

Book Reviews

***The Charter versus Federalism: The Dilemmas of Constitutional Reform.* By Alan C. Cairns. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1992. Pp. x, 150. \$34.95. Paper, \$12.95.**

When Romulus founded Rome, he made establishing a constitution one of his first tasks. Livy tells us that "Having performed with proper ceremony his religious duties, he summoned his subjects and gave them laws, without which the creation of a unified body politic would not have been possible." Cicero, citing Romulus, later said that "There is nothing in which men draw nearer to the divine than in founding new states or in preserving those already founded." Canadians have been engaged in a process for some years of rewriting their constitution in order, among other things, to preserve their state. Whether Joe Clark, Robert Bourassa, Bob Rae, Brian Mulroney, Clyde Wells, & Co. have made a deal that will yield in Canada a unified body politic and whether, therefore, they are approaching divinity remains to be seen.

Alan Cairns has taken a sharp look at what has happened during this process, from the period leading up to the patriation of the Constitution and the coming of the Charter of Rights to the end of the Meech Lake fiasco.

Prior to the 1980s, the Canadian constitution was largely concerned with relations among governments. The rights of individuals were seen to be protected by an elected parliament, in the British tradition, rather than by a constitutionally entrenched Bill of Rights. By the beginning of the 1980s, however, things had changed. The reworking of the constitution that then took place had two aspects. One was patriation with an agreed-upon amending formula, and the other was the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights. The dynamics of the two parts were very different. The former remained the domain of politicians. The new arrangements were still arrangements governing relations between levels of government,

and the politicians who negotiated the deal clearly intended that future changes should remain in the hands of the politicians. But the Charter of Rights introduced a new element into the mix. Such a charter would bring ordinary citizens into direct relation with their constitution for the first time. The pressures for such a charter were of several sorts, from the decline of the British connection and consequent weakening of our tendency to take that model for granted, to various international trends in favor of declarations of human rights. Moreover, the political process, through which the Charter received its final formulation (often contrary to what the politicians involved wanted to see), came to involve the citizenry in general, and various constituencies, e.g., women, in a very important and public way.

Commentators have disagreed about whether the Charter of Rights was a step away from democracy in the British tradition (see, for example, Charles Taylor, "Alternative Futures: Legitimacy, Identity, and Alienation in Late Twentieth Century Canada," in Alan Cairns and Cynthia Williams, eds., *Constitutionalism, Citizenship and Society in Canada*, vol. 33 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada [Toronto, 1985]) or a step towards greater democracy (Thomas R. Berger, "Towards a Regime of Tolerance," in Stephen Brooks, ed. *Political Thought in Canada: Contemporary Perspectives* [Toronto, 1984]). In fact all that one can reasonably say is that in general the impact on Canadian politics remains to be seen. For, that impact will be a matter of how people decide to use the Charter, and on what the courts decide. The Charter has not yet settled into our social fabric and political practice, and until it does we are in no position to say exactly how it will affect us. One thing is already clear, however: the process by which the Charter came about, and the fact that it is now there for ordinary citizens to use, has involved ordinary citizens with their constitution in a way that they were never before involved.

This has had an impact on what happened after 1982 and in the process leading to, and from, the Meech Lake deal. Brian Mulroney, after winning the Conservative leadership on a platform of strong federalism, won the Prime Ministership after a campaign based on an alliance with Quebec separatists. To satisfy the latter, he reopened the constitutional debate before the Charter had a chance to settle firmly into our practices.

He approached the issues on the model of a labor negotiator. That sort of practice works well when the issues are such that there is a middle ground towards which both sides can be moved; it does not work where issues involve matters of principle where compromise is less easily achieved. Unfortunately, Mulroney found himself defending federalism while having to satisfy his allies in Quebec. As a consequence he found himself in what any negotiator should realize is the worst of negotiating positions, that of negotiating against oneself. As one would naturally expect to occur to one in such a position, Mulroney ended up giving away the federalist store to the provinces, and lots of other things too, including some things that ordinary people thought they had gained with the Charter. That the Charter should have been threatened should not surprise us, for, as Cairns makes clear, the Charter has a federalist bias in that it places citizens in a direct relation with the federal government and the constitution, by-passing the provincial premiers who have hitherto thought, and continue to like to think, that constitutional relations are their concern and not that of the people.

Cairns lays out in three chapters the process leading up to the Charter, and the way in which that process and subsequently the Charter itself has re-oriented Canadian citizens to their constitution. In a final chapter on the lessons of Meech Lake he details how Mulroney and the provincial premiers made a deal on the old premise that Canadian constitutional issues were the concern of politicians, and were then surprised that ordinary citizens rose up to attack the deal and defend their rights not only as guaranteed by the Charter, but also, as they now saw it, their right to be consulted in a serious way on constitutional changes. Although Clyde Wells has been made the scapegoat by many, Cairns makes clear how it really was ordinary people who killed the deal.

Unfortunately, the politicians have still failed to realize this, and it is entirely likely that the deal they have now cooked up will meet a fate similar to that of Meech Lake. Certainly, there is no sense that either the old players, like Mulroney, nor the new ones like Bob Rae, have learned the lesson.

Cairns's book raises a wide variety of issues about how we do, and how we ought to, look upon our constitution, and engages in an equally wide variety of debates. It is well written, and one realizes after reading it how difficult it is going to be, in the aftermath of Mulroney's re-

opening the constitutional debate, to find compromises that will at once satisfy the politicians and meet the expectations that the Charter of Rights has created among all Canadians. Unfortunately, the likelihood that we have amongst us a Romulus who can produce a constitution that will ensure "the creation of a unified body politic" seems increasingly small.

University of Toronto

Fred Wilson

***Making a Match: Courtship in Shakespeare and his Society.* By Ann Jennalie Cook. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1991. Pp. ix, 273. \$37.50.**

"O Antony! Nay, I will take thee too" (V.ii.311), cries Cleopatra, and dies. Editors imagine that she's addressing an asp which she applies to her arm (SD M. R. Ridley, Arden ed. [London: Methuen, 1965]), but Cook argues that the whole line is a *de futuro* marriage vow directed to Antony, and the suicide scene is an extended nuptial (225). In this instance, Cook's insistence on recovering social rituals embedded in play texts illuminates not just a tiny dramatic moment but also the only play by Shakespeare which makes adultery look respectable. Thank goodness, though, that she *doesn't* go on to point out that the marriage is technically invalid because Antony's legal wife Octavia is still alive, or to speculate about whether bigamy applies to a corpse! Too often in this book, the plays are used to illuminate contemporary attitudes instead of the other way around; the result is just such a myopic literalism. Thus Hamlet in the closet scene is a well-informed objector when he denounces Gertrude's marriage to Claudius on the grounds of consanguinity and criminality (219); contemporary prejudice against May-December unions is confirmed by the disastrous marriages of Othello and Desdemona and Saturninus and Tamora (32). But do the plays authorize the hysterical rhetoric of an enervated Hamlet or a bereft Brabantio? Cook often fails to consider that ideology is complicated by representation; as simple social documents, the plays can neither surprise nor subvert.

The title of *Making a Match* is a pun: the "match" between life and art is as much Cook's concern as the wooing and wedding which are the book's subjects. But this "match" is no simple handfasting, as Cook

herself seems aware, at least initially. History is as much fiction as fiction is history. That's why it's worrying to see Cook dismiss the Renaissance insistence on virtue in a spouse as "moral window dressing" (41), or obfuscation of more mercenary motives. Life, like texts, is being simplified rather than seen as a complex construction of ambivalent desire. Even Cook herself admits that her shotgun wedding between contemporary evidence and dramatic texts (with the former playing the role of tyrannical husband, since the book's organization subordinates play to pamphlet) is an unhappy one. If some plays do reflect and confirm the conduct books, others don't. Forced to admit that, for example, "Shakespeare invests mutual affection between wooers with greater weight than it carried in much of his society" (103), Cook then hypothesizes that Shakespeare's audiences liked to see their impossible desires as well as their prejudices acted out in the theatre. Neither Shakespeare's plays nor Shakespeare's society can be easily simplified or measured against the "facts," then, however scrupulously these are gathered and verified and documented.

For *Making a Match* easily substantiates its claim to have amassed "the most comprehensive documentation of historical and critical materials relating to courtship that has yet been undertaken" (263). Cook presents herself as an objective and neutral historian rather than as a literary critic or theorist, and claims she seeks "neither to quarrel with nor to supersede other perspectives" (15) in an attempt to reach "widely shared conclusions" (263). Just how widely shared those conclusions are can be inferred from the often pedantic and polemical tone of her book, as she wages a vicious footnote war against the ahistorical and the misinformed. And, while she generously invites feminists to "find here a much richer body of evidence to support their views" (14), her own views frequently seem to collude with the Elizabethans she describes, as she compares women under their husbands' authority to sons under their fathers' (8), and proceeds to indict Desdemona for sexual "impropriety" from which Othello, as an "alien," is exempt (205). Claiming impartiality, Cook too often either ignores or misrepresents the gender politics that defined the Renaissance mating game.

Though it frustrates and annoys at times, this book is well worth reading for its careful reconstruction of a world quite different from our own—a world in which marriage is more like a complex business transac-

tion, involving a wide circle of interests and influences, than like our own casual (and easily severed) liaison. Like the Elizabethans about their marriages, however, Cook needs to be more circumspect about the matches she makes between Shakespeare and his society.

Dalhousie University

Christina Luckyj

***Inconvenient Fictions: Literature and the Limits of Theory.* By Bernard Harrison. New Haven: Yale UP, 1991. Pp. ix, 293. \$35.00.**

In a collection of strenuously argued essays, written over a ten-year period, Bernard Harrison examines issues in literary theory in terms of their capacity to develop contemporary humanistic philosophy. The theories he examines include the problems of textual indeterminacy in Derridean deconstruction, Frege and Davidson on the problem of metaphorical meaning, new critical formalism, and Frank Kermode's theory of hermeneutics and narrative. The humanistic philosophy which emerges from these issues is less clearly associated with particular philosophers by name, but rather emerges in the various essays as the creative redescription of the human self, the particularity of experience in writers like Sterne and Forster, and the exploration of ethical relationships in Muriel Spark, Jane Austen, and biblical parable.

This book cannot be described as a contribution to literary criticism or as philosophical interpretations of works of literature. In fact it challenges the entire dichotomy between the literary and philosophical disciplines and it rejects the often shallow claims of one discipline attempting to govern or to explain the other. For Harrison, the philosophical investigation of selfhood cannot be reduced to a deconstruction of the subject, but by the same token works of philosophy do a poor job of explaining the human obligations and adjustments pictured by works of literature. Sterne's anti-dogmatic view of human personality is indebted to Lockean nominalism but also corrective of it. Forster builds a complex view of friendship which begins in Moore's utilitarianism but takes the consideration of moral impulses and moral relativism into the sorts of concrete individual encounters only the novel can grasp and portray. At

its best, Harrison's book belongs in the context of recent books by Stanley Cavell, or Martha Nussbaum, or Anthony Cascardi, or Richard Eldridge, or Alexander Nehamas.

The variety of writers and topics covered by this book is partly explained by the occasional origin of many of the essays. With that in mind, the reader should perhaps judge the book's coherence not in terms of its table of contents but by its degrees of fusion between philosophical and literary vocabularies. This fusion is the source of coherent ethical guidance. For Harrison, interpretation is not a matter of reducing Austen and Muriel Spark and Sterne to the explanations of one theory. It is a matter of finding how these authors provide complex descriptions which correspond to the work of philosophy. Rethinking the relationship between works of literature and issues in philosophy also means looking for a type of interpretive coherence which avoids large explanatory frameworks and generic terms like "modernity" or "symbolism" or "narratology." Instead, Harrison tends to favor terms like "embodiment" (76), "defamiliarization" (51), or phrases like the self's "habitation is the text of the self's actions and utterances" (199).

Taken out of context, these terms perhaps sound gnomic, but they also indicate some areas where the toughest work remains to be done. The fusion of humanistic philosophy and textual analysis is often rendered in an ambiguous, almost aesthetical vocabulary. At times, it seems as if the primary function of works of literature is to shift perspectives on human action, rearrange familiar concepts, provoke discoveries of meaning and relevance. While it is true that the ability to keep terms like that in motion gets closer to the ways that novels work than does a dryly generic philosophical vocabulary, it does not seem to give works of literature a decisive impact and connection to the way we ordinarily speak and use language to shape a public sphere of ethical deliberation. Given the care and rigor that went into the writing of this book, I would guess that Harrison's future work would move in this direction, furthered by the writings of other philosopher critics who are now redefining the meaning of humanism. Harrison's book shares in the task of that redefinition.

***Dissociation and Wholeness in Patrick White's Fiction.* By Laurence Stevens. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier UP, 1989. Pp. xii, 163. \$29.95.**

To read Laurence Stevens's *Dissociation and Wholeness in Patrick White's Fiction* and David Marr's *Patrick White. A Life* in the same week is a sobering experience. Marr's biography is so richly and generously achieved, so powerfully accessory to the partial autobiography of White's own *Flaws in the Glass*, that the academic and emotional limitations of *Dissociations and Wholeness* come across more aggressively than they might have in the pre-Marr era of White criticism. The company of Marr and White places Laurence Stevens at such a disadvantage that one has to consciously remind oneself of the institutional and critical space he occupies. At one point in his book, Stevens quotes White on what he believed to have been the great social mistake of his life, one that his companion Manoly Lascaris never made, in believing that total sincerity was compatible with human intercourse. "My pursuit of that razor-blade truth," he wrote, with brutal and accurate succinctness, "has made me a slasher." Marr's biography gives the details of the wounded and remaindered victims of Martin Place, but does it with such clarity that White's slashing can be seen to have been neither random nor, in the context of who he was and needed to be, unrelated to his fears, values and beliefs.

But the slasher of Martin Place is an uneasy presence in *Dissociation and Wholeness*, in its *jardin exotique* of sensibility, of intelligent readers of the novel, of human reality, of the human condition, of the critical community, of firmly rooted perspectives in the common world. This enclosed garden has F. R. Leavis as its Adam. Laurence Stevens has taken up Adam's tools and moral yardsticks and applied them with fastidious and fussing irritation to a number of White's novels.

In his view, dissociation and the wrong kind of wholeness are everywhere in Patrick White. The real thing comes with a Stevens's flourish of Leavis on Lawrence: "Lawrence's awareness of the unknown and the unknowable, however, unlike Eliot's, is at the same time an exaltation of creative life, and inseparable from an acceptance of responsibility as inhering, necessarily, in the human individual's self-gathered, delicately intent and unanalyzably intuitive wholeness." This would have received very short shrift from Patrick White, banishing as it does most of his maverick, marginal and sanctified central characters

from that limbo of contempt and neglect that society and even its most sensitive, critical, moral guardians would confine them. There is a kind of Leavisite jabbing match going on in this book. White will say that "*The Aunt's Story* is a work which celebrates the human spirit." Laurence Stevens says no: it can't, because Theodora Goodman is a social cripple, not a representative human being. She, like White himself, is too solipsistic; he, like her, sees significance as existing outside society. This must be wrong, says Laurence Stevens, in an echo of Adam/Leavis: human reality is relationship and relationship is society. Transcendence is either an affair between existing and consenting adults or else it is an external, extraterritorial fix, as unwelcome in a novel as transcendental signifiers would be in certain areas of contemporary discourse. "Can madness be said to embody reality?" asks Stevens. "Our answer must be an unqualified no," he answers, on behalf of the intellectual reader and that implicit undergraduate being inducted once more into the tropes of sensibility, sanity, centrality and safe reading important to the Leavisite critical manner. The result of White's insistence on locating wholeness beyond the life we live in constitutes, from this critical stance, an overt devaluing of human life.

Dissociation and Wholeness is a catechism of lamentation and preacherly disapprovals. The satirical and religious ferocity of White's slashing imagination, the surges of music and painting that deliver up to him the Himmelfarbs, Miss Hares and Hurtle Duffields with such radiant, regenerate power, the scorched earth of contempt and rage and abhorrence that White brings to the cruelties and conformist blindness of an unleavened, material society, the redemptive and blasphemous explosiveness of a language which yet retains a tactile and precise sense of itself, get reduced in these filters of late Leavis to truant gestures of immature, irresponsible excess.

There was always a danger that Leavis could become a set of mannerisms, stances, pieties and critical tags. He eventually became a parody of his best self. There is no doubt, in my mind, that *Scrutiny* in the 1940s and the early 1950s brought a quality of literate and highly informed attention to literature, music and education in England, and gave to Departments of English in that country a sense of purpose, vocation and discipline that was, presumably, an advance over what Leavis felt obtained in the civil laxity of Oxford and Lord David Cecil. Given who

he was, *there* (Cambridge), at that time, Leavis did engage the literature of his own country across a defined range of expression with integrity and insight, although in a somewhat dictatorial manner. We know that Peter Beatson managed to get a PhD out of Cambridge on Patrick White in the early 1970s, but even after he had completed it he still felt astonished that he had got away with it. Laurence Stevens, in a prefatorial comment, speaks of the daring involved in his tackling a living, post-1900 author like White. When Cambridge was trying to get rid of Leavis in the mid 1930s the unwelcome possibility was put before him of a Chair of English at the University of Tasmania. The idea of following Ellen Roxburgh to an antipodes of exile did not please Leavis and we need not imagine that his response to Patrick White would have been more favorable. White would not have been part of his great tradition. Laurence Stevens on White sounds like Leavis, uses some of the master's terms of approval and disapproval, but the tone and temper is different. Leavis's likes and dislikes, I think, made cultural sense; he was as good a hater in his own province as White was in his. There are no Fens, no Belltrees anywhere around the critical world of Laurence Stevens, no rooting historical and cultural earth to his admonitions.

There is a free-floating, Prufrock quality to the finicky distances that mark this study of what it believes to be the dissociations of White. But if one thing stands clear from the Marr biography, it is that almost everyone, everything, every place he ever lived with or in, found its way into the tissue of his novels. Nothing went into his work without having been deeply felt, imagined, thought, interrogated to an absolute and logical, moral final point. Language and fiction were a constant exploration for White, a territory of venture and emotional risk. He lived his own flaws, despairs and carefully watched, reluctantly asserted beliefs into his extraordinary novels. These glowed with the wholeness that White sought for, always, he said, intuitively, and always with a deep implication in a world of intensively lived and remembered human relationships. It is almost scandalous to introduce the tepid tag of dissociation to a body of work which is so tense, bitter and alert to the rhythms of association and fusions of character.

Laurence Stevens is not, of course, alone in pursuing this kind of critical discourse on White. He sees himself in the company of others, and I am sure he saw his book as taking a position in the field of White

criticism. His strand of disapproval is not new. It has its parallel in the early Australian reception of White by the various factions of nationalists and Leavisites alike. But again, he is neither A. D. Hope nor Leonie Kramer; and although he brings something of Veronica Brady, John Colmer and Adrian Mitchell to the work of White, he lacks the different and tempered touch that they bring to their evaluations of the novelist. One reason may be the love-hate, *Kulturkampf* dimension that surrounded White in his native land, giving to the criticism of his novels a distinct set of cultural and moral dispositions embedded in the fabric of Australian intellectual life.

We can get a brief register of the difference between these critics and Laurence Stevens by touching on a comment by Adrian Mitchell on the figure of Hurtle Duffield in *The Vivisector* that Stevens quotes in his text: "We expect to discover a maturing character, as in say, Jane Austen, but White's characters do not, in that sense, mature." As a statement of expectations denied this will just about do; in the process, it does at least say something about the area of critical whatnots in White. But when Laurence Stevens moves into this Leavisite gestural terrain, the effect is a bit more wooden.

This is a strange book to have appeared as late as 1989. It has come into the world out of its historical moment. The set of assumptions it carries about life, literature and criticism are solid shoots of Leavis; reading *Dissociation and Wholeness* is like visiting a room in a museum of critical practices, visiting one's own past. In my own experiences in England and Australia in the 1960s there were many Laurence Stevenses in many of the Departments and Schools of English in those countries. Coleridge's notion of a clerisy, beyond class and inside Culture in the high Arnoldian sense, armed with a moral vision that would never stray into philosophy, religion, history or sociology without the greatest aesthetic care, was the order of that polite critical day. For a number of reasons, this diaspora of Leavis never established itself with any force in Canadian universities, and hardly dented the United States. It is intriguing to see such a late flowering of this imperial growth patrolling Patrick White with such care and with such earnest filters so late in the day.

Laurence Stevens does read his White with some textual closeness and with the grappling concern with literature that one associated with Leavis. He has all the querulous seriousness and anxieties of sensitivity that

Leavis brought to his vocation as critic. But after the Marr biography has given us access to the rich intimacies that flow before, through and around the felt life of White's novels, not least into what Laurence Stevens sees as his abstraction, his conscious working with the symbolic and mythological materials of religious and philosophical traditions, it is difficult to return to the hard tack of the omniscient, disembodied, but institutionally empowered critic, having his relatively narrow way with an arbitrarily moralized author, who finds himself confined to the dock of his own novels, on display for judgment before a rhetorical jury made up of arbitrary invisibilities like the community of critics, or, in its singular form, the intelligent reader.

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***Unsettling Relations: the university as a site of feminist struggles.* By Himani Bannerji, Linda Carty, Kari Delhi, Susan Heald and Kate McKenna. Toronto: Women's P, 1991. Pp. 159. \$14.95.**

This is not a book I would teach. Students might be seduced by it; in fact, it is a book second-year students would probably wish they could write: litanies, mostly bathetic, of ways the writers have been done wrong (childhood piano lessons included); these are backed up with learned citations from Marx, Engels, Foucault, *et al*, which, however—aside from being, at times, bizarrely interpreted—are overshadowed by chunks of turgid prose (" . . . I dropped out of the department as does a leaf from a branch when its stem has dried"), and ludicrous expressions of self-doubt (one contributor is, she says, "now referred to as an academic because I teach at a university"). Yet students come to women's studies realizing the urgent need for social change. Feminist students also desire, indeed, agitate for, new knowledges and ways of learning. *Unsettling Relations* (*UR*)'s one-dimensional analysis offers neither vision, nor even information concerning the histories of the institutional structures pertaining to its subject, feminist education in universities. How *do* academics resist, much less reconstruct, the academy? Judging by the pragmatic method,

insufficient focus, and inept composition of *UR*, these writers are not poised for effective struggles in the universities.

The five essayists, who point out that they are untenured (that makes six of us), will move to interest only the converted—and actually I was not moved; I've heard it all before, only never so relentlessly, nor rendered so absurdly. The articles are rife with terms like "non-Jewish whiteness" and "white, lesbian, hearing impaired, middle class, female, feminist political activist." But for all that the writers project a scrupulously correct attempt at "locating themselves," their introduction is vague as to exactly where they came together, saying only that they "had connections to the same graduate school," and they do not explain what or who, precisely, drew them together. However, within the essays, they reveal that the place was the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (my translation: "OISE" is not spelled out in the text). And, given that a sociologist there, Dorothy E. Smith, is quoted in four of the pieces; that her name appears in the bibliography twice as many times (seven entries) as any other; and that the third and lengthiest article parses Smith's academic project—the reader divines that they may be attempting to practice what that scholar theorizes. Fair enough; but each essay repeats the same formula. The writers narrate "personal experiences" of graduate school or teaching; relate this to their gender/class/race/sexual preference/nationality/physical disability/parents' professions/previous community activism/*etcetera*; and, finally, deplore academic knowledge construction. (It's tempting to say that researchers like Gayatri Spivak and Carolyn Steedman, more imaginative and eminently more adept in the theory department, are miles better at this, and leave it at that.)

Now, no feminist in her right mind would disagree that the academy is not a haven of political differences; that it is not characterized by misogyny, racism, and general all-round hegemonic bias and cement-headedness. But let's face it: like any workplace, a university is by definition a snake pit. We all know, for instance, that PhD programs, at least in North America, are a form of hazing—hoops to jump through, gauntlets to run; getting through has more to do with luck, canny self-interest, and stamina, than with merit, or heaven knows, learning. Everyone has her own stories, ones we try to forget; or, over beer tables every so often, we together pick our scabs. Then again some people write books about their grievances. A white-middle-class-heterosexual male,

Wilfrid Cude, published *The PhD Trap* (1987), a notorious book, a scream, or perhaps a long whine, of frustration, which is at least replete with statistics, arising out of his "personal experience" as an unsuccessful PhD candidate. *UR*, on the other hand, argues that the problem has to do with a non-inclusive knowledge base. This is not news. It is also only a partial explanation of tortuous proceedings within the academy. Yet any discussion of the structural history of institutional power, and of feminist encroachments upon it, is curiously absent from a book prefaced with claims to marxist aspirations.

Many critiques, including the Canadian *The University Means Business* (Newson and Buchbinder 1988), indicate that the method of cultural supremacy in the academy is predictable, if not admirable. It has a quite easily understood intelligence. It regards radical students and those scholars engaged with progressive knowledge rather philosophically: we are elements to be dealt with. Because those intent on reproducing hegemony have power, they will *not* broaden their knowledge base. They don't have to. Besides, it's not within their realm to consider other possibilities. So they must be opposed and displaced, by means of structural shifts which, to date, they have (unwittingly) initiated and with which they have collaborated. Cultural supremacists were dumb enough to let the culturally disenfranchised flood into universities in the late 1960s. And they gave us library cards. Then to satisfy the liberal creed of pluralism, and to get us out of their hair, the proponents of the Dead White Fathers, in the 1970s and early 1980s, hired, as they always had, a few proponents of dissent, and in addition suffered those already in place who had crossed the floor—and they approved women's studies programs. Now that the state is making its moves to impoverish radical scholarship, and now that feminists are occupying institutional space, we should convert more of it into back rooms. Full- and part-time faculty and students must go on organizing—and unionizing—to revise and transform structures so that universities hang on to what they have, and in addition further the promotion of democratic education. (Nobody said it was easy.) Wingeing about past and present injustices and self-deficiencies is not consciousness-raising, but a banal exercise in (a) liberal guilt, or (b) self-righteous anger. It is not activism.

Autobiographical theorizing is a project, feminist or otherwise, with a venerable history and large creative scope; it has generated both

epistemological systems and the novel. The narratives in *UR* are not engaging: the writers fail to leaven or vary the prosaic details of their personal histories with suspense, wit, or irony—pique is the single emotion; aggrieved is the only tone. And intellectual work should surely be that which uncovers and passionately advances truth claims. *UR*'s style belies a muddled intention. Again and again, the reader is made impatient by dull, farcical observations. For one thing, jargon is not theory—the word "discourse" is frequently misused, to cite an example. More damningly, tedious dissection of the elements of difference—pseudo-postmodernism—is an over-simple substitute for a deep and radically driven analysis of subject formation and systems of dominance.

Finally, one last cause for exasperation: *UR* misrepresents the significance of feminist scholarship. The thrust of its arguments veers toward anti-intellectual stopping-places. One essayist complains that sustained attention to one's discipline delimits feminism:

. . . publishing in scholarly journals is a hard and time-consuming business. It is this kind of work rather than political activism and personal history which counts as properly academic. The more feminists adjust their work to these parameters, the more we risk being split from transformative politics within and beyond the universities.

The writer's self-flagellation aside, this is an astonishingly naïve and pernicious devaluing of the careful, inventive scholarly labor of feminists reframing their disciplines. *UR* implies that the feminists who write books about the history of scientific classification or French Revolutionary women writers are merely alienated deposits of male supremacy, and that the only way to proceed is by means of self-examining apologia—also known as navel-gazing. We must forego the business of making a virtue out of oppression, or of shying away from the power and position we've won, and get on with the responsibility of plotting imperative feminist scholarship and programs meant to shape emancipatory learning.

Tender Geographies. Women and the Origins of the Novel in France.
By Joan DeJean. New York: Columbia UP, 1991. Pp. xii, 297. \$35.00.

Referring to the *Carte de Tendre*, *Tender Geographies* establishes womens' place in society, politics and literature, linking it with womens' space within the salon, and regrettably and undeservedly, outside the various *académies*. The parallel between private space, *chambre*, *ruelle*, *alcôve* or *réduit* in which women sought to establish freedom and the origin of the Amazon myth is established. At the same time the legal prison represented by marriage and the Salic law which prevented women from reigning (despite their illustrious regencies), constituted an obstacle to be surmounted by these strong and wise women. Excellent illustrations and documentation of the Amazon theme both in history and in literature are provided. It would be interesting indeed to explore more fully this theme throughout literary history, especially in an interdisciplinary manner, including the art and operas of many nations. But DeJean, after whetting our appetites, uses this image as a springboard to a discussion of the Fronde. Here she makes a highly original presentation in which she avers that the seventeenth-century women became Amazons incarnate and "when they brought legend to life, [they] helped to alter permanently both the course of the French monarchy and the course of French literature" (36). DeJean considers the Fronde a "woman's war" in which "women had taken command" (37). Moreover, she indicates that if this story "had been invented by a man, it would undoubtedly be interpreted as an inscription of the threat of female sexuality; the *Frondeuses* in a sense reinvented themselves as a male phantasm" (37). She offers as examples the valiant military exploits of the Princesse de Condé, the Duchesse de Longueville and the Duchesse de Chevreuse. Finally, DeJean recalls the contemporary repression of information about the *Fronde*, which was "feminocentric" without becoming "feminist" (41). The political impetus and energy of the Fronde is then linked to the Salons which DeJean characterizes as "female literary collectives" (47). She focusses on Scudéry's massive production, her depiction of a society "separate but equal" (49), and her treatment by literary critics and historians who tended to reduce the impact of the woman writer by attributing authorship to her brother or to a group while minimizing the author's central role. Finally, Scudéry's novels, contemporary to the Fronde, are seen as

important because of the rejection of marriage and the legal status it confers. Scudéry is seen as instigator of a tradition of French women of letters who question marriage's function to "regulate the social order" (50).

Lafayette's (DeJean rejects the "Madame de" and applauds the times for dropping the Mrs., Miss, or Rep. before Ferraro [1]), novels *Zayde* and *La Princesse de Clèves* are examined with regard to the place accorded women and the place the author accorded marriage. Rather than conclude the novel and resolve all issues, the marriage in this novel is concluded and dismissed at the outset. DeJean offers a new conclusion. Heretofore the ending has been seen as the avowal of guilt and the retreat or withdrawal of the woman to a country estate or convent where she pines and perhaps even dies shortly after the novel ends. DeJean sees the woman's act as a "triumph of indifference, and a legal triumph as well" (123). She "recreates herself as the owner on the family plot" (123) where she can, like the heroine of Graffigny's *Lettres d'une péruvienne*, reign freely over her own little universe. While one might hesitate to go as far as DeJean in interpreting *dessein* as signifying both intention and *sein*, "mark, signature or pledge" (121), one cannot but agree that the novel certainly is a study of the politics of marriage which could indeed lead to a redefinition of property rights.

The preceding argument is bolstered by the treatment Lafayette and the increasingly numerous women writers of the day received at the hands of critics. Denigrated and later forgotten, these women nonetheless made an important contribution to literature, one which DeJean brings to light and summarizes neatly in the appendix which provides an excellent list of the woman writers of the day and their works. This certainly will present a rewarding area of research for scholars who today have the opportunity to make up for the unfair treatment offered these women writers isolated during their lives, satirized after their deaths, and neglected by tradition.

DeJean is to be congratulated for this useful work, for her fresh ideas, and for the clarity with which she puts forward her strong arguments. She concludes with provocative questions: "Will women's writing ever be considered a worthy vision of Frenchness? Will francophone women's writing ever be considered truly French?" (199). With studies like DeJean's women come a lot closer to possessing their own history and

literature. Yourcenar, on her election to the Académie Française in 1981, three hundred years after women were excluded, said she was "accompanied by an invisible troop of women who should perhaps have received this honour sooner, to the extent that I am tempted to stand aside to let their shades go first" (70). DeJean has not only given faces and names to Yourcenar's anonymous seventeenth-century precursors but she has given all women a reason to be proud.

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***Lawyers in Canada.* By David A. A. Stager with Harry W. Arthurs. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990. Pp. xiv, 370. \$60.00. Paper, \$25.00.**

According to the authors of *Lawyers in Canada*, lawyers are "essential to the provision of justice" (3). This is reason enough to undertake a detailed study of lawyers and the practice of law. It is also reason enough to read such a study. By trying to understand the individuals who provide us with "justice," we can perhaps also begin to understand the nature and limitations of the "justice" which is being provided.

Lawyers in Canada is a broad, comprehensive study of the legal profession in Canada. It comes at a time when shifting social and economic forces have wrought significant changes on the legal profession—both in terms of the nature of the practice of law and the composition of the legal community. The authors undertake this study in part to remedy what they claim is a lack of sufficient information about the legal profession in Canada. This lack of information is basic, and covers such issues as the demographics of membership in the legal profession, the socio-economic and educational background of lawyers, the kind of work they do, for whom and for how much money. Further, whatever information is available has, according to the authors, lacked a context for understanding movement and change within the profession. Trends are hard to discern and are thus not fully analyzed.

The main author of this, David Stager, is a professor of economics at the University of Toronto. (Harry Arthurs had originally undertaken to coauthor the book; however, due to the added duties occasioned by his

appointment as president of York University, his collaboration was more limited.) He notes that of the scanty research on the legal profession, most has been "by lawyers, about lawyers, for lawyers" (9). Stager brings to the study a more social sciences-oriented perspective, and an objective detachment from many of the profession's "sacred cows." His economics background is reflected in a recurring concern about the impact of various changes on the cost of legal services: the effect of legal costs on private and corporate clients, and the relationship of recent high legal costs to the growth of corporate in-house law departments, paralegal services, increased specialization, and the changing internal structure of large law firms.

Stager presents law as a large and important business, and in many places it would seem that he considers "justice" to be the commodity furnished by this business. This approach raises the interesting question of the nature of justice. The tension between justice as a commodity and justice as an ideal surely lies behind many of the different questions regarding the need for autonomy of the self regulating law societies, the controlled access to the legal profession, the profession's monopoly over certain services, and many of the legal-ethical questions surrounding these issues.

Stager adopts a broad social science perspective for this ambitious study in an attempt to "provide a baseline for studies of historical change in the profession and for monitoring its responses to future conditions" (3). He notes the lack of past comprehensive examinations of the profession. As a result, the range of compiled information is intentionally broad, and covers all members of the profession from practising lawyers to judges, professors, and law students. He stresses the importance of understanding the legal profession in a broader social context. The types of services provided, the training and skills of lawyers, costs, fee structures and professional accountability, all have an impact on people outside the profession through the economy, as well as through access to justice issues. Stager takes a "transdisciplinary" approach to the materials in which he fuses elements of political science, sociology, economics and law. Stager discusses some of the inherent pitfalls in such an approach (9-10). He also includes a useful overview of the major research done on the legal profession from the disciplines of economics, sociology and political science (10-19). By "transdisciplinary" Stager implies an approach which

synthesizes the work in the main social sciences disciplines, "to provide a comprehensive analysis of lawyers, both as individual practitioners and collectively as the legal profession. There is therefore a broader set of phenomena included than if the study were constrained by the conventional paradigms of any one of these disciplines (9).

Lawyers in Canada is extremely readable. A wealth of information is provided in a manner that is accessible and avoids being dull. This in itself is a remarkable achievement. Where relevant, easy-to-read charts and tables accompany the text, the information provided will be of interest to lawyers and non-lawyers alike. For lawyers, the book is a fund of well organized information about the profession, including relative earnings based on factors such as gender, geographic location, public or private sector, large or small firm, and so on. It contains useful information on billing practices, paralegal services, technical support, and technological developments. It considers the relative merits of specialization versus general practice, as well as a range of other practical issues. For law students, the book establishes a good overview of the profession, and could be a useful tool for making an informed career choice. For academics in a range of disciplines, the book provides a rich context for understanding and analyzing different aspects of the legal profession. For the non-lawyer, *Lawyers in Canada* helps to demystify much of the legal profession, and may be a useful tool in making informed choices regarding the need for legal assistance and the nature of legal services required.

Five central themes run throughout the work. These themes provide a structure for the collected data, as well as a general framework for analysis within the different topical areas. The first theme concerns "changes in the personal characteristics of both the producers and users of lawyers' services" (7). In other words, this theme is related to demographic changes in the supply and demand for legal services. Thus Stager examines changing demographics in law schools, as well as in the different sectors of the practice of law. One of the most significant changes is the increasing representation of women in the study and practice of law.

The second theme explores the way in which lawyers' services have become differentiated, stratified or "specialized." This theme leads to an analysis of the changing nature of the practice of law. Being a lawyer

today may mean performing substantially different functions from a lawyer of twenty-five, or even ten, years ago. The authors look at differences in size and type of law firms, as well as how factors such as location affect the range of services provided or required.

A third theme addresses the way in which services are provided. More specifically, it looks at the structure of law firms, the division of resources, the role and impact of support staff, and so on, as well as the effects which such factors have on the cost and quality of services actually provided. The fourth theme addresses variations in lawyers' earnings. These variations are assessed in light of differences in personal characteristics of lawyers, such as age, sex, marital status, and national origin, and employment characteristics such as geographic location, size and type of firm. Finally, the fifth theme considers the thorny question of the law as a self-governing profession. The authors look at the structure of law societies, their influence on training, membership, the provision of services, their degree of control over the profession and challenges to that control.

The themes run throughout the book, which is divided into six parts. The first part is introductory. It outlines "some of the major changes occurring in the profession in Canada, and some of the issues that confront it" (8), and explains the particular transdisciplinary social sciences perspective chosen for the study. The remaining four parts divide the study of lawyers in Canada into the regulation and practice of law; becoming a lawyer; lawyers in private practice and lawyers in industry and the public sector. The individual chapters cover legal education, law societies, lawyers services, admission to the profession, legal practice in the public and private sectors, and such issues as fees and fee structures, earnings and professional monopolies. The topics are carefully subdivided in a manner which greatly facilitates its use as a reference guide.

It is natural that in a study of such scope the authors would need to set some limits both to the data collected and to the analytical framework. Nevertheless, it is perhaps regrettable that the authors chose to downplay the bijuridical nature of Canada's legal system. The book claims national scope in its title, and indeed, relies on statistics from all the provinces and territories. While mention is made of the difference between the civil law system of Quebec and the common law of the rest of Canada, an understanding of this difference is not carried over into the analysis of

much of the information. Thus, in the section on legal education, no differences are noted between law teaching in the two systems aside from observations about differences in the formation of applicants to law schools. It would perhaps have been interesting to consider demographic differences in civil law classrooms as opposed to common law classrooms; the effect of the stricter approach to curriculum requirements of the Quebec bar on legal formation; the number of Canadian lawyers who qualify in both civil and common law, and the career and salary benefits which may flow from this; the impact of formation in the different streams on career mobility within the federal system, and so on. It might also have been interesting to compare general professional statistical information across the two systems. The failure to acknowledge that these questions exist may mislead or confuse users of the book who are not familiar with the major differences between the two legal systems. The essential silence of the text with respect to potential differences in the two legal systems leaves one wondering whether the authors saw no difference, saw differences which they considered insignificant, or were simply unwilling to take on the issue in the space allotted to them.

It is inevitable that, in providing its rich description, *Lawyers in Canada* raises more questions than it can hope to answer. The collection and presentation of data often cries out for a deeper analysis, which is in any case beyond the scope of the book. *Lawyers in Canada* is nevertheless a rich sourcebook for those who wish to pursue further research into the legal profession. In addition to raising many important questions, it also includes a lengthy and detailed bibliography.

The concluding chapter of *Lawyers in Canada* "draws together the implications of the diverse changes explored in previous chapters and attempts to assess their cumulative effects on the future of the legal profession in Canada" (317). The changes relate to the growth of the profession, its diversification, changing economics and a changing political context. The authors argue that the practice of law in Canada is in a process of evolutionary change, and point to some of the areas where change is likely to come most quickly. Nevertheless, they predict no great revolutions in the nature of either the provision or providers of legal services. Stager and Arthurs paint a broad and multifaceted panorama of the profession which is alternately informative and intriguing. *Lawyers in*

Canada should not be the last word on the legal profession in Canada, but it is certainly an important beginning.

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***The Railway King of Canada: Sir William Mackenzie, 1849-1923.* By R. B. Fleming. Vancouver: U of British Columbia P, 1991. Pp. xxii, 340. \$29.95.**

During the fall of 1912, the Canadian railway and utility promoter Sir William Mackenzie entertained the English journalist and novelist Sarah Macnaughtan at his summer home in Balsam Lake. She, evidently, was charmed by the setting, by Mackenzie's pretty home town of Kirkfield, and most of all by Mackenzie's ability to tell a good story. In describing this encounter in his fine biography, R. B. Fleming is quick to point out that Mackenzie had reinvented Kirkfield, purifying the brawling pioneer town in which he had been raised, just as he was reinventing his life in the stories he offered Macnaughtan. Fleming uses the meeting to illustrate Mackenzie's power as a storyteller, and to himself invent an event—Fleming has Mackenzie reflect on the state of his life and his fragile business empire as he and the English writer sit silently staring at the fire. The meeting with Macnaughtan is a wonderful moment in the book and is also a reminder of the main challenge Fleming has had to face in reconstructing Mackenzie's life: the entrepreneur left plenty of stories and a few public statements to posterity, and little else.

Fleming has responded to the challenge and produced a well-researched and readable portrait of an important Canadian businessman. He makes impressive use of archival and other materials to avoid being taken in by Mackenzie's stories, and offers some interesting perspectives on this businessman's public career. The William Mackenzie who emerges from the pages of *The Railway King of Canada* is quite different from T. D. Regehr's beleaguered champion of a prairie railway. Fleming has few illusions about Mackenzie's business motives: he convincingly shows that the large and immediate profits to be gained from railway contracting determined the peculiar development and ultimately disastrous

financing of the Canadian Northern Railway. Nevertheless, Fleming seeks to avoid presenting Mackenzie as the robber baron he all too frequently appears to be in the otherwise sophisticated work of Christopher Armstrong and H. V. Nelles on utility promotion. The citizens of Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro may have assisted Mackenzie in making his millions, but Fleming suggests that self-interest and the public interest were often the same: Mackenzie provided well operated utilities which produced reductions in prices for those using them. Fleming is particularly anxious, perhaps somewhat too anxious, to defend Mackenzie's management of the Toronto Street Railway; he suggests that Armstrong and Nelles overemphasize the feuds between the city and the street railway.

Mackenzie's public career and his enterprises provide the central focus of the book. Without personal papers, Fleming relies on many of the same public documents which various other historians have examined. As a result, those looking for new insights into Mackenzie's business activities, or into the interaction of the entrepreneur's private and public lives, will be disappointed. What Fleming does offer in this biography is a good read and a fine sense of late-Victorian and Edwardian society in Canada. Details on parties, shopping, automobile driving and theatre going add color and a sense of time and place to the biography. I particularly enjoyed Fleming's description of the Kirkfield society from which Mackenzie emerged. It is one of the most sympathetic portraits of a traditional rural community I have encountered.

Kirkfield offers more than local color, however, for the oral traditions in the community are central to Fleming's view of Mackenzie. Fleming suggests that Mackenzie's success as an entrepreneur rested in large measure on his ability to spin a good tale. Mackenzie, the "master of illusions," was able to drum up support among private investors, the general public and politicians, for visionary projects such as the electrification of street railways or the construction of another transcontinental railway. This is an intriguing thesis. It is obviously difficult to prove, particularly since Mackenzie was a private storyteller; he appears from Fleming's account to have been an awkward public speaker. Fleming does document those observers, including Sarah Macnaughtan, who seem to have been taken in by his stories. If we judge from accomplishments, however, his storyteller's charm seems to have failed him at crucial

moments. In his bid for the Birmingham street railway and the Yukon railway, in his negotiations with the Dominion government while promoting and subsequently while trying to salvage the Canadian Northern, in his dealings with the city of Toronto with respect to street railways, and in his relations with the Ontario government and Adam Beck concerning hydro-electric development, Mackenzie appears to have rubbed people the wrong way, not entranced them with his stories.

The Railway King of Canada is a well-crafted and entertaining biography. Fleming covers a number of complex controversies in which Mackenzie's enterprises were involved in a straightforward and balanced fashion. Because so many historians have turned their attention to tracing larger social forces, Fleming is quite sensitive to the importance of circumstance, but wants to leave some room for the role of character. In fact, there are times when I want to hear more about character in the biography—I want to know whether it made any difference that William Mackenzie, and not some other figure, introduced many Canadians to the modern technological age. But perhaps that is asking too much of a biographer who has managed to breathe some life into an important yet enigmatic figure, a man who deliberately shrouded his life in stories.

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