

1999

## Book Reviews

Criticism Editors

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### Recommended Citation

Editors, Criticism (1999) "Book Reviews," *Criticism*: Vol. 41: Iss. 4, Article 5.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/criticism/vol41/iss4/5>

*Keats's Paradise Lost* by Beth Lau. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998. Pp. x + 215. Illustrations. \$49.95.

*Keats's Odes and Contemporary Criticism* by James O'Rourke. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998. Pp. xiv + 193. \$39.95.

After a ten-year revitalization by the New Historicism, Keats studies now stands at a crossroads. Where will criticism lead from here? What will it look like? Appearing at the end of a half-century of extraordinary scholarship on the poet, both books under review—perhaps appropriately—register a pause in the grand march of intellect. Both are essentially summary works (in conception and design) and remain indebted to powerful legacies of the past: in Lau's case, the textual scholarship of the Harvard Keatsians, and in O'Rourke's the persistent allure of formalism. This does not mean that they do not break new ground—each book offers its own useful insights—but the advance is modest, the arguments slow to shake off the influence of earlier scholars and critics. One feels the shadows lengthening. It is a painful question to ask, but we must ask it nonetheless: Are we broadening our knowledge of Keats, enlivening and expanding the conversation? Or are we combing through the rubble? Do these books point to the vitality of Keats studies at the *fin de siècle* or to its torpor?

*Keats's Paradise Lost* (a title aptly describing this state of affairs) offers a complete transcription of Keats's marginalia and markings in Milton's epic poem along with detailed annotations and critical commentary. Lau is a thorough and careful textual scholar and this book offers a clean, clear, and precise representation of the 19 marginal notes as well as the numerous underlinings Keats recorded in his 1807 two-volume copy of the poem. Although she has narrowed her scope from *Keats's Reading of the Romantic Poets* (1991), Lau continues the meticulous editing and careful annotation that made this earlier reference book indispensable for Keats scholars. The transcription itself is preceded by three chapters of critical commentary, addressing the practice of Romantic marginalia, the dating of the *Paradise Lost* marginalia, and the recurrent themes and patterns that emerge in these notes. The book includes references to other Keats poems and letters as well as five photo-reproductions of pages from the original volumes (at Keats House Library, Hampstead).

It is fair to say that the marginalia "can aid our understanding of the process by which Keats absorbed and assimilated the work of other writers for his own purposes ... aid[ing] our understanding of Keats's creative process" (4), but I'm not sure these marginalia can be considered a "hitherto neglected component of the Keats canon" (8), since they have been published several times before, as Lau is quick to note, most recently by Elizabeth Cook in her 1990 Oxford Authors' edition of Keats's work. Moreover, prominent critics

such as Bate, Finney, Wittreich, and Vendler, among others, have mulled over the notes at some length. Lau's contribution is to collect the marginalia in one place, publish the complete markings for the first time, and support these notes with the full critical apparatus described above. I suspect, though, that the chief value of the book will lie in its convenience rather than its necessity. American scholars need no longer make the expensive trek to Hampstead to gain access to a full and accurate transcription into Keats's notes and markings. Lau herself states that it is this availability—along with the critical discussion she hopes publication of the marginalia will initiate—that constitutes the book's primary *raison d'être*. But I wonder if the insights these notes afford us into Keats's "creative process" will nudge criticism in new directions. Is it reassuring or disappointing, for instance, to learn that Keats flagged those passages devoted to elaborate description, those that highlight the tension between disciplined ambition and indolence, and those that focus on the pathos of change, suffering, and abandonment?

It should be stressed that a sustained reading of the notes and underscored passages does have its benefits however, not the least of which is a peculiar voyeuristic pleasure in watching one great poet eavesdrop on another. We peer in on Keats's responses to Milton's lines and discover that they are not the spontaneous jottings we anticipated, but oddly formal commentary, as if Keats were lecturing before a public audience, or impersonating Hazlitt. "The Genius of Milton," he declaims on the title page, "more particularly in respect to its span in immensity, calculated him, by a sort of birthright, for such an 'argument' as the paradise lost" (71). Or later, "Milton is godlike in the sublime pathetic" (note 9, 112), or "the management of this Poem is Apollonian" (note 10, 102). Elsewhere he loosens up a bit, falling into a more familiar type of breathless admiration—"The light and shade—the sort of black brightness—the ebon diamonding—the ethiop Immortality—the sorrow the pain"—but then by the end of the note he lapses back into chin-stroking didactic: "[these] leave no room for any thing to be said thereon, but: 'so it is'—" (note 6, 83–84). To explain this tone Lau describes the library-like practices of the Keats circle, whose members typically circulated their books so that marginal notes became more like semi-public statements than private meditations. These marginalia provided opportunities to impress, influence, or instruct other readers as well as to register personal responses. The *Paradise Lost* marginalia, in fact, were copied by George Keats and Mariane Reynolds and the volume was eventually given by Keats to Maria Dilke, who would have shared it with her husband and his circle.

One weakness in the book is the subtle prejudice against the appearance or "look" of Keats's original notes. In her introduction, Lau writes that "It might even be argued that a print transcription is preferable to a photographic record, in that the former presents the marginalia in a more clear, readable, and usable fashion than does the latter" (7), but this preference necessarily

transforms—one might even say distorts—the evidence of the actual page. What delights the virtuous scholar shocks the tactile book lover, who witnesses a complete transformation in the book's aesthetic environment. Keats's expressive jottings fall victim to the clean procession of print. As it turns out, the several facsimile pages thankfully included here reveal a visual narrative that is often at odds with the verbal appreciations Keats tallies in the margins. The title page especially shows Keats's dense handwriting overwhelming the title of Milton's poem, and his sinuous cursive swarms around the regimented pentameters in note 5 (78), nearly encroaching on the printed lines themselves. By contrast, note 15 frames the poem as if it were a masterpiece, setting off rather than rivaling the printed text. Whether as subversive scrawl or ornamental fringe, the marginalia's visual character seems crucial to an understanding of Keats's aim.

Although she acknowledges the importance of this visual dimension by including the facsimiles, Lau must sacrifice, by economic necessity, the unique character of Keats's hand to the demands of rigorous scholarly order and accuracy. Currently it is possible to avoid this dilemma by scanning photo-reproductions of original texts onto high-resolution internet sites that faithfully reproduce each page. Such a site, in fact, is the ideal format for this kind of scholarly activity, preserving the integrity of the document while disseminating it much more widely and inexpensively than a university press. It is safe to say that such future sites will supercede the kind of traditional textual scholarship employed here. The only obstacle—and it is still at this point a considerable one—is copyright restriction, though this hurdle will inevitably vanish as the internet matures and gains acceptance in scholarly and curatorial communities.

O'Rourke's *Keats's Odes and Contemporary Criticism* is an intelligent and subtle reading of four of the great odes which foregrounds critical commentary in its extended ruminations on the texts. The book sets out "to show how these poems traverse, and often exceed, the range of our modern critical practices" (ix), how they are fundamentally more complex and self aware than the range of discourse critics have brought to them. O'Rourke seeks to replace the "earnest" and "respectable" poet (xii) who emerges from recent studies with a more "eccentric figure whose poetry moves into uncharted discursive spaces" (xiii). Although the deployment of numerous critical approaches is always informed and sophisticated, at times it threatens to bury the author's own close readings. Moving from Saussure to Lacan to Kristeva to Althusser it's easy to lose track of O'Rourke's own voice, though when it does assert itself it is usually worth attending to. The main problem here is not only a disorienting critical eclecticism, but a tendency to respond more to the criticism than to the odes themselves. Like the intertextual allusions he so precisely traces in the poems, his own argument seems a distillation of voices, an echo chamber of formalist criticism from the last fifty years.

The first chapter, on the Nightingale ode, is by far the strongest because of the author's coherent and assertive voice. Entitled "Ghostlier Demarcations, Keener Sounds: Intertextuality and Agency in the 'Ode to a Nightingale,'" this essay describes the ode's modern critical history as registering "a shift from one formalism to another" (2), from the new criticism to Yale poststructuralist formalism. O'Rourke argues that critics have too readily followed the lead of Bloom, de Man, and Hartman in focusing on the ode's rhetoric of self-consciousness and fragmentation, attempting to answer the poem's own vexed questions in its final stanza. "What is of greatest value," he maintains, lies not in any systematic answers to be gleaned from the ode, but "in the vehicle itself, in the access that the 'Nightingale' ode allows to a highly unstructured process of composition" (3). O'Rourke points out "the limits of our formalist practices in describing the signifying process of lyric poetry" (4), and then demonstrates his own "sensitivity to the material presence of words" (5) by offering a highly nuanced study of the ode's "intertextual twinings" (18). No reading to date, it is safe to say, has devoted such attention to the ode's "acoustic character" (26). O'Rourke pursues the echoes, allusions, and alliterations of Shakespeare and Milton as they emerge in the winding mossy ways of the poem, searchingly registering the ode's sonic complexities. In this sense, a better title for this chapter might be "Hooked on Phonics," since the author extensively sounds the "materially associative" and mnemonic textures of individual words like "forlorn" and "Ruth."

While it is certainly accurate to say that the Yale critics have turned a deaf ear to the ode's music, it is not entirely clear where such sustained phonic scrutiny leads us. Aren't we still left with the puzzle of the ode's meaning, the epistemological dilemma passed down to us by its ending? O'Rourke is highly skilful at showing us "how he borrowed" (4), but not why Keats borrowed and what the borrowings amount to. In fact, if I understand the argument correctly, we are not meant to ask this question because it would assume an active agency incompatible with Keats's commitment to negative capability, to a poetics underwritten by "uncertainties, mysteries, and doubts."

Here's the crux: we are told that "phonetic determination of word choice [is] a prominent feature of the entire poem" (27), but this "phonetic determination" often slips into a phonetic *determinism* that threatens to obscure the agency of the poet and hurtle the poem into semantic darkness. This type of intertextual determinism arises numerous times in the argument: for example, we read that the "sonic memory remains to shape the voice of the poem" (12); "the loss of identification, brought about by forces contrary to the speaker's desire, occurs outside his conscious mental activity and exists in the poem only as a *fait accompli*" (14); "the proliferation of literary echoes accompanies the poem's loss of cathexis toward the transcendent" (20), and so on. The poem never seems to surmount its ghostly network of phonetic associations to become distinctly Keatsian, or at least consciously shaped. If, as we learn

near the end of the chapter, the odes' "richness depends upon the wealth of associations ... that cluster in their words" (37), if, in other words, the odes are valorized primarily for the *fact* of their intertextuality, then where does that leave us? Aren't we skirting perilously close to a kind of absolute formalism, a formalism for formalism's sake? If our pleasure in reading the odes comes from "being submerged in a wild joining and disjoining of our cultural legacy" (43), aren't we in danger of becoming connoisseurs of chaos? Is a delight in ambiguity and uncertainty for its own sake decadent?

Ironically, chapter two, "Antiquity, Romanticism, and Modernity," seeks to rescue Keats's agency not from the aural snare of intertextuality but from the "deterministic explanatory power" (51) of the New Historicism, which has deprived "Keats of the ability to reflect upon and distance himself from a particular historical narrative that has been implicitly incorporated into the poem" (51). Keats no longer "play[s] gone" (xii) as he did in the Nightingale ode, but instead assumes the role of a savvy art critic and aesthete. O'Rourke finds that there has been an "artificial controversy" (46) over the punctuation of the last two lines and that the aphorism "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" is "neither metaphysical nor ironic" (54). On the contrary, by situating the phrase within the aesthetic context of the *Annals of the Fine Arts* and selected essays of Hazlitt, O'Rourke concludes that contemporary readers "would not have found the conclusion of the 'Urn' an unsatisfying, paradoxical or unfamiliar proposition" (54). There is still emphasis on the poem's "sonic presence" (81) in this chapter, but both the ode's thematic and historical contexts are accorded more weight. Especially fine is the analysis of gender roles in the poem's densely metaphoric opening (58–60) as well as the discussion of the much-lamented repetition of "happy" in stanza three (66–69).

In spite of his conviction that the New Historicism has oversimplified and reduced the complexity of "Ode on a Grecian Urn," O'Rourke nevertheless relies on a historicist analysis throughout the chapter. More specifically, even as he argues that recent ekphrastic criticism "greatly oversimplif[ies]" the ode (62), the author stresses Keats's engagement in the contemporary debate over differences between the verbal and the visual arts. Particularly troubling in a study whose title includes the words "contemporary criticism," is O'Rourke's complete elision of recent studies that supplement if not supplant the earlier work of Krieger and Spitzer. There is no mention of W.J.T. Mitchell's highly influential work on ekphrasis in *Picture Theory* (1994), nor of Heffernan's *Museum of Words* (1993), nor Scott's *The Sculpted Word* (1994). Each of these studies covers similar ground and merits serious consideration.

The last two chapters, on the "Ode on Melancholy" and "To Autumn," reveal occasional insights about the poems but tend to bog down in an exposition of critical theories. It is in these chapters that the critical machine begins to overshadow the poems themselves, and the welter of perspectives begins to

confuse rather than clarify the author's thesis. In the restless movement between and among historicist critical practices and ahistorical linguistic and psychoanalytic approaches we sense a basic contradiction, if not a critical cacophony that obviates any coherent overall vision. Aside from a type of hyper-formalism, there is no consistent critical position adopted in these chapters. In fact the *mélange* of approaches often over-intellectualizes these poems, moving us away from the phonic sensitivity O'Rourke expressed in his earlier discussions. He is so suspicious of "Melancholy"'s overt messages, for instance, that he fairly overlooks the ode's sensuous beauty and poignant agonies. In parsing the text's "pronominal imprecision" (96), the author leaves the poem's clear-cut message (not to mention its material existence) far behind, hanging up the ode as a cloudy trophy in the rarified halls of philosophy.

Although both Lauy and O'Rourke's studies provide moments of originality, one wonders if they warrant book-length treatments. Keats's marginalia have been published several times before, as I have mentioned, and O'Rourke's essays do not sustain the interconnection and development that typically characterize the extended argument of a book. To return, then, to the questions with which I began this review: are Keats studies enjoying a healthy pause or entering a period of stasis and inertia? Where will the next fifty years lead? The current moment may be comparable to the predicament faced by the poet-speaker in "The Fall of Hyperion" as he stands before Moneta's altar. Does he let the "palsied chill" of the past paralyze his limbs, or ascend the steps to new vision? For the modern critic those steps lead to the imaginative possibilities of a new electronic medium—the internet—which offers the potential not only to reshape but also to revitalize Keats studies. In terms of archival work, textual scholarship, verbal/visual analysis, and more broadly speaking, secondary school and undergraduate education, to name just a few areas, the internet provides the platform for a fresh, distinctly contemporary approach to Keats's poetry. Preparing ourselves for "the hard task proposed" (I, 1.120), for the conceptual revolution currently under way, is the challenge Keats studies faces in the next century.

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*Word Crimes: Blasphemy, Culture, and Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*  
by Joss Marsh. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Pp. xii + 431.  
\$55.00 cloth; \$22.50 paper.

In a January 1817 advertisement for his short-lived weekly newspaper *The Reformists' Register*, William Hone both identifies his intended audience and presents his interpretation of an emergent class structure:

It is to the MIDDLE CLASS *now*, as at *other* times, in this country, the salvation of all that ought to be dear to Englishmen must be confided; it is amongst *this* class that the great improvement has been going on; it is from *this* clas [sic], now informed as no class in any country, at any time, ever were informed, that whatever of good may be obtained will proceed.

Later that year, Hone was tried in the King's Court at Guildhall on charges of blasphemy for having written and published three political parodies based on passages from the Book of Common Prayer. Needless to say, his waggish, parodic, and decidedly middle-class approach to political issues was not favorably received by the powers that be in Regency England. At the far end of the century, Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* presented the narrative of its title character's inescapable slide from aspiring, devoted faith into religious doubt and despair. The novel and its author were volubly and forcefully condemned in the court of public opinion, largely because Jude's story proved irretrievably offensive to respectable middle-class mores. These two figures—Hone and Hardy—mark the chronological boundaries of Joss Marsh's impressive study of nineteenth-century blasphemy, *Word Crimes: Blasphemy, Culture, and Literature in Nineteenth-Century England*. The book is, quite simply, a beautifully written, thoroughly researched, theoretically provocative study that will shift the very terms in which we understand the cultures of writing in Romantic- and Victorian-era England.

The term blasphemy, of course, presupposes a demarcation within the field of public discourse—all possible utterances are separated into the “speakable” and the “unspeakable,” and, in its simplest form, blasphemy might be defined as “*the speaking of the unspeakable*” (7, Marsh's italics). But, as Marsh points out, the bald definition is empty of significance until we begin to see how the discursive boundary established by the concept of blasphemy shifts and develops in response to historical circumstance. In the present instance, a comparison of Hone's and Hardy's places in the history of English public discourse reveals the central thesis of Marsh's study: during the nineteenth century the very conception of blasphemy was transformed from an ecclesiastical to a civil crime, from uttering language that was deemed offensive to established religious beliefs and/or scriptural knowledge to uttering language that was deemed offensive to the standards of literary and cultural propriety. In 1817, the blasphemy laws and the legal institutions that enforced them were invoked against the “Arch Blasphemer” Hone. Though it seems clear that Hone's trials were part of a broad-based effort to shore up an aristocratic social hierarchy against the democratizing incursions of an emergent middle class, it is significant that the tactics involved a defense of specifically liturgical language. By 1895, the middle class (with all its pretensions to “Respectability”) was clearly entrenched at the hegemonic center of English culture, a position confirmed by labeling Hardy's novel blasphemous and

“unspeakable.” With such images as the scholarly young Jude being smacked in the ear with the “characteristic part of a barrow-pig,” Hardy had, in Marsh’s terms, written an explicit novel that “was nothing other than a recipe for the perfect Victorian word crime” (279). The effort to protect the sanctity of religious language had now become a matter of obscenity or indecency—a violation of the standards of proper English literature—and this shift in the legal and popular conceptions of blasphemy is the armature upon which *Word Crimes* turns.

But the simplicity of the thesis belies the searching complexity of the book. *Word Crimes* is a historical study organized around discussions of several blasphemy trials and other key events in the cultural elucidation of nineteenth-century public speech, and the analyses of these episodes are consistently well informed and illuminating. Let me offer just two examples. First, Marsh’s reevaluation of William Hone’s contributions to the history of nineteenth-century print culture is long overdue. Hone is known in several diverse, historically significant connections: the 1817 trials, for instance, in which he earned Not Guilty verdicts and temporarily stymied the efforts of the Home Office to silence the reformist press; the controversial 1820 publication of the *Apocryphal New Testament*, a text that complicated the claims to completeness and authority of the Bible itself; a series of extremely popular and influential political squibs (brilliantly illustrated by George Cruikshank) produced in the years of Peterloo and the Queen Caroline affair; and finally, in the later 1820s and early 1830s, a series of antiquarian and popular culture miscellanies called the *Every-Day Book*, *The Table Book*, and *The Year Book*. *Word Crimes* not only provides a reliable and thorough discussion of most of these activities, but it also demonstrates—persuasively—that Hone’s writing and publishing constitutes an important but heretofore overlooked link between the political discourse of the Romantic and Regency periods and the more dialogical and socially panoramic tendencies of Victorian novels. Indeed, Marsh identifies the rather odd appearance of the “worthy book-stall keeper” in *Oliver Twist* as Dickens’s representation of Hone himself, the passionate seeker after justice and the necessarily suppressed antecedent of Dickensian fiction. Dickens, after all, was a great admirer of Hone’s popular miscellanies, a collaborator with Cruikshank, and even a personal acquaintance of Hone in the latter’s fading years. It is thus hardly surprising that Hone should be given such a cameo appearance in the young novelist’s narrative of London street life.

A second and even more exciting sample of *Word Crimes*’ approach comes in Marsh’s analysis not of a single incident or figure, but of the discursive shifts characteristic of a whole decade. The 1880s saw the apex of a number of Victorian cultural movements and projects: the *OED* was begun, establishing vernacular English rather than scriptural discourse as a normative linguistic standard; the Victorian squeamishness about sexuality reached its

heights in a sometimes absurd tendency toward euphemism and Latinate diction (the deliberate opposite, Marsh points out, of blasphemy); a code of silence was enforced as due punishment for those who held opinions deemed too noxious to disseminate, in effect applying an early and decidedly cruel version of a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy against those who might disturb the settled respectability of the middle class; the whole field of psycholinguistics began in earnest along with its concomitant emphasis on the mentally constitutive power of language and, hence, a heightened concern over the insidiously corrupting influences of noxious discourse; and so on. All of these movements demonstrate a broad cultural awareness of the fearful power of language—the “sacred terror of language” (222) as Marsh calls it in one connection—and it is easy enough to see how blasphemy and obscenity begin to blur together under the more general heading of “word crimes.” Blasphemy was a class crime and blasphemy laws were used, as Marsh documents brilliantly with the case of G. W. Foote, to homogenize and consolidate the power of a respectable middle class.

The ghost of Foucault hovers around the argument of *Word Crimes*, only occasionally making his influence directly felt. Nonetheless, perhaps the key contribution of the book lies in Marsh’s transformation of Foucault’s analysis of social discipline into a construction of what is in effect a genealogy of proscribed speech. To put the argument in Marsh’s terms: “the primary method of reformed institutional discipline in the nineteenth century . . . was not visual or panoptical in the Foucauldian-Benthamite sense but antiverbal and counterdiscursive” (239). The insight is vital, for it opens a myriad of channels through which the relationships between Victorian culture and literary representation can be explored and explained. It helps us to understand what is said—and what is not said—in the literary corpus of the period. If the book has a shortcoming, it lies in the limitations of this genealogy. Quite understandably, Marsh focuses her study on the nineteenth century alone, beginning decisively with the discussion of Hone, the writer and publisher whose work seems to anticipate so many different trends of Victorian anxiety over blasphemous language. But Hone, too, was only a link in the narrative of an even more comprehensive story, one leading back through figures like Blake and Defoe to the religious struggles of the seventeenth century. Indeed, *Word Crimes*’ weakness is that it sometimes does not recognize this vital history of committed dissent within which the “blasphemers” of the early nineteenth century operated; its strength is that it makes possible precisely the kind of new history of literary discourse that it both exemplifies and advocates.

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*The Radical Rhetoric of the English Deists: The Discourse of Scepticism, 1680–1750*  
by James Herrick. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1997.  
Pp. 254. \$29.95.

This is a bold work that sets out to underscore the importance of radical anti-Christian discourses to the history of freedom in eighteenth-century English debate. Key to its argument is the suggestion that a “virulent sceptical movement”—Deism—took hold in “British Cities and Universities” in the period (6). Addressed to an audience of “urban, literate working people with only tentative ties to the Church” (205) and “prone to riot, both physical and mental” (70), the radical rhetoric of the Deists fought a successful and fierce “cultural warfare” against the political and religious institutions of orthodoxy. Herrick argues for a heroic, radical, and populist account of deism, located in clubs, coffee houses, secret guild and clandestine meetings. One of the key premises of his account is the claim that exploring the “rhetoric” of deistical writings and controversies is critical to refurbishing their reputation and importance. In particular in communicating with the “broad new public” of the eighteenth century (65), the development and articulation of a “discourse of subterfuge” (51), and a powerful rhetoric of ridicule corroded the polite clerical languages of true religion. Indeed Herrick makes much of the relationship between the inappropriate treatment of key Christian doctrine and Scriptural knowledge, and the subversion of the refined language of the political and religious elite (64).

One of the important themes Herrick addresses is the problem of “Deist” sincerity, or as he puts it, their “tactical appropriation of Christian language.” Drawing from David Berman’s suggestions about the “art of theological lying,” the author argues that the “public dishonesty” of deistical writing, and in particular their claim to be sincere by reforming Christians (66), was simply a means of avoiding censorship and intruding their ideas into orthodox discourse. Indeed, while describing the works of men such as Thomas Woolston, Peter Annet, or Jacob Ilive, Herrick indicates how many of the “Deists” exploited and appropriated, for example, the meaning of patristic sources against commonplace accounts (79, 133, 192). An important complement to this argument is the proposition that the major achievement of the “deist” movement was to create the origins of modern Biblical criticism (40–46, 54, 84, 192, 206–7 *passim*). Figures such as Thomas Woolston stand “as the first major figure in modern biblical criticism” (84). Annet’s critique of the Pentateuch, Ilive’s forgery of the Book of Jasher, and Woolston’s readings of Christ’s miracles are all described as important milestones in a proleptic history of hermeneutics that found its fruition in the school of German Higher Criticism. This is a significant and suggestive point, even though it might be possible to dispute the teleological narrative implicit in such an account of “origins.”

While there are many positive elements of the work, not least the fact that the author has given a clear, and in general scholarly, exegesis of the writings of a canon (Blount, Toland, Shaftesbury, Collins, Tindal, Woolston, Chubb, Annet, Ilive) of “deist” writings, there are some profoundly contentious issues raised in the course of the work. Broadly, these problems fall into two related categories: the conceptual and the historiographical. The premise of the work is a very important one: that the rhetorical strategies and literary technologies that radical authors made and used was central to their political or persuasive intentions is an unchallengeable claim. Indeed, Herrick is to be commended for placing the issue on the agenda. What is not quite so clear is whether the approach adopted in the work is able to pursue this theme with real rigor. The focus on ridicule, on the critical assessment of the credit of Christian textual and historical witnesses, and on the construction of a “reasonable” discourse is accomplished but does not tell the whole story.

The role of rhetoric in intellectual culture has recently been expertly and comprehensively excavated in Quentin Skinner’s magisterial *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): one achievement of the latter work is to indicate the ubiquity and sophistication of rhetorical discourse in early modern intellectual life. The point to be made here is that rhetorical strategies were not the invention of the radicals, but part of the cultural infrastructure of intellectual exchange. The roles of satire, irony, and literary subterfuge, especially in the Augustan age of print culture, were resources fashioned, constructed, and manipulated by all public writers, as Conal Condren most recently has shown, in *Satire, Lies and Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997). Investigating this rhetorical dimension of literary exchange is even more complex when the technologies of print culture are considered. The cultural warfare between different competing religio-political interests was not simply an exchange of intellectual positions but involved a panoply of techniques for establishing the authority and meaning of the text. Making an intellectual case look authentic and persuasive might involve questions of typographical structure as much as questions of propositional coherence. These strategies of historical investigation are all the more pertinent because, as the author correctly indicates, the matters under debate concerned not just the value of intellectual positions but ultimately questions about the distribution of power within Augustan society. Herrick does not however treat his texts in this manner: the bulk of the exegesis in the work simply gives an account of the arguments rather than any clear idea of how the texts worked. This is especially problematic because of his assertions about the powerfully persuasive and transformative qualities of the works: put bluntly, Herrick claims the “deist” tracts changed their audience’s ideas. The book however gives no evidence of this. It is true that the book is very sensitive to the “orthodox” fears about the dangers of the “deist”

writings, and examines the various trials for blasphemy and irreligion, but ultimately the arguments are little more than assertion. Exploring audience reception of any text is obviously a difficult historical ambition, but the writings of a series of historians, from Robert Darnton, through Roger Chartier, to Harold Love, have pointed the way to more sophisticated methods for exploring the social history of ideas, of the book and of the history of reading practices. We need to know much more about the production, circulation, and consumption of these works before moving on to make claims about their meaning. Who “published” the works? How many editions did they achieve? In what size, font, and format were they produced? Many texts of the period “emplot” an audience or ideal reader into the interstices of their arguments: what tropes and languages did the “deist” works employ? The layout of pages, the protocol for citation of sources, the use of headers and footers, marginal comments and other textual apparatus, all provide evidence for reconstruction of the way texts were read and the sort of cultural authority they might command.

One of the most difficult issues posed by this account is prompted by the rather over structured account of the stand-off between “orthodoxy” and the “deists.” Herrick is correctly cautious about attempting to define a “deist” position but he does frequently write of a “deist” movement. Figures as diverse as John Toland, William Whiston, Peter Annet, and Jacob Ilive are gathered together under the label of “radical deism.” It is not clear that this labeling achieves a historical meaning. Many of these authors were engaged in a similar project of deconstructing priestcraft, but beyond that had very different political and religious identities. John Toland articulated a profoundly heterodox critique of commonplace attitudes to the nature of religion, doctrine, and the ecclesiastical establishment: the intentions of this discourse (embedded in a republican tradition) were distinct from the ambitions of a theologian like William Whiston. In order to establish an argument for treating these men as a movement, a much more careful account of their social and political connections is necessary. A similar argument might be made about Herrick’s account of “orthodoxy.” There has been much work in recent years exploring the nature of Christian culture in the period: the writings of J. Walsh, C. Heydon, S. Taylor, W. Jacob, K. Haakonssen, and most recently B. W. Young have suggested that the nature of Christian orthodoxy in the eighteenth century was vibrant both in intellectual and social terms. Christian orthodoxy was both robust and diverse: it encompassed a variety of different theological, ecclesiological, ethical, soteriological, and political platforms. The question of establishing the identity of orthodoxy was contested as much from within the carapace of Trinitarian Christianity as from without. It was precisely because the claim to “orthodoxy” was both a powerful and persistently negotiated matter that many of the “deists” were effective at intruding their

arguments into public discourse. Herrick might quite sensibly repost that at least in one powerful sense “orthodoxy” can be identified with those Churchmen who controlled the mechanisms of legal authority and prompted the prosecutions of men like Woolston and Annet, but his aspect of institutional authority does not help us think through the affective authority of the Church in local communities.

The over-rigid distinction between “orthodoxy” and the “deists” is perhaps responsible for some of the proleptic arguments Herrick makes about the relationship between the “deists” and the origins of modern biblical criticism. As Herrick argues, there is a great deal of sense in indicating the innovation of some of the criticism advanced by people like Toland, Woolston, and Annet. What is perhaps missing is an acknowledgment of the contributions “orthodox” clerics made to the set of scholarly methods exploited by later figures. Herrick does pay some attention to the achievements of figures like Richard Simon and Spinoza (although the history of the reception of Simonian ideas in England in the 1680s is not engaged). What is elusive is the massive corpus of work undertaken by figures, among many, such as James Ussher, Brian Walton, and later John Mill. These Christian scholars produced huge tomes of biblical criticism that engaged with questions of diverse readings, the historical transmission of biblical manuscripts, questions of inerrancy, and inspiration. As authors like Richard Bentley were to insist, “critick” was important to the authority of Christian institutions: far from adopting conservative or reactionary attitudes towards the value of critical methods, many in the “orthodox” camp were attempting to ensure that these powerful tools were exploited by the Church against the challenges of radical men. The battle over the meaning of biblical criticism was not one-sided but fiercely contested by competing interests.

One final point of doubt about the narrative proposed by Herrick could focus on the lack of a European context for locating the achievements of the “deists.” There is a valuable account of various intellectual traditions that may have fed into the radical intellectual position, but there is little or no attempt to establish connections between the ideas and arguments of men like Toland, or Woolston, or Ilive, and authors in Holland, Germany, or France. Part of this may be caused by Herrick’s focus on printed material, although avoiding a consideration of the circulation of clandestine material in the period might suggest some revisions of the arguments about the socially radical character of “deist” discourse. A figure like John Toland was significant as a continental writer and as a British one: he moved in milieux in Holland, Germany, and France. His works were translated, both in printed and scribal form, into French; his English and Latin works were reviewed by the major intellectual journals of the day. Recent work implicates him in the production of radical manuscripts such as the *Traité des trois imposteurs*, and the publication of

impious works like Giordano Bruno's *Spaccio* (1713). Evidence also indicates that he was at the center of a circle of readers of manuscript material in England: importantly, the clandestine literature he circulated was sent, not to artisans and working men, but to lords and indeed ladies. One of his audiences was not the "public," but very much a private and powerful political elite; indeed Toland, like many other radicals of his day, held most of the vulgar in contempt.

Many of the criticisms in this review may seem overly harsh. It is worth reiterating that the book does have value as an overview of the types of debate which convulsed English literary and political discourse in the eighteenth century. It is a very accomplished starting point which should encourage scholars to take seriously the survival and power of radical discourse in the eighteenth century.

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*Wilde the Irishman* edited by Jerusha McCormack. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998. Pp. xvi + 205. \$30.00.

An influential trend in nineteenth-century literary criticism of recent years sees the writings of Oscar Wilde in light of Irish tradition and culture—a critical turn notably furthered by Jerusha McCormack's *Wilde the Irishman*. While not the first writer to suggest a connection between the forms of Wilde's "Irishness" and the representations of those idioms in his work, McCormack brings together a collection of essays by Irish critics and cultural commentators that not only reclaim the late-Victorian writer for Ireland but situate his aphoristic style within what she describes in the introduction as "an ancient, but increasingly marginalized and despised native tradition" (3). Tracing this cultural indebtedness in her own essay on Wilde as "Aesthete and Anarchist," McCormack uses a conceptual framework constructed from letters, essays, and reviews to expose his particular brand of Anglo-Irish nationalism. Likewise, Declan Kiberd on "The Artist as an Irishman," Deidre Toomey on "Oscar Wilde and Irish Orality," Owen Dudley Edwards on "Impressions of an Irish Sphinx," and Derek Mahon's critique of Richard Ellman's biography of Wilde usefully incorporate cultural studies, aesthetics, and political theory to explain the complex inversions that inhabit such comedies as *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Salome*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *An Ideal Husband*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. (For additional commentary on Wilde, see Declan Kiberd's *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* [London:

Jonathan Cape, 1995].) Distinct from other critical works on Wilde's plays, however, McCormack's book (as a whole) considers their comedic and social content not as a succinct formal model for political action, but as an intangible form marked by contradiction and fluidity of meaning—a less literal model that empowers a style that is simultaneously Irish Bull and Empire-speak, the monotone voice of English “passion, commitment and command” (88).

Thus when Algernon Moncrieff tells Jack in *The Importance of Being Earnest* that “The truth is rarely pure and never simple. Modern life would be very tedious if it were either, and modern literature a complete impossibility,” he attends to the tenuous linkage between art and imitation—between art and national freedom—that Declan Kiberd sees as an integral part of Wilde's utopian view of Ireland. According to Kiberd, Wilde sought to create “not only an image of revolutionary possibility for Ireland but also a rebuke to contemporary Britain” in his writing (23). And just as Algernon tells Jack: “literary criticism is not your forte . . . Don't try it. You should leave that to people who haven't been at a University,” he reverses the site of literary production from the autocratic elite to the powerless—from the colonizer to the colonized. Kiberd argues, moreover, that such re-appropriation was, and still is, crucial in understanding how Wilde created texts that not only ascribe “value” to the occupier culture but promote it as a “testing ground for Irish ideas and debates” (21). On this basis, he extrapolates Wilde's use of language as a tool to contain and structure the chaotic and disordered state of late nineteenth-century Ireland. Though Kiberd returns to many of the concerns regarding national identity raised in McCormack's introduction (with the result that the negative criticism surrounding Wilde's influence on Victorian Englishmen developed there transfers a certain instability to his presentation), his essay makes insightful comparisons between Wilde's work and that of the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges and, of course, the aesthetic preferences of Speranza—Oscar Wilde's Irish nationalist mother.

If Kiberd's reading of Wilde appears somewhat uncontentious, Deirdre Toomey's treatment of his “Irish Orality” comes close to being the *pièce de résistance* of McCormack's book—a critical work in its own right. Toomey's remarks about Wilde's “lack of ownership” in his early (oral) tales not only contextualize the various types of writing produced throughout his career, but clarify how larger cultural and political issues are incorporated into his story telling. According to Toomey, the absence of “ownership” or authorship is an identifying characteristic of oral cultures. The text, in effect, belongs to the whole community (26). Drawing from W. B. Yeats's recollections of Wilde, Toomey notes that although the former “manifested a productive tension between extreme endorsement of oral culture [and] extreme concern with the text elaborately realized in an object, the book . . . the tension between writing and talking for Wilde was a hostile symbiosis” (25). The cathartic effect of

Irish oral tradition is most obvious in Toomey's reading of Chapter Two of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and, I might add, her penetrating assessment of his biblical tale, "The Woman Taken in Adultery," and later work entitled "The Poet." We are reminded near the end of the essay, however, that the body of images found in these tales is hardly considered an isolated phenomenon. Like Yeats, Lady Wilde, and other Protestant nationalists, Wilde associated himself with a cultural tradition that was more often despised than lauded by British lexicographers. Clearly viewing the historical context in which Wilde lived as the impetus for his writing, Toomey raises what might be considered more general questions about Irish oral culture and its "hold" on his consciousness.

While the opening paragraph of Owen Dudley Edward's essay "Impressions of an Irish Sphinx" locates Wilde's art within the "historical moment" of his dalliance with several gay men in a railway station cloakroom, what is more disconcerting about the ensuing discussion is the critic's willingness to subsume it into a more or less comprehensive category. According to Edward, Wilde "did not contrive his life, and indeed built it far less designedly than most of us: he could not have contrived it, for one thing, because he discovered repeatedly that he was not what he had thought he was" (48). Though the ideological subtext to all of this is conspicuously ignored, Edward eventually observes that Wilde's family life (especially the death of his sister, Isola) made "the greatest impact on his fictional creativity" (60) and that his constant reinvention of himself served to cover up some of those realities. Armed with Wilde's private letters from his early school days at Portora and Trinity College in Dublin, Edward not only rehabilitates his original thesis but extends the idea that the writer assumed various masks that became "instinctive as well as artistic" (68). And just as Dublin artist Patrick O'Connor's bust of Oscar Wilde shows "a head looking forward, seeking rather than speaking, a mouth that might say a great deal and yet guard its reserves with remarkable success" (69), we find him abstracted and distanced in ways that are reminiscent of what Edward calls "the sundering of his history from its Irish background" (68).

Yet there is much that is new and insightful in the second half of McCormack's book. When venturing toward Wildean fiction, Bernard O'Donoghue's "The Journey to Reading Gaol: Sacrifice and Scapegoats in Irish Literature" relies on reviews, essays, letters, and scholarly texts to help explain the complex transfer of Wilde's Irishness to his writing. Finding a justification for his view that sacrifice, linked to violence, is "somehow natively Irish" (103) in such works as Yeats's play *The King's Threshold*, Heaney's Bog poems in *North*, and in "less obviously related" Wildean plays, he promotes the idea of a scapegoat victim as "an important metaphorical device which can be used to absolve a society of its guilt by freeing it from marks of shame" (103). O'Donoghue's effectiveness is most apparent, however, in his interpretation of

the suicide threat in Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* as a "telling satiric answer to the argument that killing the self is as 'brutal' as killing someone else" (107). Though he does not examine Wilde's use of the cultural markers of such brutality in great detail, O'Donoghue understands how images drawn from ritual sacrifice (in particular those from the Christian tradition) contain ineffable forces, power, and energy. Like Frank McGuinness's "The Spirit of Play in *De Profundis*," he reminds us that the sacrificial victim may also be an unwilling one (107). And just as O'Donoghue and McGuinness both emphasize the numerous ways in which Wilde sought to reinvent himself—in prison, for example, he must have included himself as he prays for "those who are dumb under oppression and whose silence is heard only by God"—we are given a direct admission of what McGuinness, in particular, terms "theatrical writing of the highest order" (145).

With this in mind, the effects of Angela Bourke's essay on the burning of Bridget Cleary, the comparison between Wilde and Jesse James drawn by Fintan O'Toole, and Seamus Heaney's reflection on the Oscar Wilde Dedication at Westminster Abbey on February 14, 1995, lead us once again to the small window in Wilde's desolate jail cell—an opening that might have offered him views of what philosopher Henri Lefebvre describes as "more than spectacles . . . where opacity and horizons, obstacles and perspectives are implicated, for they become complicated [and] imbricate themselves to the point of allowing the Unknown to be perceived or guessed at" (see *Writings on Cities: Henri Lefebvre*, edited by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas [Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996], 224). Using Ireland's cultural traditions to enlarge our view of Wilde, McCormack's collection of essays not only accomplishes the task of reclaiming a "native son" but alerts the reader to the cultural and historical context of artistic production and the critical role it plays in our attempt to pin down, so to speak, the meaning(s) of his work.

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*The Burdens of Intimacy: Psychoanalysis and Victorian Masculinity* by Christopher Lane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. Pp. xxi + 322. \$46.00 cloth; \$18.00 paper.

Christopher Lane's *The Burden of Intimacy* examines the ways in which relations of intimacy and desire pose a threat to individual identity for men in Victorian literature. He focuses on the erotically charged, and often violent,

friendships of Victorian men (with other men and with women) from both a historical and psychoanalytic perspective. This study explores the question of masculinity in both standard late-Victorian figures (such as Algernon Swinburne, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, and E. M. Forster) and less canonical authors (such as Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Olive Schreiner, and George Santayana). Lane's interest in the relationship between desire, gender, and identity makes it necessary for him to engage with studies of the homoerotics of Victorian male friendships, just as his interest in the relation between psychoanalysis and history makes it necessary for him to engage with Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*. Lane provocatively contrasts his approach to Victorian masculinity with both queer theory and Foucault's history, and he seeks to position Lacanian psychoanalysis as a solution to the shortcomings of both.

Lane presents his argument as distinct from previous approaches to a study of the history of gender and sexuality in two ways. First, as opposed to the work of Michel Foucault and his followers, Lane sees repression not as the result of a nineteenth-century discourse of sexuality but as an ahistorical function of human subjectivity. Repression is thus available for our use as an interpretive tool with which to investigate Victorian texts. Second, distancing himself from contemporary practitioners of queer theory, Lane avoids an approach that, in his eyes, is too quick to equate Victorian moments of sexual ambiguity with contemporary gay identity. In contrast to these approaches, *The Burdens of Intimacy* builds on psychoanalytic theory as recently articulated by Joan Copjec, Jacqueline Rose, and Leo Bersani, all of whom explicitly build on Lacan's work. However, by choosing a specific historical period, Lane attempts to integrate history and psychoanalysis more aggressively than the theorists who provide the psychoanalytic framework. Like these psychoanalytic critics, Lane argues that the existence of the unconscious destabilizes any subjectivity and undermines all sexual relations. However, in addition, Lane explores how these tendentious categories of subjectivity may, themselves, be historically contingent. Thus, rather than exploring identity in twentieth century terms, for example, "heterosexuality" and "homosexuality," Lane argues that the Victorian categories of "virility" and "effeminacy" serve as primary examples of the unstable markers of identity that characterize nineteenth-century masculinity. According to Lane, this approach is more historically accurate than contemporary queer theorists' and more "interpretively subtle than" Foucault's historicist argument (xix), which Lane reads as disregarding the destabilizing effects of the unconscious thereby reducing subjectivity to little more than the product of culturally determined norms and strictures.

The power of Lane's focus on late Victorian texts comes in his attention to the way texts resist entirely conservative or entirely progressive notions of sexuality and gender in this period. In keeping in line with his psychoanalytic

emphasis on the ultimate incoherence of identity, Lane keeps readers focused on the ways texts both assert and subvert identities. Thus we see how the dandy in Bulwer-Lytton's *Pelham* reveals both intense self-control and an equally intense passivity. In Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, the new woman both calls for a rearrangement of sexual relations and at the same time reasserts the hierarchical opposition between virility and effeminacy. Forster's explicitly homosexual short stories in *The Life to Come* and his novel *Maurice* propose a utopian vision of male homosexuality that escapes class boundaries at the same time that they paradoxically suggest the power-dynamics and sadism inherent in all sexual relationships. These readings are particularly interesting in terms of Schreiner's use of the Victorian "new woman" and Forster's attempts to portray a happy homosexual, where the feminist and anti-homophobic emphasis of the works might have and, as Lane points out, has led critics to accept rather than critically probe the dynamics of identity in these works.

Indeed, Lane is extremely careful to "consider the conceptual blind spots and historical idealism accompanying demands that we retrieve and 'out' people in the past in order to render them our own" (225). Lane wants to read the sexual ambiguity of Victorian texts as just that: an ambiguity which is neither explicitly heterosexual or homosexual. Despite this aversion to reading in terms of either modern sexual identity, however, Lane's argument most often takes exception to critics who have read these texts in terms of homosexuality. His reading of Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, for instance, argues that to "read Henchard as 'Hardy's male homosexual' [quoting Todd E. Jones] is to excise the psychic and conceptual richness of this oscillation" (135) between male and female objects. In his discussion of James's *The Tragic Muse*, he begins with the intention of "avoiding the assumption that homosexual desire is simply the 'truth' of" the text (144). Lane thus argues that the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality are "often inadequate to the diversity of thought, acts, and desires that Victorian fiction frequently represents" (37). Readers who are interested in questions of how the categories of homosexuality or heterosexuality emerged out of this Victorian ambiguity will be disappointed: Lane's goal is to keep us focused on this ambiguity and the ways in which identity and desire always work at cross purposes.

Thus, Lane proposes a double-pronged argument, hoping to articulate the importance of the unconscious in the face of Foucault's attempt to historicize it and, conversely, hoping to historicize homosexuality in the face of queer theory's effort to read a politicized gay identity into texts written prior to the twentieth century. Foucault argues that rather than seeing the unconscious as outside of discourse, we should examine the genealogy and effects of positing some unavailable knowledge, for example, the unconscious, outside of discourse as the "truth" of sexuality at a particular

moment in Anglo-European history. Lane (along with previous critics of Foucault such as Jacques Derrida, Gayatri Spivak, and Joan Copjec) argues that Foucault's focus on the nineteenth century is moot in as much as language and identity *always* refer to some necessary but unrepresentable supplement outside of themselves. Lane makes a significant contribution to this debate because, unlike previous critics, Lane seeks to integrate history into his very critique of Foucault's historicism. However, Lane's simultaneous critique of Foucault's approach to the unconscious and queer theory's interest in the homoerotic, if not homosexual, opens up another problem since his use of theory and history may appear over determined: his argument against queer theory claims that for historical reasons homosexual identity always fails to emerge in these texts; his use of psychoanalysis contends that even if a sexual identity could emerge in these texts it would for theoretical reasons necessarily fail anyway. Thus, the search for the nineteenth-century homosexual is doubly doomed.

Moreover, it is hard not to feel that there is something too rigid in the anti-Foucauldian thrust of the study, and too defensive about psychoanalysis. Readers will probably note a heightened sense of melodrama when Lane writes in defense of psychoanalysis that "one characterization of psychoanalysis after another has dismissed this field and its body of writing as irrelevant or politically coercive" (2–3). He conducts his argument mindful of "the disbelief, ridicule, and even contempt with which various intellectuals respond to these and other psychoanalytic arguments" (xviii). Perhaps because of the very difficulty of the task he sets up for himself, in a sense re-entering the debate between constructionists and essentialists, Lane's very rhetoric seems to bristle with frustration. Or perhaps because as a psychoanalytic critic whose study takes on the challenge of articulating the connections between history and psychoanalysis, he needs to constantly reassert the dominance of psychoanalysis. At any rate, Lane's commitment to a polarized view of critical theory (most especially towards Foucault, but also towards queer theorists such as Eve Sedgwick and D. A. Miller) leads to an aggressive defense of the purity of psychoanalysis. This is all the more surprising if we acknowledge that Lane's study has an unquestionable ability to illuminate both the texts at hand and the various critical approaches to these texts through a rigorous skepticism directed at complacent appeals to identity. Precisely because Lane's powerful readings foreground the precarious nature of identity, his insistence on making certain that the identity of psychoanalysis is kept pure from other trends in criticism, seems unconvincing and unstable, as well.

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*The Devil's Mousetrap: Redemption and Colonial American Literature* by Linda Munk. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pp. xii + 144. \$35.00.

In *The Devil's Mousetrap: Redemption and Colonial American Literature*, Linda Munk excavates the influences of Judaism and the early Church Fathers on the works of three American Puritan theologians: Increase Mather, Edward Taylor, and Jonathan Edwards. Her study is aimed both at revising our understanding of colonial typological approaches to the Christian Bible and at explicating how such approaches were directed by millennial hopes and anti-Catholic polemics.

A Christian method of biblical exegesis, typology views the Hebrew Bible not as a complete document in itself but rather as a prophetic foreshadowing of the New Testament. Specific historical episodes of the Old Testament are interpreted as "types" or prefigurations that are fully revealed in the "antitypes" or events of Christ's life, death, and resurrection in the New Testament. Literary scholars have long maintained that an understanding of typology is essential to a reading of New England Puritan texts. They have shown that typology informed the American Puritan view of history, since the New England community considered its own exile to the New World as itself an antitypical fulfillment—a historical event adumbrated by the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. This exegetical method, scholars tell us, also accounts for the analogical nature of Puritan poetics. Although conservative exegetes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries insisted on the historicity of Old Testament types, more liberal exegetes or "spiritualizers" viewed the type as a metaphoric vehicle for its New Testament tenor, a figure made literal and, as a result, abrogated in the New; typology, then, provided a paradigm for the Puritan understanding of literal and figurative meaning. Munk argues, however, that colonial Puritan writers did not, as scholars have readily assumed, view the Old Testament types simply as figures to be fulfilled in the New; rather, she holds that these theologians, drawing from both Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions, actually understood such types to coexist with, and partake of, the fulfillment they foreshadowed. These theologians discerned the very presence of Christ in the events of the Old Testament.

Munk grounds her argument in a study of the typological theories of early Church Fathers that influenced colonial theologians but have, she argues, been ignored or simplified by twentieth-century scholars. Using two well-known types, the Passover sacrifice and the binding of Isaac, she explicates the Patristic tradition of exegesis. The lamb sacrificed to redeem the Israelites was a standard type for the sacrifice of Christ (himself the paschal lamb of God) for the redemption of humanity. Likewise, the binding of Isaac was understood to foreshadow the crucifixion: Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice prefigures Christ bearing the cross, and the thicket that catches

the ram prefigures Christ's crown of thorns (though she focuses on Christian typology, Munk also points out that Jewish midrashic tradition also conflates the saving blood of the paschal lamb with the blood of circumcision and the ram's blood at the binding of Isaac). In her analysis of these two types, Munk emphasizes that Church Fathers, such as Chrysostom and Melito, considered Christ to be implicit in and coincident with the types themselves: the divine *pragma* revealed at the crucifixion was assumed to exist in a less disclosed form at both Old Testament events. Melito, in particular, contended that the saving efficacy of the lamb's blood depended upon Christ's crucifixion and that Christ's redemption necessarily influenced the historical event in Egypt. Although Church Fathers attributed the Old Testament events to a historical moment that preceded the crucifixion, they posited an omnipresent Christ that stood outside linear temporality and existed before the incarnation. After the Fall at Eden, according to Patristic christology, God would have nothing to do with humanity except through Christ's mediation; therefore, the Church Fathers assumed, every divine revelation to Israel in the Old Testament was necessarily a revelation of Christ that differed only in degree from the incarnation itself.

Munk argues that the colonial Puritan exegete, influenced by this Patristic tradition, often read the presence of Christ back into the Old Testament. Christ was a divinity veiled in humanity (and, as Munk's title reminds us, that frail humanity was a decoy to bait and trap Satan), and this divine incarnation provides a "model of reading" the Old and New Testaments in relation to each other. In the Old Testament, Cotton Mather wrote, Christ is veiled in types. The letter of the type, Munk elaborates, is a veil of flesh, an incarnation that hides a spiritual meaning that exists in the Old Testament but is not unveiled until the New (97).

In his *History of the Work of Redemption*, a series of thirty sermons preached in 1739, Jonathan Edwards employed such a typology in his radical interpretation of the story of Moses and burning bush. The bush that burned but was not consumed was a traditional type for the crucifixion in which Christ suffered but was not exterminated (in other exegetical accounts, it is taken as a foreshadowing of Mary's inexhaustible virginity). In Edwards' interpretation of the story, however, the angel that appears before Moses is, in fact, the Messiah. Munk argues that Edwards uses figuration "to prove that Christ, as the angel of the Lord and in 'human form,' was already present and active in the Old Testament" (27).

Using detailed readings of his sermonic and poetic writings, Munk shows how Edward Taylor also discerned Christ's presence in the Old Testament. Christian exegetes traditionally read the Old Testament account of the Feast of Tabernacles (or Sukkot), an autumnal pilgrimage festival in which Jews camped in booths in remembrance of their ancestors' wanderings, as a fore-

shadowing of Christ's nativity; the tabernacles of Leviticus were assumed to prefigure the moment when divinity was housed in a man's flesh and God came to dwell among humanity. Appropriating the Jewish messianism of Zachariah, in which Sukkot anticipates a messianic age when all nations would join the Jews in this festival, Christian exegetes transformed the Feast into a promise fulfilled by the birth of Christ. In a nuanced reading of his Meditation 24, Munk explains how Taylor's images of tabernacles evoke this divine incarnation: "Godhead" is "Cabbin'd" in the body of Christ. She adds, moreover, that Taylor saw more than just a prophecy or figuration of Christ in the Old Testament accounts of Sukkot: as evidenced in his sermonic writing, the minister saw Christ among the myrtle trees at the Feast in Zachariah.

Munk uses her readings of theological works to demonstrate also that colonial American typology was shaped by, and instrumental in, Christian apologetics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She explains how, for example, Puritan theologians, reading Sukkot as a prefiguration of the Feast of the Nativity, relocated Christ's birth in the autumnal season and, thereby, denied the Catholic celebration in December and discredited Rome. In her analysis of millennialist writing by Increase Mather, Munk offers the most detailed example of such typological apologetics. While the Old Testament account of the Jews' redemption from Babylonian captivity was a standard type for humanity's redemption through Christ, Mather reread this account as a prophecy as well of the conversion of seventeenth-century Jews. This rereading was in keeping with the Puritan's typologically informed view of history: in the same way New England Puritans saw themselves as living antitypes of Old Testament Israelites, Mather saw seventeenth-century Jews as living antitypes of their own Biblical ancestors (their supposedly impending conversion to Christianity, that is, was prefigured by the redemption of Biblical Jews in the Old Testament). Mather's revision, moreover, was used to buttress millennial hopes for the predicted second coming of Christ around the year 1700. This second coming would, according to millennialists, require the conversion of the world's Jewry and lead both to the destruction of the Church of Rome and to the triumph of Puritanism; thus, Mather's particular typology advances both a Christianizing campaign and, perhaps more important, an anti-Rome rhetoric.

Munk's book is painstakingly researched and elegantly told. Readers who have yet to grasp the complexities of typological practice are sure to do so after reading this book. But while Munk deftly explicates typology and its various influences, the book could go much farther in explaining what is at stake in her study for American literary studies. Indeed, the book is never situated in the context of American literary criticism (key scholarly works, such as the essays collected by Sacvan Bercovitch in *Typology and Early American Literature*, go unmentioned), and, as a result, one does not get a strong sense

of the critical tradition she claims to revise. If typology is key to understanding Puritan literature, the reader is left wanting to know what the literary implications of her revisions would be and how exactly her revised understanding of typology would help us rethink that literature overall. Still, Munk brings a wealth of material to bear on these colonial texts and her book is bound to enrich any scholar's understanding of American Puritan literary sensibilities.

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*On the Walls and in the Streets: American Poetry Broad­sides from the 1960s* by James D. Sullivan. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997. Pp. 206.

Critics and theorists have repeatedly called for closer attention to the material conditions of textual production and reception, but due to the complexities of the “real” world, it is often difficult to envision just what such a study would look like. Whenever the world outside the reified text is invoked, a wide range of issues and concerns is raised. For instance, how does one discuss the creation of the textual artifact when so much of its production involves decisions that are worlds apart from the actual words on the page? The final work always hides the myriad economic, political, and social factors that might have influenced how the final “product” emerged. An even more vexing problem is how to codify the myriad contexts of idiosyncratic reader responses; depending on time, place, social position, temperament, and any number of factors, each reader will produce, to a greater or lesser extent, his or her own reading. And where does one place the author, caught in the middle, trying to write for the critic, the publisher, the reader, the community, and the self simultaneously? Any study that tries to incorporate all of these facets clearly has its hands full, but this text-reader-writer triad must be addressed if any meaningful understanding of the materiality of the text is to be reached.

This is exactly what James D. Sullivan attempts to do in *On the Walls and in the Streets*, his study of 1960s American broadsides. In his aptly titled introduction “American Samizdat,” Sullivan explains why he chose to study broadsides, a usually maligned genre:

The material qualities of broadsides, so various in their ways of presenting texts, foreground the physical and historical existence of the literary artifact precisely as an artifact, and they reveal the text precisely as a malleable construct dependent on its realization in—and

its interaction with—both graphic design and social setting for the production of meaning. Those tangible and visible qualities of design and publication carry the traces of the artifact's use, and thus make poetry as a cultural practice, rather than simply as a series of texts, available for critical analysis. (3)

This attention to “poetry as a cultural practice” informs Sullivan’s work and lends it its particular force and impact. Sullivan not only traces texts from beginning to end, from production to reception, but considers how each text is altered during every step along that path. Looking beyond the words on the page, Sullivan incorporates the material roles of the writer, the reader, and the text itself into his analysis. Working through a series of close readings, Sullivan attempts to contextualize textual production, authorship, and the material uses these broadsides were put to by readers. By viewing these historical documents as “sites” for the making of meaning, Sullivan is thus able to reveal the nexus of meanings (many of which are contradictory and all of which are changing over time) that surround the literary artifact.

The power of Sullivan’s technique can be seen in his first chapter, “Real Cool Pages: The Broadside Press,” which deals with the Black Arts Movement’s Broadside Series. Based in Detroit and under the supervision of Dudley Randall, this series sought to provide African Americans with inexpensive, yet attractive, editions of familiar poems in an attempt to solidify a shared cultural heritage. Sullivan’s reading of one such poem, Gwendolyn Brooks’s “We Real Cool,” contrasts the reception of this poem in standard references and teaching anthologies with that of a 1966 Black Arts Broadside. His point is that reading the poem in an institutional setting and out of a mainstream publication invites the reader to view its delinquent pool players through the prism of the reader’s own cultural values. In this context, the poem “confirms the dominance and the rightness of values foreign to the players themselves” (34). The broadside, however, inverts the norms of publishing, printing the poem in rough, white letters on a black background. The poem thus comes to look like a chalkboard, and the writing is seen as the players’ rather than the poet’s or institution’s. Thus the “design for the broadside makes their discourse sensually aggressive, even heroic” (38). The material conditions of the broadside and its status as an object outside the educational system provides a different “read” to Brooks’s poem. As interesting as this analysis may be, Sullivan fails to address the obvious questions that his reading raises. Should the broadside, then, be taught alongside the “standard” poem? If so, how should it be presented? And what did the original, 1960s audience make of this version? Such divergent readings were important, according to Sullivan, because “the Black Arts Movement wanted a literature that did real political work, literature that would simultaneously draw on, disseminate, and help

establish anew a distinct and rich African American culture" (52–53). Although Sullivan claims that broadsides provided a viable means to unite a community and build a sense of cultural identity, he fails to describe how the subversive broadside of "We Real Cool" actually produces (or fails to produce) a community built on shared cultural values; he inadequately connects "poetry" and "practice."

Sullivan takes up this theme of the consensus-building power of broadsides in his next chapter, which deals with antiwar broadsides. While critics such as Robert B. Shaw and Philip D. Beidler have attacked civilian antiwar poetry as unesthetic and uninformed, Sullivan attempts to recoup this genre by stressing its *function* as a shaper and formulator of public responses to the war. Ephemeral and often anonymous, these broadsides were designed to quickly "get the word out" and catalyze antiwar support. Here Sullivan provides close reads of W. S. Merwin's "When the War Is Over," Lawrence Ferlinghetti's "Where Is Vietnam," and Gary Snyder's "A Curse on the Men in Washington, Pentagon." While interesting, this focus on individual poems elides other unexplored discussions such as the conditions of printing technology that made such broadsides possible. Although Sullivan occasionally does discuss the historical contingencies that have changed the printing industry, this germane consideration is conspicuously absent in a book devoted to the materiality of the printed page. Still, Sullivan ends with the intriguing point that despite the ephemerality of these broadsides, some have nevertheless survived, and our access to them now is mediated by the institution of the library archive, a point he picks up again in his last chapter on Allen Ginsberg.

Sullivan then turns his attention to the function that the author plays in shaping cultural and textual meaning. In "Signed Edition," Sullivan looks at how authors themselves can influence the meanings drawn from a text. Here Sullivan uses the figure of Robert Lowell, a poet whose "scope of cultural prestige and authority" in the 1960s has remained "unmatched by any American poet since" (88). Since "the famous poet's endorsement, via the name on the broadside, guarantees the value of that position to the extent of that poet's cultural authority" (88), both Lowell and his work were in high demand by a variety of groups that sought to align this poet's name with their cause. Despite the relevance of this point, this chapter is both the shortest and least satisfying of Sullivan's text. This section lacks the materialist analysis of the broadsides themselves that so powerfully informed Sullivan's other chapters. Much of this chapter is simply textual explication combined with historical contextualization. While Sullivan does analyze a few broadsides by Lawrence Scott that utilize some of Lowell's poetry, these are simply the excuse for a discussion of the author as a guarantor of authenticity, not the focus of the critique itself.

Sullivan returns to the materiality of the text in his exploration of fine print broadsides. Here Sullivan describes a number of interesting literary artifacts, including a \$1,000 edition of *Moby-Dick* by Arion Press and a portfolio by Edwin Schlossberg entitled *Wordswordswords* that includes a poem stamped into aluminum foil. These quality letterpress productions again call attention to the text as object, but in a different manner than does Brooks's poem. The small print runs, author and printer signatures, attention to minute printing details, and elaborate colophons make broadsides like Walter Hamady's edition of Diane Wakoski's "The Owl and The Snake" art objects to be treasured rather than texts to be simply read. The comparison between fine print broadsides and their ephemeral antiwar cousins thus leads Sullivan to an interesting dictum: "The less self-effacing the printer, the more self-effacing the reader" (136). With a bookstore edition one focuses on the meaning of the words; with fine editions, one marvels at the quality of the physical text.

But for Sullivan, *where* one reads is as important as *what* one reads. Sullivan's analysis of Allen Ginsberg's 1965 broadside of "Kral Majales" aptly demonstrates that the context within which the broadside is viewed radically alters the reading of it. Robert LaVigne's drawing of a naked Ginsberg within the outline of a penis creates a charged sense of sexuality that the viewer cannot ignore. As a displayed broadside, "Kral Majales" was "a sign of the displayer's openness, or perhaps just naughtiness, in opposition to regimes of political and sexual constraint" (151). But as an illustration in Ginsberg's *Collected Poems*, this work is "available only for private beholding—for the reader alone in the canonical armchair—not for display and, thus, for the graphic declaration of opinions and allegiances" (151). And encountered in the library archive, it is seen "not as an expression of contemporary culture but as an object of historical study, a well-preserved statement from the past" (152). All of these conclusions are indeed relevant. Unfortunately for the reader, though, they raise more questions than they answer. Displaying "Kral Majales" "marks a territory and indicates allegiances" (150), but what do those "territories" and "allegiances" tell us about the countercultural moment they occur in, especially considering the phallic politics of the broadside? What does it mean for Ginsberg to include such ephemera in his *Collected Poems*, and how exactly does the "canonical armchair" alter readings and shape cultural practice, if indeed it does? And what does "historical study" say about the academy, its relationship to the counterculture, and our own cultural moment? Sullivan claims that broadsides can provide us with the "textures of countercultural life" (163), but these "textures" remain inadequately examined in his study.

It is precisely this lack of contextualization that plagues Sullivan's work. Sullivan cites Michel de Certeau and Stuart Hall as two theorists who inform his book. According to Sullivan, his project coincides with de Certeau's work

of “studying and giving public expression to the infinite details of everyday life” (3) and with Hall’s model of mass communication which looks at how a message becomes coded and interpreted throughout the transmission process. However, these thinkers are seldom mentioned in Sullivan’s text, leaving the theoretical underpinnings of *On the Walls* inadequately developed. Sullivan likewise fails to provide a historicist/materialist background to his project. Besides a brief overview of the history of American broadsides, a short paragraph on the emergence of ephemeral publishing, and a few remarks about letterpress printing as a new artistic medium, Sullivan is content to focus on the materiality of the text without expanding on the histories that made that textuality possible. Finally, his book suffers from a problem that plagues any work that tries to explain audience response: it often resorts to surmise and vague generalization of what a group of readers might have thought. Rather than relying on first hand evidence such as marginalia, Sullivan merely speculates on how a particular audience received and utilized these broadsides. While Sullivan’s explications give familiar poems a new twist and should interest anyone with a desire to know more about broadsides, *On the Walls* still falls short of its stated intention to uncover “poetry as a cultural practice” (3). His analysis finally stops at the point where it should be just beginning, even as it points toward the direction that must be taken to reach a true materialist understanding of 1960s broadsides.

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