Dana Polan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986. Pp. xxix + 104. \$10.95, paper.

Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* is an admirable addition to the University of Minnesota's Theory and History of Literature Series. A brief but dense text, this book has had to wait eleven years to be translated into English. Both the University of Minnesota Press and translator Dana Polan are to be commended for offering us a translation that captures much of the verve and daring of the original text. This edition comes with a helpful foreword by Réda Bensmaïa and a translator's introduction by Dana Polan. A thorough index has made the English edition more accessible. This will prove extremely helpful to both those interested in the various readings of Kafka's works and those interested in the theoretical concepts employed by Deleuze and Guattari.

The importance of this book for literary scholars is, simply put, that it offers a sustained analysis of a major literary figure by two of the most significant theorists writing today. Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* is likely to become as important a text for literary studies as their earlier *Anti-Oedipus*. Perhaps the greatest significance of the work of Deleuze and Guattari at this time is that it offers a productive resolution of the impasse—best formulated by the work of Foucault—that politically minded critical theory had reached in the wake of structuralism and post-structuralism. Political interpretation, having rejected the empiricism of traditional Marxist criticism, retreated to cautious descriptive analysis. As such, the oppressive effects of the discursive constitution of subjectivity were emphasized at the expense of any coherent articulation of strategies of resistance. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the contiguity of power and desire is a direct response to this theoretical impasse. They reject the idea that power emanates from one unified source. This is the fallacy of both Marxist empiricism and ideology critique. Deleuze and Guattari seek rather to reveal the specificity and particularity of every theater of struggle.

For the most part Deleuze and Guattari discuss Kafka in general theoretical terms, placing him in what they term a minor literature. For the purposes of explication, the book can be divided into an outline of their theoretical placement of Kafka and a summary of their reading of Kafka's works. It should be pointed out that this is an artificial distinction, since the text of Deleuze and Guattari does not proceed in this manner.

The decisive point of departure for Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari argue, is his articulation of a minor literature. A minor literature does not come from a minor language; "it is rather that which a minority constructs within the context of a major language" (p. 16). A writer of minor literature writes within the context of a major literature, yet is from the outset alienated from it. This insures that minor literature does not partake of the transcendental signification of major literature. Thus there is no Oedipal struggle with the father that could explain the varied and diffused struggles within Kafka's works. Minor literature is instead insistently political; it constructs contiguous assemblages out of the reigning deployments of power. These struggles are relentlessly

particular; the struggle with the father is *contiguous* with the struggle with the bureaucrat, the lawyer, the judge, etc. No transcendental signification, like that of an Oedipal father, can resolve these struggles. As Deleuze and Guattari write: "The judges, commissioners, bureaucrats, and so on, are not substitutions for the father; rather it is the father who is a condensation of all these forces that he submits to and that he tries to get his sons to submit to" (p. 12). A minor literature thus politicizes the points of conflict within a major language.

The strategy Deleuze and Guattari use in approaching Kafka is one of experimentation and not interpretation. To do otherwise they argue would be to place Kafka in the domain of a major literature and language. To interpret Kafka would be to submit him to the rule of transcendental signification, which insists that all disparate textual assemblages be reducible to one verifiable pattern or structure. Deleuze and Guattari adopt rather a strategy of experimentation. Experimentation proceeds by entering the text of Kafka at some point and activating various assemblages. "We aren't even trying to interpret, to say this means that," Deleuze and Guattari write (p. 7). Kafka is not so much a text for Deleuze and Guattari as a series of "Kafka machines." These machines exist in multitude in Kafka and require not some act of interpretation, but activation with existing "machinic" assemblages. This possibility of activating Kafka machines with existing machinic relations of power is what lends Kafka his political significance.

In treating Kafka's works, Deleuze and Guattari divide their discussion into considerations of the letters, stories and novels. Kafka's letters, Deleuze and Guattari argue, are the motor that drive the Kafka writing machine. The letters are part of a strategy of vampirism, an attempt to engage and yet distance the desire of the addressee at the same time. The letters function as the first deployment of the machine in Kafka. Aimed against the transcendental source from which power is seen to emanate, the letters introduce machinic assemblages that serve to defer and distance.

The second component of Kafka's writing machine are the stories. The stories confront the predicament of the letters and seek not merely to defer but to find a line of escape. The stories are characterized by what Deleuze and Guattari term "the becoming-animal," that which attempts to burrow into and out of existing assemblages of power. Yet the line of escape that the stories try to trace must fail for there is no ultimate goal or exit but only more machines. The stories are nonetheless decisive for Kafka and the formation of a minor literature.

The third component of the Kafka writing machine are the novels. With the novels the machinic assemblages come into their own. There is no way out in the novels; they are interminable. Machines exist always in contiguity with other machines in the novels. The fact that there is no escape from machines is affirmed. The novels turn on the ceaseless movement from one machine to another.

From just a historical point of view, this book by Deleuze and Guattari is of undeniable significance. Political interpretation—perhaps best exemplified by Georg Lukács—was long incapable of seeing anything but petty bourgeois nihilism in Kafka. The work of Benjamin and Adorno and the Liblice conferences did much to present Kafka as a source for politically productive inter-

pretation. Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* stands as the most recent contribution to this reassessment of Kafka's work. Indeed, the Kafka they offer us is, within the context of political interpretation, refreshingly affirmative and guiltless. "He is an author," Deleuze and Guattari write, "who laughs with a profound joy, a joie de vivre" (p. 41).

There are several points, it must be said, that mar this study. Many readers will doubtlessly be frustrated by the inexhaustible stream of esoteric "theoretical" terms in this book. These terms obviously have no connection to any existing philosophy or theory, but apparently serve as metaphors for some ideas of Deleuze and Guattari. It is also surprising that writers who are arguing for the notion of a minor literature care so little for the original German of Kafka's texts. We are even informed at one point that *Faust* revolves around the fate of woman named Marguerite. Deleuze and Guattari, after all, argue that every struggle is a particular struggle. Why then should that which makes up the textual specificity of Kafka be ignored? The most far-reaching drawback to *Kafka* is, however, part of the very theoretical framework of the argument. The political scenario Deleuze and Guattari posit reveals a rather trite triadic structure. There is, first of all, the type of particularized struggle Deleuze and Guattari argue for. Then there is the state that makes this strategy necessary, "deterritorialization." As "de-" suggests, this state is a fall from a more organic past. This assumption of a triadic development, long endemic to leftist criticism, causes Deleuze and Guattari to write silly things such as the following: "The mouth, tongue, and teeth find their primitive territoriality in food. In giving themselves over to the articulations of sounds, the mouth, tongue, and teeth deterritorialize" (p. 19). It must be asked to what extent such a nostalgia for a lost origin serves merely to further the discourse of power that Deleuze and Guattari so passionately argue against.

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Recent Theories of Narrative by Wallace Martin. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1986. Pp. 242. \$29.95, cloth; \$8.95, paper.

In this valuable book, Wallace Martin presents (most of the) theories of (literary) narrative that have been developed during the past twenty years. He illustrates their power by applying them repeatedly to a number of stories on the motif of "the lover's gift regained" (including Chaucer's "Shipman's Tale," Katherine Mansfield's "Bliss," Ernest Hemingway's "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.) After an introduction in which he reviews theories of the novel in the first half of the twentieth century, surveys such important theoretical accounts of (fictional) narrative as those of Frye, Booth, and French structuralism, and discusses recent trends in literary and narrative theory (reader response criticism, the renewed interest in the notion "interpretation"), Martin examines, in two consecutive chapters, the two changes of perspective that have been most significant in the elaboration of recent narrative theories: the shift from studying the novel in particular to studying narrative in general and the shift from

viewing realism as an accurate depiction of life to viewing it as a set of literary conventions. Martin then examines the structuralists' endeavor to isolate and characterize the factors governing all narrative sequences and devotes his fifth chapter to the structural analysts he considers most influential (Barthes, Genette, and Chatman). Chapter VI addresses the topic of the narrator and, more generally, that of point of view. Chapter VII considers the role of the reader in narrative transactions and explores communication-bound models of narrative analysis. In his final chapter, Martin discusses various ways in which metafictional and parodic narratives transgress theoretical frames of reference; he concludes with general remarks on the relation of literature to life and the status of narrative as a mode of explanation. An appendix containing "Bliss," "The Shipman's Tale," and another story based on the "lovers's gift regained" motif, an extensive annotated bibliography, and a useful author and subject index complete the volume.

As even this quick description suggests, the range of Martin's book is remarkable. There is hardly a student of narrative that he does not mention and there are few trends and topics in narrative theory that he does not cover or touch upon (he points out that he does not discuss in his presentation studies of themes and types, unreliable narration, stylistics, semiotics, and discourse analysis; I wish he had addressed the topic of tellability). Besides, Martin is consistently clear; he provides helpful comparisons of terms that have arisen in different frameworks; he proves balanced in his assessments (though I suspect that he favors pluralism over monism—his title is revealing—and prefers contextualists and hermeneutists to formalists and structuralists); he succeeds in showing the problematic nature of various distinctions and proposals; and he has many interesting things to say about (literary) narrative and its analysis (for instance, that literary study has never quite managed to forget old theories, that—p. 126—"criticism is a struggle to name that which has never been noticed," that—p. 144—written narratives may well be "the source of the varied visual resources of the movies, rather than vice versa," and that—p. 189—"it is undesirable to shut the rest of life off from its connection with literature, or to sever any ties literary study might have with other disciplines"). In fact, Martin's book is difficult to criticize.

Nevertheless, I will try and point to a few possible imperfections. Is Martin quite correct in arguing that narrative is not comparable to language because (among other reasons) "there are many kinds of stories, little agreement about which ones are the best, and less agreement about what they mean" (p. 27)? After all, there are many kinds of sentences, little agreement about which ones are the best (is "The guy who just left is my brother" better or worse than "It started to rain"?), and less agreement about what they mean ("It is cold in here" and "The cat sat on the mat" can mean different things in different contexts). When Horace says that epics should begin *in medias res* (p. 84), is he referring to a principle of ordering (you start in the middle of things and then go back to an earlier period of time) or, rather, to a principle of selection (you start with the situation pertinent to your account and not *ab ovo*)? If an event "is defined as a transition from one state of affairs to another, [must it] entail static description of one or both states" (p. 122)? Clearly not: "Mary opened the window" implies two states ("The window was closed;" "The window was open") but in no way entails their descrip-

tion. Is it quite appropriate to suggest that a narrative passage is scenic because some of the actions and statements it recounts occurred only once (p. 126)? Consider "Sartre wrote *La Nausée* in the thirties and then he wrote *La Mort dans l'âme* in the forties." Is "narration . . . always in the past tense" (p. 132)? What about something like "You will kill your father and marry your mother?"

More generally, I think that, because Martin does not address squarely the question of what theories of narrative should account for, he tends to exaggerate their "responsibilities" (for instance, p. 119, should they account for the links between reality and fiction?). I also think that his instrumental view of theory (pp. 9, 53, 140, *et passim*) makes him overemphasize the usefulness criterion and forget that theories are interesting not only when they can be applied fruitfully but also when they lead to new (theoretical!) problems.

But these are merely possible imperfections. On the whole, Martin's book is an outstanding introduction to recent theories of narrative.

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Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology by W.J.T. Mitchell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Pp. x + 226. \$20.00.

In my university's library, *Iconology* is shelved with the art history books, in a separate library, on the smaller of Duke's two campuses. One understands that shelving: Mitchell's book chronicles the history and theory of iconology, and iconology figures prominently in art history. But the shelving also belies what makes *Iconology* such an important book: Mitchell is a major critic of the interart comparison, and one with unusual sophistication and understanding of contemporary literary theory. What he has to say about the ideological rather than "natural" or "inevitable" elevation of word over image or image over word will, therefore, be important for art historians (in a discipline little touched by contemporary revolutions in theory), but will also be important for literary critics—and not just those working on interart studies.

Persuaded that "something like the Renaissance notion of *ut pictura poesis* . . . is always with us," and that "the dialectic of word and image seems to be a constant in the fabric of signs that a culture weaves around itself," Mitchell explores the various notions advanced of what an image or word is, the historical fortunes of the comparison of word and image, and the ideological structures that have, at different times in aesthetic and social history, elevated one over the other in prestige, in conceived force and influence. In that history, acts of power and persuasion present themselves as the "true," as when Albertian perspective "convince(d) an entire civilization that it possessed an infallible method of representation" (p. 36). Mitchell resists absolutisms of all kinds which would make any system of signs an "infallible method of representation." He draws on, but does not doggedly follow, various contemporary sources in his argument.

After a brief discussion of "what is an image," the body of Mitchell's book

discusses four key figures in the discourse of image versus word: Nelson Goodman, E.M. Gombrich, Gottfried Lessing, and Edmund Burke. In the Chicago tradition, each chapter traces ideas back to classical sources; then, each chapter analyses the ideologies that govern the major thinker's ideas and the ideologies they in turn generated. Mitchell seeks to uncover "the text-image relation as a social and historical one, characterized by all the complexities and conflicts that plague the relations of individuals, groups, nations, classes, genders, and cultures" (p. 157). His goal is not an elusive "master-theory" of the relation of text and image; in fact, such goals are seen as false and harmful. Mitchell seeks "coherence" and understanding, not "universality" or "harmony."

The chapter on Lessing exemplifies the tough common sense of Mitchell's approach. It documents the "femininity" of painting in the "family romance" of genres Lessing constructs. When it comes to clear, kernel-like formulations of difficult ideas, no one does it better than Mitchell. As here, when Mitchell describes (as many have tried to do before him) how Lessing was both right and wrong: "Lessing . . . is absolutely right insofar as he regards poetry and painting as radically different modes or [*sic*: of] representation, but . . . his mistake is the reification of this difference in terms of analogous oppositions like nature and culture, space and time" (p. 44). Everyone who has ever wrestled with the shadow Lessing casts over interart studies or has ever entered the dubious lists of the champions of time or space will appreciate the elegance in the simplicity of that formulation.

In the final section of the book, Mitchell turns most specifically to "the rhetoric of iconoclasm," noting that fears about imagery (and hostility to notions like "visual imagination") are rooted in ideological conceptions and in anxieties of class, race, and gender. He traces the history and implications of two "hyper-icons" (metaphors/images for the production of images)—the camera obscura and the fetish—in order to restore the "dialogic play" of such received "hyper-icons" and also to establish their implications in/for Marxist theory. Noting that "aesthetics is Marx's blind spot," Mitchell notes also that Marxist theory historically deconstructs aesthetics. His discussion poses the question: "How can the rhetoric of iconoclasm serve as an instrument of cultural criticism without becoming a rhetoric of exaggerated alienation that imitates the intellectual despotism it most despises?" (p. 204).

In this book, Mitchell in a sense turns the tables on those who ask that interart studies "justify" themselves; he asks what is wrong with those who fear the bringing together of genres, modes of expression, the visual and verbal. A bold move, it decisively signals that the defensive stage of theorizing about word and image, verbal and visual art has ended and that an aggressive new stage has begun. Armed with literary theory, interart scholars from the literature side of the comparison aren't taking any more "guff" from skeptics in art history, in literary studies, in philosophy, or aesthetics, or political theory.