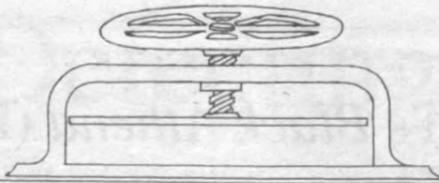


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COMPLIMENTARY

An Interview with Charles Bernstein

M=I=X=I=N=G Genres

Scott Fennessey

Books by Charles Bernstein:

A POETICS

Harvard University Press, 240 pp., \$15.95 paper

ROUGH TRADES

Sun & Moon Press, 100 pp., \$10.95 paper

SENSES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Paradigm, 28 pp., \$4.00 paper

Charles Bernstein's prominence tempts one to regard him as a leading "Language Poet." He has a dozen books of poetry to his credit, most recently *Rough Trades* (1990),

and two volumes of essays, *Content's Dream* (1985), and *A Poetics*, just released from Harvard University Press. He edited the critical journal *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* with Bruce Andrews, and guest edited issues of *Paris Review* and *Boundary 2*. His work as an editor has focused on bringing the work of other "language poets" to public attention. Two years ago he succeeded Robert Creeley in the David Gray Chair at SUNY Buffalo.

Although Bernstein might appear to be a leader, he resists the idea that he is representative of a group of poets, or even that "language poetry" is a movement to be led, much less a school. "The 'language movement' you referred to is a very dispersed and contradictory phenomenon. It's not a group, really, not even a movement. It's a series of related tendencies," he said in a recent interview.

The "language tendency" is indeed very dispersed. Although the most visible poets were originally clustered in the San Francisco and New York City areas in the early '70s, during the '80s it spread as far afield as the former Soviet Union. Description of these "tendencies" runs the risk of homogenizing different voices, but what they all do have in common is a fascination with the forms of language. Perhaps the most disturbing feature to traditionalists, is that many of these poets refuse to work within only one form

at a time. A single poem might mix several forms at once: fragments of political speeches, office memos, verse - nothing is excluded; a poem may have multiple voices.

Bernstein's writing, in particular, is radically heterodox. He maintains that "conventions are ever-present," and he likes to play with them. He says his work is charged by some with "just trying to explode conventions, or to create some kind of rawer truth," and, by others, with being "only interested in convention, providing an unemotional, cerebral experience." Neither is the case, according to Bernstein, although he does want convention to be seen for what it is. He wants to make "what would be secondary [experience] primary and certain primary experiences secondary. Certain kinds of public issues I want to pull in like a tornado - if you think of a poem as a tornado - to suck them into the poetic process so that they become as turbulent and agitated as the most personal and intimate detail. At the same time, out the top spurts traditional sentimental topics, which are not lost, but rather portrayed in their public frames, their official discourses, almost as formulas or rote speeches as said by robots or zombies."

Bernstein says that "poetry is not like a team." The term "Language Poetry" never appears in *A Poetics*, since, as he says, details tend to get lost behind names. At



Charles Bernstein

Photo: Susan Bee

the same time, Bernstein maintains that it is important to read poems in a context. When he teaches poetry, say, of the period 1910 to 1940, he assigns about seventy different poets. He says that "it's not really possible to understand *The Waste-land* without understanding what Robert Service was doing." Similarly, Bernstein understands language poetry "not as the isolated work of a deeply suffering individual, but rather as the creation of

particular works of art that have a relation to one another."

S.F. You write a lot of poetry and you also write a lot of essays, frequently blurring the lines between the two. What decisions are involved in choosing to write in one form or the other?

C.B. There are clear distinctions between the genres - essays and poems - but I think that those are

See Bernstein, p. 14

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The Saliency of Race

Biodun Jeyifo

SHADES OF BLACK:

Diversity in African-American Identity

by William E. Cross, Jr.

Temple University Press, 296 pp., \$18.95 paper

Both the contents and the central arguments of *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American Identity* are nothing if not startling. And, if they are accurate, psychology must be the most dismal, the most underdeveloped of the human and social sciences in America in this century. In the more substantial first part of the book's two-part format, which is appropriately titled "Re-thinking Self-hatred," the author, Professor William E. Cross of Cornell's Africana Studies and Research Center, outlines a remarkably congruent evolutionary profile of psychology as a scientific discipline in its encounter with African-

American identity in a two-phase movement, each phase overwhelmingly dominated by a paradigm which is exactly the antithesis of the other.

The second part of *Shades of Black* is something of an extended coda to the first part; here Professor Cross gives us the fruits of his work in the last two decades on what he calls "the psychology of nigrescence." This account is eloquent and absorbing; it is part scientific and part anecdotal and it mixes modes of academic discourse with popular, ideological "testifying" in a manner sometimes reminiscent of the inspirational aspects of the work of Frantz Fanon (Without doubt, this aspect of *Shades of Black* will draw criticism from academic purists, given the critique that Cross mounts against the academic mainstream of the discipline of psychology).

see Race, p. 4

Bruce Franklin's M.I.A.

The Missing and the Dead

Review by Susan Sweetnam

Interview by Sarah Elbert

M.I.A., or Mythmaking in America

by Bruce H. Franklin
Lawrence Hill Books, 225 pp., \$17.95

In wars involving the United States previous to Vietnam, "prisoner of war" and "missing in action" were considered two separate categories. The category POW/MIA was an invention designed to suggest that every missing American in Southeast Asia might be a prisoner of war, even though most MIAs were lost under circumstances that made capture impossible. In his latest book, *M.I.A. or Mythmaking in America*, H. Bruce Franklin claims that in 1969 the Nixon Administration - just days after being elected on the promise to end the war - fabricated the POW/MIA category to deflect attention from the burgeoning anti-

war movement. In the wake of the controversy over the movie *JFK*, Franklin's claim could be mistaken



Bruce Franklin

as the loose talk of another conspiracy nut on the loose; but Franklin, the John Cotton Dana Professor of English and American Studies at Rutgers University in Newark, and

author of 15 books on culture and history, presents mounds of scrupulously researched evidence supporting his assertion that there is no basis for believing in the existence of live POWs.

Franklin carefully lays out the political reasons why the POW/MIA category was manufactured by Nixon and perpetuated by subsequent administrations, and he reveals how the numbers have been inflated in the ensuing years. According to Franklin, the number of Americans still missing from either World War II or the Korean War is far greater than from the Vietnam War, even though Vietnam was the longest conflict and included protracted "secret" incursions into Laos and Cambodia. Also, unlike previous wars, 80 percent of the missing in the Vietnam War were airmen, who

see Bruce, p. 6

Opinion/Editorial

Reflections on Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* (Part II)

John Coleman

In November, we published an interview with Martin Bernal about the controversy over his projected four-volume series, *Black Athena*, the second volume of which was published last summer. Last month, we printed the first part of a critique of Bernal's work by John E. Coleman of the Department of Classics at Cornell University, and Bernal's response to Coleman. Here we continue coverage of the controversy with the second part of this debate, which will be concluded in the April issue of *the Bookpress*.

BLACK ATHENA
The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization
by Martin Bernal
Rutgers University Press

Volume I: The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785-1985
\$15.95 paper, 575 pp.

Volume II: The Archaeological and Documentary Evidence
\$16.95 paper, 736 pp.



In general, the Egyptians say that their ancestors sent forth numerous colonies to many parts of the inhabited world, by reason of the pre-eminence of their former kings and their excessive population; but since they offer no precise proof whatsoever for these statements, and since no historian worthy of credence testifies in their support, we have not thought that their accounts merited recording.

Diodorus Siculus, I, 29 (1st century B.C.; Loeb translation)

2. The Ancient Greek belief in invasions from Egypt or Syro-Palestine.

The picture is far from straightforward. The Homeric and Hesiodic poems, the earliest sources on Greek beliefs about their past, do not support the view that there was a general Greek belief in such invasions (Bernal's "Ancient Model"), since they make no mention of invasions or immigration from Egypt or Syro-Palestine and generally show only a limited awareness of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Later Classical Greek writers are far from unanimous about Eastern influences on, and/or invasions of Greece. Their views in the relevant passages are almost always connected to mythical characters and events, particularly the stories of Danaos and of Kadmos. The coming of Danaos and the Danaids to

Greece from Egypt (pursued by Aigyptos and his sons), as given by Aeschylus (*The Suppliant Woman*) and others, is linked ultimately with the Greek gods Zeus and Hera and served the purpose of explaining the names of the various races of humankind recognized by the Greeks, such as the Greeks themselves (*Danaoi* in the Homeric poems), the Pelasgians (*Pelasgoi*) and the Egyptians (*Aigyptioi*). The legends about Cadmos bringing writing and other civilized arts to Greece from Egypt or Phoenicia are confused and inconsistent. For instance, Cadmos is Egyptian in some accounts, Phoenician in others; although he was believed to have founded Greek Thebes during the age of the heroes (i.e. the Bronze Age), he was also credited with introducing the alphabet from Phoenicia. As already mentioned, the alphabet is not attested in Greece before about 750 B.C.

The Greek historian Herodotus (mid-5th century B.C.), who makes the strongest statements of any author about the Egyptian origins of Greek practices, is completely ignorant of the Hyksos and makes no mention even of the role they played in Egyptian history, let alone of invasions of Greece. Although he argues in favor of the Egyptian origin and character of the Greek gods, he makes no specific equations between the Egyptian and the Greek

names for the gods and a passage in Diodorus Siculus shows that the ancient sources were greatly confused on this point. The question of the names of the gods is especially important for Bernal's arguments about Egyptian influence on Greece, which depend to a large extent on his claims that the actual names of Greek gods were derived from those of Egyptian ones, such as Athena from Neit (*Black Athena I*, p. 51-52). To my knowledge, there is no support in the ancient sources for these claims.

It should be further noted that Herodotus is not always trustworthy and that errors abound in his account of Egyptian civilization. For instance, he has the pyramid building pharaohs coming near the end rather than the beginning of Bronze Age Egyptian history. Furthermore, Herodotus often recorded mere fables, sometimes adding that he himself doubted their truth. Thucydides, who knew of Herodotus' work, makes no mention of invasions or influence from Egypt or Syro-Palestine in his summary of the distant past. Plutarch (*On the Malice of Herodotus*, 13-14) specifically disagrees with Herodotus' claims of Egyptian influence on Greece. Even Diodorus Siculus, whose account of Egypt is somewhat similar to that of Herodotus, is highly skeptical about claims of Egyptian invasions, as the passage at the head

of this article shows. Nowhere does Bernal discuss that passage, which would seem to cast great doubts on his alleged "Ancient Model."

In short, there were various contradictory beliefs about the relationships between Greece, on the one hand, and Egypt and Syro-Palestine, on the other, rather than the single "Ancient Model" postulated by Bernal.

It is important to bear in mind the limited nature of the sources of information available to the Classical Greeks like Herodotus about their own Bronze Age past some 800 or more years earlier. The "Dark Ages," a period of at least 300 years during which writing was unknown and cultural memories were transmitted by word of mouth, had intervened between the Bronze Age and the time of Homer and Hesiod. The Homeric poems, for instance, present a highly anachronistic and distorted picture of the Mycenaean period. They show that the former existence of the Linear B system of writing had been completely forgotten. Furthermore, although some Classical Greeks were familiar with Egypt, there is no evidence that they ever had access there to accurate records about the past. By the time of Herodotus and the other Greek visitors, Egypt had long since ceased to be a leading center of civilization - in Herodotus' day it was part of the

see Coleman, p. 12

A Response to John Coleman (Part II)

Martin Bernal

2. The Ancient Greek belief in an invasion from Egypt or the Levant.

Coleman denies that Homer and Hesiod refer to any such invasion. I argue in *Black Athena I* (pp. 85-86) that knowledge of this tradition can be found in several passages from early Greek epics. In particular, there are the lines from the lost epic the *Danaids* in which the Daughters of Danaos are described as arming themselves by the banks of the Nile. Hesiod also indicates that Europa was a daughter of Phoinix and was carried over salt water by Zeus. This demonstrates what was already highly probable, that the myths around Danaos and Kadmos and Europa arriving from the southeast were already current when Hesiod wrote.

Coleman writes that they (Homer and Hesiod) "show only a limited awareness of the East Mediterranean." However, Peter Walcott in his *Hesiod and the Near East* has demonstrated that Hesiod's work is full of South West Asian and Egyptian material. For example, his *Theogony*, or "origin of the Gods" and the story of Pandora have tight connections with earlier South West Asian and Egyptian myths. Similarly, two of the central themes of the *Iliad*, besieging a city for a stolen bride and leaving concealed men to be taken in by the unsuspecting citizens, have Ugaritic and Egyptian precedents respectively. Such probable derivations puts Coleman in a difficult position. Either the themes were introduced in the Bronze age and were transmitted through what

he maintains were nearly impermeable "Dark Ages" or they were introduced during the Dark or Geometric Ages themselves. As these themes are integral to the poets' compositions they must have been present well before they wrote. He puts this in the 8th century - I would set it rather earlier - in any event before the "Orientalizing" Period. I maintain that the themes could have entered at either period or - more likely - both, because there was cultural transmission through the "Dark Ages" and substantial material and cultural exchange between the Levant and the Aegean in the 10th and 9th centuries.

There are certainly many contradictions in the myths and legends "about Eastern influences on and/or invasions of Greece." Nevertheless, there is no doubt that these stories were widespread and generally believed among Greeks, even during periods when there was a great deal of hostility to contemporary Egyptians and Phoenicians.

It is true that Herodotus made relatively few specific equations between Greek and Egyptian divinities, but he did specify the very few Greek ones that he believed *not* to have Egyptian names. What is more, there is no question that he stated that "the names of almost all the Greek gods came from Egypt." Thus, I find it puzzling that Coleman should state, "To my knowledge, there is no support in ancient sources for these claims [the Egyptian origin of the names of the Greek gods]."

Herodotus clearly wrote a great deal of unfounded folklore and, as Coleman points out, he often ex-

pressed skepticism about it. However, Herodotus did not do this when treating what he saw as the Egyptian origin of Greek religion. Furthermore, as Egyptologists have increased their knowledge of Egypt, Herodotus has been given increasing credit for his reports. The question is whether one should accept what he says about "invasions" or the Egyptian origin of the Greek Pantheon. I believe that one should accept neither without outside confirmatory evidence.

Using this skeptical approach for "invasions," like Stubbings and others, I think that the pattern Herodotus describes tallies reasonably well with the archaeological evidence. On the religious side, the parallels between the Egyptian and Greek sets of divinities are striking. As the Indo-Europeanist Dumézil acknowledged, the religions of other Indo-European speaking peoples were very different from those of the Greeks. I did not accept Herodotus' claim on the names of the gods uncritically, but treated it as a working hypothesis. As such, I found it extremely fruitful because it provided plausible etymologies for the names of a large number of Greek divinities that had resisted the efforts of dozens of brilliant and assiduous scholars, who have worked on these problems - within the Aryan Model - for more than 150 years. Given the existence of many of these divine names in Linear B, and the clear cultic continuities from Mycenaean to Archaic and Classical times, it is impossible to attribute all of these parallels between Greek and Egyptian religion to later eclecticism.

Thucydides did refer to Phoenician and Carian activities in the Cyclades. As I argue in *Black Athena I* (pp. 101-102), I believe that reference to wider Phoenician and Egyptian invasions would have spoiled Thucydides' claim that the Peloponnesian War was the greatest war ever. It is also noteworthy that he did not challenge the traditions, which, we know from both Herodotus and Attic drama, were widespread in his times.

I did not quote the passage from Diodorus Siculus, with which Coleman heads his essay, because it does not apply to the Egyptian claims of having colonized in Greece.

Coleman should, at least, have considered the last sentence of the passage he quotes: "since they offer no proof whatsoever and no historian worthy of credence testifies in their support, we have not thought their accounts merited recording." The passage comes immediately after Diodorus *had recorded*, not only of the colonizations of Danaos, but also Egyptian descriptions of them in Colchis and Athens. In the last case, he cites some "proofs offered" by his Egyptian informants. What is more, a little further on, Diodorus describes Herodotus as "a curious observer... and widely acquainted

see Bernal, p. 13

the BOOKPRESS

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Editorial Staff: Jack Goldman, Joel Ray

Production & Design: Jay Laird
Arts Editor: Benn T.F. Nadelman
Advertising: Joel Ray

Contributors: Milly Acharya, Charla Barnard, William Benson, Robin Fisher Cisne, Theresa Demo, Michel Droge, Sarah Elbert, Lydia Fakundiny, Scott Fennessey, Gunilla Feigenbaum, Peter Fortunato, Mary Gilliland, Robert Hill, Gail Holst-Warhaft, Biodun Jeyifo, Hitch Lyman, Scott McDermott, Jeanne Mackin, Kathy Morris, Timothy Muskat, Laurie Ray, Vicky Romanoff, Mark Shechner, J. Michael Serino, Alan Singer, Suzanne Stewart, Susan Sweetnam, Patti Witten

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Detecting Difference

Lydia Fakundiny

BREACH OF IMMUNITY

by Molly Hite

St. Martin's, 248 pp., \$18.95

The title of Molly Hite's second novel rings on legal phrases like "breach of contract" and "breach of promise": failure to live up to some agreement, commitment, vow. But as *speech* is to *speak* so *breach* is to *break*, and what is breached is broken, ruptured, damaged, wounded, no longer whole. The oldest sense of *breach* in English has not to do with words, vowed and disavowed, but with the body - violent action upon the body and the injury inflicted. Hence the breach as a sign of physical violation, trespass made visible in broken, torn, penetrated flesh. The novel's short, brilliantly

vitalizes plot and thought alike, stirring up a whole lot more than an innocent devotee of crime fiction may have bargained for. Mysteries are supposed to make for fun reading, and this one does no less. But its designs on the reader are more encompassing, more provocative, and, when all's said and done, more genuinely entertaining.

Anna Blessing, Lieutenant of Detectives, and Priscilla Carmody, Detective Third Grade, are both cops' daughters; beyond that, they're about as unlike as can be, as professionally distant in their daily relations as they are different personally in many of the ways that seem to count most. Ambitious, with "her eye on promotion," Priscilla - Scilla, she is called - has only begun her

getting the rapist, eliciting from seemingly random violence the pattern by which crime is found out. She's the precinct's "Big Lady," or, in a tiny, telling sound shift: "Pig Lady." Scilla, on the other hand, may be, as one rape victim supposes in a moment of rage, "a lady pig," but what occupies her, as passionately as the intelligible patterning of violence does Anna, is just those unconscious codes by which we communicate what we would perhaps rather not, if only we knew better. She takes charge of her somewhat wistful, ruminative male partner's "education on the subject of the prevailing sex/gender system" with a tenacity as fierce as the jaw-grip of the ferret or weasel, "small but mean," with which she is compared.

Is Anna, then, proof of how a woman with brains, her female contours comfortably distended by compulsive overeating, may over the years turn quite imperceptibly into an "honorary man"? Is Scilla a feminist role model, necessarily something of an ideologue, a live-wire protest against the gynophobic myth carried in her own name? Or is it Anna, in her grotesqueries of feeding and her massive competence, who bears the potent mark of old devouring female danger, the Odyssean Scylla-monster with her six ravening dogs' heads attached below the waist? Can it be the keen, appealing "Daddy's girl," Scilla, sharpshooter, Type-A driver scaring her partner Mike into wondering if maybe she just plain loves violence - can it be she who is "in effect one of the boys"?

"This is all gender," declares Anna in one of her moments of flat-out synthesis. One is reminded by the novel's own allusiveness of *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare's genially unsettling dance through the bafflements of affectional choice, its masquerade of woman-disguised-as-man loved by another woman, loving a man. At issue there, under the guise of who gets whom, is the unspeakable riddle of what it is we desire in those we are drawn to and what, in us, does the attracting and desiring. Masculine? Feminine? And in what combinations? It is all, one might conclude, a dizzying mutability where, according to the Fool's paradox, "nothing that is so is so." Natural "kind" dissolves into the artifices of culture, into concerns like our modern ones about gender, what it is and how it gets constructed, how it constructs us. "Such as we are made of such we be," asserts (ambiguously) Shakespeare's Viola-Cesario. ("Silla," in the play's most likely source). At the narrative center of Molly Hite's novel of detection is an elusive rapist in crinoline and high heels, with a mean eye to the sexual preferences of prospective victims. There's both a conventional mystery of identity here - who done it? - and the more resistant enigma of how individuals, by hook or by crook, negotiate the world as "woman" or as "man."

It's as gripping, as thoroughly satisfying a read as one could want - a strong, skillfully made plot, a diverse and engaging palette of characters, a fictive urban setting whose geographical detail and socio-eco-

conomic striation evoke a real contemporary westcoast city. And, as should be obvious by now, *Breach of Immunity* is far from being a concoction exclusively for addicts of crime and suspense. Stories that are mostly plot, that, despite their asides into character and such, are out to hook you into the sheer tension of their who-done-its, have a way of coming up empty in the end; the compulsive pace of it all eats into the pleasure.

Breach of Immunity creates a

narrative pace marvelously suited to its own subversive business as a police procedural. Its mutations of plot-advancement into exposition, speculation, and introspection are as sure, as fluid, as its roving point of view. A visit by Scilla, on the rapist's trail, to a massage parlor owned by her friend Missy winds engagingly from thoughts on dildoes and commodity fetishism to a long glance back at the two women's evolving

see *Breach*, p. 12

An Interview with Molly Hite

L.F. What exactly are "police procedurals," and what made you want to write one?

M.H. As far as I know, police procedurals as a genre developed in the 1950s and '60s as a twist on the so-called "classic" detective novel. In the "classic" detective novel, there is a closed fictional universe, and the status quo is disrupted by the criminal action of an insider. The thrust of the plot is then to reveal the identity of the criminal, to purge him or her from the fictional universe, and in this way to restore the status quo - a deeply conservative, even reactionary agenda, when you think about it.

I grew up on "classic" detective novels. But after I read my first thousand or so, I began to wish for a few cracks in that fictional universe, and so I got attracted to the police procedural, which deals with a grossly defective status quo and very flawed characters who often aren't sure they *ought* to restore it even if they could. The people who deal with crime in the procedural are professionals slogging along doing their business, not sharp, superior amateurs. In procedurals, crime is often messily and illogically motivated, as it is in life. And solutions to crimes aren't neat and don't provide the kind of satisfaction you have in the classic detective novel. The emphasis falls less on plot and more on character, but the characters aren't elegant or especially smart or morally justified. They're working cops, who get their results not through brilliant ratiocination but through the dogged application of police procedures - that's why the genre is called the procedural. The first name anyone thinks of when you talk about the procedural is Ed McBain - that's a pseudonym of Evan Hunter, of *The Blackboard Jungle* - but I'm a great fan of a lot of procedural writers in various countries: Jarwillem van de Wetering of the Netherlands, the husband-wife team of Maj Sowell and Per Wahloo in Sweden, Katherine Aird and Reginald Hill in England, K.C. Constantine in the United States.

L.F. Are you interested in the world of police procedurals *per se* - what your novel's jacket blurb calls "the male world of bad coffee, mean streets, and rumpled uniforms" - or do the conventions of this kind of fiction serve other purposes for you?

M.H. Both. I'm interested in ways the conventions of the procedural create a more morally ambiguous - and correspondingly more liberal -

fictional universe. But I'm also interested in how this liberalism in turn corresponds to an increasing masculinism. The procedural universe is a universe of men, by and large. Although female victims are often treated sympathetically, they're still victims, and usually victims because they're female: procedurals tend to involve more violent crimes and more sex-related crimes. It's almost as if the qualities of gritty realism guaranteed a masculine world - men are the problem solvers; women are aspects of the problem. So my initial question was, what if I used the conventions of the genre but made some of the cops women? There are a few writers who have done this, but they have tended at the same time to feminize the genre, to make the inner life of the female cop more important, for instance. I wanted to keep the conventions intact. For instance, in procedurals characters are developed largely through dialogue. The narrator is omniscient and the point of view migrates from character to character, often disconcertingly. And the characters tend not to be anybody's ideal, in terms of background, behavior, even physical qualities. No Lord Peter Wimseys in this bunch. In fact, the characters are overwhelmingly working class, not a classicist or Dante scholar among them, so you don't have all those wonderful allusions that kept me going through the first thousand or so "classic" detective stories.

L.F. Speaking of physical qualities, would you comment on your Lieutenant of Detectives, the Fat Lady whose ever-growing body has long ago blotted out the feminine, but extends its female spread daily into the position of "an honorary man"?

M.H. Well, Lieutenant of Detectives Anna Blessing is at the center of my fictional project. She violates any number of taboos about the representation of female protagonists: she's sixty-two, she's obese, she's a compulsive eater of junk food, and her attitudes seem to be exactly what you'd expect of a cop who came up through the ranks in the 1950s and '60s. In fact, she's a type of character you find a lot in procedurals... except she's a woman. In writing her, I was exploring the boundaries of permissible attributes and behaviors for female characters. And pushing at those boundaries, hard.

L.F. In your book of theory and

see *Hite*, p. 12



Painted photo: Kathy Morris

executed prologue brings you hard up against that other, starker meaning and never lets you forget it afterwards.

The body - its privacy and wholeness - is put at risk in this absorbing story of crime and detection, where certain individuals may be targeted but none are safe, no one is invulnerable, immune. Not even the "solid citizen" so-called; not men, either. The crime is rape, vicious and brutalizing as ever, and in this case (as various of the novel's characters begin to speculate early on), something more besides: "assault with a *potentially* deadly weapon," rape as a device for slow murder of a peculiarly contemporary kind. The detection is all in the line of police business, mundane, organizational, time-consuming like all things that go by the book, hazardous; and, because this is Hinton's Third Precinct, not exactly what it used to be: the Lieutenant of Detectives is a woman, and so is one of the two investigating officers. But that only begins to say how *Breach of Immunity* gives a subversively feminist slant to what must be one of the most masculinist of narrative genres, the police procedural, and how this very difference

climb to the top; Anna is nearing mandatory retirement age and seems to have slid, somehow, from "cop's widow and mother of two girls to just plain cop," in the process becoming "one of the boys" - she is "the woman who passed." Scilla is slight, "a natural soprano," winsome and wholesome, tough, energetic, up-to-date, college educated and sensitive to socio-political nuance. Anna lives on junkfood - seems, in her daily routine, to live *for* it - mountains of it, is hugely obese and growing, does not so much sit as "ooze" over chairs, commands the cautious regard of her detectives and commandeers idle patrol cars for her dietary indulgences here and there about town, "snorts," "rasps," "snuffles," and celebrates more or less all the time, even asleep, analyzing and synthesizing, pores over suspect etymologies and is not beyond using words like "faggot" as mere referential labels, apparently sans premeditation or guilt. Unlike Scilla, it cannot be said of her that she "spoke the language." Yet Anna is unpredictable. She seems not so much obtuse as plain uninterested in honing her linguistic sensibilities; what's foremost on her mind is

Off Campus at the Bookery

The "Off Campus at the Bookery" lecture series continued last month with Joel Savishinsky's lecture, "There's No Place Like (A) Home," examining the lives of those who live and work in an average American nursing home. "Off Campus at the Bookery" continues to feature lectures and readings on a wide variety of topics, one flight up in the office complex Atrium of the DeWitt Mall, on Sundays at 4:00 P.M.

March 1

James McConkey

will read from and sign copies of his latest work, *Rowan's Progress*. Drawing from his experiences in Rowan County, Kentucky, where he and his wife taught before coming to Cornell University, McConkey tells the story of the positive difference one or two willing people can make in a community, and covers over 80 years of the county's history. *Rowan's Progress* completes McConkey's trilogy of memoirs, which began in *Courts of Memory* and continued in *Crossroads*.



March 29

Molly Hite

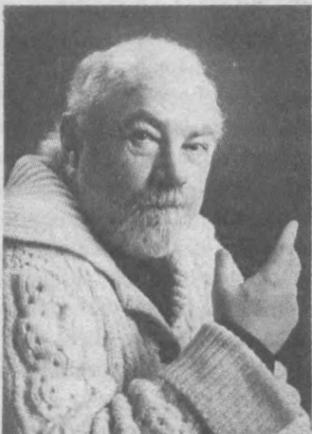
will read from her novel, *Breach of Immunity* (see article, p. 3), and sign copies. Professor Hite has been a member of the English Department faculty at Cornell for the last ten years. She is also the author of two critical studies, *Ideas of Order in the Novels of Thomas Pynchon* and *The Other Side of the Story: Structures and Strategies of Contemporary Feminist Narrative*, and another novel, *Class Porn*, which received much critical acclaim. She is currently working on a book about Virginia Woolf and a sequel to *Breach of Immunity*.



April 19

Sidney Smith

will read from his first recently-published first novel, *Flannery*, and sign copies. The book deals largely with "fringe-political, pub-literary" Dublin life in the early '70s. The author of several plays and poetry collections, including *Girl with Violin*, *Sensualities and Scurrilities*, and *Sherca*, he has also written and performed solo plays in Ithaca, London, New York City, and at the Dublin Theatre Festival. He currently teaches writing at Ithaca College.



May 3

Susan Hubbard

will read from her short fiction collection, *Walking on Ice*, which won the 1989 Associated Writing Programs' Short Fiction Prize, and sign copies. Hubbard received an M.A. in creative writing from Syracuse University, and now teaches writing in the College of Engineering at Cornell University. This summer she will lead a fiction-writing workshop at the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast Writers' Conference.



May 17

David Adams

will read poetry from *Shaped Like a Heart*, published in 1991 as part of the collection, *A Red Shadow of Steel Mill*, and sign copies. Released by Bottom Dog Press, the book features poems set in the industrial and rural Midwest. In 1991, Adams was featured as a guest poet at the James Wright Festival. He has worked in a variety of occupations, from laborer to technical writer, and for the last three years has taught technical writing in the College of Engineering at Cornell University.



Race

continued from p. 1

What is the "psychology of nigrescence?" It is a stage-by-stage account of a collective psychobiography, a collective psychodrama in which African-Americans move from the lowest levels of racial awareness, which may or may not involve self-hatred and negativity, to the most racially self-aware, self-accepting consciousness and attitudes. It is on account of this schema that the "psychology of nigrescence" was initially designated the "psychology of Negro to Black Conversion" by Cross. But if the identity change here is from Negro to Black, following the shifts in the politics of language, the politics of self-designation in the African-American community, why "nigrescence" which recalls Negro (and negritude)? But this anticipates the closing section of this short review. Let us first return to the author's indictment of the psychology of race in America.

According to Cross, between the 1930s and the early 1960s the psychological study of African-Americans was overwhelmingly dominated by a paradigm fixated on themes of self-hatred, low self-esteem and an "out-group" racial preference for whiteness in terms of color and physical features. It is important to add that what is significant about this profile as a paradigm, as an intellectual formation, is not so much the themes, as troubling as they are; rather, it is precisely in the research protocols, testing procedures and invariant interpretive practices that the paradigm achieves its epistemic power. These protocols, procedures and practices cover an extraordinarily broad spectrum and readers will find much in this section of *Shades of Black* that is depressingly familiar in regurgitative academic formalism, especially in the social sciences.

But as Cross narrates it, the issues go far beyond this. For instance, the "self-hatred" paradigm drew its conclusions about "Negro" identity primarily and abundantly from studies of pre-school children and not a little from outright clinical cases. (Indeed, there seems to have been no disciplinary distinctions between psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and social psychologists; Professor Cross himself, by the way, doesn't urge such distinctions). In one particularly egregious research procedure, the "natural" impulse of very light-skinned, near-white African-American children to identify with pictures of white children was ignored or disregarded in so-called "Show Me" tests. Equally telling, the paradigm allowed for very little differentiation among black children, even though most tests clearly registered such differentiation; the governing premise that the "in-group" racial preference of white children in these tests - what Cross describes as "monoracial preference" - constituted the "figure" against which black children's responses matched into a featureless "ground." The "blighted lives," the tangle of pathology and the self-hatred projected from studies inspired by these paradigmatic procedures and practices could thus not have had any appreciable empirical validity to the mostly pre-school subjects of the studies; it follows that their applicability to teenagers

and adults, to all blacks, was purely fanciful. In short, this reigning paradigm in the psychology of African-Americans between the 1930s and the 1960s was so crudely homogenizing and simplifying that it could not have engaged the scientific and cultural ramifications of these much-quoted words from Alice Walker's *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*: "Mama, why are we brown, pink, and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige, and black?" Answer: "Well, you know, the colored race is just like a flower garden, with every flower represented."

The theoretical critique that Cross mounts against this paradigm, a critique insufficiently elaborated, argues that the paradigm was not empiricist enough, was indeed a mishmash of Adlerian ego psychology, pre-Freudian culturalist psychoanalysis (by way of importation from Europe of the ideas and premises of the discredited "Jewish self-hatred" school) and a naive positivism which literalized and reified the "fact" of Negro oppression. It should be added that the author's critique is by no means ungenerous. Cross records and affirms the use of these studies of "Negro self-hatred" as effective, damning evidence against racism and segregation in the famous 1954 Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* case. What does not go unremarked, however, is the manner in which citable, unambiguous cases of psychopathology became generalizable into a self-replicating, self-validating stereotype of every African-American. So totalitarian indeed did the self-hatred paradigm become that, according to Cross, studies from the period which showed African-American resilience, complexity, texture and even "normal" psychological structures, were deliberately ignored and marginalized in professional circles and publications.

The forgotten elements of these ignored studies - complexity, texture, diversity - are logically taken up in Cross's account of the second phase of the psychology of African-American identity, spanning the period of the Black Power movement from the late 1960s to the 1980s. This phase produces its own paradigm which is reactively constructed against the previously dominant paradigm. For benighted self-hatred, vast reserves of self-esteem - often much higher than levels found among white children - for an undifferentiated, simple Negro identity, a great variety of modes of being black. It is a mark of the author's intellectual honesty that even though much of his own professional work belongs here, he is able to acknowledge and criticize the oversimplifications of the new paradigm of the "psychology of nigrescence." He is able to record even a certain amount of continuity of problematic, flawed methodological perspectives between the old and new paradigms. Prominent among these is the premise of the interchangeability of the results of tests probing personal psychological traits and structures and those probing the dynamics of group consciousness, experience, and attitudes. Moreover, Cross is honest and courageous enough to admit that he and his colleagues in the psychology of nigrescence school are yet to

See Race, p. 15

Judith Butler: Singing the Body

Margaret Nash

Judith Butler is the author of *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France*, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* and numerous articles that transgress the boundaries of feminist theory, philosophy, psychoanalytic theory and poststructuralism. She is co-editor of a soon-to-be-published anthology titled *Feminists Theorize the Political* and is currently working on a book titled *Bodies That Matter*. Her work has challenged appeals to foundational identity categories such as sex, gender and sexual orientation, exposing them as effects of discourses that constrain feminist politics. Her inquiry into the political construction and regulation of identities has fueled feminist debate and critique. This past semester, Butler has been a visiting senior scholar at the Society for Humanities at Cornell University. She is a professor at Johns Hopkins University in the Humanities Center.

M.N. You began *Gender Trouble* by recalling the injunction of your childhood: "That to make trouble was something one should never do precisely because it gets one in trouble." Now, "trouble" is precisely the term that characterizes the consequences of much of your work. Care to comment?

J.B. It's true that I was always getting into trouble as a kid - talking back, refusing to follow rules - and I remember a principal at my elementary school telling me I had a good

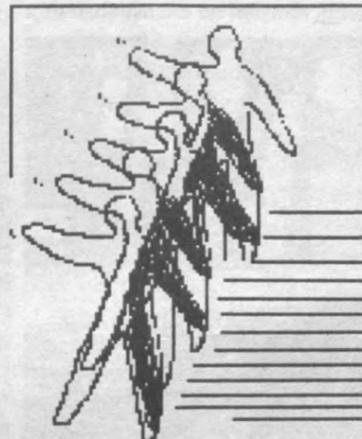
head on my shoulders and that if I could only stop being a disciplinary problem, I could make something of myself. I remember being startled by that notion, and wasn't at all sure that I could stop being a disciplinary problem; at some point I decided that the only way to "make something of myself" was as a disciplinary problem. In some sense, I've been making a career out of that notion.

M.N. Can you explain what you mean by saying that gender is a performance?

J.B. Well, I'm slightly dismayed by a popular misappropriation of my argument. Some readers assume that I mean something like what Erving Goffman meant, taking on a gender role as a choice. But there is a difference between theatrical self-presentation and gender performativity. I get the notion of performativity from Derrida's essay, "Signature, Event, Context," and it has to do with how the notion of "choice" or "self" is produced as an effect of a certain compulsory repetition. I understand that gender presentations produce the appearance of self-identity as well as an inner "truth" that they are said to express. My work is an effort to explain the process through which genders assume a naturalized form. Heterosexualized genders tend to get consolidated through the repeated exclusion of other possibilities, which always threaten to break through the seamlessness of the heterosexual surface of society.

M.N. What political practices would help to destabilize exclusionary identity categories?

J.B. Queer Nation and ACT-UP have both used aggressive and effective theatrical performances to make visible gay and lesbian cultures which are usually suppressed. They have endeavored to refigure radically



what can be included within public space, and I think that's terrifically important because of the attention and urgency it focuses on the issue of AIDS.

M.N. Do you think Madonna is such a subversive figure, or has she been coopted?

J.B. Both. She is subversive because she enacts an extremely aggressive female sexuality which can be quite threatening. It's interesting to see how much women love her and how men have ambivalent feelings toward Madonna; she's potentially castrating and a little bit frightening to men. Some of them

really love her, but women are much more enthusiastic about her - it's a phenomenon both of identification and desire. Women identify with her, want to be her - right? - at the same time, here's a figure of really aggressive female sexuality who makes women themselves desirable as objects of desire. Madonna also has a lot of "Fuck You" in her. In her film and in some of her clips she seeks to offend, and likes to get into trouble. You could see she wanted the police to come fetch her for obscenity and she was really excited about the idea that she might transgress some law. I think that's great. It's important to contest obscenity laws right now. On the other hand, it's clear that she promotes and fortifies a certain restricted notion of femininity. Like, when she lost weight, a lot of us were a bit disappointed because she produced the notion of a kind of normal femininity which, again, was going to be very white, very thin and a little less wild. The racial politics of her film are also worrisome because she acts out and eroticizes a lot of white domination.

M.N. You say we have to cure ourselves of the illusion of a body of - a real body - a true body, beyond the law.

J.B. Cure, I said that?

M.N. You use that word in *Gender Trouble* - it sounds almost Wittgensteinian. Would you still use it? What would such a cure involve?

J.B. I've been going back and

reading a lot of Freud and Lacan lately, not because I think psychoanalysis is an answer, certainly not because I think psychoanalysis provides a cure. But, there is a very interesting notion Freud suggests in *The Ego and the Id*, called the bodily ego. Basically, he says that the sense of the body as morphologically distinct and as having a contour and having parts - how one conceives of the body - is, in part, an idealized projection. This notion of the bodily ego suggests that what we call morphology, or even what gets scientifically acknowledged as morphology, like the morphology of sex for instance, is informed by an idealizing projection.

Now, Helen Longino's work, which comes out of a very different tradition from mine, is important here. In her book, *Science as Social Knowledge*, Longino suggests that most of the research into hormonal and chromosomal distinctions between the sexes is governed by a hypothesis that effectively prefigures what it seeks to discover. Basically, she looks at the scientific literature in terms of what she understands to be a kind of heterosexist idealization that guides the research from the start.

Freud makes a similar argument actually - although he probably wouldn't accept my rendition of it - which is to say that there is an expectation or an anticipation of what the body will be like, and this fantasy actually informs the direct experi-

see *Singing*, p. 12

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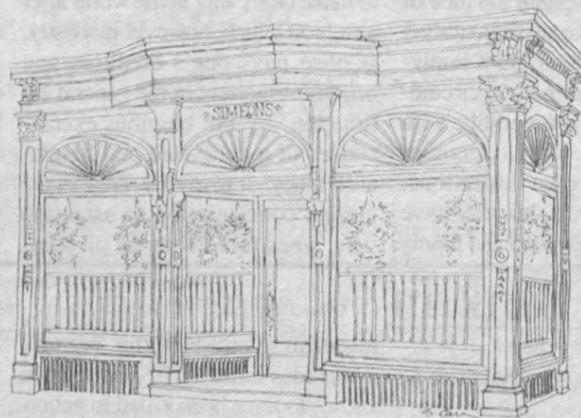
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IN THE WAY
OF WOMEN



CYNTHIA COCKBURN

On the Reader as Author

Robert Hill

Readers, amongst whom, by the very act of picking up a circular such as this one you are presently looking into, you have proven yourselves desirous to be numbered, often entertain either in secret desires or in pronouncements to a wider circle the wish to become writers as well. This latter term we understand to signify the author of a fiction, whether in its nature shorter or of greater bulk, as novels and romances.

Doubtless there are numbered among this audience those who, either by fortune or by dint of application, have succeeded to this elevated station; what may hereafter be insinuated it can only be hoped will prove of interest to such disinterested curiosities, though it cannot be of any application to their situations. Others in this number may already be in possession of their own novels, chapters of novels, or stories, languishing in drawers, never yet presented through the good offices of a publisher to a more general public; it rests with them to judge in their private circumstance the pertinence of what ensues. But for the greater number who regularly indulge their fancy or their understandings in reconnoitering the literary outpourings of others possessed, perhaps in greater degree, of a more assiduous industry or enlarged imagination, there survives the wish, with a greater or lesser fervency, but without its concomitant fruits.

It is a prerequisite in any essay to diagnose this deficiency of action, if such it be, to arrive at a precedent understanding of what, in the honored pastime of fiction writing, fascinates the imaginations and tantalizes the intentions of so great a majority subject to the sway of that fantastical whim. For there is, in the psychic admixture of those who write textbooks, scholarly and critical works, instructional or practical manuals, or pieces of journalism, no such correlative humor, nor any urgency in such degree as attends the desire to write fictions, insofar as these various literary pursuits may be justly distinguished.

There is evidently associated with the notion of an author, in the conception of those who have as yet not attained to that envied title, the idea closely allied with it of a personal style which, however much it may in particular instances fall short of or exceed licentiousness, at least bespeaks a general license of behavior and action. The hearing of the very word readily disposes our conceptions to entertain the idea of beings in whom is to be distinguished those personal eccentricities implying a freedom of mind and circumstance contrasting favorably with the conventions and exigencies governing our own situations. However much this idea may have been originally implanted and fondly

nourished by biographers or publicists, it constitutes much of the usual stock of our conception of those in whose imaginative productions we may choose to read evidence of correspondingly imaginative lives. The legend surrounding one author may cause us to supply the want of legend in the case of another by weaving from the fabric of those writings evidence for a more colorful person-



Illustration: Milly Acharya

age than any biography could in truth sustain. We revel in reports of the independent masculinity of George Sand or Ernest Hemingway; and hence are led insensibly to paint with hues of romantic solitude and melancholy, perhaps drawn from their own writings, the more prosaic existences of the Brontë sisters, or Jane Austen, or Marcel Proust.

But though these productions may not bear the weight of that closer scrutiny they necessarily invite when taken as evidence for a mode of existence and style of character we may wish to attach to their authors, they may at least be read as the record of an expanded and less constrained power of the imagination, together with an orderliness of conception and a command of language that enables those so favorably endowed to erect a fictitious scheme having some pretensions to be universally enjoyed. It may readily appear, among the commonwealth of readers, an enviable employment to make one's way in the world after a fashion which, however modestly, at once pays one's creditors and acquires notoriety in the general estimation, by the tangible excrescences of a cultivated and heightened fancy. It is worthy, then, of the closest consideration to ascertain why, when faced with the prospect

of acquiring a livelihood after so nice a fashion, so many continue to yearn after that existence without ever taking those measures pursuant to realizing it.

Such persons may, in the first instance, appeal to a want of leisure springing from the supererogatory claims upon their time of more sublunary affairs. This attenuation savors more of an excuse than of a

real deficiency of constitution, since even a casual consideration of the history of letters bears witness to the concentration of effort and the laudatory dispensation of time instanced in William Faulkner, who is reported to have written at least one novel in the course of his employment in a factory, where his tasks demanded a proximity to the prevalent din of heavy machinery, obviating at once both his leisure and those conditions widely believed requisite to the concentration of the creative faculty in our species. Similarly, Einstein, a figure of creative if not literary renown, in the exigent situation of a bustling government office, imagined his theories of the relativity of space and time; in that same act proving both economically and incontrovertibly the relativity of leisure as well.

In the second place is usually pleaded want of money. The soundness of this plangency as an attenuating consideration is undermined by the distribution and authority among the opinions of both the learned and vulgar of that legend concerning genius, that it flourishes best when starving in garrets. However far this may fall from the truth of the matter, it is nonetheless recounted of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, that he composed several romances

under an incarceration which, while it may have supplied some of the wants and leisure sufficient to his task, also removed any possibility of acquiring capital funds either to sustain him or to encourage his efforts; moreover, by one of those small ironies which spring in such profusion around cumbersome political mechanisms, the very toilet paper upon which he sometimes wrote would have been such as to supply the want, had he been at liberty to purvey that commodity among a public as eager for it, at least, as they were to receive his dissident writings. Likewise Cervantes, who wrote his picaresque in the strictures of direst want; inhabiting a second-story apartment situated above a tavern and below a brothel, these lodgings intersected by an open stair upon which ascended, with a frequency that must have subverted a lesser resolve, those who had sufficiently fueled their libidos beneath the stairs to wish to ease them above.

Thirdly may be discerned want of dispatch, though a predominating vanity may cause us to whisper this failing only in the innermost vaults of the self, rather than cite it publicly; and those who employ this consideration as a real extenuation thereby betray a further and correspondent deficiency in the subtlety of their comprehension of those principles of psychology governing themselves and their fellows, a deficiency which obscures to them the general truth that the failing in question is nearly an universal human one, and allures them thereby with all the specious plausibility of a genuine mitigation. For, to speak plainly, if this is indeed an impartially distributed failing in the genius of our race, works of romance are still framed by the pens of fellow human beings who, in the condition of a shared humanity, also suffer the malady we plead in our private cases; hence it can serve no one of us as exculpatory. And if we have failed to recognize its universality, an oversight evidenced in our pleading it, then we have laid in our own laps the constitutional excuse, that our grasp of the laws regulating our species is not such as to enable us to write with any authority or verisimilitude upon the human condition, and we should perhaps be better employed in writing astronomical or theological treatises.

Fourthly, we may plead want of resolution, being such as who, when faced with the prospect of an arduous and consuming task, feel the springs of an inspiration, the very fount of ideas, suddenly run down to an unpromising trickle; and what was once a veritable garden of the fancy is turned overnight into the severest desert, where can be discovered neither the shady bower of plot nor the nourishing delectabilities of character to sustain the

husbandman. It is neither within the admitted province of the merely diagnostic to provide antidotes by way of proverbs, blandishments, or hearty encouragements; nor can it be imagined that any word which might be proffered by way of admonition would find its way unobstructed to the hearts of such as may stand most in need of that particular correction. This want of resolve, betokening as it does a wider general deficiency of character, more often presents itself, Proteus-like, in the guise of such adventitious hindrances as are less painfully confessed to oneself. One in the circle of my acquaintances would be an author, and a pencil would not do, he would have a word processor; having acquired that with dispatch, he required only a desk with sufficient authority and weight to bear up under all that he wrote upon it; and when that requisite was satisfied, discovered that the prospect surrounding his house was not conducive, nor would his means permit him any remedy in this regard; so, being discovered by a temperamental muse to be of an even more volatile temperament, he has been bereft of that inspiration which might have given to the world what he has never yet been able to produce.

There remain two circumstances commonly insinuated as excusing a life devoid of literary production. They are the want of the raconteur's imagination; and the want of a humane interest in and vital sympathy with the species. The former deficiency renders impossible the framing of a story; the latter limitation renders a person thus wanting insensible of any common feeling with those passions and affections in fellow creatures which so much contribute to the substance of our literature; and renders that person skeptical of the opinion, so fondly espoused and warmly defended in other quarters, that such a detachment constitutes a real deficiency, whether merely literary or in some broader sense moral. As both are constitutional, they are not subject to improvement; but in the interests of a philosophical completeness and systematic exhaustiveness they bear mention. It is worthy of remarking that this last-mentioned trait, a want of interest in the species, rather than being universally regarded as a deficiency, or indeed requiring any improvement if such were possible, is viewed by some races, religions, private factions, and the more philosophical of the cults, as a thing to be cultivated assiduously as the means to a more certain and lasting happiness than literary fame can promise to furnish.

Robert Hill is a writer who lives in Ithaca, N.Y.

the number of servicemen actually classified by the Defense Department as MIA prior to 1973 was, at the most, 36. Upon further investigation, he found that there were only up to 13 who were ever definitely alive in enemy hands. All but four of those people died in captivity, and there is no evidence that anyone survived later than 1970.

The invention of the POW/MIA myth was a political masterstroke, says Franklin. Since the fate

of MIAs was such a deeply emotional issue, it generated support for the government's position on Vietnam. After all, how could any loyal American not support efforts to get MIAs out of Southeast Asia? The emotion over the POW/MIA issue continued to grow when civilians took up the cause, creating groups like the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, which lobbied

see Bruce, p. 11

Bruce Franklin

continued from p. 1

are the unlikeliest combatants to be recovered.

After conducting what appears to be exhaustive research (the book includes a 35-page appendix of interesting notes), Franklin does a superb job of explaining just what the numbers and the categories mean. For instance, the number 2,273 unaccounted-for in Indochina is

misleading, says Franklin, because it includes those 1,101 servicemen known to have been killed in action in circumstances where their bodies could not be recovered. The official designation for those 1,101 should have been KIA/BNR - killed in action, body not recovered - a category that would include crews of airplanes that exploded in the air or crashed within sight of their aircraft carriers,

soldiers machined-gunned to death in front of comrades who were unable to retrieve their bodies, or men so blown apart that there were no remains. The number of KIA/BNR was never subsumed in the MIA category during the Vietnam War. It was only after the signing of the 1973 Paris Peace Agreement that they were lumped together, according to Franklin, for political reasons.

After reviewing all the unresolved MIA cases, Franklin says that

Dances with Philosophers

Suzanne R. Stewart

WOMAN AND MODERNITY The (Life) Styles of Lou Andreas Salomé

by Bidy Martin

Cornell University Press, 250 pp., \$10.95 paper

One of Lou Andreas Salomé's favorite representations of herself and other modern women was that of a snail carrying its home on its back. But such a home belongs to woman and is essential to her existence only to the extent that she remain always mobile. "The little home is her own," Salomé wrote, "but on the way, all kinds of things grow, things that she desires and needs to grow into a true, vigorous snail." Lou Salomé lived this metaphor by embodying what Bidy Martin calls an "unlocatable, unfixed domesticity."

Born in St. Petersburg in 1861 into a Russian, but German-speaking, household with relatively open views, Salomé was allowed to leave behind her formal schooling at an early age, and from that time studied with some of the most prominent male thinkers of her era. At seventeen, she met the Dutch Reform preacher Hendrik Gillot, who took it upon himself to instruct her as his private pupil in philosophy, literature, and the history of religion. In 1880, she, like many other progressive-minded Russian women, went to Zurich to continue her studies in history and the psychology of religion. She joined the circle of post-'48ers in Rome in 1882, coming

thereby in contact with a group of intellectuals and artists who had gathered around the idealist Malwida von Meysenbug. It was in Rome, through von Meysenbug, that Salomé met the positivist philosopher, Paul Reé, who in turn introduced her to Friedrich Nietzsche that same year. Reé, Nietzsche, and Salomé made plans to live and study



Lou Andreas Salomé

photo: Sophia Goudstikker, 1897

together, but the idea fell through and Salomé and Reé moved to Berlin, where they lived together for four years. In 1887, Salomé married Friedrich Carl Andreas, a brilliant but eccentric orientalist. The marriage lasted until Andreas' death in 1930. In the first years of their marriage, Salomé made contact with the Naturalist movement in Berlin, establishing ties to Gerhart

Hauptmann, Bruno Wille and Richard Dehmel, amongst others. She became a frequent contributor to the Naturalists' theater journal, where she often wrote about Russian theater and literature.

The 1890s were prolific years for Salomé: she published more than fifty essays and reviews on religion, philosophy, art, theater, women and eroticism. She travelled extensively, and met Frank Wedekind in 1894, Arthur Schnitzler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Richard Beer-Hofmann and Peter Altenberg in 1895. In 1897, she became intimate friends with Rainer Maria Rilke, and, in 1911, she met Sigmund Freud at the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Weimar. As a consequence of this encounter, she spent the following year in Vienna studying with Freud. There, she established what would be life-long ties to the psychoanalytic movement, working closely with Viktor Tausk and Anna Freud. After leaving the Austrian capital, she herself became a lay analyst to whom Freud continued to refer patients until her death in 1937.

While such a quick overview of Salomé's life bespeaks an intellectual engagement solely with men, her diaries, her published writings, and her friendships tell another story. Salomé's diaries and correspondence are proof of close relationships with women, and many of her essays constitute dialogues with the most prominent feminists of the age, such as the Swedish Ellen Key, or the

Germans Helene Stöcker, Hedwig Dohm and Helene Lange. She admired and befriended Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, as well as Käthe Kollwitz and Anna Freud.

The fact that Salomé's relationships with women have been marginalized in the standard biographical accounts of her life is symptomatic of larger misreadings, if not distortions, that have contin-



Bidy Martin

ued to be attached to the name of Lou Salomé. Combined with an emphasis on her relationships with the "great men" of her age, this has contributed to an underestimation of her intellectual contributions to feminism, psychoanalysis and philosophy. Her most prominent biographer, Rudolph Binion, for instance, has reduced her work and life to unresolved Oedipal struggles, echoing the position assumed by Freud's biographer, Ernest Jones: "She was a woman with a remarkable

flair for great men, and she counted a large number among her friends.... It was said of her that she attached herself to the greatest men of the nineteenth and the twentieth century: Nietzsche and Freud respectively."

But this reading of Salomé's life and work as erratic, contradictory, even dishonest, may be questioned. Thus, while it is certainly true that Gillot, Nietzsche, and Reé proposed marriage to her - Nietzsche before ever meeting her! - it is equally true that she rejected them all. She remained in a marriage with Andreas that was never consummated. Throughout her life, she conducted a presumably large number of intimate relationships with men, and yet the significance to her of these attachments has remained ambiguous. Salomé has been portrayed as alternately a seductress and a muse, a narcissistic parasite and a total disciple, a woman in trousers and a supportive mother, a feminist and an anti-feminist. The question remains, however, how one is to evaluate these contradictions: are they a sign of Salomé's failure, or are they grounded in her ultimate refusal of a clearly defined "feminine" subject-position?

Salomé's (life) styles, the ways in which she chose to live and to write, are a challenge both to the ways in which a woman's work and life are interpreted, and, by extension, to the ways in which great men are monumentalized. It is this challenge that Bidy Martin accepts in her

see Salomé, p. 15

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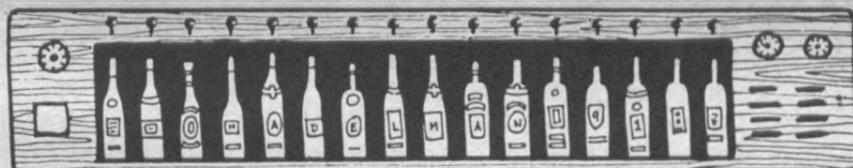
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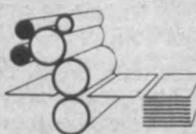
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Infirmiry Blues

John M. Kuder

MARKETPLACE MEDICINE The Rise of the For-Profit Hospital Chains

by Dave Lindorff
Bantam Books, 316 pp., \$22.50

By undertaking to write *Marketplace Medicine*, Ithaca resident Dave Lindorff exhibits both courage and fortitude: courage, because he takes on the for-profit industry giants like Humana and Hospital Corporation of America (HCA); and fortitude, because he really attempts to understand the morass of confusing and often conflicting motives and behaviors that characterize medical care as it is organized, financed, and delivered in the United States. He takes the reader with him into the boardrooms, emergency rooms, and legislative chambers where decisions about medical care are made, and along the way he explores the impact that "marketplace economics," specifically the rise of for-profit hospital chains, has had on all of us who become patients (or fear that we will). Lindorff's courageous effort

has resulted in an entertaining, provocative, and thoughtful book about health care policy.

By now, few of us need to be reminded by political candidates that American medicine is in a crisis condition. The usual litany of problems is often long, but the chief complaints are two: the dizzying rise in the cost of medical care for everyone and the lack of access to quality care experienced by millions of Americans who are poor and/or lack adequate health insurance coverage. This crisis, we are reminded in *Marketplace Medicine*, has been with us since the presidency of Richard Nixon. The severity of the symptoms has waxed and waned during the last decade and a half, but the underlying problems have remained remarkably constant despite numerous political and private sector policies - each of which, we were assured, would be the needed panacea.

As the cumbersome and underfunded regulatory policies of the 1970s demonstrated their inability

to control the rise in health care costs, policymakers began to explore other options, including an increased emphasis on deregulation and an encouragement of marketplace incentives and competition. Very little effective pro-competition legislation was actually passed, but entrepreneurs saw this policy shift as an opportunity to profit from investments in an industry that was nearly recession-proof, received payment on the basis of cost, and often had near monopoly control of markets. *Medical Marketplace* traces the meteoric growth in the for-profit hospital chains during the late 1970s and early-to-mid 1980s. As Lindorff notes, in 1978 there were 445 corporate-owned hospitals in the country, and by 1991 the number had increased to 1,384 (or one-fourth the of the total number of nonfederal hospitals). This dramatic change in the hospital industry was dominated by four large for-profit chains: Humana, HCA, American Medical International (AMI) and National Medical Enterprises

(NME).

This is certainly the kind of story that lends itself to conspiracy theories and exaggeration, but Lindorff takes a different path. He painstakingly documents the behavior of these firms and tells the personal stories of owners, administrators, physicians, employees, policymakers, patients and would-be patients who were involved in or affected by this change in the hospital industry. The author's intent, however, goes beyond mere historical documentation. By attempting a kind of common-sense understanding of this medical market and all its problems, Lindorff is able to use the "for-profit hospital sector" as a case study which reveals many of the tangled complexities of the entire health care system, and to show why its problems have been so immune to cure by either regulatory or market-based policies (many of which seem to have made the crisis worse).

Lindorff also reveals the human faces of all the victims of this "chronic crisis": patients who can't

get care when they need it; individuals and businesses that believe they pay more than their fair share; all who fear being ill because they know that a long hospital stay will impoverish them. Also frustrated and frequently irate are those well-meaning individuals who attempt to provide needed health care services in an economic environment that sends them mixed signals and incentives about how and to whom they should provide care. The reader might expect this book to be a simple exposé of the failings of the for-profit hospital chains. In fact, Lindorff is quick to divulge his biases to the reader in the book's preface, where he states his preference for a "government-run and government-financed health system." But it is much to Lindorff's credit that he tries to present a reasoned and well-balanced approach. Though it sometimes seems a struggle for him, he generally succeeds, avoiding the temptation to present merely an orchestrated diatribe -

see *Marketplace*, p. 16

Staring Down the Bear

Teresa Demo

LYDDIE

by Katherine Paterson
Lodestar Books, 182 pp., \$14.95

Katherine Paterson recalls that she began her first novel by writing "in ten minute cracks of time" with four young children underfoot. Starting with "no study, not even a desk to call mine alone," Paterson kept writing. Amid her roles as minister's wife and mother, she continued to search for a separate identity, for a way "to pass through the gates of excellence" with her writing career. Winner of both the National Book Award and the Newberry Medal, Paterson explores as a recurrent theme the quest for identity. Her focus is the individual who searches for personal definition in the midst of an impaired family unit or as part of an unreceptive culture-at-large. What distinguishes her plots, which often involve irretrievable loss or death, is her vision of hope. Though hardships exist, Paterson holds that reconciliation and meaning in life can come to one who is willing to endure a struggle with one's own spirit. This is the struggle Paterson brings to the New England of 1843, where the book *Lyddie* begins.

Lyddie relates an experience common in New England in the mid-to-late 1800s, when young farm girls left their family homes in the country to go to work at the textile mills in places like Lowell, Massachusetts. The novel is the result of Paterson's participation in the Women's History Project, celebrating Vermont's bicentennial in 1991, and her subsequent primary research on the writings of the Lowell mill girls.

Although there are direct references to *Oliver Twist*, a novel Paterson loved dearly as a child, *Lyddie* is the story of a working woman's world. Paterson does not share the wit of Dickens, but she exposes many of the same grueling conditions of factory life through Lyddie Worthen.

Lyddie is a ten-year-old girl who suffers the loss of both parents and

home but retains an indomitable spirit. Lyddie is not particularly pretty; she calls herself "plain as sod" in contrast to her more attractive sister. She is certainly not perfect; having known both poverty and betrayal, she admits to being stingy with her money and "close with her friends." But she is willing to put forth the effort it takes to discover herself, despite the personal hardships and the societal conventions that pull her to do otherwise.

At first, Lyddie tries to keep the remaining members of her family together on their Vermont farm. It is a poor family, abandoned by an irresponsible father who "went away searching in vain for riches," and dominated by a half-crazed mother who believes that the end of the world will very soon be upon them. When a hungry bear wanders into the cabin one night, Lyddie's quick wit meets the challenge. She keeps the babies and her frightened mother quiet and stares down the bear until it breaks away from her gaze "as if embarrassed." After the bear finally rages out the door with a pot of oatmeal stuck over his head, Lyddie and her sister laugh with relief.

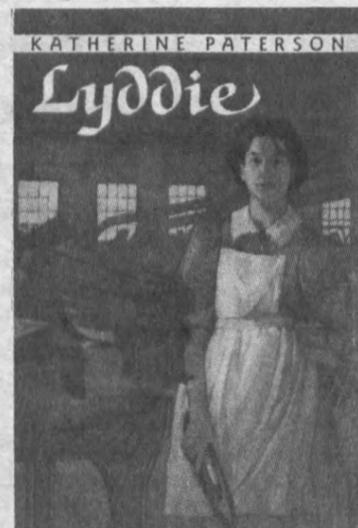
Paterson establishes this powerful metaphor in the story's opening sentence, "The bear had been their undoing, though at the time they had all laughed." Lyddie's continuous encounters with the bear - not its physical reality but what it comes to represent - are an important thread that weaves her story together.

Without the support of a breadwinner, the Worthen family breaks up. Lyddie's mother leaves the farm with her younger children, while Lyddie and her brother Charlie manage alone for a short time until a note from their mother sends them off to work as servants. Arriving at Cutler's Tavern, where she is to be a housemaid, Lyddie recognizes for the first time what such servitude will mean. "Once I walk in that gate, I ain't free anymore."

While the new living arrangement works out well for her brother, Lyddie is not yet convinced that

they shouldn't be reunited on the farm. The thought of working toward this goal of "home" holds Lyddie together. Desperately needing to keep this vision alive, she travels one day, without permission from her mistress, to visit the land she had to leave. Upon her return, she is dismissed from her job.

During the brief visit to her family's old farm, Lyddie encounters a more severe form of bondage than her own. As she enters the deserted cabin she is startled by the presence of a black man, a runaway slave that the Quaker neighbors are hiding until a safe escape to Canada



can be assured. He is not at all what Lyddie had imagined a slave to be - she had heard atrocious rumors but had never before met a black person. He is a gentle man who quotes from the Bible and generously offers her his last scrap of meal. It is through their dialogue - Ezekial's borrowed parables and Lyddie's persistent questions - that Paterson establishes the kind of freedom Ezekial knows; he is shackled by society but his spirit knows no bounds. When Lyddie offers him some money to help his escape, his thank-you wish for her is "find your freedom as well, Miss Lydia."

Believing that it is money that will buy her freedom and reclaim her family, Lyddie goes to work at the mill. The noisy, dangerous textile machines become Lyddie's new

bear. As she is trained, she struggles with both the looms and her humility. When she tames them, often working the room alone, she is greedy for her pay and impatient with the new Irish girl she trains. Surviving 13-hour work days, six days a week, broken only by brief meals and sleep, Lyddie becomes the automaton the profit-hungry mill supervisors strive for.

She must also adjust to dormitory-style life with the other mill girls. Paterson presents these young women - Amelia, Betsy, and Diane - as representative examples of the various ways to deal with the dismal, often life-threatening factory routine.

Amelia, who has spent a year at the mill, goes back to visit her family's farm one day and never returns. Diane leaves quietly for Boston, as she is unmarried and pregnant. Betsy gets sick, suffering from the awful cough that comes as a result of the lint-filled rooms and poor ventilation. But before Betsy leaves for the fresh air of Maine, she shows Lyddie a special way of coping with life. Every night she reads *Oliver Twist* aloud to the fascinated Lyddie, and Lyddie finds mental escape in her persistent interest in learning letters and reading.

Lyddie's hope of a real escape from mill life is shaken by the news of her mother's hospitalization. Her uncle now possesses the deed to the family farm, and intends to sell it. Lyddie hopes that her brother might stop the farm from being sold, but then, in her uneasy sleep, she dreams of the bear: "The bear threw off the pot... Lyddie could not stare him down."

A final incident at the mill is a pivotal one. At closing time, Lyddie finds her friend Bridget hysterical and trapped alone with the lascivious overseer, Mr. Mardsen. Lyddie rescues Bridget by sneaking behind them and dumping a fire bucket over Mr. Mardsen's head. As both girls run, Lyddie thinks she hears the "noise of an angry bear crashing an oatmeal pot against the furniture."

When Mr. Mardsen lies to his supervisors about the events in the weaving room, Lyddie is dismissed for "moral turpitude." Lyddie isn't even given the chance to ask what the accusation means. At this low point, Lyddie feels that "the bear has won... it has stolen her home, her family, and her good name."

Although it seems that all of Lyddie's dreams have dwindled away, she proves that she cannot be dismissed so easily this time. Her confidence in her abilities has grown, and a dignity nurtured by teaching herself to read has transformed her. She looks up the definition of "moral turpitude" at the bookstore she frequents, and armed with this knowledge and her new-found dignity, she finds a way to "stare down" Mr. Mardsen on her way out of town.

For the first time, she is a free woman, but her freedom is without a plan beyond the day. Wanting to visit her siblings, she sets out knowing that on the way she will pass their vacated farm. At the old cabin she unexpectedly meets Luke Stevens, the Quaker neighbor who has tended the place in the Worthen family's absence. Luke has written Lyddie before and asked for her hand in marriage. When Lyddie refuses his invitation to stay at the Stevens' farm, Luke asks, "Then if thee will not stay, where will thee go?" Hearing the question, Lyddie realizes she does have an answer for herself. She has quietly discovered that the bear she most needed to stare down was that of her own narrow spirit. Having accomplished this, she is free to move forward "to stare down all the bears" yet to come. With possibilities before her, Lyddie tells Luke that she chooses to go for an education at a "college in Ohio where they will take a women just like a man." Like Luke Stevens, the reader can only finally conclude, "Thee is indeed a wonder, Lyddie Worthen."

Theresa Demo is a writer living in Ithaca, NY.

Reading the Men's Movement

Peter Fortunato

IRON JOHN

A Book About Men
by Robert Bly
Vintage, \$11.00 paper

ABSENT FATHERS, LOST SONS

The Search for
Masculine Identity
by Guy Corneau
Shambala, \$11.00 paper

KING, WARRIOR, MAGICIAN, LOVER

Rediscovering the Archetypes of
the Mature Masculine
by Robert Moore
and Douglas Gillette
HarperCollins, \$9.95 paper

"How in the world can a person who has cut himself off from his body and heart — and been admired for this by society — aspire to intimacy with anybody?" (Guy Corneau)

It is virtually a stereotype that men have difficulty revealing and examining their inmost feelings. Furthermore, a devastating consequence of this has been men's unfeeling behavior toward women and children, the natural world, and themselves. In the past couple of years, however, something has been moving men like never before to admit the general difficulties with being male, to reveal their inner yearnings, and to examine the tender scar tissue that wraps many of their most personal wounds. The idea that something has gone awry with our model of masculinity has obtained wide currency, as has a movement among men to reconnect in a mythopoeic sense with the most ancient images of manhood.

While it seems inaccurate to talk about a "men's movement" as if it had a program or agenda, it is possible, as the authors at hand have done, to focus discussion on a few important, related themes. Each book seeks to recover certain foundations for masculine identity, and each author has, to some extent, been influenced by the psychoanalyst Carl Jung. None is preoccupied with theory as an abstract pursuit, but, rather, each seeks to evoke "masculine energy" as a revitalizing force that can connect individual men to their own essence and to the lives of others. Each author values myths, dreams, and stories as a means of contacting humanity's deepest resources. The readership already attained by Robert Bly's book, and also by Robert Moore's and Douglas Gillette's, attests to the relevance of this approach, a relevance anticipated by the phenomenal success a few years ago of Joseph Campbell's and Bill Moyers' *The Power of Myth*.

There's something substantial in these books — and in the air today — for many contemporary males. The fundamental question, for those who dare to inquire, is the personal one: On what is my masculine identity based? It's a bold question, precisely because the cultural stereotype is so blatantly flawed, and because an alternative way of being male has not yet come fully into view. While many men have been firmly challenged and changed by feminism, it seems clear that the way toward a new masculinity cannot be found by simply adopting a behavior pre-

scribed or enabled by women.

Labeling such a quest a public movement is premature and simplifies the picture, destroying a level of vitality recognizable in person and in books like these under review. The popular media, driven in part by the need to trivialize forces which threaten the status quo, have already ventured numerous satires and parodies that ironically validate the potential such a movement of "sensitive" men can have. What such resistance amounts to, and how men will address the homophobia and sexism to which it is related, remains to be seen. I believe it is implicit that men who are changed in a meaningful way by their quest must ally themselves with feminism, gay liberation, and other movements that openly work for social justice. This would amount to a revolutionary humanism, which will only be fully empowered by a rebalancing of feminine and masculine energies in the modern world — an undertaking necessary in both individual and social spheres, and imperative for the welfare of the planet.

Since *Iron John, a Book about Men* by the poet Robert Bly has been a major best-seller and has catapulted Bly so hugely into the public eye, he deserves to be reviewed first. I've been a reader of Bly's poetry for many years, and have also enjoyed his distinct, iconoclastic voice as a critic. I like it that he's never been appointed to a comfortable chair within the academy, and I like it, in limited doses, that he risks sweeping generalizations about literature, the human psyche, and American life. Often, he's right. And, though I think that sometimes his poetry seems too accessible and misses true surprise, his translations of such major poets as Neruda, Rilke, Kabir and Rumi, have done much for our cultural life. But translations is not the right word: renditions, versions, derivations, all these connote better what Robert Bly does well as an interpreter of poetry and storyteller.

Bly's many public appearances over the past 25 years as a performer of poetry and workshop leader developed the audience at the core of *Iron John's* success. More importantly, in the past 10 years or so, a process of dialogue with his audience has helped Bly's book to evolve. The origin of the book lies in an ancient tale collected by the brothers Grimm as "Iron Hans". What Bly sees there is a complex, archetypal pattern for the stages of initiation through which a boy becomes a man.

Crucial to this process are the tutelage and encouragement of an older man, and *Iron John* is a prototype of the "Wild Man" we've heard so much about. Bly tells us a Wild Man is not lawless or savage: "The Wild Man is closer to a meditation instructor.... In part, he resembles a rabbi teaching the Kabala; in part, he resembles a holder of a mystery tradition; in part, he resembles a hunting god." But the goal is not to try to become the Wild Man, which would be a dangerous form of unconsciousness, since he is a mythic character. Rather, informed by the particular power and presence this dynamic represents within each of us, men have the opportunity to re-

claim their natural spontaneity and to channel positively their more aggressive instincts. (The Jungians have much to say about the "Shadow" which is relevant to this issue.)

Bly emphasizes strongly that "the male mode of feeling" is, or should be, grief among contemporary men, the result of the wound inflicted by the absence of the father. This wound, like that of the Fisher King in the Grail myth, continues to pain us even to the point of impo-



photo: Vincent A. Salandra

tenance: we see its consequences in the decline of our society. Bly says men cannot turn to women for what was denied us of our own "fierce" nature when the bodies of our fathers were removed from us, a process begun by the socio-economic forces of the Industrial Revolution, and perpetuated through various modes of dysfunction in the modern family. Only men can help each other heal this particular type of injury, he says, through communal grieving and the atonement between sons and fathers. It's this complex point, apparently proposed as a tautology in *Iron John*, which seems to irritate and even threaten many women. How is this different from any other time men have gone off to leave the women with more than their share of responsibility? They might well ask. The overstatement is typical of Bly, and I'm not convinced that he's entirely correct.

But many men will recognize the validity of *Iron John* on this point primarily. I, too, can vouch for the grief in the relationship with my own father, and the transformative power, the healing, that can result as a consequence of coming to terms with it. It seems to me that the way toward this healing will vary with individual men, who I hope will resist enshrining any single technique or text or teacher. To his credit, and probably for the sake of his own sanity, Bly seems to resist the projections of father or guru that some have thrust upon him. It's Robert Bly, the man with his quirks and human "stuff" who is the medium through which "Iron Hans" becomes *Iron John*. I am grateful

for his work, but some readers may find his interpolations to the original story distractions from the source material, and all readers might do well to reflect for themselves upon the original fairy tale. Like poetry — and *Iron John* is full of poetry besides Bly's own — the book is challenging reading. It is enticing because of Bly's metaphorical thinking, and aggravating because of some of his assumptions. It's no wonder it has provoked a wide variety of responses. It already stands for

one is in the rise of juvenile delinquency and gang warfare among youths, whom Corneau terms our "negative redeemers" because "they remind us of our own imperfect humanity, which we tend to lose sight of in the midst of all our idealistic preoccupations." The father's caring presence humanizes the archetype of masculinity, Corneau says, and "It is the father's humanity that enables the son to conceive of a world in which things are not all black and white, and in which opposites can be juxtaposed and reconciled." The book provides incentive for the self-work through which men can begin their personal healing, and an understanding of the larger interpersonal issues at stake. His section on "The Fear of Intimacy" is especially fine in regards to male heterosexual relations with women. Though not primarily concerned with male homosexuality, the book does address it.

Whereas Bly's oratorio often rumbles with too much basso profundo, at times Corneau's work trills a bit. Its main flaw is that it presents a terrific amount of related material too quickly. Corneau avoids an over-reliance on Jung's theoretical framework, drawing instead on his own experience with clients and workshop participants, but, had I been unfamiliar with Jung, I might have resisted or missed a lot of the good sense Corneau makes. Still, the book is a useful resource because it outlines firmly the seriousness of the father's absence, the varieties of the son's loss, and the nature of the search for masculine identity.

something, and will continue to be read because of the source it taps.

The title of Guy Corneau's *Absent Fathers, Lost Sons: the Search for Masculine Identity* summarizes well the nature of the wound that he finds and treats in many contemporary men. Corneau is a Jungian analyst with a practice in Montreal, Canada, and his book, while neither a clinical study nor a self-help book, abounds with accounts of cases wherein many men will recognize some part of themselves. In general, the writing (translated from the French by Larry Shouldice) blends nicely his professional perspective with the concerns of a man touched by the urgency of his fellow men's predicament.

At the outset, Corneau cites some powerful statistics about the afflicted mental health of contemporary Canadian men, as well as the appalling news that, even in families where the father is present, "Nine minutes a day for the kids is the length of time American studies have shown is the average father's attentiveness." Corneau says, "It is almost as though our fathers are subject to a rule of silence that decrees that fathers who speak are a threat to male solidarity." His book is offered especially as an effort to help break the "hereditary silence" which has denied across the generations "every teenage boy's need for recognition — or confirmation — from his father."

Corneau details the serious consequences that result when boys have not had the advantage of active fathering. An especially striking

When I first, briefly, encountered Robert Moore's and Douglas Gillette's *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine*, as a hardbound book released just in time for the 1990 holiday season, I looked askance upon it. *Iron John* was then proving that a hardbound, non-fiction "book about men" — replete with poetry, no less! — could be a market success, and dedicated to Bly as Moore's and Gillette's book is, I mistook it for a coat-tail rider. I was wrong. In its new, softbound edition it strikes me as a very fine primer in Jungian-inspired masculine psychology, and I recommend it. Specifically, Moore and Gillette offer their book as "a simplified and readable outline of an 'operator's manual for the male psyche.'" Their aim is to help the male reader "understand [his] strengths and weaknesses as a man and provide [him] with a map to the territories of masculine selfhood which [he] still need[s] to explore." The book is "user friendly" and written in an agreeable tone of voice, which is authoritative and relies on the pronoun we without abusing its pretensions. Like Guy Corneau, the authors are practicing therapists with extensive experience working with male clients.

But *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover* limits itself to a more manageable focus than does *Absent Fathers, Lost Sons*. As a consequence, it is an especially good place to begin for readers who are not already versed in Jungian psychology. The authors build upon Jung's notion

see *Men's*, p. 12

Writing in Prints

Benn T.F. Nadelman

Are the borders between "picture" art and the art of the written word becoming obscured? Throughout history, a vast number of visual artists have been inspired by the written word. Conversely, many great texts have been inspired, accompanied, or even overshadowed by elaborate, illustrative illuminations. What precedes what, then? Is the visual or the verbal the dominant form? Or do all elements of the arts converge, allowing us to choose which form the images should take? The work of printmaker Leslie Kramer raises these questions through her incorporation of ancient texts and original symbols.

I interviewed Ms. Kramer while previewing her upcoming show at the Solà Art Gallery in Ithaca. Joining us was the gallery owner, Daphne Solà, herself an accomplished printmaker.

B.N. Ms. Kramer, would you give us a brief history of how you became an artist and more specifically why you became a printmaker?

L.K. I've been sketching and drawing since childhood and I took art lessons in my home town of Providence, Rhode Island. I studied art as my minor and French as my major in college, and when I graduated I went to Paris for a year, where I studied printmaking with Stanley Haider. It was a wonderful opportunity to combine French and art.

B.N. You're fluent in French and have a working command of Spanish. Has that had any effect on the evolution of your work?

L.K. Yes, because I've travelled quite a bit, especially in France, and I draw on these trips very heavily for inspiration. My husband and I travel together, and we often plan our trips around places that relate to my artwork.

B.N. Your current work is, for the most part, in monoprints. Would you explain what a monoprint is, and from a technical and aesthetic point of view, the difference between mono- and multi-edition printing?

L.K. A monoprint is a combination of painting, drawing, and printmaking. The artist paints and draws the image on a metal plate and then prints using damp paper. Once the image has transferred to the paper, the original no longer exists. That's what makes it a monoprint. Often I combine collage elements, such as Japanese Rice Paper, foils, or just found papers, to add texture and color.

B.N. In the past, you've worked in edition prints, both limited edition and larger editions. Why did you change to monoprinting?

L.K. I still do some limited edition prints, and there will be some in this show, but I prefer the spontaneity of monoprints. You can explore and develop ideas very rapidly, whereas traditional printmaking techniques are more technical and slower.

B.N. Do you have to give up control of your medium to any degree in order to do a monoprint?

L.K. I really enjoy the unpredictable aspects of the monoprint. You never know what you're going to get until you remove the paper from the press, and it's very exciting because it's a combination of the technique,

some chance events, and your own ideas, yet I don't really feel that I give up control completely.

B.N. Why do a monoprint instead of a drawing or painting?

L.K. There are certain textures, a certain look that can only be achieved by doing a print. There's a color, a translucence, and that surprise aspect which always keeps it interesting for the artist.

D.S. There is also a strong element of impression in a print, a physical impression which is not there in a drawing. The drawing is entirely the spontaneous line on the surface of the paper, but the monoprint involves that extra physical impression of the medium which could be wood or metal or glue or cardboard; the ink is totally absorbed by the paper, so different levels of depth can be created.



Figure 1: Bet

B.N. Ms. Solà, you're a printmaker yourself. Have you ever done monoprints?

D.S. I haven't done monoprints, but, like Ms. Kramer, I found spontaneity in a printmaking medium. I was attracted to making handmade paper, but not handmade paper on which I would do prints. Instead, I create the image in the wet pulp - a completely spontaneous creation, still very connected to my love of paper, but not the long-considered technical project that a print is. I understand the visceral connection Ms. Kramer is talking about - all printmakers have a visceral love of paper.

B.N. The term "print" has taken on a new, popular meaning over the past few decades, whereby artists will often do a drawing or painting and not even work on the plate itself, leaving that to the print house, or even having photo reproductions created for sale as "prints." Would either of you care to comment on those methods?

D.S. Not very kindly. I don't think I would consider it an original print unless the artist had taken a hand in creating the original plate.

B.N. Historically and legally that was true at one time. The artist at least had to work on the plate for the image to be considered an original print.

D.S. We should make a kind of cultural distinction here, because there's a strong European tradition of the artist working with a master craftsman who often creates the plate and does the printing, but the artist is almost always in attendance. These are not separate vocations, where one person does a drawing and the other the printing. They work in conjunction with each other; it is a system that includes an honored place for the printmaker. This is less

true in the United States, I think partly because we can't afford it - and it's not in our tradition.

B.N. Could you do a series of a monoprint?

L.K. Yes, you could do that because after you've done the first print there remains some ink on the plate surface from which you might be able to do one or two "ghost images", or you could work back into the image left on the plate. I work in series sometimes, but each one is different. I may do a number of things based on a single original image, however.

We looked at a number of the pieces that will be in the show: "Bet" (fig. 1), "Dalet" (fig. 2), and "Ancient Scroll" (fig. 3).

B.N. These prints show a great amount of control, yet they're very organic, very fluid. The titles, "Bet" and "Dalet," are two characters in the Hebrew alphabet, and I notice other Hebrew characters in the works. How did you start working with these elements?

L.K. Both of these pieces incorporate the first four characters of the Hebrew alphabet in various permutations and manipulations within the pieces. I studied Hebrew as a child, and I find the letter forms very beautiful calligraphically.

B.N. So the appeal to you is the visual as opposed to the literal meaning.

L.K. Yes, and it is also meaningful as something that relates to my childhood and my religious and ethnic background. "Ancient Scroll" is based on a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls. I've incorporated marks



Figure 2: Dalet

symbolizing ancient Hebrew and Aramaic writing, and I've used the fragmented form of the scroll. I've included some Japanese tea-chest paper, which is gold paper, to describe the value of writing. Gold is a very precious commodity, a treasure, as are the Dead Sea Scrolls. **B.N.** You've written that in much of your work calligraphic symbols serve as inspiration for the visual statement. In these works, you hope to create a bridge between the written language and abstract visual imagery. How do you bridge this gap and what response do you intend to evoke?

L.K. The response I want to evoke is one of associations from the viewer, associations between an abstract image - which is what my print is - and symbols or maybe even archetypal thoughts based on written symbols. Alexander Marshak writes about one of the most ancient forms of writing, lines scratched on bones, and his theory is that this may have represented time sequences or

possibly astrological observations. Chinese ideograms started as pictures and turned into symbols for things. I'm interested in how marks become symbols having multiple meanings. Combined with an image, such symbols may create a layering of associations in the mind of the viewer.

B.N. Have you used symbols or text from, let's say, Hindi or Chinese or Japanese?

L.K. Yes, I have some works based on Chinese characters that were written on a beautiful plate. This particular writing inspired me to make a whole series of monoprints.

B.N. Did you make a conscious effort to incorporate calligraphic symbols, or was it something you noticed in your work and began to cultivate?

L.K. I like to read a lot and the calligraphic quality of various alphabets has always fascinated me; I started using those as jumping-off points for some of my art works, and then, about twenty years ago, I began to create my own alphabet symbols. One of my works, "Phaistos," is based on a find from ancient Greece which has never been deciphered. Instead of using the characters that are in the original stone, however, I created my own symbols.

B.N. Is this the part you don't want anyone to decipher?

L.K. (laughter) It's kind of a rebus, I guess, a puzzle.

B.N. One thing art can do is cover things up. Does your art offer a mask for you?

L.K. Yes, I think I can express some things without revealing myself totally; the symbolic form is convenient for that.

D.S. The division between the meaning of words and their visual effect varies according to the artist's culture. We all react differently to visual sources. For example, if we draw the physical placement of stars, what we see in Western Culture is the outline of shapes: a bear, a dog, Archimedes, whatever. But, in Peru, Quechua Indians do not identify these same shapes: they identify the large, dark areas between the bright stars, rather than the lines connecting them. We identify points, and they look "between."

B.N. Do artists, then, view their works differently from their viewers?

D.S. Artists are likely to abstract from something that is concrete - the "space between" - which perhaps



Figure 3: Ancient Scroll

the person who is attached to the literal will not do. The viewer may read the words in Ms. Kramer's works, for example, looking for the

meaning, while the artist is looking at the form, rather than the content.

B.N. Ms. Kramer, you've also done a great deal of arts education. How do you view the relationship between your arts education work and your work as an artist?

L.K. Both are fulfilling for me. When I do my artwork, it's a solitary endeavor that takes a lot of concentration and a lot of time. Teaching is just the opposite; it's a social activity, a group endeavor, and I enjoy the feedback I get from my students. I learn by teaching, so it is also an important part of my work as an artist. I don't think I've achieved the perfect balance between those two, but I'm working on it.

B.N. I've heard it suggested that artists and writers should provide wisdom. In your current work you're



Leslie Kramer

utilizing alphabets and texts from sages of another time and place. How do you view your work in this light? Do you agree with this concept at all?

L.K. I'm trying to communicate something to the viewer through my artwork, but I guess I'll leave it to others to determine the value of what I've accomplished. I wouldn't consider myself a sage, but I'm trying to go beyond the surface of the paper and trying to find those lasting elements of humanity that may cause a gleam in someone's mind or eye, and may bring out... eternal truth may be a bit too high-blown... underlying currents that connect cultures, underlying symbols that recur in many different forms.

D.S. I think we look to art, whether it's visual or written, to distill meanings from what is happening around us, or lines of thought in our society. These are more significant to me than statements by political leaders, which seem so temporary, but of course I'm prejudiced on this subject.

B.N. So the charge to the artist is perhaps not that they must be sages, but people who provide us with ways of seeing.

L.K. Perhaps a prism for history.

Benn T.F. Nadelman is Arts Editor of "the Bookpress." He is currently writing and illustrating a book that concentrates on the enhancement of drawing skills and new observational techniques for art students, educators, and professionals.

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Bruce Franklin's M.I.A.

continued from p. 6

Congress, made the public aware of the issue, and created lots of POW/MIA memorabilia to gain publicity. Another group, Victory in Vietnam Association (VIVA), later to become Voices in Vital America, played a significant role in intensifying the passion over the issue. By creating and selling bracelets engraved with the names of POWs and MIAs, Franklin says, they helped establish decades-long emotional attachments to individual MIAs. Other advocates, such as retired Navy captain and former POW, Eugene B. "Red" McDaniel, have also helped to perpetuate the myth. McDaniel has been responsible for providing several photographs of alleged prisoners which have been circulating in recent years, fostering the belief that Americans are languishing in Southeast Asian prison camps to this day.

Where Washington and the private sector left off, Hollywood took up this emotional issue, transforming it into a potent myth in American culture by substituting

says Franklin, have seen these "forgotten heroes" - today believed to have been abandoned by their own government. According to veteran David Cline, who was wounded when his position was overrun in the battle recreated toward the end of the movie *Platoon*, "Americans want to believe that we were the good guys and that those rotten gooks are still making our boys grow rice." Hollywood turned the post-war POWs into crucial symbols of betrayed American manhood and honor.

Franklin presents an avalanche of evidence that should shake the staunchest believer in live POWs. He even points out that, ironically, the myth has turned to devour the mythmakers - in movies the feds are now being portrayed as cowards who have abandoned the MIAs. Meanwhile, Vietnam veterans, who have moved from being the scum of the earth to the mythic status of superheroes, are still not much closer to healing the terrible psychological and spiritual wounds inflicted by the Vietnam War.

Vietnam Fantasies, which explored the Vietnam War in terms of American culture, and the MIA issue was supposed to be just a chapter. But when I began to investigate MIAs, I discovered that soldiers missing in action is a myth in the full sense of the term - a story that may seem bizarre and irrational from outside the society, but is crucial to explaining how the culture sees itself and the world in relation to itself. The second thing I discovered was how the myth about MIAs was created.

S.E. How did you research that?

B.F. I went back, step by step, until I realized that this was a Richard Nixon special. In January, 1969, the Nixon Administration began developing the myth that U.S. servicemen counted as missing in action (MIA) were still alive in Vietnam. He would go on to use this emotional issue as a weapon to keep the war going for over four years, after he'd won the election on the promise to end the war. There was so much material available that I realized it would take up more than a chapter. I could find nothing that had been written on this issue. There was no critical, cultural, or historical perspective. When I read the literature of true belief, there was another surprise. I found that, if you don't know the history of the Vietnam conflict, and, if you don't know anything about the standards of research, you'd be convinced that there are still live American soldiers in Southeast Asia today.

S.E. Did you emerge from it with any sense of Nixon's consciousness of the racism of the whole MIA invention? Was that a conscious invention, do you think, or is that something blended into it by the ultra-right as it adopts the MIA myth?

B.F. Right from the start, the racism of it was very important because it was the only way the government could peddle this stuff wholesale. The roots of the myth in the "yellow peril" part of American culture are very deep.

S.E. It's almost a captivity narrative.

B.F. Yes, I have a section in my book on how the captivity narrative underlies the whole imaginative vision of the MIA myth. Rambo, for instance, is half Indian, half German - hell of a combination. These fundamental aspects of American cultural mythology are used in sophisticated ways to structure the myth and give it force. For example, the MIA myth was a convenient way to shift the public's attention away from

the conscript army - the black, Latin, Native American and white working-class guys who were getting wounded and killed on the ground - to a different social class. Most of these guys were officers, highly paid technocrats.

S.E. The MIAs?

B.F. Right. Eighty-one percent were flight crews, and unlike World War II flight crews, most were officers. The pilots, of course, were all officers, the fighter-bombers have

ordinary veterans' identification with the MIA, their espousal of the cause?

B.F. I don't think that's really true. On television and radio programs, and in the letters I've received - if that's any kind of sampling of Vietnam veterans - a much higher percentage of veterans than I've imagined thinks that the whole MIA/POW issue is phony. I've been on a couple of call-in shows where every single person who identified him-

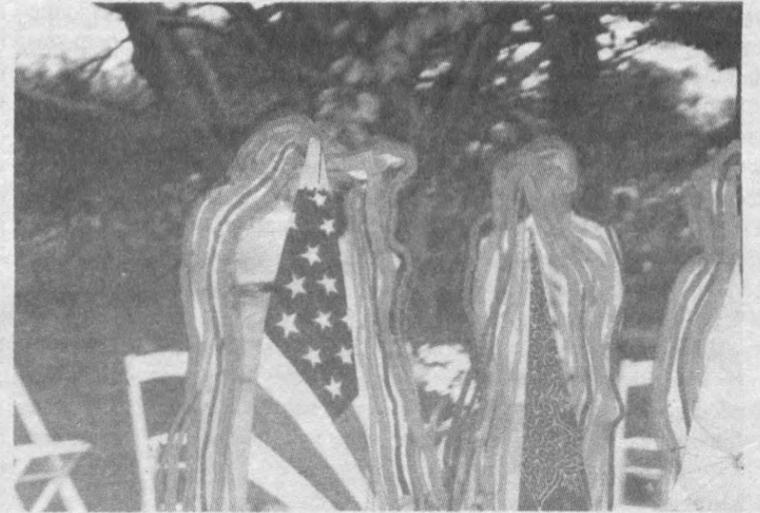


photo collage: Kathy Morris

two officers, and even the B-52s had practically all officers.

But it goes way beyond that, because of the emotional experience of the viewers of the POW rescue movies. A clue - somewhat provisional, but it seems really persuasive - is that the imagined POWs become surrogates for the the audience, the people who see and envision the myth. They become surrogates for the imprisonment people feel *within* American society. Rambo begins "First Blood 2" as a prisoner in American society, and he is liberated in order to carry out this heroic vision of liberating other prisoners.

S.E. Do you see any connection between this and the description in your book on prison literature (*Prison Literature in America*, Oxford University Press) of the convict who emerges as a prizefighter - Sonny Liston and Mike Tyson, for instance?

B.F. It's certainly there. In a way it's even more direct. Hollywood likes to send Sylvester Stallone, Gene Hackman, Chuck Norris, and David Carradine to rescue POWs in Vietnam. They shouldn't send them to Vietnam, but to the prisons of the United States where hundreds of thousands of Vietnam veterans have been incarcerated. So the myth is a successful strategy for obscuring and displacing reality.

S.E. What do you make of the

self as a Vietnam vet has said that he totally agrees with my position. Another interesting response will appear in the March *Atlantic Monthly* when they print about twelve letters, one of which is from Steven Bently, a director of VVA who is in charge of the Post-traumatic Stress Disorder section. He presents an eloquent and moving argument about how the MIA myth keeps veterans from healing, how it's used to stoke their anger, to keep them from letting go, and how devastating this is, psychologically, for many Vietnam veterans.

S.E. What about the families of veterans? What did you find out about the relationship between MIAs and families?

B.F. The media leads us to think that all families of veterans are out there carrying on about their loved ones being held prisoner, when, in fact, the vast majority of families long ago accepted that their loved ones are dead. Many families are very angry about the POW myth because the myth makes it look as though they have betrayed their loved ones. Perpetuating the myth is a very cruel thing to do to those people.

S.E. What's your best guess on the reasons for this manipulation? What does the Bush Administration have at stake?

see Franklin, p. 14



photo: Kathy Morris

fictional images of American POWs in the hands of cruel and inhuman Asian communists for the actual photographs and TV footage of massacred Vietnam villagers, napalmed children, tortured and murdered Vietnamese prisoners, wounded GIs screaming in agony, and body bags being sent home, which had marked the actual history of the Vietnam War. Hundreds of millions of people around the world,

Franklin's work on the MIA issue appeared as the cover story in the December 1991 issue of "The Atlantic Monthly." At a recent Modern Language Association meeting, Franklin told Sarah Elbert about how he came to write "M.I.A."

S.E. How did you come to the MIA issue from the study of literature?

B.F. I was working on a book called

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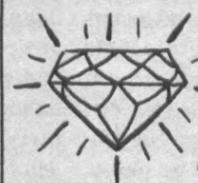
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Breach of Immunity

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friendship, to their tersely intimate exchange on the folly of the "popular wisdom" concerning rape and rapists. A midnight stop at a sleepy downtown diner has Scilla and Mike waiting it out, sitting for a whole chapter in wordless rumination over their stalled case, themselves, each other. The taut account - from the victim's standpoint - of yet another violent attack in metropolitan Hinton breaks off into the life, the career, and the recumbent ratiocinations of Anna Blessing, Lieutenant of Detectives, the narrative of one life-world giving way to another as different from it as can be. Shifts of this kind have a way of amplifying the story's appeal, dilating it to make it take in more and more (a bit like the body of Anna Blessing herself), easing and gentling the steamroller of plot by the sometimes central, sometimes tangential goings-on of its characters.

What brings all this off with admirable style is the stuff of writ-

ing itself - the words, the prose, the way we're carried along from moment to moment. From curt and snappy all the way to sinuously elongated yet nimble, the sentences are a continuing treat. The words have a satisfying reach from slang to learned, from "johns" and "prosses" to "gnosis" and the faintly dialectical, old-fashioned "squinned eyes" that make Anna's face so strange to look into. In the hustle to get to the end, the crime solved, the perpetrator caught, the detective free to go on, an avid reader may forget how it all hangs on strokes of black on white. Here, the writing recalls us, again and again, to all that makes the trip pleasurable, to what can make the silence of reading a feast of sound and sense.

Lydia Fakundiny teaches English at Cornell University and has recently published an anthology, "The Art of the Essay" (Houghton Mifflin, 1990).

Singing

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ence of the body. So, if our access to the body is mediated through these psychic elaborations, then there is a kind of equivocation between what we call the materiality of the body and its psychic construction.

If you take a second step, and say that the psyche and its idealization are the same, then what it produces - even at very early ages - has to do with available gender ideals and norms; it is a way of instituting gender norms. I would say that even morphology - the contouring of the body - is an articulation of certain kinds of phantasmatic gender norms. Matter is always formed - I do believe that. I guess I'm a neo-Aristotelian in that sense. Foucault, too, thought that there is no recourse to materiality without a certain formation of that materiality. It is only through the formation of materiality that we are even able to refer to something as "material".

M.N. You really hold on to a notion of agency in your work.

J.B. Yes, but not a traditional one. M.N. I know it's not a traditional one, but I think it's important for us to hold on to the illusion of it because it empowers us.

J.B. Well, some people say, "If everything is discourse, then we're determined in advance and there is no agency." And, "If the subject is a fiction as you say, then where is agency?" On the other hand, others say, "Oh, Judy, you are a wild voluntarist. I can't believe how much agency there is in your work. You think we're free to take on our genders and take them off as we please, and proliferate them wildly." I feel that both extremes miss the point because, in my work, agency resides

in the notion of resignification. The "we" who we are is an effect of our being totally embedded in existing power structures, but that doesn't mean we're determined. We still have to reiterate these structures because they only work through resignification.

M.N. In the beginning of *Gender Trouble* you say laughter is indispensable for feminism.

J.B. I agree.

M.N. Do you want to say anything more about laughter and its political role for feminism or how it works in the way you perform your own lectures, and, I imagine, in how you lead your life?

J.B. I think it's really important to be able to get over one's self. Let's say somebody points something out to me, which thoroughly calls into question everything I have just said. First of all, you have to be willing to see it. But then, you have to learn to laugh at yourself instead of getting into heavy pride about a position you've taken. You have to be able to jettison it or rework it in virtue of this contestation that you have indeed produced. Since I am in favor of living the contingency of identity, I feel there has to be a vacillation between making presuppositions that you don't question when you are articulating a position, and then being willing to call into question those very presuppositions. Giving up a position one has held very firmly and seriously can be a humorous moment, but it is the only way to revise theory and politics in a more democratic direction.

Margaret Nash teaches philosophy at SUNY Cortland.

Hite Interview

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criticism. *The Other Side of the Story: Structures and Strategies of Contemporary Feminist Narratives*, you make a powerful argument for the experimental character of narrative form in the novels of such women as Jean Rhys, Doris Lessing, Alice Walker, and Margaret Atwood. Can you situate your own fictions in this argument?

M.H. Along with a number of other feminist theorists, I've argued that narrative conventions have ideological implications. To take an obvious example, during the nineteenth century the only possible endings for a female protagonist in a novel were marriage and death. Presumably, you could learn a certain amount from this rather narrow literary prescription about what real-life women were supposed to be and do. Writing that disrupts such conventions, on the other hand, may challenge or even rewrite the ideology encoded in the conventions. I've always been interested in what we term genre fiction for that reason - the conventions are very rigid but also very visible, almost parodically so. In *Class Porn* I was looking at the conventions of male pornography and the ways in which that kind of pornography constructs female desire and female pleasure. Of course, if you cast a cold eye on heterosexual pornography written for the male reader, you discover that female desire and pleasure can only be the

Men's Movement

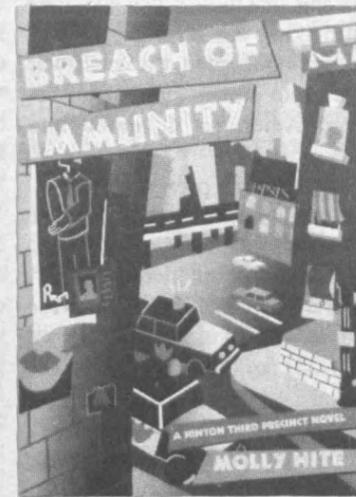
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that the contents of the human psyche can be pictured by virtue of the archetypal dynamics that pattern wholeness. Though their primary concern is the masculine psyche, Moore and Gillette maintain that the life-giving energies of "the four quarters" are necessary for every human being. Furthermore, it is their contention that "two fundamental dialectical oppositions [are] built into the dynamics of the deep self: King (or Queen)/Magician and Lover/Warrior." The bulk of the book is given to examining the symbolism of these primordial images. References to the plots and characters of contemporary films and to the situations of everyday life illustrate the authors' ideas.

Moore and Gillette contend that the disintegration of the family system doesn't explain the crisis in male identity. Rather, the causes are in two conditions that afflict present society as a whole: the prevalence of "Boy Psychology" at work even within men apparently established in positions of power, and "Patriarchy," which is a public manifestation of immature masculine energies. The underlying fault, as all the authors under review in this article agree, is in the lack of meaningful initiation for boys by "ritual elders" who are themselves integrated fields of masculine energy. Citing the anthropologist Victor Turner, Moore and Gillette note that our culture typically treats boys to "mere ceremonials" rather than meaningfully transforming them into men.

They say that "What is missing is not, for the most part, what many depth psychologists assume is missing; that is, adequate connection with the inner feminine. In many cases, these men seeking help had been, and were continuing to be,

complements of male desire and pleasure - with some fairly weird consequences, if you care to pursue them. I pursued them, of course; I'm thrilled by weird consequences. In *Breach of Immunity*, I'm interested in the existing conventions for representing women, and in what happens if you slip in some of the con-



ventions for representing men. Obviously I'm trying to expand the possibilities, to create women who in good and bad ways go beyond what female characters are still tacitly supposed to be and do. If you think we don't have any of these conventions any more, name for me, fast, five female protagonists who are emphatically not good looking. L.F. On the old but always fun and sometimes telling question of literary influence: As a novelist, with what writers do you feel a particular

overwhelmed by the feminine... we do not need, as some feminists are saying, less masculine power. We need more. But we need more of the mature masculine. We need more "Man psychology." And here, once again, is the radical *cri de coeur* of the burgeoning men's movement. Because of Patriarchal conditioning, women, or men, might mistake it as a "battle cry," or dismiss it cynically as a "baby's cry," but clearly these writers intend something other.

Moore's and Gillette's book presents an original model based on a four-sided pyramid structure faced with each of the "mature masculine archetypes." (The shadows they cast are also considered.) Within it, also represented in pyramid form, with a valid place of their own, are the archetypes of the immature masculine, such as the Divine Child and its shadows, The High Chair Tyrant and the Weaking Prince. The model is an elegant and evocative one, I think. Throughout my reading I was provoked to ask, "What from my own life experience is related to this?" I found much.

Part of the usefulness of *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover* is in the "ritual space" that a reading is likely to produce for one who ponders its images. Moore and Gillette note the shortage these days of initiated elders who can effectively channel the masculine energies to transform boys and heal men. But they have had experience enough with the human psyche to trust that its deep resources can be relied upon by the committed individual: "We do our 'homework' from the conscious side, and the unconscious, with its powerful resources, will, if approached in the right way, respond... in healing and generative ways." I think that the book can, in fact, be considered a

affinity? To what writers, living or dead, do you consider yourself in some sense indebted?

M.H. Charlotte Brontë. Virginia Woolf. Joseph Conrad. No, really - I'm influenced by everybody, I always sound like whatever writer I've just been reading. Which tends to mean whatever writer I've just been teaching - I teach twentieth-century fiction, a large and variegated field. Procedural writers. Probably not Thomas Pynchon, who I think is one of the two or three great prose stylists in English right now, but you don't want to sound like him. Emphatically Margaret Atwood; in fact I just did a reading from *Class Porn* at the Modern Language Association convention, in a session entitled "Margaret Atwood: Creative Responses."

L.F. Will there be other novels of the Hinton Third Precinct?

M.H. I'm starting a second one in May. It's got a terrific title, which I've sworn I won't reveal until I have the copyright. It involves lots of research into more things I know nothing about at the moment. But, at the moment, I'm living with my characters and delighted to have the option of taking them through more experiences. They grow, you know. They have crises. They come to conclusions, or presumably will at some point in the future, theirs and mine. That was the great unforeseen bonus of writing a genre novel, the chance to go on, to do a series.

mandala - a circular image of masculine wholeness - to be contemplated as an expression of the value men need to give their inner lives.

The time and space given to such activity by an individual engages the initiatory process symbolically; this is the mythic level of experience, which generates both inner and outer relationships, the rapture of being alive, as Joseph Campbell put it. I can only hope that men intent upon contacting positive masculine energy will patiently and persistently cultivate it with regard to the other archetypal forces of the psyche, some of which require firm opposition, and with regard to the perspectives of other informed people. The latter, in their wisdom, can provide insurance against the ego's inflating itself with deluded pride, and help guard against unconsciousness or "possession" by an archetype.

Moore and Gillette leave us with a short collection of techniques for

see *Men's*, p. 15

Coleman

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Persian Empire - and the priests who were the primary sources of historical information for the Greeks were not likely themselves to have been well-informed. Finally, we should note that the Classical Greeks were totally unaware that families of languages exist and that their own language belonged to a family (Indo-European) different from that to which the Egyptian and Semitic languages belong. Hence, even if the Classical Greeks had unanimously believed in invasions from Egypt, we would have reason to be skeptical in the absence of independent evidence. (To be concluded in next issue)

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Bernal

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with history," hence he appears to have regarded him in general as a "historian worthy of credence." There is absolutely no doubt that Diodorus knew that Herodotus had testified in support of the settlements in Greece from Egypt. Thus, it is evident that, in the passage quoted by Coleman, Diodorus was referring, not to the settlements in Greece, but to other Egyptian claims for conquests of Persia, India, etc., which had not been supported by Herodotus.

Plutarch did attack Herodotus' version of the Ancient Model, and I quote his attack extensively in *Black Athena I* (pp. 112-113). Given the Greek self image after the 4th century as a "master race", the surprising thing is that rejections of the "invasions" that put Greeks in an inferior position to Egyptians and Phoenicians were so few and inconsistent. Plutarch's "lateness" and inconsistency would explain why the demolishers of the Ancient Model did not cite him, but preferred to rely on the "tacit dissent" of the older Greek writers. In the early 19th century, the historian of Greece, Connop Thirlwall, who was generally hostile to the conventional wisdom of his times, wrote about it:

In a comparatively late period [Thirlwall did not know of the fragments from Hesiod and the Danaids cited above] - that which followed the rise of historical literature among the Greeks - we find a belief generally prevalent, both in the people and among the learned, that in ages of very remote antiquity, before the name and dominion of the Pelasgians had given way to that of the Hellenic race, foreigners had been led by various causes to the shores of Greece and there planted colonies, founded dynasties, built cities, and introduced useful arts and social institutions, before unknown to the ruder natives. The same belief has been almost universally adopted by the learned men of modern times...

This is what I call the "Ancient Model."

As I have argued above, I do not accept that writing was unknown during the "Dark Ages" and there is increasing evidence of continuities between the Mycenaean and Archaic ages. In any event, no one contests that the people of the two periods spoke the same language, worshipped most of the same gods and lived in many of the same cities, which retained the same names. In addition to this, Greeks of the Classical period had some access to Egypt and Phoenicia where records survived from the Bronze Age. I do not accept that Egyptian culture was completely decadent and out of touch with its history in the 5th century B.C. Thus, I am convinced it is impossible to dismiss the Greeks' knowledge of their distant past, and I am convinced that the Aryan Model is far more suspect.

(To be concluded in next issue)

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DUANE MICHALS' HISTORY LESSON

Into the packed auditorium at the George Eastman House came a beaming Duane Michals, photographer, author, lecturer. The evening of the opening of his retrospective exhibition got off to a rousing start when he informed us that not only had he lost his glasses, but that the slides he was going to show at this evening's lecture had been left behind! No problem, he would use slides that the gallery had on hand, and forget about his glasses - he had already seen all the work before! The Duane Michals' show began to roll, and he quickly caught his audience with a witty monologue on the philosophy of the "decisive moment" and his indecision on when that might occur. *Now Becoming Then* is not only the name of his new book, but could also have been the title for this talk.

Those familiar with 20th-century photography know the work of Cartier-Bresson, in whose work it has been said one may find the embodiment of the ideal moment: when all the forces of good composition and sublime subject matter find illumination in the lens of a master. Cartier-Bresson may have been the author of the statement about the decisive moment in answer to the question: "When do you snap the picture?" The decisive moment was something he couldn't abide by, Michals told his audience; in fact there were so many such moments, for one whose eyes are open, that it would be pointless to document them all. All of life could be viewed as one important moment, the now of our existence, the now, or now, or maybe now.

"Most photographers are spectators who photograph other people's lives - something they know absolutely nothing about," Michals continued. So, he began to take a series of still photos using actors in a scenario of his own invention, with a beginning, a middle, and an end - much the same way a director of the cinema would. Michals became his own storyteller, creating the sets, concocting the action, and these were the works that became his signature: a series of images where a narrative structure is employed to convey, through dramatic situations, images that he has in his imagination. Within this format, he could invent a plot like a short story writer, and he could explore funny, sometimes surreal, sometimes difficult subject matter (see for example his "Journey of the Spirit After Death"). Michals goes further to personalize his work: the formal nature of the photo as object is compounded by the inclusion of a story line, typically handwritten, along the lower border of each image. The photographer narrates the action he is photographing, and it ends up looking like an illustrated book, or television storyboard.

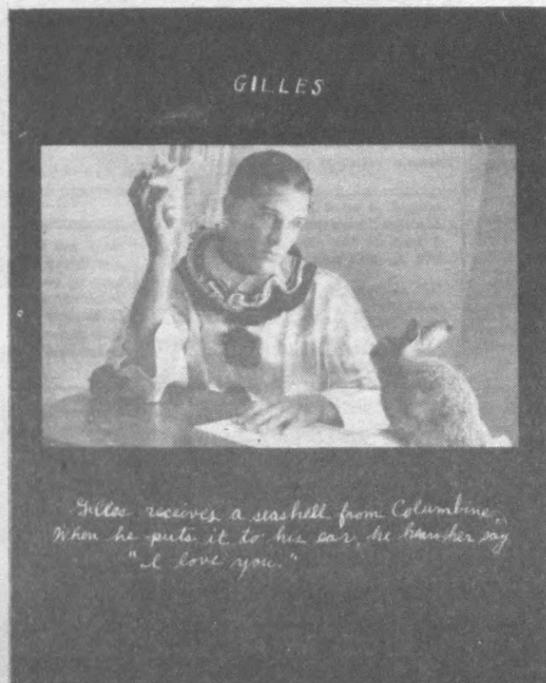
The titles for his photos some-

times read like titles of poems by Wallace Stevens: "The Man Who Ran Ahead of His Time," "Empty New York," or "The Man Who Saw The Future." Like Stevens, Michals is a bit of a Francophile, and the narrative images he comes up with seem to be descendants from a pictorial tradition including the surrealism of Rene Magritte and the psychological drama of Balbus, both of them "French" painters. I don't think it is mere coincidence that Michals includes portraits of artists whom he admires and is in turn

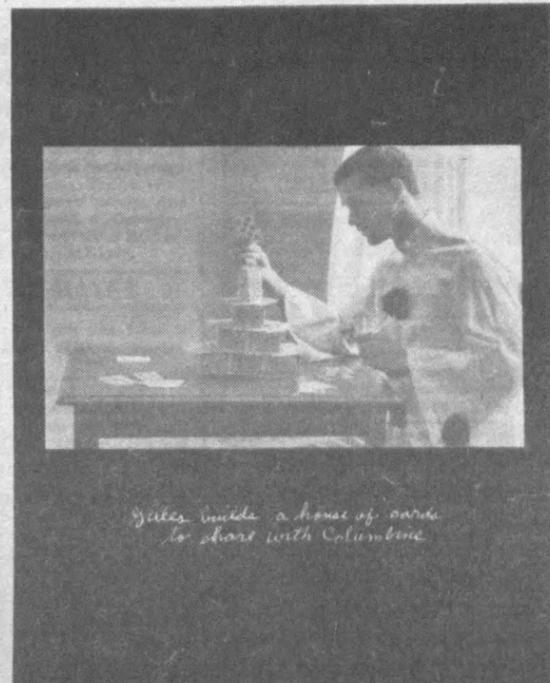
is engaged in a dual career: his commercial work supports his gallery art, and allows him to create his various books and portfolios.

It might have been instructive to see Michals' commercial work alongside his "fine art" photography. Unfortunately, neither book nor exhibition makes it clear as to what he has accomplished for his corporate employers. Nevertheless, we have much to think about when we encounter his work. The accompanying essay by Max Kozloff, in *Now Becoming Then*, serves well as an

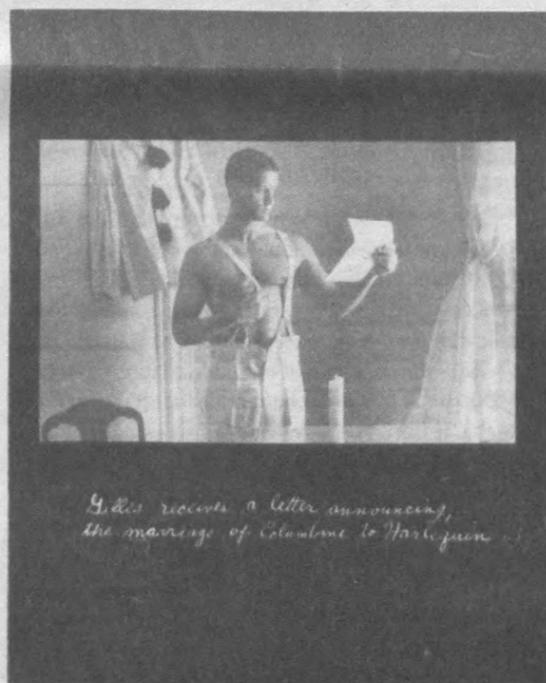
photographer's family background in the seven photos that comprise the work "I Remember Pittsburgh" in the early pages of the book. Michals' personal tone is like reading a diary or receiving a confidence from a friend. The pensive text below the photo, "A Letter From My Father," deals with love that remains unexpressed across a generation gap - and is then torn away by death. This motion is somehow balanced by a silent pen writing a sentence in "Someone Left a Message for You." Reflected in a mir-



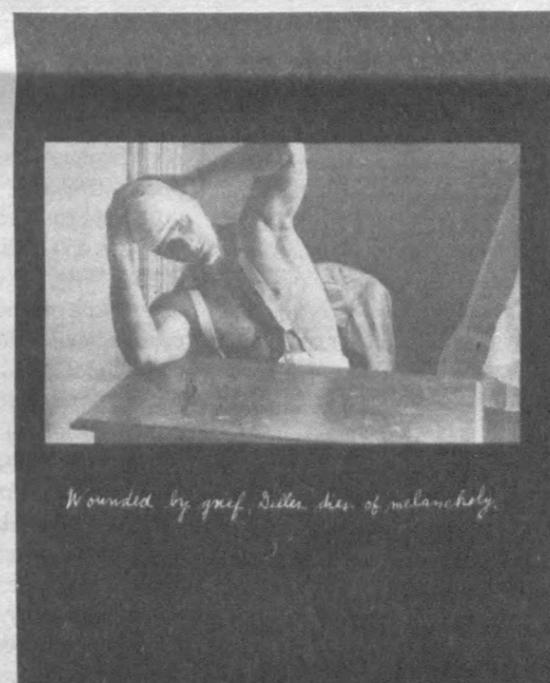
Gilles receives a seashell from Colombine. When he puts it to his ear, he hears her say "I love you."



Gilles builds a house of cards to share with Colombine.



Gilles receives a letter announcing the marriage of Colombine to Harlequin.



Wounded by grief, Gilles dies of melancholy.

"Gilles" by Duane Michals: (1) Gilles receives a seashell from Colombine. When he puts it up to his ear, he hears her say "I love you." (2) Gilles builds a house of cards to share with Colombine. (3) Gilles receives a letter announcing the marriage of Colombine to Harlequin. (4) Wounded by grief, Gilles dies of melancholy.

influenced by (among the best of his works would have to be the portraits of Henri Clouzot, director, Rene Magritte, painter, Man Ray, photographer, and Joseph Cornell, collage artist and filmmaker).

DUANE MICHALS IN PRINTS

In his lifestyle and in his art, Duane Michals is something of a rebel. He bucks the tradition of the photographer endlessly agonizing over darkroom techniques to achieve the perfect print, like an Ansel Adams or an Irving Penn. To his audience at the lecture, Michals disclosed that he has no formal studio, and his prints are done by others. He prefers to work in natural light, and he even looks forward to the commercial assignments that he receives from major magazines and corporations that allow him to travel abroad. He

introduction to understanding the major themes that run through the Michals oeuvre. In Michals' work there are sight gags that provide a little shock ("Things are Queer," "The Bogeyman"), there is extended play ("I Build a Pyramid," "Take One and See Mt. Fujiyama," and "Amazing Rick Dick Super Sleuth") and there are other photos that leave a lasting impression ("Chance Meeting," and "Christ in New York"). Though the photos are elegantly presented in this large-format book, I had difficulty finding them when they were cited in the Kozloff text: too much back and forth to the index, and no page numbers!

Sometimes the handwritten comments by Michals have more of an impact than the photos themselves; ideally, however, they work together to create a balanced form of expression. We get a look at the

ror, it says, "As you read this, I am entering your mind..." Perhaps as an antidote to the very real moment of death, Michals fictionalizes a moment of hope, a desire if you will.

Michals says he began to write on his photographs because he felt that they inadequately expressed his intentions. When I visited his Eastman House retrospective and his recent show, "Poetry and Tales," at the Sidney Janis Gallery, I was struck by the intimate scale of the pictures, and I found myself easily engaged in reading as well as looking. Duane Michals is a photographer who is not content with the trendy, the hip, and the confrontational aspect that is the show business of the art world today.

Alan Singer is an artist and writer residing in Rochester, N.Y.

Bernstein Interview

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often a matter of expectation, of audience; they are labels rather than intrinsic elements of the writing process. I am interested in blurring, switching and cross-cutting between such genre distinctions.

In my poetry I use different elements to create a musical work, elements not only from poetry and literary criticism, but from all kinds of activities - medical words, slang, sports-writing - collaged together. When I say that I include any possible thing, like most writers I have very specific parameters as to what my sensibility allows. So it's not that anything I find, I can include in a poem.

My poems are filled with what could be essay-like moments, although they're often broken down and fragmented and rhymed and put into various kinds of forms. I don't

a continuation of poetry by other means.

S.F. Do you think that a secondary process of writing is a fallacious approach?

C.B. I don't think it's fallacious as such; it has a different interest value. As a writer interested in poetry and poetics, I seek to create works of art rather than adjudicating or normative works. It's not that I don't make evaluative comments in my essays, but I embed them within the process of thought. I'm often as interested in *how* I'm expressing a thought as in what the thought is. I often don't know what I'm thinking, apart from reading what I've written after the fact.

Clearly, great gains have been made in human knowledge in more systematic or rational approaches, so I don't dismiss those other forms. But I don't accept that they're the

ture is a good arena for people who want to assert a group identity. I think that's a terrific function that the small press and poetry serve. I'm frankly always overwhelmed by the care and attention that poetry still gets in our culture from people who are not so much interested in "Art" or the history of art, but rather see it as a galvanizing social force. In the lesbian community in particular, poetry plays an active role in social identity.

Take white male heterosexuals, such as myself; I'm not interested in making the identity of this group more visible. It's a very different kind of social position. If anything, I'm interested in undercutting, subverting, de-authorizing, that identity. I have different ideas about language and identity than people who come from different directions; who speaks is always a cru-

against racism. At the same time, we must try not to allow racism to define how we categorize human beings.

In our own poetry, the color line has been an incredibly destructive force, because the enormous innovations of African-Americans such as Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, and Jean Toomer are not properly understood as part of the same rethinking of poetry that white artists who were their contemporaries (Stein, Reznikoff, Zukofsky and others— I'm thinking of the the second wave of modernists) were also concerned with. They were together involved in a complex renegotiation with English in relation to the vernacular, to second languages - trying to create a cultural space for American poetry which wasn't dominated by a literary, island, or English tradition.

Those black writers tend to have been neglected partly because they did not speak about black issues as directly as some others. The danger is that writers who interrogate very deep questions of culture, and the creation of cultural identity through language, are excluded from this national voice of multiculturalism because their work deals more with questions of form and its contradictions, rather than the assertion of some identity that's assumed. Yet that work is crucial to

understanding the history of American literature.

The debt that the whole tradition of radical writing owes to African-American writers is just now beginning to be realized. That's because we tend to segregate out race authors as somehow not participating within the context of modernism and postmodernism. But American modernism and postmodernism would not exist in as vibrant a way without the contributions of black artists.

S.F. It may seem incomprehensible to you, but people do discuss seriously the death of poetry.

C.B. It is incomprehensible, but people say that, people always say that. Are they having no primary experience? Is that what they're saying? It's an incredibly rich time for poetry right now. I think it's also true that the poetry that interests me most is systematically excluded from those places that most general readers look. In any given year, less than one percent of the books that are interesting are reviewed in the major newspapers, even the literary ones. Readers have to more actively seek out what interests them. If you're unwilling to do that, then poetry is dead for you.

Scott Fennessey is a writer living in Ithaca, NY.

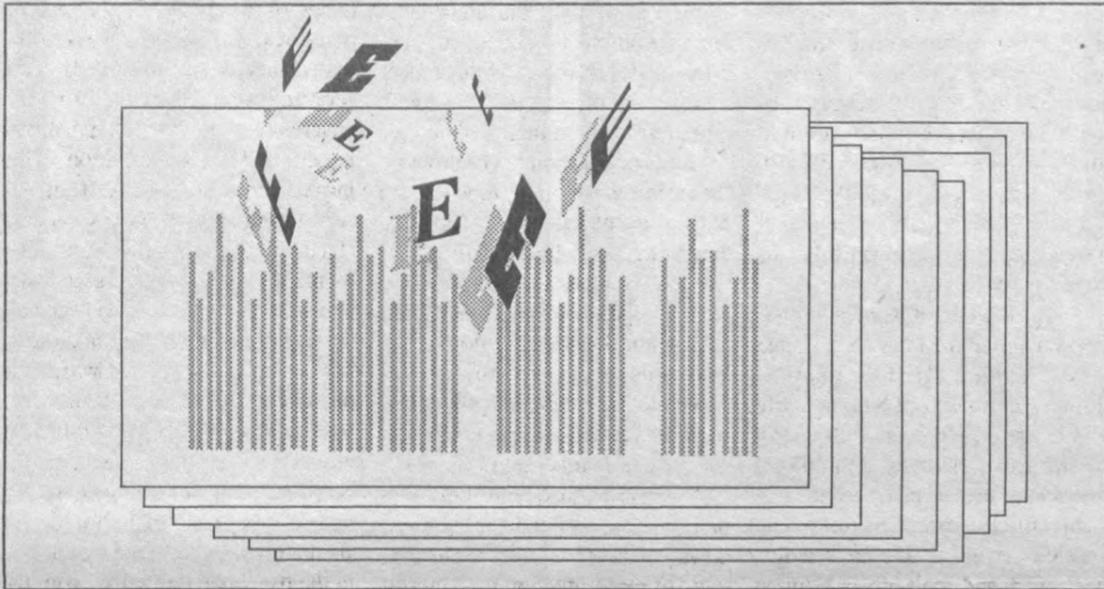


Illustration: Patti Witten, Wisteria Graphics

think that poems are in some way primary and essays secondary; on the contrary, I think all genres are equal. For certain writers, some genres may be richer than others. But there is no hierarchy of genres: one is not intrinsically better - closer to the truth or the imagination - than others.

With essays, then, I am interested in making them as much aesthetic works - literary and poetic - as possible. That's the way I like to write. When I sit down and write, I don't say, "Here I can write in some secondary fashion." To me, the active writing process of the essay should be equal to that of the poem. Once you break down that primary/secondary distinction, the essays themselves engage in the poetic process. The distinction then becomes one of convention, or, to use Erving Goffman's term, the frame. In his book, *Frame Analysis*, Goffman talks about how meaning is really read through the context of what the frame has set up for a particular kind of social interaction. An essay is a particular kind of frame, a convention which arouses certain expectations. But I play with that genre in mind, just like I play with the genre of poetry. Nevertheless, there are different kinds of writing and frames; I mix them, but very often one is dominant. Most of my essays result from people asking me to do things; poems almost never come about that way. The question you asked me provides an impulse to respond which is unlike what I'd be doing in a poem. I'm engaged in this general work of poetics, through talking to you now, through the book I've just published, which I've called

only valid ones, nor do I say that poetic writing is the only truth. Some poetry, Romantic poetry, has made that claim, but I think all genres have strengths and limitations. I'm interested in being conscious of the limits of a writing practice. My version of this is vibrating those limits, making them sing so they can be heard - that is a very pleasurable process to me. I am suspicious of writing that is not aware of the limitations of its practice as writing. Unfortunately, many normative secondary writing processes don't have this skeptical or introspective side.

S.F. In your essay, "The State of the Art," you address the tendency of the educational system to valorize a diversity which is frequently just tokenism. Do you think that the language writing movement has offered a model for how the conflict between identity politics and forces of homogenization might be negotiated?

C.B. I'm not sure that any series of connected poetic activities can offer a model for dynamics that exist partly at the level of the state. There's a lot of thinking about the nature of identity, about identification, about collective formations of various sorts, that goes on in and through writing, and poetry is a primary site of such reflection. It is true that in North America the politics of identity is associated with literary activity. Various groups celebrate their identity through literary activity, partly because it's a more open field. It's much easier to publish books and magazines and have readings, than to assert that identity on national television, national radio or even the newspapers. Litera-

cial thing to understand when reading poetry.

I would prefer poetry such as I write to be understood not as some continuous voice of poetic inspiration that speaks through the centuries, but, rather, particularized in the way that we tend to particularize works of ethnic literature - that is to say, to be read as being partial. At the same time, I'm impatient with some of the *reductive* ways in which poetry is read as being representative of some collectivity which is defined much too quickly, or defined in much too fixed a way. At least within literary contexts, I understand individual identity to be much more fluid: the poem is not a unitary thing, but composed of many voices.

Group identities are equally problematic to me. I can understand the need to assert self-identity if your identity has always been denied you. At the same time, those identities are not fixed and necessary, but composed of parts. The solution is not to make everything unitary, but to allow for a much greater, much more radical sense of diversity than we have within our culture, which always pushes toward simplistic ideas of identity rather than multiple, shifting ones.

The problem is that racism has so pervaded our literary culture, as well as our general political culture, that we force people who are victimized to accept a definition of their identity *by means* of racist practices. One of the paradoxical byproducts of the effort to oppose racism, is that it may allow the oppressor once again to define the identity of the oppressed. We need to have a strong, sharp and continuous movement

WHOSE LANGUAGE

Who's on first? The dust descends as the skylight caves in. The door closes on a dream of default and denunciation (go get those piazzas), hankering after frozen (prose) ambiance (ambivalence). Doors to fall in, bells to dust, nuances to circumscribe. Only the real is real: the little girl who cries out "Baby! Baby!" but forgets to look in the mirror - of a ... it doesn't really matter whose, only the appointment of a skewed and derelict parade. My face turns to glass, at last.

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Franklin's M.I.A.

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B.F. The POW/MIA myth was used to keep the war going, essentially from the spring of 1969 until now in 1992. So the answer to the question "Why?" leads back to "Why did we go to war in the first place?" The U.S. has been in a state of war with Vietnam, in one form or another, since 1946. We've never had normal relations, we've always been attacking their society. This is not hyperbole. It's illegal for any American citizen to go to Vietnam and spend money because it's a violation of the Trading with the Enemy Act. Why are we at war with Vietnam? Why do we want to keep this going on? Why did the government go there in the first place? It's a question I've answered elsewhere. It can't be answered in 25 words or less.

S.E. You've written a book as radical as anything you wrote back when you were a political fugitive

years ago, but presumably you're not going to lose your job this time, you're not going to be black-listed. What do you make of that?

B.F. Now I get paid for teaching precisely what I was fired for saying at Stanford in the 1960s. Read the speech in my political autobiography [*Back Where You Came From*, Harper's Magazine Press, 1975 - out of print] that I was fired for giving. Things are different now. The evidence that was released late in the Vietnam war and afterward proved that the government was systematically lying to the American people in the name of national security. So it's no longer a radical belief, just common knowledge: *Of course* the government is involved in deceiving the people.

Susan Sweetnam is a writer living in Ithaca, NY.

Sarah Elbert teaches history and literature at SUNY Binghamton.

Race

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completely disentangle themselves from this particular reductionist premise which, proceeding from the "fact" that race matters so much in the life of individual African-Americans, then makes that fact an *immanent* structure. It is with regard to this particular point that I believe that if the explicit subject of *Shades of Black* is a critique of historic psychological reductionisms of African-American identity, the underlying metanarrative of the book is that of the extraordinarily complex question of the salience of race. In this regard, perhaps the most important theme explored by the book is what I can only describe as the dialectic of salience and non-salience of race in the daily life of African-Americans. In the dominant semiological constructions of racial identity in America, only white people are allowed the immense privilege of not having to be irreducibly white twenty-four hours of the day. Cross suggests that this in fact might not be so alien to the daily existence

of people of color. The closing sections of the book indeed make this point into an explicit polemic, a moving, insightful polemic.

But why "nigrescence," since this not only recalls Negro but also implies the contamination of unscientific, mythological constructions of race? Perhaps what we have here is an aporia: race and racial tropes are so deeply inscribed in language, in discourse, and in social relations, that while arguing powerfully for a more complex understanding of the salience of race in America, Cross is ensnared by a catachrestic racial trope which harks back to a past burdened with "Aryanization" and the "Negro soul" and such terms. Fortunately, we are not, in this book, in a prison-house of language. Professor Cross writes lucidly, forcefully, and on a subject which *had*, sooner or later, to be written.

Biodun Jeyifo teaches African literature and Marxist and postcolonial critical theory in the English Department at Cornell University.

Men's Movement

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accessing the archetypal powers they've discussed. It is the least developed section of the book, and one could hope for more, but it does begin a process that can lead far beyond the pages of this primer. It is wise to remember that no model or schema is complete because the map is not the territory. However, through focused attention upon certain representations of reality we can imaginatively enrich our lives. Devout readers or lovers of art, like religious contemplatives, know how real their participation with an image or a symbol can be, and how it can

restructure other patterns of their experience in the world. Can it be that, to begin with, men need to be reminded of the value and the dignity inherent in such introversion?

Peter Fortunato teaches at Ithaca College and has a counseling practice.

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Salomé

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new biography of Lou Salomé, which takes careful account of the biographical details without falling into the psychological reductionism of many previous studies. Martin employs a double perspective to engage the question of Lou Salomé: she views her in the wider socio-cultural context of a newly industrialized and recently unified Wilhelminian Germany, while also performing a close reading of Salomé's texts, which map out both an "inside" and an "outside" of the new social order. The dominant discourses of the day were seeking intellectual foundations for the new social order - an order that was to think of women in new ways. Salomé both participated in this project and, at the same time, challenged the very idea of "foundational thinking."

Martin shows that this *double* positionality generated by modernist thought was key for Salomé in any effort to arrive at a concept of woman, whom she saw as both "in sich ruhend" (resting {with} in herself) and, *because* of that very self-sufficiency, like the snail, continually on the move. According to Salomé, sexuality is guided by a "double directionality": absolute narcissism and, paradoxically, the capacity for self-loss.

This reading of woman, understood in differential but not absolute terms, guides Martin's analysis through all aspects of Salomé's life and work. Difference, rather than questions of essence, destabilizes distinctions that are perceived to exist "objectively" between men and women, sexuality and knowledge, one's work and one's life, or between one's own work and that of others. These lines of demarcation become fluid in Salomé, and Martin traces a remarkable absence of anxiety over the question of "property," understood, above all, in the sense of intellectual "patrimony." What this meant for Salomé was that she was able to "appropriate," or make her own, the work of Nietzsche and Freud without a sense of indebtedness or dependency, or even an obligation to accurately represent their thought.

This fluid sense of distinctions also guided Salomé's understanding of the shared grounding of knowledge and sexuality in libidinal drives. According to Salomé, men and women share a fundamental bisexuality, but differ in their relation to repression. Men sacrifice their feminine side by projecting it onto

women, making them both an object of knowledge and a symbol of their forgotten past. This externalization grounds the typically male distinction between subject and object, as well as man's ultimate worship of objects and of the process of production and circulation. Woman, on the other hand, can more readily resist this process of objectification due to her more integrated relationship with her experience. Thus, woman's lesser need of "logical" thinking is also her greatest asset: while men repress difference or contradiction, deeming them illogical, woman is more open to these modes of thought, thereby enabling her to view critically dominant concepts of "reality."

Salomé's work here makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of gender distinctions and to a critical theory of modernity. One might call this contribution her theory and politics of visibility, challenging, as it does, both the content of male representations of women as well as the theoretical presuppositions that lie behind representational thinking. In this deeper critique, she often parted ways with other feminists in their demand for "equal representation." The problem for Salomé is not simply *how* women are represented, but the fact that they of necessity become *objects* of representation in a structure of (male) thought that is premised on renunciation and sacrifice. Salomé, like Nietzsche, sees a connection between representation and power; that is, she recognizes the ever-present danger that is inherent in the act of representation insofar as it involves the construction and the "pinning down" of an object. It is because the logic of representation is so closely linked to the logic of power that Salomé wants more than simply to propose an alternative, "feminine" representation. As Martin shows, more is at stake than reclaiming a new position of mastery, because such a new representation would merely reproduce what Salomé wants to criticize. Yet at the same time - and here Martin traces the density and complexity of Salomé's thought - Salomé does not reject all representation out of hand. She parts company with the later Nietzsche, whose search for a new philosophy had provided him with a critique of Reason, but at the expense of a retreat from the social world into his own psyche to such an extent that he found no way of returning. For Salomé, who held with Freud to an albeit tenuous belief in sanity, the critique of Reason cannot be naively

equated with the abandonment of Reason.

Salomé's critique of Reason thus seeks to encompass two seemingly contradictory positions: on the one hand, she claims that representational thought, as the ever closer approximation of a representation or a sign to its object or referent, is always implicated in relations of power because it must sacrifice those elements of thought that are not accessible to representation. On the other hand, she wants to resist Nietzsche's fall into an abyss, which she reads as a pathological form of self-loss.

It is clear that, for Salomé, this paradox may be answered by privileging woman's position. Woman occupies a space from which a new kind of knowledge can be generated because she, unlike man, is exempt from the traps of Oedipal structures where the source of knowledge in love and in the body is sacrificed and denied. Salomé, Martin states, "works with the fantasies of the body, its drives, its pleasures, and its rootedness in the materiality of life itself." It is by reconnecting thought to the materiality of life that Salomé effects her critique of representation. This implies, first of all, a critique of empiricism: in Martin's words, "feminine and masculine cannot be equated with literal men and women." Instead, woman becomes the source of knowledge, according to Martin, "at the point at which the object recedes from visibility, recedes from a verifiable, empirical place" to a place where the difference between content and form is not necessarily abolished, but where such a distinction may be explored in the psychoanalytic sense, with the result that knowledge may finally return to its lost origins in libidinal drives.

The status of these origins in Salomé's work are, however, ambiguous: they, too, have a double structure, since they are both original in the essentialist sense, while at the same time the site where such an essentialism may be criticized. Woman's place is in its very nature *heimlich* - at once the place where representation breaks down and the place where a new representation can be generated, the place that itself is both representable and not, and thus both site and non-site, a domesticity on the move...

Suzanne R. Stewart is a writer living in Ithaca.

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Marketplace Medicine

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which would have been all too easy with this topic.

The potential villains, the entrepreneurs behind the for-profit hospital movement, are portrayed not so much as mean-spirited people, but rather as hard-nosed businessmen who have a somewhat misguided belief that what is good for them is also good for the industry and the consumer. Lindorff skillfully depicts each as seemingly caught up in the self-aggrandizing excitement of rebuilding a giant industry on the basis of their own personal plan. Indeed, one of the most appealing features of the book is its emphasis on the differences among these for-profit enterprises, which largely seem to reflect the varying personalities of their dominating founders.

HCA, for instance, was started by a father-and-son team of physicians, Thomas Frist and Thomas Frist, Jr., who initially just wanted a better place to practice medicine. They found it easy to raise funds in the private sector and became increasingly ambitious after forming a partnership with Jack Massey, the business developer behind the Kentucky Fried Chicken chain. The resulting HCA chain soon dominated the industry by sheer size alone, which was achieved by employing a relatively friendly approach to the buy-outs of small not-for-profit hospitals in the South.

Humana, on the other hand, emerged from the profit motive, pure and simple. It was started by an opportunistic and wealthy group of lawyers and businessmen led by David Jones. As a consequence, Humana has operated somewhat differently from HCA, gaining the reputation of a company that takes over hospitals with a take-no-prisoners approach. Lindorff relates the particularly telling story of how Humana attracted Dr. William Devries and his Jarvik-7 artificial heart program to Louisville, Kentucky, mainly for its publicity value. Even though the Jarvik-7 project is largely viewed now as a medical failure, it made Humana a household name in medicine within a few short weeks.

Without overstating his case, Lindorff argues that, despite these differences among individual firms, their overall responsiveness to community health needs has been very poor. He traces this deficiency not to Scrooge-like capitalists, but to profit-motivated owners who op-

erate in a health care system that increasingly emphasizes financial performance above all other goals. Furthermore, Lindorff points out, all patients are not equally profitable to the hospital; under the current system, patients with complex and difficult medical problems and those who either have no insurance or whose insurance, like Medicaid, pays providers relatively little, often become a drag on the hospital's financial position.

Such market incentives influence the not-for-profit hospital sector as well, and thus one can expect increasingly poor responsiveness to the needs of the poor, the sick, and the underinsured by all hospitals. Lindorff wavers a bit on this point, but does acknowledge that the behavior of some not-for-profit community hospitals (many of which are now forming chains or chain-like alliances) is often not much different from that of the for-profits.

How well hospitals respond to the needs of their community, including the needs of the poor, is an empirical question that can be answered. And one can reasonably ask, Do not-for-profit hospitals really provide more free care to the poor than do the for-profit hospitals? The evidence to date on such questions tends slightly to support Lindorff's argument, but it is by no means conclusive. The reason for our inability to find big differences between the for-profits and the not-for-profits is, I believe, not so much that the for-profits are behaving so well, but that many of the not-for-profits are behaving just as poorly. Lindorff does, however, weave anecdotal evidence and a compelling logical argument that makes me wonder whether fellow researchers in the field have somehow failed - perhaps due to some problem of measurement - to identify the true differences in performance.

Lindorff is on more solid ground when he suggests that the for-profits have not saved hospitals from closure by improving their cost control. Almost without exception, the for-profits make their hospitals more viable by spending money on capital improvements and by increasing charges, actions that raise the cost of medical care rather than reduce it.

Much of the concern about the for-profit chains taking over the medical care industry has dissipated in recent years as a result of a dramatic shift in their financial performance. Burdened by heavy debt

loads, overly optimistic growth strategies, and a failure to maintain revenue flows under Medicare's DRG payment system, the big four firms have all been forced to retrench. Lindorff argues that we haven't seen the last of their influence, due not so much to the for-profits' economic power, but rather their still-significant political power. The for-profits' trade and lobbying organization, The Federation of American Health Systems, and its political action committee, FedPAC, are among the most influential groups in Washington. Lindorff documents how they are able to wield much more power than their economic size might suggest. Partly they have built a very influential power base from the grass roots up, partly they have shrewdly played the Washington power game, forming formidable alliances with groups such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); they have also spent vast sums of money purchasing the ears of influential politicians. The picture Lindorff paints of the political and economic power these organizations have in some of the southern communities within which they primarily operate is reminiscent of the robber barons of the early 1900s. The author's argument is convincing on this point: the for-profit chains are not about to quietly fold up their tents and leave the medical marketplace.

Nearly everyone has been wrong in predicting the future of the health services industry. Reading the final chapters of *Marketplace Medicine* leads me to conclude that Lindorff will likely also be wrong in predicting that the dominance of the for-profits will continue to grow. My reason for this conclusion is that Lindorff's synopsis of trends, in borrowing from the experience of other industries such as manufacturing, fails to appreciate adequately the differences between the medical industry and these others.

Marketplace Medicine is a provocative and highly readable foray into the root causes of many of today's health care problems. It is simply a good read for thinking readers, and I hope it is not Dave Lindorff's last venture into the health care arena. He's done such a good job on hospitals that he should consider explaining the health insurance market next.

John M. Kuder is Associate Professor in the Sloan Program in Health Services Administration at Cornell University.

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