

Reviews

Jan Nordby Gretlund, *Frames of Southern Mind: Reflections on the Stoic, Bi-Racial and Existential South* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1998), 286 pp. ISBN 87-7838-397-8 (paper); DKK 250.

Jan Nordby Gretlund's *Frames of Southern Mind: Reflections on the Stoic, Bi-Racial and Existential South* collects essays that the author has written over a period of some twenty years; some of them have been published in earlier and shorter versions, others are conference papers that have been rewritten/edited for this book. In addition the book contains an interview with Martin Luther King, Sr., and Gretlund also prints twenty-five letters that he and Walker Percy exchanged during the last nine years of the Southern writer's life. The book testifies to Gretlund's sustained interest in, and deep involvement with, Southern society, especially its literature, during all this time. There are seventeen chapters all told, most of them devoted to one writer, but some contain discussions of groups of writers as well as reflections on matters of methodology in Southern scholarship.

The literature of the American South, Jan Gretlund says, 'has for the last sixty some years argued about its revered stoic heritage, lingered on the region's biracial identity, and eventually dealt with universal existential questions' (9). In the Introduction he addresses the point made by some critics, notably Michael Kreyling, that the South should be read and understood in terms of cultural waves that originated outside of the South and then washed through its literature and changed it. Gretlund largely dismisses this notion and argues that the South must be understood from within, must be discussed and analyzed in terms of a distinct set of historical, social and cultural facts which are unique to the region. *Frames of Southern Mind* derives its structure from the tripartite focus indicated by the subtitle. Gretlund neatly organizes his materials into three parts each made up of five separate texts. The three sections are entitled 'The Stoic South,' 'The Bi-Racial South,' and 'The Existential South'; in addition there is a section consisting of two essays, entitled 'The Lagniappe,' which – tongue in cheek – Gretlund refers to in the Introduction as a gratuity, 'a bonus' to the reader. Here he offers his personal views on the situation in Southern writing and scholarship today.

The section on Southern Stoicism opens with a close reading of Allen Tate's well known poem 'Ode to the Confederate Dead,' which went through several revisions before it reached its final shape, as printed in Tate's *Selected Poems* from 1937. One might argue that this essay doesn't belong in Gretlund's first section at all, since the point of his analysis is that the speaker of the poem despairs at his inability to confirm for himself and his own times the type of commitment to a cause which the Confederate Dead typified. But the analysis offers a useful counterpoint for the essays to come: Tate's dramatization of the South's loss of a sense of direction in the first part of this century indirectly argues for a return to the kind of stoic awareness that had sustained the region in the past.

One writer who has responded to the call for renewed stoicism is Madison Jones, a sadly neglected author in Gretlund's estimation. His chapter on this Tennessee writer is a fine

introduction to his novels, which Gretlund places in the Agrarian tradition, in that they offer frequent dramatizations of the regret that accompanies 'the loss of inherited values.' Jones' fiction is marked by the typically Southern concerns of place, community and history; while bleakly aware of the limitations and inadequacies of modern life, Jones nevertheless manages to imbue his characters' lives with 'pride, courage and dignity' (55).

Madison Jones' novels are all set in the South. This is not the case with the fiction of Katherine Anne Porter, but Gretlund sides with Louis D. Rubin, Jr., who in talking about *Ship of Fools* has argued that the values by which Porter judges human character in general 'are quite "Southern"' (41). Gretlund's approach to his materials in this book is colored by an unmistakable sympathy for much of what the South represents, as well as his admiration for the writers he discusses, as revealed in the following characterization of Porter. She 'was brought up in accordance with the best of Southern codes,' he argues, and some of the results of this upbringing were 'a lack of sentimentality, an emphasis on decorum, a moral stamina, and an emotional stability, all of which helped her greatly as a fiction writer' (39). This set of values remained firm also during those many years that Porter lived outside the region. Gretlund's approach in this essay is unabashedly biographical; such an approach, he comes close to arguing, is a must with Porter. If critics had taken biography more firmly into account they would have avoided misreadings of the kind that George Hendrick is guilty of when he sees 'the Miranda stories as ending in "isolation and desolation"' (40). Citing Porter's comments in the margins of her own copy of Hendrick's book, Gretlund refutes the viability of such a reading; Miranda, Porter had noted, 'wasn't frightened, wasn't sad, only resolved. A very positive state of being' (40). Gretlund's essay constitutes a sustained defense of Porter's 'stoic' artistic credo: 'Porter's only faith was in her art and in her duty to tell the truth as she saw it. She saw lust, cruelty, contempt, egotism, and hate. And she had the courage to say so' (41).

A similarly un sentimental approach to life is found in the fiction of Flannery O'Connor. However, in his chapter on this writer it is less immediately clear how Gretlund wants his reader to understand the concept of stoicism. In his discussion of what he labels O'Connor's 'Social Stoicism' Gretlund again enters into debate with critical tradition. A common view concerning this writer is that she is predominantly a religious writer who takes but little interest in social matters. While acknowledging the overarching role of Christian issues in O'Connor's fiction, both short and long, Gretlund makes a case for seeing her also as a writer with marked social concerns, most specifically concerning issues of race and class.

The idea of a 'Stoic South' receives its most principled discussion in the last essay in the section, in a nicely argued and instructive examination of Walker Percy's Stoicism. Here Gretlund shows that the ideas of Classical Stoicism form an integral part of the Old South's value base. For instance, the Southern notion of *noblesse oblige* is heavily informed by Stoic ideals, which Gretlund summarizes as follows: 'reason, a sense of duty, courage, justice, freedom, compassion, dignity, and self-discipline' (83). This was an intellectual legacy which was instilled in Percy by his foster father, William Alexander Percy, who from an early time gave his adopted son instruction in the ideas of Mark Aurelius and Epictetus as guides to authentic living also in modern times. As Walker Percy came of age, this secular humanism, with its stress on individualism, became too

constricting for him; in Catholicism he found a sense of community which he did not find in Stoicism. Some commentators have for this reason seen his novels as a wholesale denunciation of Southern Stoicism per se. Gretlund argues against this critical tradition: 'Stoicism and Christianity are not necessarily antithetical, although it took Percy some time (and his critics somewhat longer) to realize this. What Percy showed us about his ethical Stoic heritage is *not* that something is wrong with it but that Stoicism is not enough' (84).

Many of the concerns discussed under the heading of Stoicism reappear in the next section on 'The Bi-Racial South.' The first essay is a discussion of Katherine Anne Porter's unfinished story, 'The Man in the Tree,' where the subject is racial lynching. Another essay in this section provides an analysis of Eudora Welty's short story, 'Where is the Voice Coming From?' Welty wrote this story directly after the assassination in her home town of Jackson, Mississippi of Medgar Evers, the NAACP field secretary. Part of the South's Stoic legacy, as described by Gretlund, is an ability to own up to the horrors of its violent history. Both Porter and Welty do this in their fiction; in the process they put under scrutiny some of the social dynamics which underlie racial tension. Both of these writers have come under fire for a failure to speak up forcefully against the nasty facts of the South's racial history. In these two essays Gretlund argues that such a criticism is ill-founded. 'The Man in the Tree,' though unpublished, is 'so full of hideous images of racism' that they 'dispel any accusation of racism' against Porter (101). Welty's story describes the assassination of the fictionalized Black Civil Rights leader from the perspective of the assassin. Welty wrote the story out of 'shock and revolt' at the realization that she 'knew' the man (131); not his real identity, but the kind of man that he was. The story is among other things an attempt to describe and understand a representative of the violent South and is thus Welty's way of confronting, and thereby denouncing, the region's many acts of brutality in the name of race.

Race is obviously also a central concern for Ralph Ellison. In the chapter entitled 'In a Run-Away Buggy,' Gretlund provides an analysis of 'And Hickmann Arrives,' one of several fragments of a second Ellison novel that never saw publication. As in *Invisible Man* racial conflict is the central fact of this text. But rather than focussing merely on anger as a means of protest, Ellison always combines social protest and affirmation of Afro-American heritage. The fragment under discussion depicts among other things a dignified non-violent protest against racism in the US Senate by a group of Black elders, led by Reverend A.Z. Hickmann. As he does in his famous novel, Ellison in this story dramatizes, through skillful interweaving of plot and symbolism, the interdependence of black and white Americans, their fates forever interlocked by the facts of history, not least Southern history. Gretlund's interview with Martin Luther King, Sr. nicely complements the Ellison essay. The value of non-violent protest is stressed, as is the moral authority accompanying a firm sense of ethnic and national identity. But even though Martin Luther King, Sr. acknowledges that Afro-Americans have witnessed considerable progress since the death of his son, there are still problems; the high level of unemployment among young Afro-Americans is one of these problems, a situation which is ripe with potential for social unrest.

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introduction to his novels, which Gretlund places in the Agrarian tradition, in that they offer frequent dramatizations of the regret that accompanies 'the loss of inherited values.' Jones' fiction is marked by the typically Southern concerns of place, community and history; while bleakly aware of the limitations and inadequacies of modern life, Jones nevertheless manages to imbue his characters' lives with 'pride, courage and dignity' (55).

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judgements. Gretlund is a writer who is not afraid to take a stance *vis-à-vis* the material he treats. Nowhere is this more visible than in the essay entitled 'Silencing the Voice of the Past in Southern Fiction.' Here Gretlund addresses the thorny issue of political correctness and argues forcefully for liberality in adjudicating what constitutes acceptable rhetoric in speaking about, for instance, matters of race. Referring to the debate surrounding *Huckleberry Finn*, he places himself squarely in the camp of those who defend Twain against charges of racism. Similarly, he denounces the criticism levied against Welty for using the word 'nigger' in 'Where Is the Voice Coming From?' The story, Gretlund remarks, is after all told from the point of view of a racist.

In his third section Gretlund addresses what he calls 'The Existential South.' He never defines what he understands by this phrase. Generally the term seems to refer to a set of writers who foreground their characters' crisis of self, these characters' sense of alienation and psychological dislocation. However, he also sometimes uses the term 'existentialist' without distinguishing between this and the more general term 'existential,' which seems unfortunate. My dictionary reserves the former term for the philosophical movement of that name. So when Gretlund speaks of 'Eudora Welty's existentialism' in reference to her depiction of Laurel Hand's crisis of self in *The Optimist's Daughter* (171), 'existentialism' does not seem a good term to use. If by 'existentialism' is understood the notion that existence precedes essence, then Welty takes rather the opposite view. Welty, Gretlund points out, grounds her approach to character in fiction on 'an aesthetics of place' (188 et passim). Gretlund quotes her essay 'Place in Fiction' to this effect, and he offers this elaboration apropos of the fiction of Josephine Humphreys: 'In important respects our minds are products of our native place, its history, its atmosphere, and its *essence* of place' (225; my italics). This minor objection as concerns terminology aside, under the heading 'The Existential South' Gretlund offers convincing and thorough readings, in two separate essays, of the fiction of Eudora Welty (especially *The Optimist's Daughter*) and Josephine Humphreys as dramatizations of contemporary experiences of alienation and psychological isolation – existential problems indeed. Antidotes to this type of anxiety are for both of these writers an ability to face the Southern past and sensitivity to the healing power inherent in a sense of place.

The essays about Welty and Humphreys in this section are complemented by Gretlund's correspondence with Walker Percy, a chapter on contemporary Southern poetry, and a discussion of the fiction of Larry Brown. The Percy letters will be received with interest by students of this writer's fiction in that several of them address key ideas in his oeuvre (especially the role of science), but the published correspondence also allows considerable room for Gretlund's reflections on Percy's works. A.R. Ammons, James Dickey and Donald Justice are poets who exemplify what Gretlund singles out as a distinctive phase in Southern literary history. This phase is marked by a shift in focus from the communal to the individual. 'The general tendency in Southern literature after 1968,' says Gretlund, 'has been a concern with loneliness and the disintegration of minds, lives, marriages, families, relationships, and communities' (163). Larry Brown, an exciting but uneven writer in Gretlund's opinion, dramatizes many of these types of personal crises in his stories and novels, with a typical Southern attention to the importance of place. Brown reappears in the essay entitled 'New Frames of Southern Mind,' placed in the section

Gretlund calls 'The Lagniappe,' but the chapter might as well have been placed in the previous section in that the writers mentioned here share the thematic concerns that Gretlund labels 'existential.' 'New Frames of Southern Mind' offers an overview of some fifteen Southern writers of fiction currently publishing. The essay takes the form of a status report, and Gretlund likes what he sees: 'The writers referred to in this chapter exemplify the continuity, change, and excellence of Southern fiction in the 1980s, and their output was impressive' (261).

The last essay in the collection Gretlund calls 'Frames of Southern History, Biography, and Fiction.' Here Gretlund addresses the growing awareness in the academic community of the collapse of genre boundaries between historiography, biography and fiction. In the first part of the essay he rehearses, and supports, the view of Hayden White et al. that a writer of history of necessity has to make use of the narrative strategies of fiction to make readerly sense, historiographers' insistence on non-fictional 'objectivity' notwithstanding. The second part provides good illustrations of how a writer of biography/ autobiography – in casu Eudora Welty in *One Writer's Beginning* – does the same. These viewpoints are well established in the literature by now and will raise few objections. However, the last part of the essay, where Gretlund seeks to demonstrate why 'without pleasure, [he has] found that *modern fiction is (auto)biography*' (274), he is a little less convincing. His views here seem somewhat sweeping and are less cogently argued and illustrated than in the first two parts of the essay.

Each of Gretlund's seventeen chapters has a small preface which explains the circumstances that produced the text in question; read together these prefaces constitute a form of autobiography of the author as Southern scholar and tell of a varied activity as researcher, speaker and commentator, editor, and conference organizer. *Frames of Southern Mind* is only one of the many fruits of that labor. The book suffers here and there from repetitions and overlap, which must be ascribed to the fact that these essays were written over a long period of time, for a number of disparate occasions. Some minor misgivings noted along the way notwithstanding, this remains a highly stimulating book. Gretlund has an impressive grasp of his materials. He convinces both in his close readings and in his ability to survey the larger field. The fact that he is never afraid of taking a strong stance vis-à-vis writers and issues should be productive of fruitful debate.

Per Winther

University of Oslo

Walter L Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 283 pp., ISBN 0-312-17680-5, paper; \$17.95.

Historian Walter L. Hixson, author of a study of cold war diplomat and ideologue George F. Kennan, argues in this book that information and culture played a decisive role in bringing down the Soviet Union and its satellites. 'Infiltration' – Hixson curiously insists on keeping the cold-war term – of American ideology and culture into the USSR and Eastern Europe during the Cold War has been neglected by traditional diplomatic histories of the Cold War, he suggests. Hixson acknowledges that such comparative neglect of the

contribution of American culture to the collapse of Soviet communism reflects the fact that State Department diplomats and functionaries took a dim view of the political significance of cultural contacts with the Soviet Union during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. The maintenance of the economic and military superiority of the United States was the primary objective and all dealings with the Soviets should proceed on the basis that the Soviets understood and accepted that fact.

Propaganda conducted especially by radio grew out of war-time experience, when it was known as 'psychological warfare.' The outgoing Truman administration had requisitioned a report from MIT and Harvard on how to 'wage total cold war.' Appropriately entitled 'Project Troy,' this collaboration between the elite universities and the national security bureaucracy was seen as exemplary by State Department officials. On the basis of the scholarly recommendations a Psychology Strategy Board was set up in 1951 with the task of uniting the national security bureaucracy in a campaign of psychological warfare. The Board, manned by personnel from the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was to submit recommendations to the National Security Council. The underlying assumption of 'psychological warfare' strategies was that the peoples of Eastern Europe were discontented with Soviet rule, and the goal was to stir up disaffection and ultimately rebellion against Communist oppression. Anti-Communist propaganda was beamed into the Soviet zone by the Voice of America (VOA), Radio Liberation (RL) and Radio Free Europe (RFE). Each country was targeted separately in its own national language spoken by refugees, escapees and others, often fanatically anti-Communist. Some of the more vulgar and vituperative propaganda was conducted not by VOA but by the Munich-based stations RL and RFE; officially 'private' stations but funded by the CIA and with boards answerable to the State Department.

On Eisenhower's initiative a United States Information Agency (now USIS) was created in 1953. Hixson argues that its creation was somewhat against the wishes of the State Department. However, although the director would report directly to the president and the National Security Council, the new agency would be subject to policy guidance by the State Department. In a classic example of Orwellian Newspeak the mission of the USIA was stated as that of persuading 'foreign peoples that it lies in their own interest to take actions which are also consistent with the national objectives of the United States' (26). The *de facto* subordination of USIA was indicated by its continual complaints about inadequate funding and its submission to demands that it maintain an Index of 'subversive' literature during the height of the McCarthy rampage. Thus USIA libraries were asked to remove such highly esteemed novels as Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, Jones' *From Here to Eternity*, and Ellison's *Invisible Man*.

Hixson's central argument is that aggressive psychological 'warfare' broadcasts were exposed as so much irresponsible hot air in 1956 when both the US and NATO passively stood by as Soviet troops 'drowned the Budapest uprising in blood,' as the headmaster at my school memorably put it to us in his morning address. In Hixson's scenario control over RFE and VOA subsequently tightened, as when the US began to encourage national communism particularly in Poland. The anti-Polish programs of the 'private' RFE radio station were summarily transformed into pro-Gomulka broadcasts. VOA turned to exclusive English-language broadcasts of news and entertainment. Its famous 'Music

USA' program was actually launched as early as 1955. Emceed by Willis Conover, it became one of the most popular VOA programs.'

Hixson wants to document a movement in American cold war propaganda away from strident anti-communist rhetoric towards an emphasis upon the enviable American Way of Life as something that ought to and could be made available to all people in the world once they committed themselves to liberal democracy and a capitalist economy. He attaches particular importance to the American contribution to the 1958 Brussels World Fair, to the 1958 cultural agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, and to the subsequent American National Exhibition in Moscow the following year. For the Brussels Exhibition Hixson relies on Robert Rydell's *World of Fairs* (1993) as well as archival material containing USIA officials' reports. Hixson argues that in both exhibitions the Americans were anxious to counter Soviet criticism of class exploitation and the disfranchisement of African-Americans. Thus in Brussels the American show was sold as 'People's Capitalism' (in the United States there is only one class: the Middle Class). Hixson deals extensively with the 'American Negro' exhibit, which in his words tried to present the issue of race with 'unprecedented honesty and integrity.' Both the Soviet and European press had circulated the Little Rock, Arkansas images and news of the previous year, and the Americans evidently felt that they could not ignore the issue. Whether the presentation was as courageous as Hixson claims is not clear on the evidence offered here. Perhaps he ascribes 'integrity' to the USIA because this section of the exhibition in particular aroused the anger of Southern congressmen: protests, however, that led the honorable USIA organizers to remove offending photos of 'mixed' couples or groups from the exhibition. The analysis of the US exhibition in 1959 in Moscow that secured the world's headlines because of Nixon and Khrushchev's carefully staged 'kitchen debate' rests on Hixson's own archival research both in the US and Russia. Here the People's Capitalism – the American Way of Life – was translated into an orgy of exhibited consumer goods, 'labor-saving' house appliances, cosmetics and hygienic products and, of course, automobiles. Carefully vetted young Americans served as guides to the various exhibits and personally sifted and fielded questions from the many visitors. Hixson reports USIA officials' self-congratulatory reports on this effective pedagogical strategy. They may well have picked up the idea from the communists. Any visitor to the USSR in those years will recall how hard it was to sneak out or see anything 'unaccompanied.'

Hixson doesn't have much to say about American 'high' culture as propaganda, but mentions in passing that the Americans worried about Soviet criticism of vulgar American mass entertainment (including rock'n'roll). Accordingly both in Brussels and Moscow 'modern' American art (e.g. abstract expressionist painting) was exhibited. There is some indication that the selection of 'modernist' art worried American organizers because of its potentially disturbing effects on the overall impression of the exhibition. Conservative Congressmen and corporate business executives tended to argue that there was little point in spending money on showing America's dirty linen abroad. Rather, they wanted American art which conveyed deep spiritual and national truths. Intermittently, Hixson's book offers fascinating snippets such as the above, the successful tour of Leonard

1. As far as I remember the signature tune of his regular 'Jazz Club USA' was 'Take the A-Train.'

Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic, the earlier impact of the frequently-toured *Porgy and Bess* (presumably because of its large African-American cast), or pianist Van Cliburn's surprising, and apparently cult-like, success. But the thesis of his book, that with better funding and hence more clout the USIA could have even more successfully 'penetrated' the Iron Curtain, and thus, perhaps, have ended the Cold War sooner and more cheaply, is not really persuasive. The USIA comes across as totally subservient to the State Department.

But perhaps this is not what his book is really about. To a great extent, and as his concluding chapters also suggest, he intends a contribution to the rehabilitation of Eisenhower, who is presented as a man of good will and common-sense about how to serve US national interests best – but, unfortunately, also a weak man who let hard-liner Secretary of State John Foster Dulles have his way and who disastrously agreed to one last, fatal, U-2 spy plane flight. In Hixson's scenario Eisenhower blew the chance to go down in history as the statesman who initiated a *détente* between East and West. Isn't this expecting a bit too much from the man who cowardly refused to stop the execution of the Rosenbergs?

Christen K. Thomsen

Odense University

Poul Houe and Sven Hakon Rossel (eds), *Images of America in Scandinavia* (Amsterdam and Atlanta, Georgia: Editions Rodopi B.V., 1998), x + 232 pp. ISBN 90-420-0621-8, cloth, \$66; 90-420-0611-0, paper, \$20.

Poul Houe and Sven Hakon Rossel deserve credit for giving us a timely and useful book that places itself in a tradition of scholarly study of the impact of the United States on Europe. This is a tradition where Scandinavian contributions have been of major significance, beginning with Halvdan Koht's *The American Spirit in Europe* in 1949. Much groundwork remains to be done, however, and scholars working in this fascinating yet problematic field are faced with the conflicting demands of making synthesizing and interpretive use of what has already been done and digging up the many basic yet still unknown pieces of information that are needed for an improved interpretation. The contributors demonstrate different approaches to this complex field of study.

The volume is carefully designed. Tasks have been set and contributors selected. There are two articles each on Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; one on the impact of American literature and one on more general cultural and political responses to the United States. In addition Sven Rossel has written an introductory article on the image of the United States in Danish literature (with some comments on Denmark and Norway) and Poul Houe has written a concluding essay on three American novelists, Willa Cather, Ole Rolvaag, and Sophus Keith Winther, and the Swedish Vilhelm Moberg. Some of his readings are valuable contributions, but his article is necessarily an appendix to the central theme. Iceland and Finland have not been included even though these countries would have provided fascinating perspectives given their different histories. What we have is an account of how Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes have looked at themselves in the American mirror.

Hans H. Skei and Rolf Lundén have written on translations of American literature in Norway and Sweden, respectively. Apart from studies on the reception of Hemingway and Faulkner, little work has been done in Norway, and Skei has written the first survey of a subject that, as he correctly observes, 'deserves a book of its own' (98). Lundén has been able to make excellent use of earlier scholarship, general works such as by Harald Elovson (1930), Carl Anderson (1957), Sten Torgerson (1982), and himself (1991, 1992), more specialized studies on specific authors, and statistical studies. The general conclusions drawn by both are interestingly similar. Claus Secher, who also has statistics at his disposal, has interpreted his task somewhat differently in that his article focuses on the manner in which Danish critics and literary historians, in particular Frederik Schyberg (1930) and Sven Møller Kristensen (1948), have interpreted American literature. All three have contributed to the history of reading in Scandinavia. Skei's account distinguishes itself from the two others in two respects: he pays attention to the translators and he considers the impact in Norway of books written and published in Norwegian in the United States.

Secher's article unavoidably overlaps with that by Steffen Elmer Jørgensen on 'Aspects of the American Cultural Impact on Denmark 1776 to 1995,' as does Rossell's article on 'The Image of the United States in Danish Literature.' It would seem that a collaborative effort by the three would have given a more comprehensive account than three individual studies. Indeed, collaboration between all eight authors would have made for a better book. While Jørgensen's concept of culture does not include literature and the arts, except in popular culture, it does include agriculture, industry, and the economy, areas that are not considered by Birgitta Stene ('The Swedish Image of America') and only touched upon by Øyvind Gulliksen ('American Influences on Norwegian Culture'). On the other hand, Gulliksen includes religion while the impact of the United States on churches and religious movements in Denmark and Sweden has not been considered. Surely the volume would have benefitted from cooperation between the contributors, both at an early stage where the areas and aspects to be considered could have been discussed, and at a later stage when drafts could have been exchanged for comment, criticism, and inspiration. The Marshall Plan, for instance, is considered by Gulliksen but not mentioned by Jørgensen. This may be because it had no impact in Denmark, but the question is not raised. Fulbright, the American who may have had the greatest impact on images of America in the minds of Scandinavian academics and professionals in the second half of the twentieth century, is not mentioned in the index. Indeed, only Gulliksen writes about academic research and educational institutions. The volume would also have benefitted from better copy-editing.

While all authors have done impressive research and arrived at valuable insights and interpretations, Birgitta Stene deserves special mention for the extraordinary breadth of her article on Sweden. Øyvind Gulliksen's article stands out for a different reason: unlike the others, he includes himself in the culture that is studied. His integration of personal autobiography with historical scholarship is a model of how studies of cultural impact and cultural images may be performed.

Each article has a bibliography. It would have been better with one for the whole book. Had the contributors exchanged bibliographical information as their work progressed this may have added to the value of their project. Some bibliographical omissions that come to

mind are H. Arnold Barton, *A Folk Divided: Homeland Swedes and Swedish Americans, 1840-1940* (1994), Sigmund Skard, *USA i norsk historie* (1976 – only the shorter, American version is listed), Harald S. Næss, *Knut Hamsun og Amerika* (1969), Jørund Mannsåker, *Emigrasjon og diktning: Utvandringa til Nord-Amerika i norsk skjønnlitteratur* (1971), Ingeborg R. Kongslien, *Draumen om fridom og jord: Ein studie i skandinaviske emigrantromanar* (1989), and Reidar Øksnevad, *Sambandstatene i norsk litteratur* (1950 – a bibliography!).

Houe and Rossel's volume is a good beginning. Hopefully more will follow.

Orm Øverland

University of Bergen

Mikko Keskinen, *Response, Resistance, Deconstruction: Reading and Writing in/of Three Novels by John Updike*, *Jyväskylä Studies in the Arts*, 62 (Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 1998) 271 pp, ISBN: 951-39-0119-X, paper.

Mikko Keskinen may not have invented the most felicitous title of the year, but he is nonetheless responsible for one of the most original and intriguing contributions to Updike scholarship of 1998. In his *Response, Resistance, Deconstruction: Reading and Writing in/of Three Novels by John Updike* he has taken the author up on his persistent complaint that the critics have tended to turn a blind eye to his significant contributions to experimental fiction since the 1970s, having forever consigned him to the ranks of 'mannerist' chroniclers of the malaise of the WASP middle class. Even if Keskinen does not quite seem to trust his instincts all the way here, claiming by way of introduction that 'it is not my intention to rehabilitate Updike as a postmodernist,' much of the body of his book demonstrates how fruitful it is to try to read the three Updike novels he has chosen in terms of the concepts and perceptions commonly associated with postmodernist criticism. Certainly he has proved his observation from the 'Abstract' of his study that 'Updike appears to be closer to American postmodernists than is usually acknowledged.' While Keskinen has chosen to concentrate on three novels from the 1970s, *Rabbit Redux*, *A Month of Sundays*, and *The Coup*, novels like *The Witches of Eastwick* and *S.* might have lent themselves equally well to such analyses.

Keskinen's book, originally a doctoral dissertation, falls into two distinct parts. The first part sets the stage for the explication of Updike by introducing a number of contemporary critical concepts and practices; where, in addition to the *Response, Resistance, Deconstruction*, and *Reading/Writing* of the title, *Narratology*, *Transference*, and *Self-Reflexivity* loom large. Here Keskinen shows an impressive grasp and range of reference, critically evaluating the usefulness of concepts and theories for his own purposes. For the less initiated reader than one may expect to find on a dissertation committee, however, the density of argument and the proliferation of abstractions may prove a formidable obstacle. Statements such as the following are by no means atypical: 'Instead of the teleology of narrative, I am interested in the teleo-theology of narratology' and 'This curious combination of monism and solipsism at least partly explains the gendering of the narratees to accord the focalizer.' On many occasions in this book, Keskinen's own

observation that '[t]he general tendency of criticism to be more theoretical or more philosophical than literature may have caused the discipline to become more metaphysical and consequently more thetic than what it studies' is amply borne out!

It would be unfortunate, however, if readers were put off by such professional mental gymnastics, since many of these terms are made to function effectively and empirically in the reading of Updike's texts. Even when the reader, like the present one, employs a fair amount of resistance against a number of the presuppositions of the Derridean deconstructionism that Keskinen largely uses as his frame of reference, the author succeeds in demonstrating that such categories can yield important and original insights into both the thematics of the fiction and Updike's practices as a writer. Such a realization is perhaps most surprising in the case of *Rabbit Redux*, which we have, after all, come to know as one of the four novels Updike has written to chronicle American middle-class life in the second half of the twentieth century. Obviously the realism of the social history is still there in Keskinen's analysis, but the reader is made to see and understand many of these realities in a different way through the new glasses provided by the 'Allegories of Interpretation' of an unfamiliar set of parameters. The narratological analysis of the function of Harry, Skeeter, and Jill is thoroughly illuminating, even if the attempts to (de)construct resisting readers of various stripes may seem both reductive and repetitive after a while.

Keskinen's metafictional discussion of *A Month of Sundays* is also quite enlightening, but it is perhaps in the case of *The Coup* that the fruitfulness of his postmodernist approach to Updike is most striking. In this novel, Updike's most sustained and successful attempt at satire, we get the hilarious questing memoir of Ellelou, the deposed President of the Kingdom/Republic of Kush in Northwestern Africa, and here the author's narratological pyrotechnics are accounted for in exemplary fashion. What is made abundantly clear from these vantage points is the complexity of Updike's treatment of both the (post)colonial African scene and the ethnocentric American society from which Ellelou has received so many formative impressions. And, *mirabile dictu*, this sober and serious analysis also succeeds in augmenting and proliferating the humor of the novel, projecting the satirist's ability to manipulate ironic juxtapositions and assorted other incongruities in a feast of fun for the reader who comes along for the ride.

Mikko Keskinen's book should be required reading for those who think that John Updike is a tedious, sex-obsessed live white male who has written too many novels of social realism for his own good. It has left this reviewer with renewed respect both for Updike's ingenuity and for the capacity of postmodernist criticism, once it ceases to play scholastic ping-pong and engages in the nitty-gritty of textual confrontation, to open up important new horizons of meaning even for resisting readers.

Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog (eds), *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 304 pp. 24 illus., ISBN: 0-300-06809-3, cloth, \$42.00; 0-300-07006-3, paper, \$19.00.

'What does it mean to invent the psychological,' asks Nancy Schnog in the first line of her introduction. Obviously, to see 'the psychological' as 'invented' problematizes the ways Americans have regarded identity and interiority throughout the twentieth century. As Joel Pfister explains in his introduction, entitled 'On Conceptualizing the Cultural History of Emotional and Psychological Life in America,' the two editors seek to analyze 'the psychological' not as a 'definitely knowable truth' but as a changing and changeable cultural category. The quotation marks around the term, used consistently throughout the volume, thus aim to defamiliarize and destabilize our assumptions about mental landscapes. In Pfister's formulation, 'we wanted to extend the possibilities of a history that would investigate emotions not as timeless givens which sprout from the soil of an eternal "inner" self, but as culturally structured experiences, interpretations, and performances of the self.' Why is it, then, that labels and concepts such as 'the unconscious,' 'Electra complex,' 'neurosis,' 'nerves,' and 'superego' gain or lose 'cultural authority' at given historical moments? *Inventing the Psychological* addresses this issue through a valuable, interdisciplinary collection of essays on 'the formation of psychological belief and inner experience in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America.' Together, the editors and contributors to the volume attempt to uncover the significant public and private resources that have helped construct primarily middle-class notions about 'the psychological' as the most private, individual and 'deepest' part of our identities. As a result, they hope to complicate our ways of conceptualizing 'the psychological' and to assist us in envisioning alternative modes of self-(non)definition. In Pfister's words, 'I contend that the history of psychological and emotional life in America demands that we think in more sophisticated and creative ways about the formation and exercise of cultural power draped in "psychological" authority – power that has assumed shapes that are sometimes fairly obvious, sometimes revealingly subtle.'

The four sections following the editors' introductions accordingly map the construction of 'the psychological' in the States from a kaleidoscope of perspectives. Part II, 'Family, Literature and the Nineteenth-Century Emotional Revolution,' opens with John Demos' essay 'Oedipus and America' (1978), which, though generally ignored, inspired the editors to situate 'the psychological' historically and ideologically – especially Demos' notion of the nineteenth-century 'hothouse family,' which would prepare the ground for the enthusiastic reception of psychoanalysis in North America. In the same section, Nancy Schnog's intriguing 'Changing Emotions: Moods and the Nineteenth-Century American Woman Writer' charts in the works of Louisa May Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and Kate Chopin a shift in the 'scripting' of feminine emotions from insistently elevating domestic cheerfulness to allowing, or encouraging, feminine moodiness, based on a masculine romantic equation of moods with individuality and 'depth.'

Equally interesting is David M. Luben's essay in Part III on the later paintings of Thomas Eakins, which depicted an 'elusive interiority' through body posture and facial expression. Middle-class Americans thus found their self-conceived complexity and depth

given a moral stature, significantly, Lubin concludes, drained of any political content. His discussion of Eakins' bourgeois subjects connects itself to the posings of Charcot's hysterical patients and to Edward Curtis' photographs in *The North American Indian* (1907-30), thus opening up a variety of possibilities for theoretical and pedagogical (dis)connections. Joel Pfister's second contribution to the volume, 'Glamorizing the Psychological: The Politics of the Performances of Modern Psychological Identities,' in the same section on 'The Rise of Psychological Culture,' includes a related analysis of the bourgeois concept of 'the primitive within,' especially popular among Greenwich Village radicals in the late 1910s and 1920s. The inner cavemen and -women cultivated through the mass-marketing in popular culture of sexuality as a sexy and true expression of 'individuality' rechanneled potentially subversive radicalism to the private sphere, thus serving the interests of what decades later would be designated 'the Establishment.' Other articles in Pfister and Schnog's thought-provoking book discuss, for example, academic textbooks and the psychology industry in the 1890-1940 period, and the brainwashing of Korean War prisoners.

In the final section on 'Race, Gender and the Psychological in Twentieth-Century Mass Culture,' Robert Walser analyzes in a fairly technical manner the concept of 'Deep Jazz,' while Franny Nudelman offers a reading of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* that, instead of seeing it as promoting a specifically feminine discourse in the vein of French feminist criticism, reads the conflation of the private and the public in this inconclusive talk show as a way of curtailing women's public power, in that the injured woman becomes a generic representative of her sex, 'deprived of a listening audience.' Possibly less analytically sophisticated than the essays in earlier sections, Nudelman's concluding analysis of a popular subject nonetheless allows the reader, somewhat fatigued from the high academic discourse of the majority of contributions to *Inventing the Psychological*, a well-deserved rest.

Pfister and Schnog's contributions to the mapping of the cultural history of emotions in North America nonetheless prove to be well worth our journey. Their volume stimulates the readership to enter new paths of research and teaching, its interdisciplinary and innovative essays pointing towards professional and private re-visions.

Clara Juncker

Odense University

Alan Shima and Hans Lofgren (eds), *American Studies in the Nordic Countries*. Uppsala Nordic American Studies Reports No. 14 (Uppsala: The Swedish Institute for North American Studies, 1998), 101 pp., ISBN 91-506-1279-4; SEK 120.

Thanks to the initiative of the organizers of the 1997 NAAS conference in Gothenburg, two panels, one with doctoral students the other with professors, provided an opportunity to assess the development, present status, and challenges of American Studies in the Nordic countries. The resulting little book edited by Alan Shima and Hans Lofgren is a valuable contribution to our ongoing reflections on the nature of our scholarly and pedagogical work.

As might be expected, the two panels were different in their approaches to the question about the methodological and institutional implications of current developments in American Studies (7). While the professorial panel give surveys of past developments and present status, stressing institutional aspects, the doctoral students are more inclined to discuss challenges, consider new departures, and stress theoretical aspects. This is as it should be.

Finland has the most interesting news to report on the institutional level. Markku Henriksson and Mikko Toivonen have decided on a sensible division of labor that makes the Finnish contributions more of a piece than those from the other countries. Henriksson has a broad historical sweep, beginning with the work of Pehr Kalm in the 1740s but quickly moving up to the more recent past. Among the Finnish achievements are the annually alternating North American Studies conferences since 1985 in Tampere and Helsinki. Thanks to the generosity of the McDonnell-Douglas Aerospace Corporation, Finland now has its first chair in 'multidisciplinary American Studies, with teaching especially in American society, history, and culture.' (Congratulations, Markku!)

Another exciting development is that North American Studies is one of the four-year national doctoral programs funded by the Ministry of Education and the Finnish Academy. Toivonen gives an instructive account of this program, located in Tampere and starting out with seven graduate students with scholarships in 1995. The program is not only interdisciplinary; it is also inter-university with several additional 'associate' participants who have various funding from their universities. That the program runs counter to institutional departmental organization, however, is a complicating factor. There is some understatement in Toivonen's remark that '[c]rossing over to other disciplines is not encouraged in the Finnish universities' (29). I will return to some of his reflections below. Before we leave Finland, however, it must be noted that while the situation holds promise, it is also precarious. The doctoral program has not received funding for a new four-year period and much will depend on current efforts to get funding from other sources. The candidates will have to have their degrees from traditional departments since Finnish law, as Henriksson has informed me, 'does not recognize a degree in North American Studies.'

While buoyancy characterizes the attitude of the Finns, Rolf Lundén seems more resigned in his account of what he calls 'The Uphill Journey.' The public resistance to institutionalized American Studies may have been greater in Sweden than in the other Nordic countries. While a positive attitude to the United States became part of official Finland's Cold War balancing act, and while the Norwegian government took the initiative to establish chairs in both Russian and American literatures after the Second World War, the Swedish government at first refused to appoint a new professor to the only Swedish chair in American literature (in Uppsala) after Lars Ohnebrink died in 1966. When it was eventually decided to fill the chair in 1968, it was necessary to have Olov Fryckstedt return home from a German university. Lundén's survey of the present situation is largely focused on the Uppsala Department of English, but he also describes the two undergraduate programs in American Studies organized by the Swedish Institute for North American Studies at Uppsala and the Center for North American Studies at Lund.

Lundén is concerned that NAAS may pride itself with labels such as multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary but that in practice is an association of literary scholars with a

sprinkling of historians. He welcomes the 'fairly recent influx of political scientists into NAAS [as] a healthy trend,' and wonders whether we should not try to attract more representatives from a variety of disciplines. But he is also concerned that 'such proliferation [may] threaten the cohesion of our association' (36).

Dale Carter's Danish story is more optimistic in tone. After giving much the same description of a discipline-based academic structure, he adds that it has not been his experience 'that current departmental structures make cross-disciplinary work impossible. My own department gives me and my American Studies colleagues full freedom to teach inter- and multi-disciplinary courses, as well as courses that you would not expect to find in English Departments, such as U.S. foreign relations or politics and the media' (65-66). One reason for Dale Carter's more up-beat approach to his subject may be that Denmark has indeed become a powerhouse for American Studies in Scandinavia. I would date the ascendancy of Denmark to the appointment of David Nye as professor of American history in Odense in 1992. While keeping up a stream of books of remarkable merit he has become the natural center of an active team of colleagues. He was responsible for the creation of the American Studies Center at Odense in 1992. Aarhus got its center in 1996. For a long period the historian Niels Thorsen at the English Department in Copenhagen was the main editor of *American Studies in Scandinavia* while now the editorship has passed on to David Nye and Carl Pedersen in Odense. As a previous editor of the journal I feel entitled to observe that there has been an improvement in energy and quality under Danish management.

Per Winther has a somewhat different approach than his colleagues, focusing on the teaching of the 'civilization' component in the Departments of English. He gives a survey of differences between the two main approaches to the subject with Oslo and Trondheim representing a social studies/history approach and Tromsø and Bergen along with several colleges representing a text-based cultural studies approach. The only book-length attempt to develop a theoretical basis for culture studies in English Departments in Scandinavia is Frederick Brøgger's (Tromsø) *Culture, Language, Text: Culture Studies within the Study of English as a Foreign Language* (1992), and he argues for the study of texts (widely defined) at the center of American Studies. Ole Moen (Oslo), the most explicit critic of this view, argues for a social science and history approach. The main problem may be that both insist that their scholarly approaches and teaching methods should be normative. Surely the very idea of American Studies invites a liberal and inclusive attitude to approaches, methods, and research materials. Quality of research, of writing, and of results. not ideological or methodological purity should be our criteria for judging each others' work. *Forlig eder!*

The most interesting contributions, however, are by the doctoral students Berndt Clavier (Lund), Henrik Bødker (Odense), and Lene Johannessen (Bergen). In his account of the Finnish Graduate School, Mikko Toivonen points to problems facing doctoral students in small departments in sparsely populated countries, isolated from peers as well as experienced scholars by long distances. This theme is also taken up by Lene Johannessen who claims that 'professional isolation is perhaps one of the strongest characteristics of the graduate student's academic existence.' Contributing to this professional isolation are the minority position of American Studies in the English Departments that host them and the

'rigid disciplinary boundaries which prevent us from collaborating with colleagues in other yet related fields' (99). Her call for 'the creation of a forum for Nordic doctoral students' (101) should be heeded.

Berndt Clavier points to the possibility of 'cross-disciplinary rather than inter-disciplinary' (52) programs by opening up the spaces between departments rather than by creating new ones. This echoes the views of Carter who observes that Danish institutions 'offer at least the building blocks of American Studies, even if not always the cement' (59). Clavier has found the makings of good cement at UCSC, in particular in the encouragement given there for the creation of 'research clusters.' A main difficulty facing innovation at Scandinavian (Clavier writes Swedish) universities is that interdisciplinarity 'always takes the shape of institutionalization and disciplinarity' (54). 'Instead of maintaining our boundaries at all cost we should try to find ways of including the negotiable edges of our disciplines into the solid cores' (52), he writes, and concludes, 'we could perhaps start to build programs, courses and research clusters, between rather than in specific departments' (55).

Perhaps the most controversial contribution is Henrik Bødker's 'The Re-Inscription of Distance: Doing Non-American American Studies in a Diminishing World.' Taking his cue from Sigmund Skard, he sees 'the elimination of certain productive and vital distances' as a major problem in that 'it almost seems as if a great part of contemporary European American Studies were practiced from positions wholly within the United States' (71). He takes issue with both the topics of study and the implied audience of much of the American Studies conducted in our continent and asks whether our 'explicit perspective' should not be through our 'own culture and its history' and our work thus be more 'comparative' (75).

American Studies in the U.S. is ... largely a reaction against the study of America through European methods and materials; what one might tentatively call for at this stage of American Studies in Europe is thus an 'inverse' re-invigoration of American Studies in Europe in the sense that what should be de-emphasized are the materials through which America studies itself while perhaps retaining some of the methods. (77)

Bødker's view may be timely. It certainly is based on reflection. And yet it speaks of the distance in time back to the young Øverland who reacted to what he regarded as the parochial and isolated nature of so much of what went for American Studies in Europe as he was starting out in what to him seems yesterday.

On the one hand much of academic American Studies in Europe is still conducted in the many vernacular languages, which means both that this work does not enter an international scholarly discourse and, consequently, that it has no real peer review. On the other, however, there is the danger that what we do may easily be derivative and must certainly suffer from our distance from American source materials and our second-hand American experience. Our outside perspective may be our most important asset in American Studies. Perhaps we should heed Bødker's mēne tekēl, increase our awareness of this outside perspective, and make use of its creative potentials rather than be virtual Americans.

A word in closing. Three of the four doctoral students refer to a recent year of study at

an American graduate school sponsored by the Fulbright Program. Surely this program deserves a few words of praise and gratitude from us all as it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

Orm Øverland

University of Bergen

Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 560 pp., ISBN 0-674-68937-2, paper; \$18.95, DKK 312,50.

What makes a President? We tend to think of the American Presidency in terms of simple chronology: one president succeeding the other; each president becoming a master, rather than a creator, of American politics. Skowronek challenges that pattern by making the different kinds of politics that presidents make the objective of his book. He argues that a simple periodization scheme severely limits the analysis of leadership, and that it fails to recognize the presidents as individual agents of political change. Rather than following a chronological approach, e.g., speaking of Carter, Reagan, Bush and Clinton as late-twentieth century presidents, Skowronek observes a correlation of presidents by events and societal time frames. He defines four basic types of political leadership: Jeffersonian, Jacksonian, Republican and Liberal, all recurring at cyclical intervals. In Skowronek's own words, the book 'offers an analysis of the leadership patterns that are repeatedly produced through the American constitutional system.'

A re-thinking of presidential history expands the framework for understanding the impact of a president's policies, and the success of these policies on a more long-term basis. Skowronek's claim is that Presidents make politics, politics do not make presidents, though he simultaneously admits that several factors influence the success of a presidential term. By way of the Constitution and the established ways of the White House, for example, the presidency is institutionalized, but Skowronek aims to transcend this very rigid way of viewing the Presidency by expanding the basis of analysis to emphasize both historical context and personality as important factors when evaluating any president.

In assessing a Chief Executive we look to define the successes and failures, but the conclusion to such an analysis depends on our point of departure. One excellent example is the Presidency of Jimmy Carter. In their evaluations, historians and political scientists cover a wide range of opinions. Carter's term in office has been described in terms of everything from amateurish via a turning point in a American history to an impossible leadership situation. None have defined it as unequivocally successful. But what defines a successful presidency? According to Skowronek, '[s]uccessful political leaders do not necessarily do more than other leaders, successful leaders control the political definitions of their actions, the terms in which their places in history are understood.' In other words, the leader is the agenda-setter and a successful leader defines the context of the presidency; he defines the operational codes, and accordingly governs the political situation. Carter did not control the political definitions of his actions, because he 'came to power in what has proven to be an impossible leadership situation time and time again

since the Presidency of John Adams.' Carter's presidency coincided with a turbulent time in America's history. The country was in the midst of an economic recession, and its international reputation and integrity had been shattered by the Asian war. Skowronek argues that 'to take the dismal results of Carter ... as prima facie evidence of [his] political talents is to assume that presidents who have fared better played on the same field of political authority.'

In evaluating the field of political authority, Skowronek skillfully and systematically makes use of historical evidence. His approach can only be applauded as it brings a new and broader understanding of the historical evolution of the presidency.

Birgitte Nielsen

Odense University

Werner Sollors (ed), *Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literatures* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 409 pp., ISBN: 0-8147-8093-8, paper; \$25.00.

Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literature is a collection of twenty eight essays on what has been a largely neglected area in American Studies, namely, writings in languages other than English. The articles are all original contributions, and include, as editor Werner Sollors notes in the 'Introduction'

case studies and groundbreaking bibliographical work, historically focused contributions on language creation and suppression, and close readings of representative texts ... [it takes] seriously the task of examining the history of discrete language groups and their literary productions, as well as by crossing language boundaries ... by investigating newly invented languages; and by reflecting on the effects of multilingualism on English writing in the United States (9-10).

At the core of *Multilingual America* lies the concern with what Sollors refers to as the 'blind spot of language' (5): the way in which representations of the American experience have consistently ignored voices in languages other than English. Even with the past decades' focus on multiculturalism and pluralism, the agenda these debates set for expansion of the 'canon' has largely been deaf to the sounds of immigrants giving their versions of the American experience in their own languages. Te-hsing Shan notes that 'the LOWINUS [Languages Of What Is Now the US] Project at once unsettles and redefines long-held ideas about American literature' (119), and even if there are still many bridges to cross *Multilingual America* is a significant step forward.

The essays are divided into seven sections which provide different perspectives on multilingualism in the United States and what its recognition entails: 'Literary History, Old and New'; 'The Many Languages of American Literature'; 'Yekl and Hyde': 'Different-Language Versions of the 'same' Texts'; 'Multilingualism as a Way of Life'; 'Melting Glots'; 'Multilingualism and English-Language Writing'; and 'Languages and Language Rights.' Added to these is a separate part on research in Multilingual America

and a number of useful web addresses and search hints for further exploration and information. Given the collection's thematic and quantitative span, it is impossible here to mention all the contributions, even all the sections. Instead references are made to some issues that recur across the sections.

One such theme is the conflict between retaining the old home culture while at the same time assimilating into the new American. The negotiation of this dichotomy in turn generates two central questions: firstly, in what does the 'old' culture consist; and, secondly, what exactly is the 'new?' Orm Øverland shows that, for instance, to the Norwegian-American writer and journalist Waldemar Ager 'the new' was English rather than something innately American, and the notion of the melting pot a 'metaphor of destruction, more about the killing of the old man than the creation of the new' (53). In 'The Quintessence of the Jew' Matthew Frye Jacobson translates Abraham Cahan's *Yekl* back into Yiddish. He argues that in the original language *Yekl* 'engaged transnational debates regarding the essence of Jewish character' more than the assimilationist debate refracted in the English language version published two years later in 1895 (104). The definition of Polishness was, too, as Karen Majewski shows, a complicated matter: 'Was one a Pole by virtue of birthplace, of genealogy, of language, of religion, social class, political affiliation, of ideology, of inclination, of opportunism?' (248). The task of culture preservation thus had to be negotiated on two fronts: internally within the ethnic group and externally in relation to the dominant mainstream society. Several of the essays in this collection add significantly, not only to our understanding of the dynamics behind these processes, but also to the inter-ethnic points of convergence and divergence among the ethnic-American groups.

Apart from the insights the essays bring to different groups and their American cultural histories, they also bring attention to writings that are largely unknown to the general audience. Michel Fabre, for instance, traces the literature of the Creoles of color, the gens de *couleur* in Louisiana from the antebellum period to its extinction around the First World War. Distinguished from other African Americans by 'jealously preserving their Latin culture,' this group existed in a peculiar neither-nor category, removed from the black as well as the white community (29). Equally peripheral, perhaps, to the awareness of most Americanists is the history of the Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) press and its communal and political function. Its 'undoing,' Aviva Ben-Ur suggests, became the very acculturation it had worked to facilitate. Other literary productions that have been considered marginal to American Studies are the Jewish Orthodox sermons. Menahem Blondheim offers an interesting discussion of the adjustment these sermons had to make in order to reach new world congregations. Even if the members were basically the same as in the old country, the new setting drastically altered the needs and expectations that had to be met. Peter Conolly-Smith has written about Adolph Philipp's German musical comedies, and shows how they functioned to the immigrant community as a pedagogical bridging between high-brow German drama and the popular theater of the new world.

Another case in point is contemporary Chinese-American literature written in Chinese, which retains its connections with the old culture but centers on immigrant thematics in the US. This literature, Xiao-huang Yin argues, is distinguished from Chinese-American literature in English by its liberty of speech: of not having to conform to stereotypical

representations of the Chinese-American experience. This particular use of another language than English is also, as Mario Muffi argues, an important aspect of the Italian-American foundational work *Peppino* (1885) by Luigi Donato Ventura – written in *French*, rather than English or Italian. Muffi suggests that one reason Ventura may have done this is that a 'neutral' language enabled him to talk about things 'privately' Italian to a public audience while at the same time enabling him to retain the grace of *la bella figura* (173). This aspect of language use ties up with another important theme several essays touch on, namely how writers in the past as well as the present century have felt pressured to relate their fears and hopes in English and how this has influenced their accounts of their experiences. This is Aviva Taubenfeld's concern in her examination of the different configurations of the Jewish community and the author/narrator in the Yiddish and English versions of Cahan's *Yekl*.

Apart from the obvious educational contribution *Multilingual America* makes to the current multiculturalist debate, it is also a highly valuable pedagogical addition that will be useful to all students and teachers in American literature and American Studies departments. The teaching of American literature and culture is becoming increasingly dependent on inclusive reading-lists, and our understanding of American cultural and literary history must take into account both historical awareness as well as awareness of the multiple implications of 'hyphenated' America. Although he was speaking about Mexican-Americans in particular, scholar and writer Juan Bruce-Novoa's comment that the hyphen signifies 'intercultural possibilities' of a continually expanding space is, as *Multilingual America* demonstrates, of general relevance.² Only by acknowledging this can we appreciate the multicultural 'narration of the nation' American literature has reflected from its early days.

Lene Johannessen

University of Bergen

Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (London: University College London Press, 1998), 576 pp. ISBN: 0-520-212-983, paper; \$24.95.

Race relations in the United States changed profoundly between the early 1950s and the late 1970s. Contemporaneous with the chief impetus to change – the various boycotts, sit-ins, voter registration drives, freedom rides, and marches known collectively as the civil rights movement – were the commercial successes of artists and labels that performed, produced, and marketed musical genres closely associated with African American culture. First rhythm and blues, then soul, and later funk attained unprecedented levels of popularity with both black and white audiences and record buyers during the period. The accomplishments of Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, James Brown and others as performers, and of Atlantic, Stax, Motown, and numerous Independents as labels, seemed to provide a

2. Juan Bruce-Novoa, *Retrospace. Collected Essays on Chicano Literature, Theory, and History* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1990).

popular cultural version of the gradual shift from racial segregation via desegregation to integration: one of the many goals and achievements of the civil rights movement. Individuals involved in the civil rights movement and those in the music industry did not work in vacuums, unaware of or uninfluenced by one another's efforts. Indeed, Dick Gregory once captured the importance of the music for the foot soldiers of the movement when he observed that while movement volunteers heard the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. at most once a day on television on the evening news, they heard Aretha Franklin on the radio every hour.

How the civil rights movement and the prosperity of rhythm and blues, soul, and funk music might have been interrelated is the chief subject of Brian Ward's *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations*, a *New York Times Book Review* Notable Book for 1998. A Reader in American History at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne in Britain, Ward adopts two major approaches to his material: social and cultural history and textual analysis. Building on his knowledge of the era and the civil rights movement (he co-edited *The Making of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement* with Tony Badger in 1996), Ward's main approach is that of a historian. Ever aware of the complexity of his subject, he produces a highly readable and informative narrative gleaned from a wealth of archival, interview, and secondary material. He moves deftly between, on the one hand, socio-historical-political concerns and events of the civil rights movement, and, on the other, specific developments within the music industry that produced rhythm and blues, soul, and funk, often bridging the two areas by viewing the music as a consumer product and its fans as consumers. While he is interested in the effects of the music on white consumers, the bulk of his narrative delineates the music's effects on black consumers. Thus, he focuses on the operations of black-oriented radio stations and record labels; and on the careers of the black artists who performed the music, especially the entrepreneurial aspects of their careers and their participation in the civil rights movement.

One particular strength of the book is Ward's close attention to the role black-oriented radio stations played in numerous black communities across the United States. He describes in great detail the contributions of black disc jockeys in promoting the emerging genres (as the stations themselves adopted those genres as their formats) and in connecting the music to the events of the period. This did not go unnoticed by leaders of the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. addressed disc jockeys and television announcers at an NATRA (National Association of Television and Radio Announcers) convention in 1967, telling them:

you have paved the way for social and political change by creating a powerful, cultural bridge between black and white. School integration is much easier now that they have a common music, a common language, and enjoy the same dances. You introduced youth to that music and created a language of soul and promoted the dances which now sweep across race, class and nation (232).

Ward carefully balances King's enthusiasm with remarks made by white rhythm and blues fans and musicians from the 1960s which expose their persistent racism despite their ardor.

Nonetheless, Ward believes that rhythm and blues played a part in changing the racial attitudes of Americans, if only by reinforcing the beliefs of those in the movement and outside it – black and white – that the music did matter and could have an effect, and that the people who wrote, performed, and produced it were deserving of respect and equality.

The support black label executives and owners and recording stars gave to the movement took a variety of forms: musicians organized and performed benefit concerts (Ward singles out the numerous efforts of Sammy Davis, Jr. and Harry Belafonte), and there was both direct participation in marches, such as the 1963 March on Washington (vocalist Lena Horne and gospel legend Mahalia Jackson), and financial aid to civil rights organizations. One of Ward's main theses, though, is that rhythm and blues and soul artists were largely absent from the civil rights movement until the late 1960s. Ward cites Billy McKinney, an Atlanta Democrat first elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1972, who noted that these artists 'were not leaders, just musicians. They were not role models ... we just didn't expect them to put anything [back] in the community' (335). But if rhythm and blues, soul, and funk stars failed to 'put anything [back] in the community,' politically or socially, Ward would like to argue that rhythm and blues and soul artists did in fact give much to black and white Americans culturally by way of their music.

Ward analyzes rhythm and blues, soul, and funk lyrics to bolster his assertion that the music significantly influenced changes in race relations in post-war American society. His reading of Chuck Berry's 'The Promised Land' (1964), which maps the itinerary of the song's protagonist with eventful stops made by the Freedom Riders, is intriguing (213). Ward nicely gives credit to the often overshadowed Curtis Mayfield: important both for writing songs such as 'Keep on Pushing' (1964), 'People Get Ready' (1965), and 'We're a Winner' (1968) which addressed the issues the movement raised, and for his entrepreneurial success with his Independent label, Curtom (422). Ward's encyclopedic familiarity with rhythm and blues, soul, and funk singles and LP cuts enables him to bring to the fore artists such as Joe Tex, whose work is not typically associated with social commentary but who indeed cut tracks such as 'Love You Save (May Be Your Own)' (1966), whose litany of abuse suffered foreshadowed the social commentary which would not be commonplace until the end of the decade. To make his case that rhythm and blues, soul, and funk lyrics were expressive of beliefs, attitudes, and values widespread in black communities, Ward draws on an article written in 1966 by Rolland Snellings which 'proclaimed Rhythm and Blues a potent weapon in the black freedom struggle' (289). Ward notes that Snellings and other commentators:

were absolutely right to claim that the hopes and dreams, fears and frustrations, of ordinary blacks were expressed and embodied in the various forms of Rhythm and Blues. Black popular music and dance reflected, encoded, and, through radio, records, dances and tours, helped to nationalize the new black pride and consciousness which was inextricably linked, cause and effect, to the emergence of a viable mass campaign for black civil and voting rights (290).

But Ward is at pains to emphasize that not only lyrics with 'social' or 'political' lyrics had an important effect on attitudes during the years of the movement.

What, finally, is one to make of the concurrent emergence and success of the civil rights movement and the popularity of rhythm and blues, soul, and funk music in post-war America? *Just My Soul Responding* documents how key players in the socio-political and popular cultural spheres influenced one another, significantly.

Jody W. Pennington

University of Aarhus