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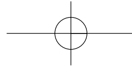
Reviews

Mary Fulbrook, *Historical Theory*, Routledge, 2002, pp. xii + 228, £10.99.

This is one of several books inspired by the challenge that postmodernism has made to the traditional attitude of historians who used to prefer to get on with the job and not bother to think too much about epistemological or methodological matters. Things have moved on from the bunker mentality of some traditionalists, such as Elton or Marwick, or the more extreme postmodernist, such as Jenkins. Mary Fulbrook's book is certainly one of the best of the new breed. For she not only places her argument in the context of the preceding debate, but has something to offer as an alternative. With considerable breadth of knowledge of the theorists and the historiographical debates, she covers a range of topics, and uses examples, which most tutors responsible for Principles and Methods of History courses will immediately recognise. Her own specialist area of German history is a particularly appropriate source for illustrations of debates about objectivity and relativism, ideological influences, and form and content.

The thesis that is put forward here is based on a critique of postmodernism and of 'Hayden White's imposed fictions', and at the same time of Richard J. Evans's *In Defence of History*, whilst rejecting, or even denying, the naïve realism of traditionalists. But, more positively, Fulbrook adopts a Kuhnian-style paradigm approach, though she does not use Kuhn's paradigms in the way that he himself used them when he applied them to the history of the natural sciences. Nevertheless, it is a well-argued case. In one respect, I think she could have strengthened it. She suggests at one point that the 'theoretical literature' does not adequately address some of the issues that are raised by the debate about the relationship between historians' interpretations and the objective determinacy of the evidence. For example, in 'the extent to which conceptually netted (and hence theoretically contaminated) evidence can be used not



merely 'to fill in gaps' within any one body of knowledge, but also to mediate between, qualify and amend a range of different conceptual and theoretical frameworks or paradigms of enquiry'. But in fact the Idealist tradition of historical thought, particularly in F. H. Bradley's *The Presuppositions of Critical History* does address such issues. Bradley's solution to these problems was that the historians had to be their own criteria, which sounds at first as if he was as relativist as the most extreme postmodernist, but in fact was a much more carefully argued thesis than that simple summary suggests. Whether or not one accepts the Idealist foundation of Bradley's thinking, there are similarities between his notion that our 'past' was an ideal construction, 'inseparable from present feeling and perception', and Fulbrook's use of paradigms.

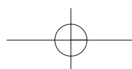
However, *Historical Theory* is a very welcome addition to the recent literature on history and theory, which should be read by all historians who want a better understanding of the methodological and epistemological issues raised by their own efforts to understand the past.

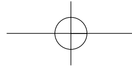
Edge Hill College of Higher Education **Christopher Parker**

Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Traherne (eds), *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, Blackwell, 2001, pp. 529, £80.

Many of the world's leading Anglo-Saxonists have contributed to this volume which provides a very useful overview of current preoccupations of those who study and teach Old English literature. The titles of the individual sections give a good idea of the main approaches – Contexts and Perspectives; Cultural Framework and Heritage; Genres and Modes; Sources and Influences; Debates and Issues. The definition of what constitues 'Anglo-Saxon literature' is a generous one. Anglo-Latin texts are included, and administrative and historical records are considered alongside more conventional literary sources. There is also a welcome perspective on the history of Anglo-Saxon studies in the final section. The dust-jacket defines the target audience as 'upper level students or faculty who want a current and challenging overview of the field', a telling indication of the importance of the American market. Most authors have written with such a readership in mind, and have assumed limited prior knowledge and a need to provide a guide to recent and current work on their topics. The general standard of contributions is high, though some that have aimed to be definitive in their coverage run the danger of being little more than annotated catalogues, and are more suitable for reference than accessible reading. The best manage to provide stimulating introductions that bring out the wider potential of their topics for understanding the Anglo-Saxon past. Although it is invidious to select a few from many fine papers, Stephanie Hollis on 'Scientific and Medical Writings', Fred Robinson on 'Secular Poetry' and Charles Wright on 'The Irish Tradition' seemed to this reviewer to have provided particularly successful and interesting overviews that have much to offer the more experienced reader as well as the novice.

But in the midst of plenty, one cannot help but notice some apparently surprising omissions. Such gaps are all the more to be regretted because there is a fair degree of repetition between chapters of some of the basic background material. The most





notable omission is a chapter on the Old English language. A concise guide is provided by Patrizia Lendinara, but as she also has to introduce Anglo-Saxon metrics and cover the migration of the Anglo-Saxons from the Continental mainland, it is not surprising that she can only manage a cursory survey. Lendinara is one of the contributors who expresses some concern about the current state of Old English studies – a state of affairs that is reflected in the choice of papers for this volume. Both she and Fred Robinson feel that the current preoccupation with the study of the Latin background and Christian sources (stimulated by a major current project into the 'Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture' with which many of the contributors are involved) is in danger of eclipsing the study of the Germanic roots of Old English literature and culture. Allen Frantzen and Nicholas Howe in their reviews of the current state of Old English studies also express concern that, at a time when Old English is being dropped from many American Graduate programmes, the subject is becoming more narrowly based and inwardly focussed. They urge more engagement with the way English studies as a whole are developing. A historian might add, on the basis of this volume to which no historians have contributed, that a greater appreciation of the wider historical and cultural contexts of some of the sources, going beyond that of various Anglo-Saxon monastic communities, is necessary for their full potential to Anglo-Saxon studies to be realised.

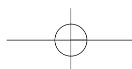
King Alfred's College, Winchester **Barbara Yorke**

Catherine Batt, *Malory's* Morte D'Arthur*: Re-making Arthurian Tradition*, Palgrave, 2002, pp. xxiii + 264, £32.50.

In recent years writers and publishers have begun a re-examination of manuscripts from the Middle Ages and, in the process, furnish new insights into the legends of King Arthur, the only British Worthy. The University of Wales, Cardiff, is publishing a series of studies of Arthur in England and Europe and Palgrave has produced *The New Middle Ages*, an interdisciplinary series of studies of medieval cultures. Now Catherine Batt's *Malory's Morte D'Arthur: Remaking Arthurian Tradition* provides a new view of its subject.

Any reader of Malory's compilation of the Arthurian tales notes repeated references to the French book, which one assumes is the author's source. But which book? After acknowledging Geoffrey of Monmouth's Latin *Historia regum Britanniae* (1136) as the primary source of the Arthurian legend, Batt focuses on Malory's use of the French Vulgate Cycle of prose romances, noting that in the fifteenth century many manuscripts in French and English were available in England. Batt points out further that Malory, an Englishman, draws on English traditions as well as French to shape the structure of his narrative.

The central concern for Batt's study of tradition in Malory is the apparent inconsistencies of the complex Arthurian tradition, between cultural mores and morality. Malory, she writes, expresses 'anxieties between an ideologically straightforward Arthurian world and the difficulties of realizing it texturally' (xviii). As a result, Malory 'brings the nature and function of Arthurian literature into question'. Among the issues examined here are Caxton's Preface and historicity; Merlin's narratives;



issues of violence, gender and narrative form in individual stories of Sir Tristram, Lancelot and Sir Gareth; and spirituality, gender and fatherhood in *Sankgreal*. Batt provides not only significant new information about Malory's sources, but also valuable insights into ambiguities that emerge from out of the complex Arthurian tradition. Containing an excellent bibliography, this book is a must for anyone reading in this field.

Chapman University **Elizabeth Truax**

Marsha S. Robinson, *Writing the Reformation:* Actes and Monuments *and the Jacobean History Play*, Ashgate, 2002, pp. xxiii + 192, £40.

This useful account of Jacobean historical drama focuses on the staging of dramatic moments of Tudor history that became famous through their enshrinement in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of These Latter and Perilous Days*. Generally known by the popular title of the *Book of Martyrs*, this ever-expanding martyrological history was one of the best-known and most influential books of its era. Jacobean playwrights seized upon some of its best-remembered stories, most notably the account of the 'providential' deliverance of Princess Elizabeth, who ran the risk of death during the reign of her sister, Mary I. Robinson lodges the convincing thesis that the plays under study are concerned more with contemporary politics and religion than they are with the nostaligic evocation of an ever more distant Tudor past.

Robinson's study explores apocalyptic expectations woven into plays such as Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*, Dekker's *Whore of Babylon, Henry VIII* by Shakespeare and Fletcher, and Drue's *Duchess of Suffolk*. They join other plays in dramatising the endangerment of Protestant subjects by Roman Catholic clerics and politicians whom nationalistic dramatists represented as melodramatic villains, most notably Stephen Gardiner and Edmund Bonner, Bishops of Winchester and London. Effectively exploring the metatheatrical side of disputations and debates in the *Book of Martyrs*, Robinson lodges a compelling argument, albeit one that is not wholly original, that the tragic emplotment of the localised suffering of Protestant victims of persecution is set within the overarching context of a 'comedy of redemption effected through providential intervention in human history. As such, 'Foxean history plays' encapsulate 'the dual perspectives of tragicomedy' (pp. 41–42). The provocative suggestions concerning the gendering of spirituality in discussion of the experience of aristocratic or royal women who are victimised by Roman Catholic 'villains' represents a high point of this study. They include Catherine Parr, Lady Jane Grey, and Catherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk.

How might this study undergo improvement? Robinson's application of the term 'Foxean' tends to flatten distinctions among plays and playwrights. By granting priority to investigation of the sources for plays under consideration, she tends to lose sight of local circumstances of theatrical production. What dramatic companies staged these plays, at what theatres, before what audiences, and to what ends? What is distinctive about the stagecraft of these plays? To what degree is it legitimate to speak of 'the Foxean stage' (p. 43)? Working largely from the problematic nineteenth-century edition of the *Book of Martyrs*, she sometimes loses sight of impor-

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tant distinctions among the four editions overseen by Foxe himself and his publisher, John Day.

Well grounded upon recent studies of Tudor and Stuart political and ecclesiastical history by Patrick Collinson, Christopher Haigh, Peter Lake, and others, *Writing the Reformation* synthesises a great mass of unfamiliar material of great interest to students of literature and history. It builds constructively upon recent studies of the religio-political nature of seventeenth-century drama or the influence of the *Book of Martyrs* by Margot Heinemann, Jerzy Limon, Huston Diehl, John Knott, and others.

The Ohio State University **John N. King**

Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court, 1590–1619*, Manchester University Press, 2002, pp. 276, £45.

This book fits securely into a growing corpus of writing which examines the place and role in Jacobean history of James VI and I and his queen, Anne or Anna of Denmark (1574–1619). The Queen has always been something of an enigma. She has been seen traditionally as a woman who had very little influence over her husband, except, perhaps, with regard to the question of her children's marriages. However, this view has recently been reversed by Leeds Barroll who has moved the emphasis for change previously placed solely on James away to the Queen.

Clare McManus' research is part of this revision, focusing on female performance in the Jacobean court masque, and, in particular, the court performances of Anna of Denmark by challenging the preconception that women did not perform on the early modern stage, and by reinstating royal and courtly women as cultural agents. *Women on the Renaissance Stage* examines female masque performance and the role of royal and aristocratic women in this period.

McManus poses the question why women were allowed to perform in the masque but in no other form of courtly or public theatre. This is examined by centring her work on the court masque in performance and the representation of the gendered body, both male and female, on the stage in dance, costume, scenery and iconography. By pursuing these lines of enquiry, her study arrives at a reading of the politicised aesthetics of the genre and the ways in which performance lies at the heart of the gendered early-Stuart aristocratic and royal identity.

To capture the full story of Anna's career McManus considers the Scottish precedents which influenced the Queen's performance career and reassesses the place of the English court within the framework of European courts and courtliness. These cultural networks are, McManus suggests, closely concerned with the space of the court and, as such, 'shed light on the gendered spaces of early modern female courtly engagement'. The development of the Queen's masques was dependent, McManus notes, on their social, political and cultural context. However, the most significant of these contexts was Anna's own court. McManus, like Barroll, argues against the traditional view that the masques of the early Stuart court were devised solely to celebrate James VI and I. As the Queen was selecting for participation in the masques,

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ladies from her own, separately identified court, the masques would, therefore, have served the additional purpose of reaffirming Anne's own position as a Queen of some substance, and of aligning her with the future King of England, Henry, Prince of Wales.

McManus makes a convincing argument leading the reader to a well-argued conclusion: the female masquers' relationship to linguistic expression is one which is far more complex than had at first been thought. She has shown how the textualised female body achieved expression through the very constraints which the masque set out to deny. By commissioning and performing masques and by her active political and cultural engagement Anna of Denmark undoubtedly contributed to the development of female performance in the seventeenth century.

Bath Spa University College **Roberta Anderson**

Patrick Brantlinger, *Who Killed Shakespeare? What's Happened to English Since the Radical Sixties*, Routledge, 2001, pp. 238, £14.99 pb.

This book will set librarians a real puzzle: they must not fall into the trap of classifying it under Shakespeare, and especially not alongside the myriad of books which concern themselves with Shakespearean biography or the authorship debate. This book is not primarily concerned with Shakespeare himself, but with the position, role and function of English as a discipline at the beginning of a new millennium.

In order to undertake this analysis, Brantlinger reviews the changes which have taken place since the 1960s and also examines the shifting patterns of higher education, paying particular attention to the emergence of new disciplinary titles. In his view, these new subjects pose different kinds of threat to English: 'Today, if 'literary studies: including Shakespeare are again on the wane, that is, I believe, less because of theory, cultural studies, and multiculturalism than of parks and recreation, accounting and informatics'.

This is a trenchant critique and one which shows a remarkable breadth of reading coupled with a corresponding depth of enquiry. It is deeply personal and heartfelt, whilst remaining carefully argued and thoroughly grounded in the writings of others. It also manages to be very funny, and to encourage the reader to sample Brantlinger's other books. It is fundamentally a work concerned with pluralities: with theories rather than theory, canons and not a canon, literatures and not Literature. Brantlinger argues that the driving force behind changes in English departments is not theory/theories but rather the emergence of and growth in contingent areas such as media and film. At the same time, however, he recognizes that English has a particular need to defend and define its territory, because of the widespread assumption that everyone knows what English is about, or at least what it ought to be about.

Who Killed Shakespeare? is a text which I would recommend to anyone proposing to study English at university. It humanizes those concerned with the practice of criticism, and exemplifies some of the day-to-day problems encountered by those practitioners. It also goes beyond merely recording and defining some of the recent theoretical positions adopted by critics: it engages with those positions and points out what Brantlinger sees as their limitations. Readers may well disagree with his

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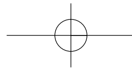


analysis of these limitations, but they certainly ought to provide the stimulus for a great deal of rewarding discussion.

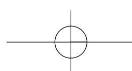
Something of a paradox, however, is posed by this text. The book, as I suggested above, is keen to present itself as not primarily concerned with Shakespeare, and yet that chapter which is most concerned with Shakespeare is also the one which proved to be the most lively, the most entertaining and the most interesting.

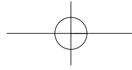
King Alfred's College, Winchester **Geoff Ridden**

Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700*, Oxford Studies in Social History, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 413, £45.00.

This is a delightful book which will both impress the academic specialist and enthral the general reader. At first glance the book's title suggests a conflicting dichotomy between an oral and literate culture in England in the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries, yet one of Dr Fox's main conclusions is that there was no necessary antithesis between the two forms of communication which, far from being engaged in conflict, fed off and invigorated one another. Such a crude dichotomy, therefore, is to be rejected in the same way that a simplistic division into 'elite' and 'popular' culture has been shown to be woefully misleading. The written word, it is argued, both in manuscript and in print, penetrated much more deeply down the social scale and circulated in much greater quantities than historians have previously thought possible. One major explanation of this is that reading ability in some form or another was much more widespread than is usually assumed, and Fox questions and largely rejects the received view that literacy can be measured by the ability to sign a name. He concludes by emphasising just what a literate and textually aware society early modern England was.

These novel conclusions are derived from an exploration of the interaction between the three different media, oral, scribal and printed, in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. For most people oral communication undoubtedly remained paramount throughout the entire period even though, at the same time, there were significant advances made in popular literacy fuelled by the new technology of print. In the small communities in which most people lived there would be little need to read and most communication was purely oral. People sat and talked around the fireside, sang songs and responded to visual imagery. When skills were needed non-readers could seek the assistance of the locally proficient. Reading aloud was the norm and even those who could not read bought printed texts to be read to them with the Bible being the obvious prime example. However, oral communication itself could pose a problem given the variety of dialects and forms of pronunciation current. These two centuries witnessed the golden age of the proverb with an estimated 12,000 proverbs and proverbial phrases in regular use. The book throws up some surprising examples of how long established many proverbs still in use are ('as sick as a parrot' being my favourite example). A fascinating chapter is devoted to 'old wives' tales and children's lore which demonstrates the importance of mothers in the education of children and a rich legacy of orally recalled and delivered stories and fairy tales. The book also focuses on the role of oral tradition and practical demonstration in recalling and preserving the customary law of the community. Yet this was an area



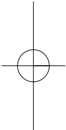


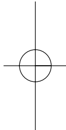
in which there was a growing impulse to resort to the written word and the rulings of equity courts. The final two chapters are devoted to 'ballads and libels' and 'rumours and news'. The power of the former was principally oral, and remained so, while news on current affairs was to become increasingly, but never primarily, influenced by the written word.

The argument of this book is largely convincing although Fox may be open to the charge of exaggeration so far as his generous estimate of the extent of reading ability is concerned. The work is based upon an impressive range of primary sources including some which are challenging to use. It would have added to the value of this study if Fox had included a chapter on developments in the eighteenth century but this is perhaps asking for an extra dish from one who has already given us a feast.

University of Ulster **Keith Lindley**

Tom Cain (ed.), *The Poetry of Mildmay Fane, Second Earl of Westmorland from the Fulbeck, Harvard and Westmorland Manuscripts*, Manchester University Press, 2001, pp. xii + 465, £50.

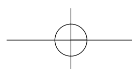


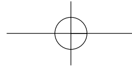


Tom Cain has performed a notable service in putting these poems into print. Fane's poetry has hitherto been largely known through a single volume of 137 English and Latin poems, *Otia Sacra* (1648), the first book of poetry published by an English peer. Cain's new edition renders accessible (in original spelling and punctuation) the texts of just over 500 poems, most hitherto unpublished, fom a series of mainly holograph manuscript miscellanies. These are accompanied by a translation of Fane's brief Latin memoir and a substantial and thoughtful introduction principally outlining the range and diversity of Fane's work.

The limitations of the volume can presumably be attributed to pressure exerted by Cain's publishers. In exoneration it should be noted that they took over this volume from the unexpectedly curtailed series Renaissance Texts from manuscript, projected by the late and much lamented Jeremy Maule. The eighty pages of annotation and textual commentary (in tortuously small type) provide a rich seam of interpretation and explication. Yet these poems demand a lot of annotation, particularly with regard to historical context, and much is left out in terms of poetic influence and intertextuality. The relationship of the poems to *Otia Sacra* is not systematically indicated; the more than 300 items in Latin, Italian and French from the same manuscripts are excluded. The extensive illuminations from the manuscripts, drawings, emblems and peculiar hybrids (which also appeared in *Otia Sacra*), are not reproduced (though there are a handful of plates). Nor are the forty-four poems that appear in *Otia Sacra* but not in the manuscripts republished here. Quite frustratingly the index only covers titles and first lines. There is no index of subjects or proper names, to identify for example the several poems on Ben Jonson, Francis Beaumont, the Fairfax family and Cromwell.

These qualifications aside the volume opens up a fascinating and extensive body of mid-seventeenth century poetry for the first time. Fane's *oeuvre* is heterogeneous, including poems on notable events (for example the death of the Earl of Pembroke), and on personal affairs (his courtship of his wife), love poetry, occasional poetry, psalm paraphrases, translations, religious meditative lyrics much indebted to George





Herbert, poems summarising sermons. Many of the personal poems speak to a circumstance and an audience so specific that they seem little more than a private communication within a now-lost context. This is particularly the case with the earlier writings, though even among these we can find interesting reflections, such as this on patronage and the convention of the gift:

> Noe, know I have those ill deceipts,
> And crafts in Guifts, are like to baites
> On hookes, wheron a flye would cheat
> The greedier fish when it would eat: (p. 76)

Fane's translations have an ease and an even-tempered tone distant from some of his 'original' compositions. The real interest lies in his political poetry, both on public events, such as Charles' voyage to Scotland, and deliberations on conscience and political languages, including a surprising poem from January 1654 in which Fane articulates his submission to the Protectorate (pp. 272–3).

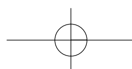
Fane's status as a minor poet is well deserved. Pretty much everything in the volume reads as if its iambics were told on fingers. But Fane is an idiosyncratic and interesting commentator on politics and its languages. He starts imitating Donne, Herbert and Jonson, and becomes an aristocratic counterpart to John Cleveland. But he is a more stimulating writer than Cleveland, more edgy, more experimental and much more prolific. This volume challenges, moreover, any account of Fane as an uncompromised and uncomplicated royalist, as his ambivalence towards the King and his interest in alternative political ideologies spills from many poems. Among the most powerful and interesting is 'The Times Steerage', a poem of some 208 verses in iambic pentameter couplets that purports to have been written in July 1643, when Fane was under house arrest. In it Fane explores the assault on royal prerogative and the rising tide of alternative accounts of political authority.

> . . . soe now the Cavillier
> And the Bowle-Noddled-Crue pretend They fight
> Both that Religion and the Lawes have right
> For Liberty tis doubtless thats their own
> Wherby all Property and safety's gone (p. 83)

If the date is correct (which is to say that if this version does not reveal substantive later emendations) Fane's intuition that religious reformation, exercised in part through the press, threatens to establish an equivalence between spiritual independence and the constitutionally 'Free-States' of the Netherlands is profound and perhaps prophetic. In this poem Fane is, despite himself, fascinated by how the changing times can be interpreted through a series of new and competing political registers, generating a vocabulary that stimulates his creative imagination.

Cain's edition constitutes a timely intervention in the ongoing re-evaluation (and complication) of royalist writing. It insists upon a critical reappraisal of Fane's work, and invites reflection on the political languages of the 1640s and 1650s, the complexities of allegiance, and the contorted relations between public and private in mid-seventeenth century manuscript poetry collections.

University of East Anglia **Joad Raymond**



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Peter Lake (with Michael Questier), *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England*, Yale UP, 2002, pp. 731, $45.00.

The Antichrist's Lewd Hat is a daring, exemplary, and magisterial work of social, religious, political and literary analysis. This book traces the recurrence of a series of tropes and images of order, disorder, sin, and punishment among inexpensive chapbooks, the theatres, and the pulpit from the 1570s through the Restoration. It examines the influence of the book trade on 'popular' religious consciousness by showing that dramatic performances, sermons, and noteworthy events of alleged providential intervention in human affairs produced printed materials that competed for the same readership. Linking official Protestantism with the market for ephemeral print, Lake argues against a revisionist Reformation historiography that isolates the adherents of reformed religion from the mass of Englishmen who are supposed to have remained vaguely 'Catholic' throughout the sixteenth century. The study's chief accomplishment lies in identifying narrative strategies of 'protestantisation' along a fluid and sometimes adversarial spectrum of edification and entertainment that ranges from the production of cheap news to pulpit jeremiads against vice and the theatre and finally to the treatment of Puritan theology on the stage.

Lake begins with literary hacks, various brands of 'godly' Protestants, Jesuit Catholic missionaries, and secular clergy who each manipulated accounts of notorious murders and the prison conversions of condemned murderers for a common, 'popular' audience. Murder pamphlets, domestic tragedies, and fiery attacks against the sins of the city depended upon stock figures of whores, rakes, and degenerate patriarchs as part of a moral and social 'world turned upside down' that delighted audiences with titillating detail before being righted by the punishment and repentance effected by magistrates and ministers. By encouraging readers to reform or suffer the same fate as the condemned, radical Protestants found, in the inversion occasioned by the murders, the opportunity to solder providential theology to the tastes of readers. At the same time, English Catholics competed with Protestants to claim execution scenes as fuel for their own evangelistic efforts. One section of the book, co-authored with Michael Questier, reveals murder pamphlets as sites both for dispute between Jesuit missionaries and secular clergy over jurisdiction of the English mission and for efforts to fashion English Catholic identity against an oppressive Protestant regime. Lake and Questier give generous attention to Elizabethan Catholicism in this context to demonstrate ways in which contrasting confessional ideologies took advantage of the same cultural materials to attract devotees.

Lake's discussion of these issues brings a provocatively fresh perspective to the study of post-Reformation religious change. Antitheatrical satire and the shifting loyalties of certain members of the London literary underground constitute his analysis of 'hot' Protestant pulpit and print attack against 'deviance'. Whores and other profligates stand collectively throughout these texts for the vices of London, and, by extension, the nation. Plays from *Macbeth* to *Arden of Faversham* incorporate the rhetoric of transgression and the reassertion of order for theatregoers. *Batholomew Fair* and *Measure for Measure* go one step further by subjecting the 'ordered' world invoked by 'godly' preachers and prison evangelists to strong ridicule. In his analysis of writers-for-hire who enjoyed denouncing the theatre throughout the 1580s but

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who switched sides during the Marprelate affair to defend religious orthodoxy or who later wrote plays themselves, Lake argues that narratives of corruption and satires directed against the attempt at 'godly' reform allow different commercial and religio-political interest groups to frame shifting ideologies for ubiquitous popular consumption. These efforts reveal Protestantism as a multi-layered phenomenon that includes interdependent but frequently competing cultural alliances and market-driven appeals to active readers.

This extraordinary book, sometimes verbose but brilliant at its best moments, provides thorough critiques of established critical and historiographical approaches to early modern culture. The project is not without its flaws: Lake barely mentions, much less analyzes, Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* as a precedent for prison- and scaffold-conversion accounts even while devoting a significant number of pages to Catholic appropriation of execution performances as instances of martyrdom. His occasionally vague focus on 'popular' readership fails to examine printing house practices and actual instances of reading as thoroughly as it might. The argument evolves from disparate materials that could have easily led in other directions. One outstanding example of internecine Protestant strife is Peter Studley's *The Looking Glass of Schism* (1634), in which Studley reports Enoch ap Evan's murder of his mother and brother after the three could not agree on whether or not to kneel to receive communion. This text, and the flurry of Puritan and non-Puritan publications that it spawned, regrettably receives only passing mention, as Lake hurries to deal with other matters. In fact, he occasionally dwells briefly on murder narratives dating from as late as the 1670s while not explicitly justifying how these lead to the concentrated attention paid to late Elizabethan years. *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat* nonetheless makes an impressive contribution to the evolving history of the English Reformations and cannot be ignored by historians or literary scholars of the period.

The Ohio State University **Mark Rankin**

Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. xiii + 292, £45; **Natasha Korda**, *Shakespeare's Domestic Economies: Gender and Property in Early Modern England*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, pp. ix + 276, $49.95.

These two books, written by women based in Literature departments in American universities, make a near pairing and indeed share much obvious common ground. Both emphasise the increasing significance attached to households, housekeeping, housewives, and 'household stuff' in society, law and literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both writers focus chiefly on the representation of household practices and household goods in drama. Since it is such an incredibly rich source it is no surprise to find *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1598) discussed at considerable length in each book. (Curiously, both writers, misleadingly depict the community in question as a village). Both Wall and Korda, however, relate the preoccupations of English drama to those in other genres of writing – legal treatises, cookery books and conduct books, for example. One of the most famous of them – Gervase Markham's *The English Housewife* (1615, 1631) – for both these writers is a key text, eloquently

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expressive of the changing social conditions and values which lay behind it. Many other similar writings appeared in this period devoted to the same agenda, or at least part of it. Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* (1573), William Harrison's *Description of England* (1587) and (much later) Hannah Woolley's *The Accomplisht Ladys Delight* (1675) are representative writings which figure in the pages of these two studies.

Staging Domesticity takes stock of the wide-ranging role of the housewife in this period; brewing, baking, distilling, dairying, butchery, medical and veterinary care, textile-making, accounting, as well as cleaning and washing were all part of it. The housewife in these years was called upon to fulfill a key management position and to get the most out of the household's servants. (This aspect receives too little attention in Wall's book). Plays like *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (1575), the first five-act comedy written in the English language, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, as well as better-known comedies by Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, all made much of these fundamental socio-economic realities. Domesticity, indeed, framed much of their dramatic action whereas in post Restoration and eighteenth-century plays the depiction of manners took centre stage. Korda's book complements Wall's by the attention it gives to household goods themselves – Katherine's preferences for fine clothes and dainty dishes in *The Taming of the Shrew*, the central theme of vigilant domestic management and the enormous range of moveable goods paraded in *The Merry Wives*, and the value attached to Desdemona's strawberry-embroidered handkerchief in *Othello*. (As a counterpoint to all this Korda attempts to squeeze much – too much! – out of the silences on households and household goods in *Measure for Measure*, a play populated by single persons of both sexes.) The author probably succeeds best with her unpacking of *The Taming of the Shrew*, making a convincing case for viewing the play as a demonstration of the market's infiltration of the household. It is a telling reminder that Petruchio never uses force to tame his shrew; denying her the *things* she craves is his chosen campaign strategy. A valuable extension to the themes of the study is a consideration of the presence of household stuff on the stage itself. Where did the players' props and costumes come from? Knowing that the most sumptuous costumes used in the public theatres had first been used in court masques and, when past their best, had been disposed of by the Revels Office, adds useful insights into both the textual resonance and audience reception of some of Shakespeare's plays.

Korda's materialist emphasis on household stuff, it seems, may owe part of its inspiration to her mother's pioneering work in advertising. (This fact emerges in the acknowledgements, as does the author's fulsome tribute to her faithful pet dog). Viewing household goods in this period as a demonstration of the home's growing significance as a sphere of consumption, however, though entirely valid, can be pushed too far. She exaggerates the decline of the household as a unit of production; domestic industry in these centuries, after all, was the still the norm in all but mining and the metal trades. In this respect, Wall's book with its sustained stress on the housewife's wide sphere of action provides a necessary corrective. And she does well to remind her readers that the pervasive stress on housekeeping in this period had a wider, socio-political significance. It was an axiom of the time that well-ordered households provided the secure foundation for a well-ordered state. 'Englishness', in part at least, was constructed in the early modern home.

King Alfred's College, Winchester **R. C. Richardson**

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Kenneth Parker (ed.), *Dorothy Osborne: Letters to William Temple: Observations on Love, Literature, Politics and Religion*, Ashgate, 2002, pp. xi + 348 £49.50.

Kenneth Parker's edition of Dorothy Osborne's letters is an excellent contribution to the study of early modern women writers. Born in 1627, Osborne is best known for the private letters she wrote from 1653–54 to her future husband William Temple. Temple is certainly a familiar figure to historians and literary critics for his diplomatic achievements and early patronage of Jonathan Swift. However, the letters written by Dorothy Osborne are also worthy of consideration for their literary skill and for what they can tell us of an early modern gentlewoman's experience of courtship. Osborne's correspondence with Temple was clandestine, and written as her family sought to oppose her match. In his introduction, Parker paints a picture of Osborne as a confident and outspoken commentator on the politics of her time, and as a powerful thinker on the relationships between men and women.

This new edition largely reproduces Parker's own 1987 Penguin edition, except for modest revisions in the notes and expansions of segments of the introduction in response to new critical work on Osborne and other early modern women. While his introductory remarks are occasionally scattered or undeveloped, Parker does draw out important concerns in the letters: from Osborne's sharp remarks against dissenters like Stephen Marshall and William Erbury to her commentary on the woeful power imbalances she witnesses in marital relationships.

The edition itself is beautifully produced, and includes two reproductions of Peter Lely's portraits of William Temple and Dorothy Osborne. Each letter is printed as a separate page of text, an elegant feature that reminds the reader of the individual origins of each letter. Each letter is preceded by a head note explaining its general context and rhetorical concerns, a helpful intervention given the density of Osborne's references to people and places.

Three sections in the introduction stand out as particularly perspicacious and original. In his consideration of Osborne's 'statements on obligations', Parker discusses Osborne's subtle understanding of what she owes her family, including her father and demanding brother. Another crucial section links the way in which the apparently ephemeral gossip of Osborne's letters had serious implications, since social and kinship ties played a large role in the constitution of the élite. As Parker notes, 'going from country house to country house; wining and dining with Briers family, with Lady Grey de Ruthin, is as much about politics, economics and marriage as it is about entertainment, so that we have the conditions for the creation and retention of a coherent sense of community which could withstand new pressures as well as strange ideas' (28). Osborne's letters become not just a source of direct comment on politics and religious events of the time, but are also shown as embedded within a nexus of power relations. Furthermore, Parker traces the reception of the letters, and the way in which they have sometimes symbolized the continuation of royalist values in a time of upheaval, especially for the Victorian-Edwardian critics who were among Osborne's first public readers.

Given the hefty price of the edition, it will not be possible for most instructors to assign the book for use in a graduate or undergraduate classroom, although a reasonably priced future edition would be a wonderful addition to classes in early mod-

ern history and literature. Yet the new Ashgate edition will doubtless become standard for Osborne scholarship, and continue to stimulate interest in a figure who has a tremendous amount to offer anyone interested in early modern women.

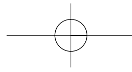
Queens College, CUNY **Carrie Hintz**

Howard D. Weinbrot, Peter J. Schakel and Stephen E. Karian (eds), *Eighteenth-century Contexts: Historical Inquiries in Honor of Phillip Harth*, University of Wisconsin Press, 2001, pp. xviii + 305, $21.95.

It is a tribute to the high quality of Phillip Harth's publications, despite their relative paucity, that fifteen scholars should have contributed a volume of essays to this *festschrift* in his honour. Although the bibliography of his contributions takes up pages xiv to xvii of the Introduction, two of them list his reviews, while only three authored books appear in them. However these, *Swift and Anglican Rationalism* (1961), *Contexts of Dryden's Thought* (1968) and *Pen for a Party: Dryden's Tory Propaganda in its Contexts* (1993), together with a handful of articles, established his reputation as one of the leading authorities on Augustan literature. It is a further tribute to his approach that, where as no fewer than thirteen of the contributors are not historians but Professors of English, their essays should be referred to in the subtitle as 'historical inquiries'. For Harth has always insisted on the importance of establishing the intellectual milieu in which an author wrote. He is as much a historian of ideas as a literary critic. This makes his contributions, and those of the essayists who appear here, as important for History as they are for Literature.

It is perhaps curious that there are no essays dealing directly with Dryden, whereas six deal with Swift, while one revisits Anglican Rationalism, a concept Harth developed as crucial to his theological position. Gerard Reedy's lucid yet erudite discussion of the concept is one of the highlights of a volume not lacking in clarity or erudition. For some, while erudite, are not clear, like Claud Rawson's 'Swift and Mandeville', (another interest of Harth's) and Michael J. Conlon's 'Anonymity and authority in the poetry of Jonathan Swift'; while others, though clear, are not erudite, such as Peter Schakel's 'Swift' Voices: innovation and complication in the Poems written at Market Hill'. Two which really take our understanding of Swift a stage further are Frank Ellis's on his rendition of Anthony Collins's *Discourse of Free-Thinking* and Herman Real's comparison of *Gulliver's Travels* with More's *Utopia*. The last of the six essays on Swift, James Woolley's, investigates the significance of the three volume manuscript miscellany in Trinity College Dublin known as 'the whimsical medley' for the establishment of the canon of his poems. It is thus more a contribution to the problem of documenting the Dean's poetical output than to our knowledge of the man himself.

The non-Swiftian essays range from an intriguing discussion of dissonance in music and poetry from 1613 to 1798 by James Winn to an ambitious attempt at 'Rerouting the history of British literary theory, 1650–1800' by Eric Rothstein. Max Novak investigates the politics of William Congreve's *The Old Batchelour*. David L. Vander Meulen compares editions of Pope's *Dunciad*. Howard Weinbrot tells the story of Pope's quarrel with Madame Dacier over the merits of Homer. The most original and



rewarding of all the essays is Patricia C. Brückmann's on the symbolism of a depiction in needlework of Noah's Ark in Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*. Brian Corman argues that the canon of the British novel established in the first two decades of the nineteenth century adversely affected women novelists until recently. Bruce Redford demonstrates how Boswell stage-managed conversations in his *Life of Johnson*.

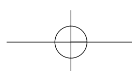
University of Northumbria **W. A. Speck**

Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage*, Cambridge University Press 2001, pp. x + 312, £40.

Dr Tadmore gives fresh impetus to the study of the early modern family, which had rather got bogged down in statistical detail, terminological confusion and arid debate. Where terms borrowed from the social sciences, such as 'nuclear' and 'extended', and 'attitudinal modernisation', bedevilled the topic, her new approach is to examine the terms contemporaries used to describe their familial and other relationships. Her principal sources are a diary, that of Thomas Turner, two conduct books, Samuel Richardson's *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum* and Eliza Haywood's *A Present for a Servant-Maid* and three novels, Richardson's *Clarissa* and *Pamela*, and Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*. These different genres make her study of particular interest to readers of this journal. Besides these principal sources she examines a wide range of documentary evidence, including manuscript material, as the impressive bibliography shows. She subjects them to a novel methodology she describes as 'the systematic analysis of historical linguistic usages'.

This refreshingly historical approach proved very rewarding. Tadmor found three distinct concepts of the family co-existing in the eighteenth century: household; lineage; and kinship. The household family accorded with Dr Johnson's dictionary definition of 'those who live in the same house'. Thus it did not necessarily depend on conjugality or consanguinity, since it included apprentices and domestic servants. The lineage family was confined to hereditary successors. The Duke of Newcastle's family vault did not contain the remains of minor kin, let alone retainers of the Pelhams. The kinship family was by contrast extensive, involving relationships with such relatives as brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins which were remarkably rich in texture. These are often described in terms of an 'onion model', with gradations of affinity from a central core of parents and children to an outer skin of remote cousins. Tadmor demonstrates that the ways in which contemporaries addressed these relationships were too complex to be reduced to a simple model.

Friendship was an even more subtle notion since it could embrace blood relatives but also included acquaintances and companions. After the death of his wife, 'a valuable and truly sincere friend', Thomas Turner got by with the help of a wide circle of friends. Again dichotomous terms from the social sciences used to describe friendship, for example contrasting 'useful' and 'expressive', 'informal' and 'contractual', and 'private' and 'public', do not adequately distinguish Turner's relationships with his friends, which could be both at once. They even included the political connexions of the Duke of Newcastle. Turner became involved in the general election of 1761 in



Sussex and Lewes as a shopkeeper who supplied goods to potential voters, being rewarded for his pains with £11.16.3d and a shoulder of lamb from the Duke's country house.

The study concludes with an investigation of friendship in literary texts, including Jeremy Taylor's *The Measures and Offices of Friendship* (1662) as well as *Betsy Thoughtless* and *Clarissa*. Tadmor convincingly shows that they can only be fully appreciated when placed in the historical context she has established in earlier chapters.

University of Northumbria **W. A. Speck**

Paula Byrne, *Jane Austen and the Theatre*, Hambledon, 2002, pp. xvii + 283, £25; **Penny Gay**, *Jane Austen and the Theatre*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. xi + 201, £37.50.

One of the most intriguing and indeed perplexing issues in Austen criticism has always been how somebody with such a love for, and knowledge of, theatre could have produced a novel such as *Mansfield Park* (1814) that appears (on the surface at least) to be deeply suspicious of theatre and theatricality. Austen was, after all, attending the theatre in London regularly while she completed this novel. Earlier on, she may even have attended a private production of *Lovers' Vows* (according to Paula Bryne's original reading of an apparently chance reference in one of her letters).

Byrne and Penny Gay have both written important new books that try to provide answers to the riddle of *Mansfield Park*, as well as addressing a whole series of other issues about her earlier and later work. Both these books, which perhaps somewhat unfortunately have the same title, will establish themselves as essential reading. And, as they both open rather than close a case, they will almost certainly give rise to other studies with similar but perhaps slightly different titles. Except in passing neither book deals with 'Sanditon'. Byrne does not offer a reading of *Persuasion* (1818), whereas Gay has a good chapter on it which explores the codes and conventions for melodrama associated with Captain Wentworth and William Walter Eliot. Byrne's concluding chapter on *Emma* (1815/6) is perhaps not as strong as it could have been, but only by the extremely high standards that she had set herself earlier on. So the debate, or dialogue, will continue and that can only be a good thing.

The evidence presented in both books about Austen's love of almost all aspects of theatre is absolutely compelling. She shared the itch to write for the theatre, as well as to act in it, at Steventon. She probably attended the theatre as regularly as was possible when she was in Bath and later in Southampton (Gay has interesting details about the different theatre designs). Her visits to her brother Henry in London after she had moved to Chawton (1811, 1813 and 1814) allowed her to sample a wide variety of metropolitan theatre. If anything, Henry, who had married the vivacious Eliza de Feuillide as a result of playing opposite her at Steventon, was even more obsessed by theatre than his sister. But she was not far behind him. What is so refreshing about both these books is that they reveal, if not for the first time then at least for the first times in sustained form, the range and depth of Austen's knowledge of the theatre. She enjoyed 'low' as well as 'high' drama. She was familiar with a wide range of Renaissance and Restoration plays (both these books suggest Elizabeth Bennet's

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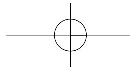
origins in a lively lady like Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*), as well as with more contemporary ones. Austen's letters make it clear that she was familiar with the performances of almost all of the leading players of the day (Siddons, Jordan, Kean, Elliston, Kemble, O'Neill and many others). Her references to them may sometimes appear to be quite casual ones but, as Byrne suggests, it was her knowledge of the theatre (shared by her family) that allowed her to write in a kind of shorthand.

Austen was just as well informed about the playwrights of her day as she was about other novelists. Byrne argues a very convincing case throughout the earlier part of her book for the influence of Richard Brinsley Sheridan: an influence which may not have been explored fully before as a result of a fixed idea that there could not be much in common between an allegedly Tory novelist and a Whig politician. Yet Byrne shows, amongst other things, that Marianne Dashwood may be a much more complex version of Lydia Languish. We know that Sheridan liked *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Both books under review note that as late as 1809 Austen was taking part in amateur theatricals: playing the part of Sheridan's Mrs. Candour. Yet Sheridan (who is named in 'The History of England') is by no means the only playwright who can be used to establish appropriate contexts. Gay makes some interesting connections between Austen's work and that of Hannah Crowley. Both books notice that, although we may have been trained to spot Austen the ironical narrator, a lot of her writing in fact takes the form of unmediated dialogue, complete with stage directions. She is just as concerned as a playwright would be with entrances and exits, and with the presence and importance of the on-stage spectator. In short, she has a highly developed sense of scenic form.

So are we any further forward with the debate over *Mansfield Park?* Byrne offers a reading of *Lovers' Vows* which is followed by a discussion of the novel itself. One of the interesting and I think original features of her approach to the play is to suggest that Fanny Price's history may be deeply embedded it it. As a poor relation she is different from Amelia in one respect, and yet some of her experiences are uncannily similar (rejecting the rake and marrying the clergyman). Byrne also notices that Kotzebue's Baron is a much more sympathetic character than Austen's one, which leads her to the nicely-phrased conclusion that although Sir Thomas may condemn the theatricals it is in fact the theatricals which condemn him. Byrne is also very good as well at identifying the way in which Tom Bertram's desire to indulge in various forms of theatrical slumming suggests his uneasiness with his role in the stage-play world of Mansfield as son and heir. Penny Gay (again quite rightly in my view) joins other critics in wondering whether the ending of *Mansfield Park* does in fact end anything. It may seem to be understated and undramatic more generally, and yet it is preceded by a novel which explores and exposes the theatricality of everyday gentry life, with a mixture of condemnation and celebration. More specifically, in order to understand the novel (and Henry Crawford's character) topical theatrical references to such events as Edmund Kean's reputation and the popularity of Don Juan plays need to be uncovered.

As indicated, a theme that runs throughout these books is the way in which Austen was acutely aware of the ways in which the social self had to be performed on a continuous and daily basis. Gay's study is perhaps more explicitly theoretical on this point, and yet it also underpins what Byrne has to say. Both of these books are major and overdue additions to Austen scholarship.

University of East Anglia **Roger Sales**



Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination*, Palgrave, 2002, pp. xiv + 260, £45.

Historically conscious studies of British romanticism have usually focused on the formative influence of the French Revolution, minimising the cultural impact of the subsequent war with Republican and Napoleonic France. Philip Shaw's book helps to correct that balance, drawing our attention away from the beginning of the conflict to its ending in 1815. This study of the British literary response to Waterloo is a book about endings: the ending of the long war with France, the ending of forty thousand lives.

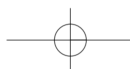
The book includes chapters on Scott, Southey, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Byron as well as briefer discussions of works of visual representation such as Turner's painting 'The Field of Waterloo' and the controversial 18-foot statue of Achilles raised in honour of Wellington by 'The Ladies' of Britain.

Shaw starts by citing Linda Colley's influential argument that British identity was forged principally through this twenty-two year conflict with France, the 'hostile Other'. The victorious and bloody ending of that conflict was therefore ambiguous in its effects: an apotheosis of national sentiment which also – with the disappearance of the hostile Other – necessarily threw identities into disarray. Shaw then draws on other kinds of theory, including Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, to explore the complicatedly mixed feelings of the poets in their responses to Waterloo.

The book's title will attract readers of this journal and Shaw has written an ambitious and intelligent book from which we can all learn. Nevertheless, as an interdisciplinary investigation the book is only partly successful. By drawing on Linda Colley to introduce a principally literary study Shaw helps to correct a serious omission in her otherwise excellent book: Britons largely ignored one of the main kinds of activity – the writing and reading of literature – through which the new national consciousness was forged. The work of Walter Benjamin is also introduced to good effect, in an excellent chapter on Byron which shed new light, for me, on both writers. On the other hand, by drawing so extensively on Lacanian psychoanalysis Shaw has produced a book which, while interdisciplinary in intent, may not always be accessible to people outside university departments of literature.

This is a familiar problem and the solution to it is not easy to see. It is not sufficient to denounce obscurity since illumination and obscurity sometimes do go hand in hand. In the case of Lacan for instance, on the rare occasions when I can understand what he is saying I find him wonderfully illuminating. Philip Shaw's discussion, drawing on Lacan, of the linked issues of death, desire and representation certainly alternates between lucidity and obscurity. Nevertheless, the obscurity could have been mitigated. For instance, in a book about imagination, which necessarily also talks about reality and about symbols, the introduction of Lacan's concepts of 'the Imaginary', 'the Real' and 'the Symbolic' is bound to cause confusion unless the terms are clearly defined. In fact, a glossary would have been useful, or at least an index that included abstract terms as well as proper names.

The shift from history to psychoanalysis has a further drawback. Shaw insists that the trauma of bodily pain and death cannot be directly represented; but the indirectness of these particular literary representations also had specific historical causes. The material presented in this book continually reminds us of these causes but they are not properly foregounded or conceptualised. How far would the book's epistemo-



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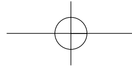


logical arguments have had to be reformulated if any of the major writers had fought in the battle as well as written about it? The absence of a Julius Caesar or a Wilfred Owen is taken for granted rather than investigated in this book's discussion of fighting and writing. And while the discussions of post-war literary tourism are consistently fascinating, the fact that the battle was not fought at home is also somehow taken for granted. The British do after all have a very odd history, full of military violence which, however, in the two hundred years between Culloden and the Battle of Britain, always took place overseas.

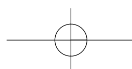
University of Glamorgan **Gavin Edwards**

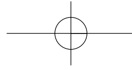
Nancy Henry, *George Eliot and the British Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. xi + 182, £35.

This is a short though nevertheless timely study in an area of George Eliot studies, and Victorian studies more generally, that has become very popular over recent years. The study of nineteenth-century imperialism, and Eliot's particular relevance to post-colonial debates, has led to a number of groundbreaking works which this particular monograph builds on, ranging from seminal pieces by Edward Said, Patrick Brantlinger, and a host of other post-colonial critics. At the same time, Henry is keen to distance her own work from these others, which she sees as part of the 'unquestioned, self-perpetuating critical tradition' which reprimands 'Eliot for her role in facilitating colonization and its attendant injustices' (p. 113). The importance of *George Eliot and the British Empire* comes through the combination of this revisionist critical approach and the fact that this is the first book-length study to make Eliot's relationship to empire the sole focus of its attention.

The book begins by countering assumptions that have been the basis of other critical studies. It is noted at the outset that 'there was no imperialist agenda behind either her [Eliot] actions or her writing' (p. 3). Henry then goes on to reject the 'retrospective imposition of terms such as "imperialist ideology" or even the concept of imperialism itself' (p. 3). In doing so she rightly points out that the notion of a monolithic imperialist ideology is unsustainable in the light of the often localised, 'fragmentary nature of the empire as perceived by Victorians at home' (p. 3). This critical position is both sensitive and sensible, not falling into the trap of homogenising disparate and complex aspects of Victorian culture.

However, this revisionist approach also leads to a rather one-sided picture of the author. For Henry, Eliot was a sensitive, non-judgemental, and to a large extent politically detached truth-teller. She is seen to have possessed an almost uncanny ability to divorce herself from her colonialist ideological context, and to be able to offer at all times an even-handed, apolitical image of the colonies and the imperial project as a whole. This picture is too much the complete opposite of the defined Said-influenced criticism that Henry begins her study by castigating. The imperialistic implications that are unarguably present in Eliot's works are thus sidestepped in the name of seeing texts only as 'historically situated in the beliefs and daily practices' (p. 115) of their own time. Not only does this risk blunting the political edge of Eliot's fiction, but it is also in danger of missing a key point; it does not weaken our admiration of



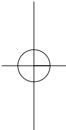


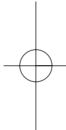
Eliot as a sophisticated, self-aware liberal if we acknowledge that she, like other Victorians, was at times subject to the delimiting ideological context of her time. This acknowledgement allows us to see those moments when she was able to overcome these limitations as the real triumph of her writing.

Beyond the theoretical debates of the introduction, the overriding focus of the study as a whole is biographical. Henry provides detailed, often new information on George Eliot and her imperial connections. We learn about the extent of Eliot's reading of imperial travel literature, about her family connections to empire via George Henry Lewes's sons and her own sister, as well as the extent of her own financial investment in the administrative framework of empire in the form of stocks and shareholdings. At each stage this information is related to Eliot's developing realist aesthetic, and in this Henry provides us with an impressive example of the potential relationship between biography and literature. It is the chief strength of what is a worthy and impressive study.

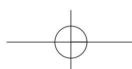
King Alfred's College, Winchester **Neil McCaw**

Alan Thiher, *Fiction Rivals Science: The French Novel from Balzac to Proust*, University of Missouri Press, 2001, pp. ix + 226, £31.50.





In the fast-growing scholarly field of science and literature, Thiher's volume, centred on the transformations of the French realist novel in a century of rapid scientific advances, makes a sometimes irritating, sometimes exciting, and overall very useful contribution. The Introduction, opening with the statutory reference to C. P. Snow, sets the historical and philosophical context: first, some 'Thinking about Literature and Science', and then some 'Background Reflections on the History of Science'. Some of these thoughts are to the point, while others are laid on with too broad and quick a brush. Eyebrows may, for instance, legitimately be raised at the assertion that 'Enlightenment thinkers were not usually given to celebrations of cultural relativity' (p. 8), especially when it is followed four pages later by a reference to Montesquieu's relativism. Chapter 2, 'Balzac and the Unity of Knowledge', explores the new epistemic frameworks constructed in the Balzacian novel in search of a form of totalising knowledge to rival that of the natural sciences. A discussion of the early works, from *La Peau de chagrin* to *Séraphita*, refers briefly to familiar material (vitalism and mesmerism, and Balzac's use of the taxonomies of nascent biological science). But it also considers the relations of Balzac's modes of writing to Lavoisier's chemistry, the electrodynamics of Ampère, and Sadi Carnot's contemporary theorizations of energy, sketching a connection between Carnot's thinking and Balzac's innovatory exploration of desire and energy as key attributes of the knowing subject. The chapter on Flaubert is less satisfying, adding little that is not well-known about that writer's ironic encyclopaedic denunciations of the sciences of his day. Archaeology and historiography, of current interest for Flaubert scholarship, are mentioned but this line is not pursued. 'Zola's Collaborative Rivalry with Science' develops Michel Serres's analysis of the scientific centres of interest that shape Zola's writing, introducing a fresh reference to concepts emerging in mid-nineteenth-century physics, in the thermodynamics of Maxwell, Clausius and Boltzmann, which should give a more



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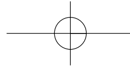


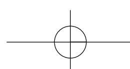
open perspective to future readings of Zola's representations of the relations of individuals to their society. The recognition that science only gives information in terms of large statistics facilitates a shift in thinking about the individual, from the fixed type, bound by the iron laws of heredity, to the more loosely-circumscribed member of a group, operating in a larger and more complex field of social and cultural dynamics. In the closing chapter, 'Proust and the End of Epistemic Competition', Proust ends the rivalry between literature and science by establishing them in separate realms. By the end of *A la recherche*, the artist has discovered that his job is to explore 'the reality of multiple sensations that are too complex to be reduced by analysis' (p. 201). Thiher positions Proust between the heritage of the realist novel and contemporary Symbolist poetry: Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and especially Valéry – not, though, Rémy de Gourmont, whose interest in Ribot's work on the relations of senses, imagination and artistic form might have taken his argument in a quite different direction. Most productively, he elaborates the analogies between Proust's work and the physics of Poincaré, the populariser of non-Euclidian geometry, whose work fed into the mentality of Proust's axiom-bound age the liberating possibility that 'the mind is capable of new geometries' (p. 185); on this basis, he generates important new readings of familiar Proustian passages. This particular connection is clearly much in the scholarly air, and Thiher helpfully notes Nicola Luckhurst's recent book (clearly arrived just as his volume was going to press), *Science and Structure in Proust's 'A la recherche'* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

University of Birmingham **Jennifer Birkett**

A. K. B. Evans and J. V. Gough (eds), *The Impact of the Railway on Society in Britain: Essays in Honour of Jack Simmons*, Ashgate, 2003, pp. 340, 25 illustrations and 6 maps, £20.

Sadly, Jack Simmons died shortly before this *Festshrift* was completed. He would have been well pleased with the result – a collection of some twenty-one essays, written by friends and colleagues on an area of study for which he is best known, and covering a range of topics, sources and approaches which he would have applauded. For Simmons had a great gift to synthesize, to connect seemingly disparate sources and to see the railway as an all embracing phenomenon that touched the lives and sensibilities of numerous people in different ways, places and times. The book is divided into four sections, framed by appreciations of Simmons (including a substantial essay by Michael Robbins, 'Jack Simmons: the making of a historian') and a bibliography of his published work.

The first section is on the origins of the railway itself. There are essays in the classic mould of railway history – detailed, descriptive and secure in their findings, if somewhat isolated from the mainstream historiography but of great interest to local historians and railway enthusiasts (Marilyn Palmer and Peter Neaverson on the prelocomotive railways of Leicestershire and Derbyshire and David Turnock on the transport geography of the Wigan Coalfield). Michael Harris on railway rolling stock writes in the same tradition, as does John Gough in his essay on Midland Railway operating documents. The most satisfying essay in this group is Philip Cottrell's



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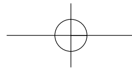
'Financing the Bagdadbahn: Barings, the City, and the Foreign Office, 1902–3', an outstanding example by a leading historian of finance of the borderless history which Simmons epitomized in his own writings, not least in his work early in his career on imperial history. In a fascinating story, which is an important contribution to the wider historiography of the political economy of British expansion overseas, Cottrell shows how the British state attempted from the mid-1890s – in this case, and several others, unsuccessfully – to employ finance in the defence of strategic political interests against German and United States encroachment in an area where local power structures were decaying.

Readers of this journal will possibly gravitate first towards the essays in the second section, 'Mind and Eye', which deal with the impact of the railway on ways of thinking and feeling. R. C. Richardson's piece on railways and religion in the Victorian period opens up and illuminates a neglected topic. He shows how the railways transformed the functioning of dioceses, underpinned itinerancy and the circuit system, the twin pillars of Wesleyan Methodism, and how the temperance and mission movements (usually together) targeted railway company employees as well as the navvies who built the lines. And with a nice sense of irony, he illustrates how the railway, which in many ways placed itself at the service of religion, developed a quasi-religious expression of its own, exemplified in the great cathedral-like railway termini, such as St Pancras. J. Mordaunt Cook explains how Ruskin saw the railway quite differently: as a potent metaphor of the capitalist principle, as undermining the old values of community and trust and as the extreme expression of the damage caused by the playing out of liberal economics. While Ruskin rejected railways, Philip Larkin (who worked with Jack Simmons at University College Leicester between 1946 and 1950), embraced them and did most of his traveling by train. Roger Craik, in a skilful interplay between an analysis of Larkin's railway poems and his life shows how Larkin used the isolation of the train journey to return unhurriedly to the observation of life. The remaining two essays in this section (by Norman Scarfe on the railways of Suffolk and Gwyn Briwnant-Jones on Dovey Junction c.1912) are largely anecdotal or derivative.

The third section 'The opening up of Britain' deals with the impact of relatively cheap travel on mobility and the widening of personal horizons. Alan A Jackson offers a brief but incisive essay on London's first 'railway suburbs'; Alastair J Durie shows that while tourism in Scotland was not the creation of the railways, they played a critical part in changing it from an élite to a mass experience; while Roy Millward, in an essay less well documented than Durie's, highlights the differences between the day tripper, mainly working-class, focus of the South Wales resorts and the socially more diverse pattern along the North Wales coast. In a provocative and insightful essay, Alan Everitt warns us against oversimplifying the modernizing effects of the railway on rural tradition, and shows how the past lived on – until at least the end of the nineteenth century. Some of the rural tradition was captured visually in the railways guides that flourished in this period, especially by the famous publisher, Sir George Measom, whose life and career are documented in a fine essay by G. H. Martin. Martin shows the painstaking way in which Measom assembled his guides, drawing together vast amounts of materials on local traders and institutions, and striking thousands of bargains in the process.

In the final section, 'Heritage and History', in an essay on the North Eastern Railway Museum at York – the antecedent of the National Railways Museum – Dieter Hopkin traces the story of the Museum from its origins in 1922, while in a more



thought-provoking essay, Colin Divall and Andrew Scott explore the challenge facing transport museums in how to reconcile through their collections the scholarly approaches to history with the personalized ways in which most people connect with the past. The collection ends with the brief reflections of T. R. Gourvish, the historian of Britain's nationalized railways, on 'the balance sheet of change' and a shorter personal essay by George Ottley, editor of the magisterial *Bibliography of British Railway History* (1965, 1988) on the development of railway history since 1954, the year Ottley first met Jack Simmons.

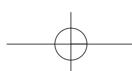
A *Festshrift* dedicated to a historian with such diverse interests is almost bound to include essays of variable quality and this is no exception. However taken together, the editors have put together a collection that offers a refreshingly rounded view of what railway history can be when it escapes, as Simmons anticipated many years ago, from its traditional technological and economic paradigms.

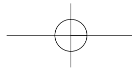
University of the West of England, Bristol **Geoffrey Channon**

Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain*, Palgrave, 2003, pp. xi + 245, £45.

This book, despite a substantial set of generalisations, is essentially personal, and it doubtless achieves its avowed main purpose of explaining to the author's colleagues in Australian 'cultural management' how and why nineteenth-century historical objects, including houses and homes, are worth categorizing and conserving independently of any financial value that they possess. The author's conclusions are modest, if firm – that 'in certain circumstances', which she tries to identify, 'a cultivated mind and nice manners suggest the more substantial qualities of character, as opposed to the facile veneer of personality'. Celebrity would be a better word, and there are better words than 'nice' or, indeed, 'genteel', which she quite deliberately employs throughout her book while recognizing that it was only an adjective, often used with uneasiness, even at the time, to describe 'the culture of the middle class'. Again she recognizes that 'plural classes' might be more appropriate, but she does not choose to explore those aspects of middle-class culture, raw and rough, which pushed 'gentility' aside. Her account generates the most sympathetic response from a professional historian when she states that while 'the meanings of historic objects are complex and elusive . . . it is hard to resist a feeling of special intimacy with and understanding of the various owners and users of the material'.

She finds it easier herself – and more sympathetic – to respond to Bourdieu and, among historians, E. P. Thompson than to other social historians whom she prematurely considers as 'classical'. Nor does she seem to have read widely in Victorian literature. More of interest has been written about Victorian things than she acknowledges. Yet she seldom fails to engage the reader's attention, and her decision to deal with what she calls 'Greater Britain', incorporating Australia and the United States, was wise as well as bold. Within 'Greater Britain', a bold title in itself, a detailed comparison between the United States, Canada and Australia would have been illuminating, but she is fully aware of the attractions of comparative social and cultural history. The perspective she has chosen, she rightly insists, is 'central to the subject of her





book, facilitating the argument for cultural continuities within a common culture across time and space'. Unfortunately, as a person directly concerned with 'cultural management', she makes relatively little of the fact – and it is a 'fact' – that among her three countries – and Canada would have emphasized this – the presence of pre-Victorian objects, including houses and homes, transforms the conception of an 'historical heritage' and raises manifold issues in cultural management, as, indeed, does the presence of pre-Columbian cultures in the United States and aboriginal cultures in Australia. Anthropology does not figure prominently among her intellectual debts. Nor, indeed, does geography. Had India – or Mexico – been brought into the picture, some of her conclusions might have been different. It would be unfair to press this point too hard. She does look back in time, making good use of the work of Norbert Elias who combined writing about the history of European etiquette – and much else – with collecting African objects.

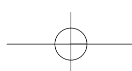
Lewes, Sussex **Asa Briggs**

John Fordham, *James Hanley: Modernism and the Working Class*, University of Wales Press, 2002, pp. xii + 315, £25.

This is an ambitious account of the writing of James Hanley, that provides not only a complete overview of his large output (Hanley's publishing career extends from 1930 to 1978), but also mounts a provocative argument on his behalf: that Hanley is best understood as a working-class writer who untypically engages with modernism in ways that challenge the predominant realism of proletarian writing. This is not a critical biography; nevertheless, it is based on impressive and extensive scholarship in both published and unpublished archives, discusses Hanley's writing in mostly chronological order, and provides where necessary a considerable amount of biographical information. To that extent, and independently of the argument that it mounts, it serves as an excellent introduction to Hanley's writing and will be an indispensable point of reference for future criticism of Hanley.

The argument of the book is, in addition, an important one, which is pursued through detailed accounts of Hanley's many novels, short stories, and radio and television plays. It draws principally on Lukacs and Adorno to argue that the relationship between Hanley's working-class position and the categories of high modernism is broadly dialectical; each transforms the other to produce an unstable series of novels, stories and plays which resolve the various contradictions of representations of working-class life (indeed of life in general) in different ways. Fordham pays due attention to the various aspects of Hanley's writing that cut through and across it: the Irish past, for he was born in Dublin and moved to Liverpool as a child; the sea, which features prominently in his work, a result in part of Hanley's life as a seaman; and Wales, for Hanley lived in Wales for thirty years and it features prominently in his work after the thirties. These different topics and their representation allow Hanley to resolve the conflicts of his novels in differing ways and with varying persuasiveness.

However, one does not finish this book with a sense of 'resolution' as the dominant note either of Hanley's work or his life. Indeed, this is the strength of Fordham's account; it repeatedly leads the reader to confront the bleakly irresolvable



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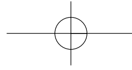


nature of twentieth-century life, and Hanley's courage and persistence in an artistic career marked by repeated frustrations, poverty, misunderstandings and censorship. Fordham clearly believes that his career is in some way exemplary – not in its biographical details, which are indeed hugely untypical, but of the aesthetic possibilities (and impossibilities) that are opened up by the confrontation of modernism and class. Readers of this fine study will be persuaded varyingly of this proposition, but will be united in praising its seriousness, its intellectual range, and its success in its central act of reclamation on Hanley's behalf. One has only to add that it would be much easier to reclaim Hanley's novels if more of them were currently in print.

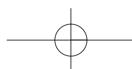
University of Gloucestershire **Simon Dentith**

Thomas Forster, *Transformations of Domesticity in Modern Women's Writing: Homelessness at Home*, Palgrave, 2002, pp. 224, £42.50.

The seemingly paradoxical subtitle of this book 'homelessness at home' originates in a phrase from Emily Dickinson who, in common with the other seven women modernists whom Thomas Forster discusses, uses her gender position to transform domestic space into a place of possibility. Thomas Forster explores the trope of home, arguing that modernist women writers re-invent domesticity in order to reject its being situated within the concept of separate spheres which he sees as inadequate to an explanation of women's lives, activities and literary production. This is a sophisticated theoretical work which draws on postmodernist geography, philosophy, cultural and queer theory to discuss selected writings of Emily Dickinson, H. D., Marianne Moore, Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Emily Holmes Coleman, Zora Neale Hurston and Sylvia Townsend Warner. Forster sees their work as occupying a transitional moment between the postmodern and the domestic ideologies of the nineteenth century.

The introductory chapter establishes a theoretical, cultural, and historical framework that highlights the significance of the figure of home for these modernist women writers. Forster demonstrates the continuing hold that domestic ideologies had on their imaginations while at the same time showing how the writing of these women anticipated postmodern re-definitions of the concepts of social space. The book explores the problems his authors faced in defining their relationship to a history that categorized domesticity as a peculiarly feminine place and argues that a critique of the boundedness of home as the basis for femininity is essential in order to reveal the racial and class specificity of domestic womanhood. Although *Their Eyes Were Watching God* participates in the same imagery of 'homelessness at home' found in white women writers, the imagery that Zora Heale Hurston uses arises from a different historical experience including the history of violence against women during slavery.

Two lesbians set up their own alternative short-lived household during the 1848 revolution in Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Summer Will Show*. In Gertrude Stein's prose poem *Tender Buttons* domestic space is posed as a possible site for alternative representational practices that refuse subjection, H.D.'s *The Gift* serves as a kind of interpretive key to the importance of domestic imagery and spatial metaphors through H.D.'s career. The representation in Marianne Moore's poem 'Silence' of a



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woman's home as an inn reveals how domestic space participates in and is produced by economic structures instead of being defined by its opposition to the public sphere. By scattering the Pargeter daughters into separate dwelling places and breaking up the family unit in *The Years*, Virginia Woolf examines the struggle to prevent confinement within just another house and avoid simply reproducing the structure of the interiorised self. Finally, Emily Holmes Coleman's *Shutter of Snow* attempts to transform the story of a woman's confinement in a state psychiatric hospital into a narrative of how women might appropriate the public spaces to which as females they have been confined. The work has a very full set of notes which provides an extended critical commentary on influences, sources, methodology, critical debates, and histories of domesticity.

Anglia Polytechnic University **Mary Joannou**

Elaine Showalter, *Teaching Literature*, Blackwell, 2002, pp. xi + 166, £45, £12.99 pb.

Elaine Showalter's *Teaching Literature* is likely to emerge as a new classic in the genre of self-reflective, critical texts on the social and psychological challenges of teaching. In the face of esoteric truisms about 'born teachers' this slim book works to demystify the teaching of literature. Growing out of an informal symposium conducted via electronic discussion board and then synthesized by Showalter (with textual references in footnotes), *Teaching Literature* is heartening evidence of a mindful, generous academic community at work. One does not get the sense of Showalter composing this book in isolation; rather, she is a kind of editor, organizing responses of enthusiastic teacher-practitioners under practical headings into a coherent dialogue.

I am probably not the only person to have read *Teaching Literature* from back to front. Most readers will be drawn to its penultimate, topical chapter, 'Teaching in Dark Times,' which reviews professors' responses to the task of teaching their courses after 9–11 and considers these reflections in the context of similar conditions of war and social upheaval, from World War I to the Vietnam War. Does one stick to the original syllabus plan or alter it to give communal grief a platform for expression? Is the act of reading literature necessarily comforting? And can the classroom be an effective source of solace, not merely to the students but to one's self? One comes out of reading *Teaching Literature* with the sense of Showalter as a committed, effective teacher, and moreover, an honest, likeable one. Her Princetonian privilege aside, one can't fault a prof who confesses freely to having anxiety dreams and stage-fright, and admits her longing for affirmation from her students. How many of us have also interpreted that stony-faced line of students in the back of the class as resistant Students from Hell until realizing we were projecting our own fears onto them? Professors of literature who feel under-trained and isolated, under pressure to research and publish, tempted to cover every writer in the anthology, and unnerved by the trials of grading and student assessment will find all of these happily grouped under the chapter heading 'The Anxiety of Teaching.'

For a compact volume, *Teaching Literature* covers extensive territory. It moves from a classification of teaching anxieties in Chapter 1 to an analysis of subject-cen-

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tred, teacher-centred and student-centred theories of teaching in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 covers the nuts and bolts from building a syllabus around the academic calendar to daily preparation before class. This chapter would be particularly valuable to starting teachers or grad students in pedagogy seminars. It examines the dangers of over-preparation, the social contract one establishes the first day of class, the qualities that make a successful lecture or discussion section, and methods of keeping students engaged, from in-class writing to group work to electronic discussion boards. This chapter also addresses greater behind-the-scenes issues such as the work of grading and academic housekeeping. While grad students are usually trained to mark essays, few realize the need to create a system for keeping files and slides, grade sheets, and rec letters in check – a mastery that most of us learn only after swimming in paper for our first years of teaching. In passages like this, Showalter rightly represents teaching as a lifestyle that extends beyond the 9–5 and even physically into our homes.

Several chapters of *Teaching Literature* are ordered by genre. Chapter 4 acknowledges the difficulties of teaching poetry to students who are resistant to it or fearful of it. If New Criticism deadened the experience of teaching poetry by forcing classes to focus merely on formal qualities like irony and paradox, Showalter asserts the need to tap into students' emotional experience of poems, particularly by exploring poems outside the New Critical canon. In terms of daily class praxis, she cites teachers who claim the benefits of having students read poems aloud, memorize poems, keep a commonplace book of poetry or a portfolio of poetic criticsm, and write their own poems in imitation of prescribed forms. Sections of this chapter advise 'working from what students already know' – such as drawing on popular music or parody to make poetic study less intimidating – and the comparative benefits and drawbacks of teaching modern translations of Chaucer. As always, Showalter is considering the balance between students' need to learn what is absolutely alien to them and their need for dignity. Having students write their own sonnets is a good idea; neglecting to tell them that you will distribute their work – even anonymously – is not. Having each student read poems aloud is a good idea, but forcing a novice to read Chaucer aloud in the original is an act of humiliation. (Maintaining students' self-confidence is especially a challenge in courses in literary theory, which faculty frequently design as a daunting series of -isms to master. In a later chapter on 'Teaching Theory,' Showalter proposes alternative problem- and topic-based structures for theory classes.)

The goal of the interactive classroom also prevails in Chapter 5, which praises performance pedagogy as a strategy for teaching drama. If the teacher is a self-conscious reciter of poetry and actor of plays, then, as Chapter 6 demonstrates, he or she is also a narrator of fiction and can toy with his or her classroom role, drawing attention to a text's temporality and narrators' unreliability through postmodern, disruptive classroom strategies. True, all of this will require more planning of a teacher already concerned with the tasks of coverage, close reading, historical context and diverse critical interpretations.

This book emerges out of Showater's tenure as President of the Modern Language Association where academic discourse has shifted vividly to acknowledge the difficulties of exploited adjuncts and life under straitened budgets. Showalter nevertheless looks to universities for structured, institutional support for improved teaching. She urges the legitimization of the scholarship of teaching, commends the establishment of campus Centers for Teaching and Learning, and promotes the centrality of pedagogy workshops in a graduate curriculum. Those of us who left graduate school

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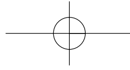

with precious little pedagogical training will find ourselves nodding vigorously when reading these suggestions. Showalter does not mention it, but sadly, Centers for Teaching and Learning have been among the first targets of recent budget cuts. Administrators seeking to save money would be well advised to read her chapter on 'Teaching Teachers' before taking up the axe.

Grounded equally in narrative anecdotes by academics and in published scholarship, *Teaching Literature* is admirably accessible and reader-friendly. Given its lack of jargon, it seems appropriate for a number of audiences. It would aid Showalter's fellow professors who teach graduate seminars in pedagogy, but it would also benefit graduate students building their first syllabi, learning how to manage classroom discussion, and working to cultivate a positive teaching persona. I'd recommend it to anyone looking to enliven his or her classroom, curious to hear what other professors do, and willing to experiment as a means of reaching more students.

Southern Oregon University **Diana Maltz**