

# BOOK REVIEWS

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*Growth and Governance of Canadian Universities: An Insider's View.* By Howard C. Clark. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003. 235 pages. \$85.00.

Howard Clark has managed to take the dry bones of every major report on post-secondary education in Canada, to clothe them with firm flesh, and set them dancing. The first half tells the story of the transformation of Canadian universities from their position in 1950, as quiet colonial backwaters, to the present, where "Canadian undergraduate education ... is noteworthy for its uniformity and high standards by any international benchmark" (200), where its graduate education is "held in high regard internationally ... certainly equal in scope and quality to that provided by other major Western countries" (201), and where university research and scholarship—though blossoming latest—has proven "quite exceptional" (201) in the international respect it has gained.

Born in New Zealand in 1929, Howard Clark reminds us of the hugely significant role played by the young scholars and researchers who came to Canada "largely from Commonwealth backgrounds" (27) to fill faculty positions from the mid 1950s to the mid 1960s. Clark's career, from his first position in the still baronial fiefdom of the UBC Chemistry Department of 1957, through a happy decade building up the department as Head of Chemistry at Western, to another ten years working out the consequences of the expanded university as Vice-President at Guelph, and ending with his experience as President of Dalhousie (1986–1995), has mirrored the major themes and issues in the post-war development of Canadian universities. His account—loosely strung along these stages—is a wonderful, even exciting, read. Writing in a dry, clear prose filled with an equally dry, clear humour, he is neither sentimental nor judgmental. The book provides a wide and informed view of how and why Canadian universities have become what they are.

The second half of the book has to do with serious problems Clark sees in the structures by which Canadian universities have come to be governed—as distinguished from those in the UK, the US, Europe, Australia and New Zealand to which he compares our own. His thesis—that our universities have become essentially ungovernable—appears to arise directly out of the difficulties he experienced as President of Dalhousie. This is unfortunate. In this case the parallel between his history and the broader trends doesn't so much help to clarify the one through the other as simply to mix them together. I wonder whether his take on events at Dalhousie—where he thinks faculty opted for a weakened *status quo* in the humanities rather than closing some programs in order to strengthen others—comes from his perspective as

a natural scientist. I mean nothing so silly as that he has no care for the arts. But he does not question his assumption that the concentrated focus necessary for the highest quality research in the sciences is an appropriate measure for other disciplines where breadth of scope and interconnectedness may be its primary condition. In other words the faculty could have made this choice without being moved primarily by self-interest.

Elsewhere his scientific background and his honest concern for the universities work to the reader's advantage. He clearly sees the dangers of faculty at research institutions finding their primary allegiance in their field of study rather than in the university. And to his great credit he recognizes, and dares to say, that the targeted funding the federal government has recently poured out on the natural sciences, while welcome, is also "slowly but efficiently eroding further any sense of community within the university and weakening the institution itself" (224).

This ambiguity crops up everywhere in the chapters on governance and it is not surprising. These matters are now in great flux and they are also very subtle. The questions he raises are the issues that have to be faced—but this is where the waters get muddy. He supports privatization and links with industry, but not to the detriment of the university; he wants tenure, but not absolutely; he doesn't want much government control, but he wants more; he does not want boards of governors that are ineffective, or too effective; he is glad for the disappearance of the "benevolent dictator" in university administration, but deplores the powerlessness of contemporary presidents. This list of aporia is not so much intended to point out the incoherence in his views, as it is to suggest their subtlety. Indeed, from this reviewer's perspective the main complaint is not that he is too subtle—but that his view of the problems and their solutions is not quite subtle enough. Faculty are moved by self-interest surely, but surely not only by it—otherwise how explain all the wonderful things he lists that have been accomplished?

The answer may lie in a view that is less strongly focussed on university faculties of science and their graduate teaching and research. Undergraduate education constitutes over 85% of what universities do—as measured by their student body. Clark recognizes that he provides little discussion of his issues in relation to this aspect of the university. It is unlikely that we will have a strong and workable understanding of what changes are necessary until we have a more complete picture. Just how much is missing becomes clear where he says, of Nova Scotia, that it "still has an antiquated and inefficient group of universities and colleges that suffers serious disadvantages in competing with institutions across Canada and internationally" (192). This may be true when thinking of scientific research, but it is quite incorrect insofar as undergraduate education is concerned. Nova Scotia continues to be, as it has been for well over 30 years, by far and away the most attractive place in Canada for students from other jurisdictions to come to for their undergraduate degrees.

A wider discussion will be necessary, and we can hope, along with Howard Clark himself, that others will take up and carry forward the important discussion he has initiated.

Colin Starnes

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*Greek Gods, Human Lives: What We Can Learn from Myths.* By Mary Lefkowitz. New Haven: Yale UP, 2003. 288 pages. \$44.95.

Mary Lefkowitz argues that the Greeks showed great respect for the otherness of their gods. The myths consistently demonstrate that when a mortal has an encounter with a god, even an affirming encounter, the mortal comes away from it (if at all), not simply affirmed, as contemporary piety would demand, but changed, usually painfully. Recent forms of Judaeo-Christian culture, whether religious or secular, on which the narcissistic self-justification of contemporary piety is most to be blamed, have obscured our ability to appreciate the absolute distinction between divine and mortal that Professor Lefkowitz argues is the characteristic insight of the myths of Greek religion. Restoring their supreme Otherness to the Greek gods is the laudable goal of the book, an introduction or companion to Greco-Roman mythology and religion for general readers, which proceeds by way of economical plot summaries of the monuments of Greco-Roman mythical narratives, from Hesiod and Homer (eighth–seventh centuries BC) through Apuleius (second century AD). The book includes an extensive glossary and judicious recommendations for further reading.

As a corrective for popular vehicles of the myths such as Thomas Bulfinch, Edith Hamilton, and Robert Graves, all of whom displace the myths from their natural contexts in order to make them seem to be about us, the undistracted concentration of Professor Lefkowitz's epitomes is on the gods, where she argues it would have been for the works' ancient audiences, rather than on humans. The point is subtly reinforced by the illustrations in her chapter on the *Iliad*, a series of vase paintings which show various pairs of combatants who seem to be the centre of interest, but in each case behind the human combatant stands a god or goddess, the real cause of the action, as we are learning.

Through her plot summaries an argument emerges about the nature of the religion (specialists will look askance at the singular noun) informed by these narratives. The gods of these peoples are concerned (insofar as they concern themselves with mortals at all) with two related things: justice and their own honour. Their justice, the Justice of Zeus as it is sometimes called, is not immediately our justice. The Justice of Zeus is a cosmic justice, a justice beyond, but comprehensive of, human justice. For the Greeks, human justice and the order of nature are not separate, or, as they are for us, opposed (in

contemporary Canada the aim of the bureaucracy of justice is to protect the unfit from themselves and others whereas a typical summary of the Law of Nature is "The Survival of the Fittest"). Each of the Greek gods is concerned not only with aspects of both the natural world and human society, but with particular places and people. They "are not concerned with achieving an abstract good, like God in the creation story in Genesis" (139), but their concrete attachments (such is the nature of concrete attachments) and their concern for their honour (such is the nature of honour) bring them into conflict with each other and with mortals. The struggle to bring the gods' diverse concerns into harmony within an overarching order, fate or natural necessity, is the Justice of Zeus, and from the perspective of mortals it may take generations to work itself out, and then only at the expense of many bystanders' lives. Human casualties in this struggle are considered "collateral damage," and in her discussion of Euripides' *Electra* and *Orestes*, Professor Lefkowitz notes, "Gods may express sympathy for humans, but they do not attempt to alleviate their suffering, because suffering and misery are inherent in the condition of being mortal" (137).

In the classical era this fundamental insight of their religion, that a great gulf is fixed between the lives of gods and men, that human life is characterized by the fragility of prosperity and the certainty of pain, produced both doubt (the Greeks were free to question their gods so long as worship did not depend on the answer) and awe. In her penultimate chapter (weakened by an unquestioning rehearsal of a questionable account of the history of myth criticism and early Greek philosophy), Professor Lefkowitz argues that its unflinching realism undermined classical Greco-Roman religion, as mortals began to demand comfort and assurance from their religion. Whether or not she is correct in the details of its origins, she does describe a development whose completion has occurred in our culture: we now have Prozac instead of religion. Even the remnant shades of western religious establishments, embarrassed themselves by their continued existence, now agree that the purpose of religion is to induce through delusion and ignorance the 'happiness' that psychoactive pharmaceuticals induce more efficiently.

Her subtitle indicates that Professor Lefkowitz believes that the lessons of the Greeks' myths are lessons for us as well. Perhaps they can be. Perhaps Professor Lefkowitz's insight that the Trojans in the *Iliad* catastrophically presume that success is a result of their own prowess and not an accident of a momentary diversion of the gods' interest will enter the mind of a prosperous Canadian reader as she fills up her SUV with fuel won from some distant desert battlefield stained with others' blood and oil. Perhaps she will feel an ominous twinge. It is not likely though. Why should she have read this book? What can her concern with Greek religion possibly be? "It is," as Professor Lefkowitz describes it, "a religion for adults and it offers responsibilities rather than rewards" (239). It is a religion realistic about a world full of forces on which we depend but which we do not control and which are

indifferent to our individual survival. It is a religion about life in this world, not religion as an escape from this world.

The SUV is the perfection and emblem of a culture that will go to any length to insulate itself from the conditions and the consequences of its prosperity: it allows its driver to sit obliviously as though in the comfort of her den while it asserts a poisonous right of way over the face of the earth, heedless of conditions adverse or favourable. Right up until the moment that its overconfident driver overturns it and kills herself and anyone else who happens to be in her way. The fatal overturning of heedless overconfidence is, in the theory of Greek tragedy, called *peripeteia*, reversal of fortune, and what it teaches is just what Professor Lefkowitz claims to be the consistent and consistently neglected lesson of the myths: "Ultimately, whether or not mortals realize it, the gods are in control ..." (54). Whatever one believes these gods to be (Greek religion was very open-minded about such questions), whatever is other and greater than ourselves and the condition of our existence (if twenty-first-century westerners are not beyond imagining that anything could be), Mary Lefkowitz argues that facing this fact squarely, as the ancients did, rather than hiding from it offers us not much comfort, perhaps, but a more complete humanity.

Gary McGonagill

Dalhousie University

*Virgil's Aeneid: Decorum, Allusion, and Ideology.* Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 162. By Wendell Clausen. Munich and Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 2002. viii, 255 pages. \$97.50 US.

In this book Wendell Clausen (Pope Professor Emeritus of Latin at Harvard and eminent Virgilian) offers a series of fertile perspectives on the *Aeneid*. Though the book yields neither a complete reading of Rome's greatest epic nor a single, overarching theory for its interpretation, its eight chapters are arranged so as to follow the basic narrative sequence of the poem, and in them is a common, if complex, approach to Virgil's text. Decorum, allusion, and ideology are aspects of the narrative that have not been fully understood. By exploring significant episodes under these rubrics, Clausen exposes breaches between our literary expectations and our grasp of some important Greco-Roman epic conventions. The result is an account of how Virgil exploits apparent obstacles to creativity and produces an original poem, an authentic foundational epic for the Rome of Augustus. Further, the reader is introduced to important patterns of signification easily lost beneath the polished surface of this well-known work.

Of the subtitle's three terms, the second is most crucial to Clausen's project: Virgil's allusion to earlier authors is an important if not dominant aspect of every chapter, and questions of decorum and ideology turn out to

be implicated in its process. Yet allusion is also the most difficult of the three conceptually. Therefore, Chapter 1 provides an accessible introduction to the whole book by first considering narrative decorum, the sensibility that governs what is appropriate to the epic genre Virgil inherited from Homer, Apollonius, Ennius *et al.* Such a foreign standard of seemliness both epitomizes the disjunction between Virgil's literary representation and modern expectations, and has received little scholarly attention. Thus Clausen is able to capture the interest of both "the educated general reader" and the "professional scholar," his two target audiences (viii). Among other things, the chapter elucidates two famous problems in *Aeneid* 1 by considering the function of narrative decorum. A sketch of the argument will give a fair idea of Clausen's method of investigation and of its far-reaching implications.

On landing in Libya after Juno has wrecked all but seven of his ships, Aeneas goes on a scouting mission, leaving his sailors to prepare a meal from their soaked provisions. His faithful side-man Achates appears in the description of this preparation: "first Achates struck a spark from flint and received the fire with leaves and fed dry food to the fire and snatched up flame with the fodder. Then those exhausted by events bring out Ceres tainted by the waves and Cerealian arms" (*Aeneid* 1.174–78). This is all by way of saying, "Achates lit a fire and the sailors brought out water-logged grain and the tools of bread-making." Two aspects of the scene strike Clausen. First is the elaborate periphrasis, which will strike the modern reader, still encumbered with a "late-romantic sensibility," as "stilted and offensive" (7). Second is the simple presence of Achates. For while the food is being prepared, Virgil gives us to understand that Aeneas is alone, concerned only for his lost comrades. He places him on an elevated promontory, desperately scanning the empty sea. This locale has long been admired for its dramatization of Aeneas' heroic isolation (*Aeneid* 1.180–86). The void in his prospect is soon filled, however, when Aeneas sights deer on the shore and kills seven to feed his crews. He is able to do so only because Achates is suddenly present to give him arrows and bow, though he had not been mentioned in Aeneas' company before.

Incongruent sensibilities; an apparent compositional McGuffin. By frequent consultation with the epic tradition, Clausen shows that decorum is the key to both problems. Moreover, he shows that a proper understanding of this literary convention is essential to appreciating Aeneas' special heroic aloofness. First, the adjective "Cerealian" is explained away: it reflects a standard of seemliness that prefers universalizing metonymy over earthy particularization of bodily necessities. But the imprint of decorum goes far deeper. Achates' performance of a chore, problematized by his later appearance at Aeneas' side, underscores Aeneas' remove from the menial and mundane. Further, a distancing decorum is also the key to Achates' unexpected appearance when Aeneas fells his deer. The bow is an unheroic weapon, but Aeneas could hardly down sufficient game with a decorous spear. Therefore, Achates is made to bear the unseemly burden until Aeneas should avail himself of it. So

far the argument from decorum takes us. But why would Virgil risk disrupting the literal logic of his narrative for the sake of mathematical necessity? Why not contrive some other means for *pius* Aeneas to provide? Because Virgil is working under another kind of necessity—he is self-consciously *alluding* to the scene in *Odyssey* 10 where Odysseus spears a single stag for his single ship. And so explanation by way of decorum passes into an exploration of allusion.

One effect of this covert reference to the *Odyssey* is that it casts Aeneas in the heroic mould of Homer. Yet considered in its new context, the allusion also amplifies the great difference between the archaic Greek and the Augustan Roman hero. More than an exile in charge of a dwindling flock, *pius* Aeneas cares for the crews who embody the historical and spiritual destiny of Rome. He does so despite the paradoxical aloofness that separates him from his fellows, and despite the limited perspective that keeps him from fully understanding his divinely ordained fate. To be sure, Clausen does not solve the literal inconsistency in the episode, but neither does he simply ignore it or propose an editorial deletion. Instead, his reading confirms Virgil's original dramatization of Aeneas' aloofness by showing precisely how it is rooted in, and just where it departs from, the epic tradition.

The allusive pattern discussed above (in severely truncated form) is indicative of Clausen's discoveries in later chapters. Some of his detective work exposes true allusive feats: Virgil's references to more than one text in more than one language in the same passage, for example. Still more interesting are revelations of more sustained systems of allusion, where Virgil moves beyond references to isolated moments of an earlier narrative to incorporate a series of moments from another poem (or even other poems) into his own story. Such detailed analyses really defy summary, but it is worth noting that their blend of philological erudition and sensitive literary interpretation comes of a profound, lifelong study of the primary texts. True, there is little discussion of the current theories of intertextuality, but Clausen's individual interpretations seem likely to outlast the currency of such theories. Overall this book deepens our understanding of the *Aeneid's* literary, historical, and cultural texture. In respect to this general project the third term of the subtitle, ideology, is uniformly present, since Virgil's creative meditation on Rome's place in the world everywhere involves adaptation of the epic tradition for his contemporary audience. Nevertheless, there is a more explicit discussion of ideology in Chapter 6, in which Clausen shows that Virgil's most overtly propagandistic book (Book 6) is also marked by subtle negotiation with the literary and historical traditions of early Rome.

Part of the pleasure of this book is its elegance of style, which is very well matched to its subject matter. Clausen will often untangle, for instance, a skein of allusions without indulging in overly explicit concluding statements. The reader is left to draw conclusions—and consider if they are possible or desirable—for himself or herself. While the complexity of his discussions and

the level of his assumptions could daunt even a well-educated newcomer to Virgil, Clausen does take real care to address the non-specialist throughout, and he translates almost all Greek and Latin. This book will receive due attention for years to come both for its learned treatment of complex literary phenomena and for its extremely sensitive interpretations of the *Aeneid*.

Peter O'Brien

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*Nero*. By Edward Champlin. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2003. 346 pages. \$29.95.

Nero has fascinated many historians over the centuries and we certainly do not lack thorough studies of this ill-famed emperor. The question we may ask ourselves is the following one: can we really learn something new through another biography of Nero? Surprisingly, the answer is most definitely yes. Edward Champlin is completely successful in providing a new approach and new points of view which reveal a more understandable (if not more likeable) Nero, one who may be very close to the original.

One of the most impressive figures in the ancient world, Nero enjoyed an incredible posthumous popularity, his memory remaining a living force for centuries. People in Rome and in the east truly missed him after his death. This of course may be quite surprising for the reader who is familiar with the three main literary sources on Nero (Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio Cassius), which are mostly negative about him; it thus seems that there were different contemporary interpretations of Nero's deeds, some of them very positive, and this is the starting point for Champlin's new approach. Without necessarily rejecting the historical facts provided by these three authors and other sources, he rejects their partial interpretation and tries to define Nero's own version, not as an apology for a bad emperor, but as a way of understanding the logic behind his apparently extravagant behaviour.

Nero saw himself as an artist, and it is as such that he played his emperor's role. He was very serious about his art and he truly had a vision of his own, showing a real strength of character about expressing this vision publicly. From this perspective, the stage, where he performed regularly, constituted a platform for his views, and provided a means of justifying himself, or at least of explaining in a flamboyant style his own interpretation of the various scandals of his life, and of explaining his self-vision, mostly influenced by mythic characters from the legendary past (e.g., Oedipus, Periander), divine figures with whom he identified himself (e.g., Apollo, Sol, Hercules), and historical precedents of the Roman past (e.g., Augustus, Mark Antony). All of this constituted the basis of a new conception of Roman power, especially the vision of an emperor who is "great of soul and beyond human judgment."



However, Nero did not confine this great (and monstrous) vision to the stage but expressed it through every possible official means, especially his so-called triumphs, in which he constantly shocked the followers of the *mos maiorum* (the customs of the ancestors), including Tacitus and our other main literary sources. However, Champlin notes that several of Nero's most outrageous actions look very different in the light of the *Saturnalia*, the traditional Roman feast during which social norms were relaxed and even temporarily reversed: Nero truly appears as the *Rex Saturnalicus*, the stand-in king who made the jests during the *Saturnalia*, turning life in Rome into permanent *Saturnalia*, marked with outrageously expensive parties meant to draw emperor and people closer and to gain popularity for the sovereign. His ill-famed Golden House project, so criticized by the literary sources, was part of the same perspective: Nero treated the whole city as his house, which scandalized our main authors. However, according to Champlin, his intention was not to exclude the people, but to include them, the Golden House being something new, a permanent platform of a spectacle showcasing the emperor for his subjects, and at the same time a house for the Roman people as well. In brief, all of Nero's extravagant program was the expression of an elaborate and egomaniacal vision of himself and the nature of his power, all expressed in an artistic and spectacular way.

This biography of Nero fulfils all of its promises. Basing his work on an enlightened and realistic use of all the relevant literary sources, of the unavoidable numismatic and epigraphical documents, and of the results of the most recent archaeological research, Champlin provides here a thorough and shrewd analysis which may not always convince the specialists (particularly his thesis about Nero's culpability in the Great Fire of Rome, which remains debatable), but must always be taken into careful consideration. This book provides new and serious ideas: a rare and precious quality, which should ultimately establish the work as a classic.

Alain Cadotte

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*1421: The Year China Discovered the World.* By Gavin Menzies. London: Bantam Press, 2002. xix, 520 pages. \$45.95.

Gavin Menzies' claims should now be familiar: in March 1421, more than one hundred ships—each of which was about four times as long as the Santa Maria commanded by Christopher Columbus—set sail from the capital of Ming China under the charge of the Muslim eunuch Zheng He (1371–1433). While the official rationale for the expedition was to return foreign envoys to their native lands and to collect tributes from the “various countries of the western oceans,” by the time the last ship arrived back in China in October 1423, the fleets of Zheng He had circumnavigated the globe and surveyed

every continent in the world. They had created permanent settlements not only in Australia and around the Indian Ocean but also along the Pacific coast of North and South America. In brief, Dias, Columbus, Magellan, and company were not the first to round the Cape of Good Hope, discover the 'New World,' or sail around the globe; the Chinese had done them all.

To support these claims, Menzies, a retired Royal naval officer, has assembled a vast corpus of disparate data (an updated list can be found at the book website [www.1421.tv](http://www.1421.tv)). Here is the general logic of Menzies' arguments: first, there exist maps dated before the age of European exploration that show with remarkable accuracy the contours of islands, countries, or continents that were not supposed to have yet been 'discovered'; second, the only country in the early fifteenth century that possessed both the technological resources and opportunities to explore the world and to create such charts was China; third, physical, textual, and oral evidence from around the globe testifies to the claim that not only did the Chinese visit many parts of the world during their voyage, they also created a large number of colonies.

Although Menzies' thesis is entirely plausible (after all, scholars have made similar though less sweeping claims), what makes his book ultimately frustrating for historians who try to take its author seriously is the unevenness in quality of its evidence and Menzies' eagerness to uphold his grand theory even at the expense of critical judgement. An example frequently cited in reviews of the book concerns the "Asiatic chicken" found in the Americas. Even if one accepts that cocks from Asia are genetically programmed to make a "kiri-kiri-kee" sound (instead of "cock-a-doodle-do" as in the case of their European counterparts) and that the "Asiatic chicken" found in the Americas had actually come directly from Asia, it still requires a leap of faith to argue that the introduction of such chicken into South America prior to the age of European exploration is a testimony to the colonization of the 'New World' by the fleets of Zheng He.

But to review the Menzies phenomenon—in addition to a website and a revised paperback edition, seventeen foreign editions of the book are reported to have either been published or are in preparation—strictly on historical grounds might be missing the point. Every generation, of course, must tell its own stories of the past. If the earlier paradigm of focusing on the 'great men' of European exploration was a direct descendant of the "Enlightenment mode of history" (in which the rise of the West is viewed as inevitable), the renewed interests in the possible antecedents set by explorers from the East clearly reflect the current uneasiness both within and outside the historical profession toward theories Eurocentric. But foes of Eurocentrism might not find much comfort in Menzies' book. Following the last of a total of seven voyages led by Zheng He, the Ming court, for fiscal as well as political reasons, decided to dismantle its maritime program. The story of Chinese exploration, not unlike the Enlightenment narrative of Chinese history, is thus

one of missed opportunities. While Menzies' claims are intended to be revisionist, one cannot help but imagine what a genuine global history of maritime exploration might look like.

Leo K. Shin

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*Pursuing Shakespeare's Dramaturgy: Some Contexts, Resources, and Strategies in His Playmaking.* By John C. Meagher. New Jersey: Associated UP, 2003. vi, 489 pages. \$75.00.

Meagher's book attempts to explore Shakespeare's art of dramatic composition, beginning first with the relevant texts—the quartos and the first folio—and then working his way outward to the stage, the actors, the playhouse, the playing conditions, and finally the audience. At a time when it seems that most scholarly work is steeped in literary theory, I was initially pleased to have the opportunity to read a book that is based strongly in the text. Meagher defines dramaturgy by stating that his book “undertakes to explore the [specific] dramatic arts and practices that distinguish plays from poetry ... in order to examine how they are characteristically employed by Shakespeare in building and enacting dramatic designs toward performance” (9). Meagher concedes that his methods are out of fashion with “the most lively movements in current Shakespeare studies” (10), but he also asserts that his method of research is a worthy pursuit because “many of Shakespeare's intentions for the performances of his plays are detectably retrievable from their texts” (9). The first four chapters of the book are devoted solely to the exploration of Shakespearean texts. Here Meagher discusses ‘The Foundational Texts,’ and he points out and questions the difficulties, intricacies, and curiosities scholars might come across while researching Shakespeare's work. Meagher's years of extensive footwork are obvious in these early chapters. He provides practical and interesting information to any student of early modern drama who has yet to travel the same research footpath. Many of Meagher's sub-topics—genres, play order and act-scene divisions, textual reliability and the printing house, stage directions—are undoubtedly fascinating to any student of drama, and Meagher's book proves early on to be a good resource; however, what it does not show early on is how his analysis of any of these subjects will contribute to our understanding of Shakespeare's dramaturgy. While Meagher showcases his astute knowledge of the foundational texts, he unfortunately neglects to succinctly (or completely) clarify what this information tells us about how Shakespeare builds his “dramatic designs toward performance” (9). Because these early chapters set the stage (pun intended) for Meagher's text, his inability to effectively express his ideas to his audience hangs over the entire work.

The middle chapters discuss the stage, the actors and playing conditions, the Shakespearean cast, costumes, stage properties, and sound and music. Out of these six chapters, the two that are the most attractive are Meagher's chapters on stage and on the stage properties. He categorically shows how Shakespeare exploits various aspects of the stage—the platform, the 'above,' the doors, and others—in order to convey meaning to the audience. Likewise, Meagher shows that action and character give meaning to the stage properties and not the other way around. Compared to the other chapters, his examples here effectively show how Shakespeare uses certain dramatic elements to construct the action and meaning of his plays: they show that dramaturgy is clearly "anchored in the action" (108). While Meagher acknowledges this, he cannot anchor his own discussion in action; he becomes distracted too often within his writing, preventing him from clearly explaining how the action of a play works within and against the conditions both inside and outside of the playhouse. The final chapters are possibly Meagher's best chapters, yet it is unfortunate that these chapters are still marred by particular flaws. His chapter on "The Arts and Crafts of Language" is out of place because it would have served better alongside his discussion of the foundational texts. The title of the final chapter, "Shakespeare's Audiences," suggests that this is a place where Meagher can discuss the successes of Shakespeare's dramaturgy, but once again he is so preoccupied with discussing the seating arrangements in the theatre that he does not give enough attention to how Shakespeare played to, for, or against his audience.

On the whole, Meagher's arguments in this book are not so much ineffective as they are unfocused and noncommittal. His discussion is too trivial in spots and too repetitive in others. Because he does not follow his arguments through to a conclusion, it is often difficult to pinpoint exactly how Meagher believes Shakespeare's dramaturgy works. In the epilogue to the book, Meagher writes that one scholar characterized Meagher's previous book, *Shakespeare's Shakespeare*, as 'reductionist,' and Meagher states, "it is probable that the same term will be used in critiques of this book" (420). I have no intention of dismissing Meagher's entire work as reductionist; in fact, it was the reductionism that I was looking forward to. Where Meagher's reductionism is unforgivable, however, is in his choice to refer to the time period from 1580 to 1630 as the "Shakesperiod." Aside from the poor play on the playwright's name, Meagher's term is in actuality terribly vague, and his use of it is, on the whole, unnecessary. Instead, the term that I would choose to characterize Meagher's book is exhibitionist. Meagher appears more interested in showing his readers what he knows about Shakespeare, his work, and the early modern period than he is in clearly explaining Shakespeare's dramaturgy.

*Literature and Dissent in Milton's England.* By Sharon Achinstein. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. xii, 302 pages. \$84.00.

I read this book mostly on the bus, and my experience of it thus emulates the slow, halting course that Achinstein ascribes to the English dissenting movement of the latter half of the seventeenth century. Non-conformity with the established Church took myriad forms, and only some of its adherents took pleasure in the English Republic. However, all non-conformists entered a long dark night of the soul upon the restoration of the monarchy. Achinstein reads literate and intelligent dissent against the traditional view of an Enlightenment mustering civility and urbanity in support of King and Church and applying the "lashings of the whips of satire" to the non-conformist bumpkin rabble and their simple-minded enthusiasm. Dryden and Butler are blocking figures to the non-conformist project during the period, and their casting as Restoration comedy villains is borne out by the pugilism of their quoted satirical tirades. The "cultural forms arising from an experience of social exclusion" make this period an Age of Milton, as much as an Age of Dryden.

Achinstein provides copious accounts of everyday people caught in their private and public distress. She also highlights certain individuals whose work has had lasting literary significance, and/or whose religious and political struggles are emblematic of the plight of English dissent, such as Andrew Marvell, John Bunyan, Richard Baxter, Mary Mollineux, Elizabeth Singer Rowe, Lucy Hutchinson, and Isaac Watts. George Herbert appears as an inspiration for the devotional literature and hymnody of dissent, though he was also admired by conservatives and monarchists during the Restoration and the eighteenth century.

At the forefront of the dissenters stands Milton. *Paradise Lost* explores those key problems of the dissenting tradition—how to reconcile individual conscience and central authority, how to maintain faith in the face of defeat, how to keep one's head when all about are losing theirs and blaming it on you. *Paradise Regain'd* is a companion piece prophesying the emergence of triumph from these dark times through the reward for faith. Such a reward might be, say, the annihilation of enemies in a violent apocalypse, so Samson occupies a place of honour in the dissenting typological pantheon. Achinstein explores *Samson Agonistes* as a meditation upon betrayal and captivity, loss of power and sight, narratives of identity and political memory, and the maintenance of individual freedom of conscience without transgression against the civil authority in whose hands one has been placed. The equation of religious fervour and violence is evident in the work of a variety of dissenters, many of whom used Samson as a model both of Christ-like submission and of Rambo-like vengeance.

Achinstein suggests in her introduction that despite its lack of tolerance in many ways, the dissenting movement contributed greatly to the development of modern society, democracy, and women's rights. An American

by birth, she is interested in the Puritan theocratic tradition that laid the foundation for American society, and in the simultaneous workings in the United States of “conscientious religious activism” for minority rights and “violent antinomian or ‘enthusiastic’ elements” willing to sacrifice others’ rights for their own conception of Truth. In this way, Achinstein establishes a context of relevance for her book and its subject in our contemporary post-9/11 world. In a world fraught with religious and political conflict, one can learn much from the ideological battle in seventeenth century England between the restored monarchy and established Church on one hand, and Milton and the rest of the dissenting tradition on the other. This book provides an astute analysis of that battle and the literature it produced.

Colin Russell

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*Flesh in the Age of Reason*. By Roy Porter. London: Penguin, 2003. xviii, 574 pages. \$50.00.

Roy Porter opens *Flesh in the Age of Reason* with a daring “Who are we?” (3). It is fitting that such a grand exploration marks the end of Porter’s remarkable career as social historian (he died suddenly in March 2002, and this is his last completed work). His task is indeed formidable: he charts the emergence of the modern self in the long eighteenth century. He looks at what he calls the “demise of the soul” (27) and the ensuing secularization of self, arguing that in this period fundamental Christian doctrines were replaced, slowly and unevenly, by lay-driven ideas. Porter doesn’t minimize his endeavour: “This book explores how ... individuals reformulated the problems of existence and made sense of the self, with a changing, and waning, reference to the soul. It is a story of the disenchantment of the world, a move from a time when everything was ensouled (animism) towards a present day in which the soul is no longer an object of scientific inquiry, though mind may still just be” (27).

Certainly, there is an epic quality to *Flesh in the Age of Reason*. In the first section Porter undertakes the daunting task of outlining approaches to the self from Plato to Locke. Much of the book goes on to trace the ideas of a variety of Enlightenment thinkers; its range includes Addison and Steele’s elaboration of the sociable, progressive and self-fashioning individual; Edward Gibbon’s belief in autobiography as an assertion of the dignity of man; Adam Smith’s *homo economicus*; David Hartley’s foundations for an associationist psychology; and William Blake’s celebration of imagination and sexual fulfilment. Porter also broaches a variety of issues such as changing perceptions of the afterlife; the transition from humoral-based medicine to a focus on the brain and the nervous system; hysteria, melancholy and madness; individualism and the novel; and the effects of the industrial revolution on understandings of selfhood.

But this ostensibly erudite subject matter does not detract from the book's accessibility. Porter writes in a clear and energetic manner, and is usually careful to include the general reader. He frequently extends his scope beyond the Age of Reason as he identifies eighteenth-century roots for modern trends or problems. For example, he explains that the new individualism heralded in the Enlightenment has in a sense turned on itself; ID cards and fingerprinting have proven that "what has been truly difficult to achieve in modern times is not identity but anonymity" (15). An intriguing chapter entitled "Flesh and Form" points to the beginnings of vegetarianism, anorexia, and the cult of youth. And Porter's unequalled excellence as medical historian shines through in his section on the commercialization of health, as it does when he describes late eighteenth-century England as a 'nervous society' addicted to drugs.

Porter's propensity for anecdote also brings life to his narrative. His portraits of thinkers are generally a satisfying blend of intellectual ideas and biography. Thus, we are entertained by the idealist Thomas Day and his disastrous attempt—by taking Lockean principles to extremes—to "sculpt a female as a wife for himself" (375). Johnson's "noble vision of man" (169) is complemented by accounts of his chronic depression and near madness. We are told that George Cheyne, a physician notorious for encouraging moderation in diet, once topped 450 pounds on the scales (237). We are also witness to Gibbon's hydrocele (an enlargement of the scrotum); Lord Byron's obsessive behaviour around exercise and food; and William Godwin's fantasy of a geriatric paradise.

Clearly, Porter provides us with a number of intriguing portraits. But why does he choose to discuss these particular intellectuals? In the preface he concedes: "I have not attempted a 'textbook' coverage; rather I present a gallery of contrasting yet interlocking studies meant to be engaging and stimulating rather than encyclopaedic" (xvi). I was forced to wonder, however, whether Porter was selective enough. He acknowledges that the "customary saga of the self ... mirrors and reinforces myths of masculinity" (16) and claims to be avoiding "heroic narratives of the odyssey of the self" (17). But in many ways he does not manage to do so, and his book comes across as a traditional—albeit witty—narrative of the evolution of the masculine autonomous individual. He acknowledges that Locke accounts for the person of man, and asks "What, however, about that of woman?" (257), but he does not go on to answer his question in a satisfactory way. This is most obvious in his persistent use of the pronoun 'man.' And as we have seen, he looks primarily to male intellectual elites. He includes a chapter on Mary Wollstonecraft, and makes passing comments on women, but gender is not included in an integral way. His lack of insight into such issues is clear in his judgement on Swift, whose stance on women is oversimplified: "misogyny marks the searing disgust driving" many of his poems (150). And the title of the book's final section is telling: "The Science of Man for a New Society." Given his exclusion

of gender, Porter's claim to be presenting a new and original history of the self is perhaps overly ambitious. His study is robust and engaging, but in many ways he simply reinforces traditional masculine paradigms of selfhood and thus ultimately provides a restrictive answer to his opening question.

Heather Meek

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*The Aesthetics and Politics of the Crowd in American Literature.* By Mary Esteve. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. 4 illustrations. x, 262 pages. \$55.00 US.

Mary Esteve has written a refreshingly polemical book which challenges Americanists to reconsider the continuing significance of liberal politics in American literary and cultural life. Especially for those of us who came of academic age when American liberalism's 'failures' were manifest, its egalitarian premises 'naive,' and its intellectual rigours dismissed, *The Aesthetics and Politics of the Crowd in American Literature* provides an opportunity to re-think what we thought knew about the relation of American politics to American aesthetics.

The central conceptual relation in this book is that of crowd to public: "In short, the anonymous, hypnotic persons entering the crowd mind by affective compulsion, and the abstract, self-conscious persons entering the public sphere by reasoning consent" (12). As such, Esteve takes immediate issue with recent theorizations of the liberal bourgeois public sphere, particularly those which criticize liberalism's alleged failure to include in principle "the sociopolitically marginalized, whose identities as such are determined by bourgeois standards of race, class, gender and so forth" (13). Dismissing such critiques as "logically adrift," she observes that, although the abusive practices carried out during the Enlightenment coincided with the rise of its universal principles of reason, abstraction, and so forth, such exclusions were coincidental rather than "genetic, situational (that is material)" (13). In a bracing critique of Michael Warner particularly, she observes: "Social inequality cannot even become phenomenologically significant until the abstract, universal principle of equality is conceptually installed and culturally naturalized" (13). While some might take issue with this claim—anti-slavery agitation, for example, arguably began as a Christian argument against cruelty and atheism—the point is both well made and well taken. Furthermore, it grounds the book's analyses of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century encounter with crowds in a theoretical polemic deeply relevant to both real politics and the politics of academic literary criticism.

Esteve furthers her defence of liberalism and its attendant values of universal reason, informed consent, and moral judgement by attempting to show how nineteenth- and twentieth-century American authors disarticulated (or failed to disarticulate) politics from aesthetics. She establishes, via Kant's third Critique, a "link between the crowd mind and the sublime aesthetic" (16),



a relation permitting the “beholder” of the crowd to enter into the sublime object, rather than merely behold it from the safe distance Kant argued was requisite for the beholder to render a disinterested aesthetic judgment (17). The nineteenth-century beholder thus enters into a mimetic rather than a reflective relation to the crowd, and in such “mimetic compulsion” (17) the beholder makes “available ... a subjectivity radically devoid of identity or value,” an identity not only fundamentally different from that of the universal citizen of reason, but one necessary to the articulation of “reasonable pluralism, that is ... a diversity of non-political religious, moral, and philosophical doctrines [which] animate reasonable persons’ affirmation of political liberalism” (17). Because the crowd aesthetic is of a fundamentally different order from that of liberal politics, it follows not that liberalism is a political ruse, but rather that “crowd representations ... supplied abundant if more subtle indications of an unimpressible political consciousness ... of a prevailing commitment to the a priori principles underwriting political liberalism” (17).

So what is the evidence, “the abundant if more subtle indications,” which Esteve detects in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary encounters with the crowd? A first chapter considers Whitman, “given his reputation as the most enthusiastic champion of democracy and its crowds” (26–27), and contrasts his affective overinvestment in radical democracy to more chaste understandings of political liberalism in writing by Lydia Marie Childs, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Crowd/radical democracy negates “reason as the source of moral deliberation” (30), and so predicates Whitman’s politics not merely on an “objective naturalism” (34) which subordinates human morality to natural whim, but on a set of “political-poetic commitments to affection and embodied power” that have “much in common with the political logic espoused by [pro-slavery apologists] such as John Calhoun and the monomaniacal George Fitzhugh” (31). If it has been some time since a critic has accused Whitman of complicity with slaveholding, Esteve’s recuperation of Poe as friend to political liberalism (46–47) will come as another surprise. In an extended reading of Hawthorne’s “The Old Apple-Dealer,” Esteve concludes her book’s analysis of the aesthetics of antebellum liberal politics, one based on readings of “arguably marginal literary works” whose “slightness testifies ... to the still-incipient state of urban consciousness in the antebellum United States” (58–59).

The remaining four chapters consider works by Henry James and Stephen Crane; representations of lynching in the context of the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair; Nella Larsen and the Harlem Renaissance; and three early twentieth-century immigrant narratives. In the book’s strongest chapter, “White City, the Nation Form, and the Souls of Lynched Folk,” Esteve moves adeptly over a remarkable terrain of literary and cultural material, describing what she calls “a chain of discursive links that enabled the US’s imagination of itself as an urban, white nation whose people constituted a body of primarily nation-affirming and only secondarily (if at all) public-minded citizens” (120).

Esteve makes startling connections: she shows how the nation's new "gregariousness" deplored by social critic Henry Childs Merwin is implicated in the mobocracy of the lynch crew, which shares, with the individual babblers trying to rise above other gregarious souls in the crowd, a compelling desire to become a "law unto itself" (118–27). It is in this chapter that the author comes closest to conceding her argument that the public sphere (and its attendant liberalism) was not, *ipso facto*, responsible for the racism most hideously visible in the history of lynching. For if the nativist nationalism that characterized the White City cannot be extricated from the racist ideology and practices of white supremacist nationalism, then liberal politics, which unarguably underscored the former discourse, must shoulder the burden of countenancing the latter. Esteve deftly meets this challenge, finding that the problem of the nationalist collectivity presented by enthused crowd and mob alike was itself a "diminishment of the public as a constitutive feature of the national polity" (127). It is not liberal politics, in other words, that allowed lynching to flourish; it was, rather, a failure of nerve that allowed the lynch mob to become a law unto itself and call it "America": a failure which served "to close the gap—or to effect the exchange—between lawlessness and lawfulness, between the crowd mind and the public square" (138).

So where, I find myself asking, where exactly is an actual gazebo of liberal politics? Esteve's findings, acutely argued, theoretically sophisticated, and contextually situated, record the failures of various kinds of Americans to instantiate the public sphere and engage with it as reasonable citizens. DuBois's story may well have "done nothing less than expose the fatuity of redeeming (and prescribing) the viciously gregarious crowd mind as equivalent to the political-liberal public square" (151). Nella Larson's *Quicksand*, Esteve argues in a similar vein, reveals "the psychical distresses" brought on by Harlem's "capitalizing renaissance and the race consciousness it purposes to mold" at the expense of a "free-standing" liberal "political conception" (155). Abraham Cahan's fictional memoir, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, relies on a "narrative logic" which "operates under the sign of nativism rather than assimilationism" (176), thereby showing how the narrator's "constitutive resistance to being American ... precipitates much of his grief and yearning for the land of his birth" (177). In one reading after another, we find critiques of crowd consciousness and mobocracy; disarticulations of the personal/aesthetic from the public/political; rejections of race and ethnic consciousness in favour of the liberal politics of immigrant assimilation (which more or less fail in the three cases Esteve analyzes). Yet we never arrive at the reasonable public square; we just know that its closest approximation, the crowd, is a deformation of its values. And that, Esteve concludes in her ambitious, smart, and occasionally frustrating study, is a place we don't want to be, even when our constructions of its liberal alternatives so miserably fail.

*Modernism and Cultural Conflict 1880–1922*. By Ann L. Ardis. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. ix, 187 pages. \$55 US.

Ann Ardis positions her study of cultural conflict in England from 1880 to 1922 within the larger and ambitious project of the new Modernist studies. The original goal of this project was to recover the other forms of literary modernity lost through the success of High Modernism, referred to throughout Ardis' study by the compound noun "Joyce–Pound–Eliot." For Ardis, the directing voice of this project is that of Deborah F. Jacobs, whose "Feminist Criticism/Cultural Studies/Modernist Texts: *A Manifesto for the '90s*" (*Rereading Modernism: New Directions in Feminist Criticism*, ed. Lisa Rado [New York: Garland, 1994] 273–98) she cites as providing the exemplary call for new paradigms for Modernist studies. Jacobs' interesting proposition was that Modernists need not or, indeed, should not think of this period solely, as she puts it, in the terms dictated by that trio of "Joyce–Pound–Eliot," in other words, in the terms of texts like Hugh Kenner's *The Pound Era* (1971) that finalized the institutional place of High Modernism. The work of Jacobs and Ardis is a manifestation of the revision of Modernist studies in the nineties by a new generation of scholars that resulted in the founding of the Modernist Studies Association in 1998, of which Ardis is Program Chair, as listed on the MSA website.

Ardis presents her study as contributing to this revision of Modernism in three ways (7–8). First, she positions the "men of 1914," as Wyndham Lewis defined himself and "Joyce–Pound–Eliot," as only one group among many jockeying for position in a period of cultural redefinition. Second, she emphasizes the disciplinary restructuring that was the context of this struggle for cultural legitimacy. Third, she questions the radical nature of the "Joyce–Pound–Eliot" literary experiments by arguing that they co-opted the language of science in order to acquire mainstream legitimacy, retreated from representations of scandalous sexuality in the wake of the Wilde trial, masked their conservative agendas with a radical poetics, and subverted the real resistance to middle class values that came from feminism and socialism. These last four points provide the rationale for her five chapters or "case studies," as she calls them (8), with the first devoted to the aggression shown to Beatrice Potter Webb over scientific methods, the second to the disappearing of Wilde in some Modernist writing, the third to studies of the valuation of new media in Lawrence's *The Lost Girl* and the rape scene in Lewis's *Tarr*, and the fourth and fifth to an individual's (Nora Syrett) and a journal's (*The New Age*) attempts to "talk back" to the "men of 1914." Each one of these "case studies" provides, supposedly, an exemplary instance of cultural conflict.

Although several of the "case studies" are successful within their terms of reference—the reading of Lawrence, for example, in terms of the conflict between literary and mass culture—the study does not convincingly enough make the case for the exemplarity of or the diachronic connection between

the five cases. Furthermore, the study happily suffers from the zero sum syndrome of some revisionary readings: the retrieval of the other Modernisms, in itself an admirable act of making complex, requires somehow the reduction to the monolithic "Joyce-Pound-Eliot," a reduction that distorts all three beyond recognition. Joyce, for example, to mention two of Ardis' points, co-opted or parodied virtually every language, including those of the sciences, and represented most forms of scandalous sexuality, including a long complex dialogue with his precursor, Wilde, and quite often, as in the sexology scenes of "Circe" or the monologues of Professor Loewy-Brueller in *Finnegans Wake* (which Ardis calls *Finnegan's Wake* throughout), did both at once.

In her conclusion, Ardis compares her study to Michael North's remarkable *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern*, contrasting the "thick description," in Clifford Geertz's terms, of his synchronic study of the Modernist *annus mirabilis* with her diachronic method (173), a method that she claimed in her introduction also "offers a 'thick description' of the Joyce-Pound-Eliot nexus" (4). North's reading of high and popular cultural events of 1922, not including directly the events of *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*, provides a truly complex or "thick" sense of how, as he put it about those texts, "the masterworks of literary modernism fit into the discursive framework of their time" (New York: Oxford UP, 1999, vi). Ardis, by her own account, aims to produce a similarly complex description of the diachronic axis from 1880 to 1922; however, her reduction of those and other masterworks, her unwillingness to countenance the complexities with which they, too, "fit into the discursive framework of their time," gives little sense of complexity and virtually none of diachrony.

Murray McArthur

University of Waterloo

*Bluebeard's Chamber: Guilt and Confession in Thomas Mann.* By Michael Marr. Trans. David Fernbach. London: Verso, 2003. 150 pages. \$36.00.

Thomas Mann was abroad when the Nazis took control of the government of Germany in 1933. His greatest fear was that he would never be able to return to his residence in Munich, and that as a consequence his carefully preserved diaries would fall into the hands of the hostile authorities. As a matter of fact, by May the danger had passed, because Mann managed to get the diaries, in a suitcase, transferred to Swiss soil, and the incriminating documents were burnt at the earliest opportunity. Before the successful retrieval of these highly personal documents, Thomas Mann's condition is described as one of "desperation" (by Erika his daughter), and "hysteria" (by Michael Marr, the author of the present study). Mann expressed his own fears at this (potential) "assault on the secrets of my life," and told his family that any publication of the contents of the then still missing diaries would "ruin" his life.

Taking the famous author at his word, Marr agrees that Thomas Mann must have feared the exposure of a shaming, even incapacitating, secret buried in these personal documents. The starting point for Marr's investigation is that this secret was definitely not, as most suppose, Mann's homoeroticism or homophilia, or even Mann's apparent fascination with the adolescent male form. Marr argues all of that was already implied in Mann's fiction, acknowledged in Mann's correspondence, and, even more unusually, known by the members of Mann's family, including both wife and children. The supporting evidence is exhaustively advanced in this slim, but handsomely produced, volume: the one hundred pages of relatively spacious typeface is endorsed by some thirty pages of densely compressed footnotes. For a summary of the discussion, this is indeed the place to begin.

This erudite and scholarly cross-examination is not without its own exhibition of zeal. Mann's "surprising casualness and nonchalance" with respect to his homoeroticism is advanced so often and with such conviction, that we are inevitably forced to consider why all previous commentators have been so deceived. Why did that great crowd consistently neglect so vast a trail of literary clues distributed throughout Mann's writing? First, of course, we are privileged to live in a new millennium, which liberates us from a blinding "prudery." But, secondly, a great deal of the commentary has apparently failed to take seriously enough the overwhelming autobiographical construction of all of Mann's writings, both the fictional and the critical.

Marr particularly emphasizes that even Mann's literary portraits of other writers and artists are really only opportunities for self-examination. They are not exactly self-portraits, but they must be read as occasions for self-revelation. The supposed subject is only the pre-text behind which the diligent literary investigator will find the obscured visage of the apparently self-absorbed German author. Of particular consequence is the unexploited introduction to Dostoyevsky's short fiction which appeared in English in New York in 1945. Mann's introduction reveals a Dostoyevsky "ruled by the secret of hell." Is one author hiding behind another in order to reveal a crime of sexual violence so extreme it could only be compared to an encounter with the devil himself?

The rest of Marr's study diligently pursues the trail of evidence which Thomas Mann has obligingly assembled for his readers. The failure on the part of others to read the runes correctly has a threefold root: (a) the assumption that Mann was afraid of being "outed" seems plausible, but only if one chooses to ignore the evidence; (b) crucial evidence has indeed been ignored, and other revealing passages have just simply been neglected; and (c) golden nuggets of evidence which may be sparkling away, and visible to the naked eye, have been discarded by other prospectors as nothing more than fool's gold—attractive enough, but very far from the real thing.

"Far-fetched speculation" is dismissed early on in Marr's meticulous monograph (6). Marr also affirms that "we do not know what the suitcase

concealed" (24): consequently, the subsequent discussions and suggestions of the demonic, criminal eroticism and violence are, regrettably, all consigned to the same realm of conjecture and supposition. Readers will have to judge for themselves whether "far-fetched" does not apply in this speculation as well. Two things are, however, beyond all doubt: first, masses of fecund insights are being offered into the texts called to the witness box. Readers will find the court proceedings fascinating. Secondly, whatever else may be at work in the course of Marr's inquest, no will ever have occasion to doubt that these are indeed "educated" guesses.

Thomas H. Curran

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*Gerhard Herzberg: An Illustrious Life in Science.* By Boris Stoicheff. Ottawa: NRC Press and Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2002. xiii, 468 pages. \$49.95.

In December 1973, while researching in Dr. Gerhard Herzberg's private papers before he deposited them with the National Archives of Canada, I experienced at first-hand some of the personal qualities which his friend and erstwhile colleague, Boris Stoicheff, lauds in this lengthy study of our then foremost natural scientist. For example, after I had spent several hours one morning sifting through a suitcase of documents Dr. Herzberg brought to his office at the National Research Council building in Ottawa, he reappeared from his adjacent laboratory to invite me home for lunch; and when I very reluctantly declined with the plea that I needed to finish the work that same day, the researcher whom Stoicheff calls "prodigious" in his dedication to the pursuit of scientific knowledge murmured that of course he understood—and left me alone to get on with it. About an hour later I looked up from my table to see the slight figure of the Nobel Prize laureate again standing in the doorway, this time carrying a paper bag containing some food to tide me over the remainder of my stay. This thoughtfulness as well as his subsequent reading and commenting upon my completed manuscript left me with an indelible impression of both the down-to-earth humanity and the painstaking scholarly standards of Gerhard Herzberg. How well has his unquestionably "illustrious life in science" now been served by Professor Stoicheff?

The book traces Herzberg's career from his quite inauspicious social origins in Germany early in the last century (his widowed and impoverished mother left her two young sons to be raised by friends when she emigrated to work as a domestic in the United States), through his hard-earned secondary schooling and later studies at the Technical University in Darmstadt, where the twenty-four-year-old received his doctorate in engineering in 1928, to postdoctoral appointments at Göttingen—the mecca of German physics—and Bristol in England before assuming an unsalaried teaching post at his

*alma mater*. There the skilled young investigator in the field of spectroscopy, his life-long scientific specialization, who had married a Jewish fellow student, witnessed the rise to power of the Nazi movement. As an 'aryan' himself at first unhampered by the new regime's anti-Semitic legislation, by 1935 Herzberg was made aware that his wife's racial background would preclude obtaining a permanent position at any institution in Germany. He therefore began the disheartening process of trying to obtain employment abroad, in an atmosphere in which the world economic depression combined with Nazism's fanning of traditional hostility in many countries towards Jews made securing almost any job by the mostly Jewish refugees from Hitler extremely difficult. The chance presence in Darmstadt of an energetic recent graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, John W.T. Spinks, who was sympathetic to Herzberg's plight and impressed with his exceptional scientific abilities, paved the way for the couple's move to Saskatoon, thanks also to the equally far-seeing and effective intervention on their behalf of its president, Walter C. Murray, with the Canadian immigration authorities. Deeply grateful to Spinks, Murray and other friends they made in Saskatchewan for their rescue and after the November 1938 'Crystal Night' pogrom also that of Luise Herzberg's parents from a grim fate in Europe, the family remained initially for a decade in Canada, where their two children were born.

This 'German' phase of Herzberg's story, which comprises more than a third of the actual text, draws heavily upon his conscientiously preserved correspondence, but gives no indication that for the most part it has already been known for over a quarter-century (cf. Lawrence D. Stokes, "Canada and an Academic Refugee from Nazi Germany: The Case of Gerhard Herzberg," *The Canadian Historical Review* 57 [1976]: 150–70). It relies additionally upon just a single textbook for the general history of Nazi Germany and on Alan Beyerchen's excellent monograph about the destruction of the physics community by Hitler's dictatorship (but there are only three citations to these sources). The author also makes no more than a passing reference to the standard work by Irving Abella and Harold Troper on Canada's restrictive policy toward Jews and most other persons escaping the Third Reich, with the result that the German and especially the Canadian socio-political contexts within which the Herzbergs successfully removed themselves across the Atlantic are largely ignored. Thus, the issue of mixed marriages and the possibility that Gerhard Herzberg might have divorced his first wife and hence remained in Germany, as all too many spouses did who found themselves in the same situation, is not so much as alluded to; nor are the circumstances in which he and his in-laws received preferential treatment from the government of Canada adequately explained. Less excusable yet are the number and range of confusing translations (does the "People's Student's Party" in pre-Nazi Darmstadt University politics perhaps refer to so-called *völkische* or racist student groups?), simple misspellings, and outright errors of fact or interpretation in relation to German affairs: Hamburg was not Germany's

largest city at the time of Herzberg's birth (6; it was, though, the "second most populated" one [14]), nor did the Versailles Treaty "cripple" German industrial capacity by stripping away her colonies and merchant fleet (68). The underlying reason for these unfortunate slips may be found in Professor Stoicheff's apparent need to rely upon assistance in rendering German materials into English (463), along with his lack of familiarity with the non-scientific aspects of European and North American historical developments.

The remaining two-thirds of the book are more satisfactory, at least in the latter regard. These pages recount Herzberg's positive experiences teaching, researching and living in Saskatchewan (although he had never heard of Saskatoon until he met Spinks), his much less enjoyable and accordingly short-lived sojourn following World War II as an astrophysicist at the Yerkes Observatory of the University of Chicago (particularly stemming from the wave of McCarthyite anti-Communism directed against scientists, too, which reminded him of their purge in Nazi Germany), and above all the almost half-century he spent at the NRC until his retirement in 1994. The two decades after Herzberg's arrival in Ottawa in 1948 constituted a veritable 'golden age' in Canadian science, well-funded and nevertheless largely unfettered by government, when under a series of enlightened directors of the Council he led its Spectroscopy Laboratory to world-wide acclaim. Ironically, its and Herzberg's fame (he won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1971) coincided with the beginning of what he regarded as inappropriate interference by the federal government in scientific affairs; specifically, an increasing disdain for 'pure' (that is, undirected) science versus a planned program linked to supposed national economic goals and technological priorities. Herzberg became the articulate champion of the former course, and Stoicheff devotes many pages to recounting his mentor's ultimate failure to persuade politicians and bureaucrats of the fallacy that scientists should be 'managed' rather than allowed freely to follow their insights, a strategy which had been responsible for most of the epochal discoveries in modern physics. Despite the many visible achievements of his long life, which saw Herzberg the recipient of some three dozen honorary degrees (including one from Dalhousie University in 1960) and countless other awards as well as the naming of the Institute of Astrophysics at the NRC after him, to say nothing of the authorship of a series of pathbreaking volumes and an unbroken stream of scientific articles (431–48) until nearly its end, by the time of his death on 3 March 1999 Gerhard Herzberg had become largely an unheard voice in his country of adoption.

Especially the account of Herzberg's NRC years is replete with instances of the same generosity and kindness I experienced, such as his encouragement of younger subordinates to conduct research and publish papers on their own. The most telling examples of this selfless behaviour are drawn from Stoicheff's own warm relations with the 'boss' who also chose him as his future biographer (234–39, 463–64). The upshot, however, is a tome that is more hagiography than biography. Conflicts, whether inside his



family (Herzberg's work, he readily admitted, took precedence over it, and he was estranged from his mother) or externally with colleagues, are mentioned by the author but not analyzed for what they might reveal about his hero's personality; was he always "mild-mannered" (255)? The same reticence characterizes any reference to his obvious ambition, or indeed his guile as a de facto atheist in having his son and daughter baptized in order to avoid "problems" with the religiously conservative population of Saskatchewan. More seriously, while the pacifist Herzberg's disappointment with his friend Edward Teller's invariably hawkish support for the military establishment is noted, his views on the principal *crise de conscience* among twentieth-century physicists—namely, the decision to build and detonate atomic bombs (from which activity, as still an 'enemy alien,' Herzberg was provisionally excluded)—are otherwise disregarded. Yet, the author feels the need more than once to report what the Herzbergs ate at their meals in Darmstadt and elsewhere. This sometimes excessive attention to mundane detail lends the book more the quality of chronicle than history, which is nowhere more evident than in the chapter on its subject's reception of the Nobel Prize—and of the ceremonials and testimonials that accompanied the event. On the other hand, Stoicheff keeps purely scientific discussions of Herzberg's, his own and others' spectroscopical endeavours and accomplishments to a minimum. Despite the much wider accessibility among non-expert readers which this lends the volume, one receives from it the overall impression that, like generals fighting wars, writing about science is too important a matter to be left solely even to a distinguished practitioner.

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*The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*. Edited by Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. xxvii, 295 pages. \$34.95 paper.

*The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* is a set of papers forming a coherent and comprehensive introduction to science fiction by twenty of the premier contemporary science fiction critics (including the two editors), each an expert in his or her own field. There is a substantial introduction, "Reading Science Fiction," by Farah Mendlesohn, a comprehensive bibliography of further reading, and an index.

The organization of the *Companion* is as logical as its subject will permit. The book is arranged in three sections: history (six papers), critical approaches (four papers), and sub-genres and themes (ten papers). In the history section, Brian Stableford takes on "Science Fiction Before the Genre," Brian Attebery "The Magazine Era 1926–1960," Damien Broderick "New Wave and Backwash 1960–1980," and John Clue "1980 to the Present;" the two

remaining papers in this section are by Mark Bould on “Film and Television” and Gary K. Wolfe on “Science Fiction and its Editors,” both of which look at their topics from the beginning to the present. In the section on critical approaches, the four papers are Veronica Hollinger’s “Feminist Theory and Science Fiction,” Andrew Butler’s “Post-modernism and Science Fiction,” Istvan Csicsery-Ronay’s “Marxist Theory and Science Fiction,” and Wendy Pearson’s “Science Fiction and Queer Theory.” The section on sub-genres and themes is more disparate and less tidy. Nevertheless, it covers a lot of ground: alternate history (Elizabeth Leonard), politics (Ken MacLeod), religion (Farah Mendlesohn), gender (Helen Merrick), hard science fiction (Kathryn Cramer), life sciences (Joan Slonczewski and Michael Levy), utopias and anti-utopias (Edward James), space opera (Gary Westfahl), and science fiction icons (Gwyneth Jones).

In the editing of books, as in life, we human beings may have done those things which we should not have done and may have failed to do those things which we should have done. The editors of this volume are human, but on both counts, they do remarkably well. Certainly, there is nothing here that should have been omitted.

There is, however, one thing that might have been added, to the advantage of the volume’s coverage. The selected topics in the section on critical approaches are certainly important in any discussion of science fiction, but they are not the only approaches and taken together their selection implies that criticism of science fiction began only with the advent of post-structuralism, although the individual papers are not strictly limited by date. What is wanting here, I suggest, is a conspectus (a single paper would probably be enough) of the criticism that emerged alongside science fiction itself. Traditional critics, structuralists, thematicists, and psychocritics—not to mention the reviewers and letter writers in the science fiction magazines themselves and the occasional scientist who decided to weigh in on the subject—all had things to say. It is a real hodge-podge, obviously, and much of it is not strictly academic literary criticism. But it all helped to shape the genre and should not be overlooked.

Overall, I judge this volume to be essential to the library of anyone studying and/or teaching science fiction and to the library of any institution where science fiction is taught. The editors are to be congratulated.

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*Doing Our Own Thing: The Degradation of Language and Music and Why We Should, Like, Care.* By John McWhorter. New York: Gotham Books, 2003. xxiv, 279 pages. \$39.00.

The title might lead one to expect a grumpy rant from an old poop about how nobody can use an apostrophe anymore. McWhorter, however, is an

under-forty linguistics professor who recognizes that the official school-rules of English grammar have little to do with how the language is actually produced, or how it should be produced. He agrees with most linguists nowadays that change in arbitrary grammar and usage conventions is constant, inevitable, and not a bad thing.

What bothers McWhorter is colloquialization. Fifty years ago and earlier, a special 'elevated' formal language was used for writing and oratory; but now what one reads and hears might be transcribed everyday talk. Lincoln's rhetoric is elevated, rhythmical, complex; George W. Bush's is simple, informal, colloquial. Compare their calls to war. Lincoln: "I appeal to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate, and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity, and the existence of our National Union, and the perpetuity of popular government; and to redress wrongs already long enough endured." Bush: "Let's roll!"

McWhorter points to other areas where similar changes have taken place. Poetry has sometimes adopted casual talk style, but when it hasn't, it is read by a drastically decreased number of people. Classical music with its formally difficult complexities and subtleties is similarly suffering a precipitous audience decline. Even pop music used to be more formal and elaborate: compare Cole Porter's melodies and lyrics to hip-hop's.

McWhorter argues that all these changes are due to the sixties counterculture revolution, which saw formality as mainstream, suffocating, boring, and repressive, and which celebrated spontaneity. (Here McWhorter's true right-wing colours emerge: it's all the fault of them Commies.) Maybe.

Okay, he's right that these things have happened, but are they *degradations*? Why is it preferable for there to be two dialects of English: one used in everyday talk, the other, more difficult to produce and understand, more formal, used exclusively in writing and oration? Is this gap a good thing? It seems to me to have served mainly to distinguish the privileged literate class from the underprivileged uneducated.

McWhorter's main claim is that the disappearing formal dialect is superior for rational interchange: clearer, more precise, better able to express subtle differences and complex connections. I doubt this. It seems to me that one could translate any complexity or subtlety from Formalese into Colloquialese with no loss of meaning. If Dubyah-talk contains less rational content than Lincoln's, that's not because they're orating in different languages. It's because GWB and his handlers want their rhetoric simple, emotional, and dumb.

A secondary virtue McWhorter claims for formal English is that its use is "a basic courtesy, just as today we still often clean up when company is coming." This, however, is clearly a matter of etiquette, and when customs change, there is no discourtesy in ignoring old ceremonies. Nobody's offended anymore when I fail to tip my hat.

The book is best when McWhorter writes as a descriptive linguist: his examples are often informative and amusing. His extended argumentation is less satisfactory: it's too long, often repetitious, rather boring in the end. Peculiarly for a book by a linguist and about writing style, it's rather badly written: rife with grammatical errors, sloppy usage, contorted unintelligible sentences. And there is an odd variety of styles: pompous and long-winded when he writes about oratory, but with touches of the cool and hip in the chapter about black music. Maybe the book was insufficiently copy-edited. It was certainly rushed into print—out in early October 2003, but with references to the Iraq war. Or maybe McWhorter is doing this self-consciously? If so, it's insufficiently witty.

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