

## Book Reviews

### Informing the Constitution Debate

*Liberty & Community: Canadian Federalism and the Failure of the Constitution.* By Robert C. Vipond. Albany: State U of New York P, 1991. Pp. x, 249. Paper, \$14.95.

Interest in the constitution has rarely been greater in Canada than it is today. Robert Vipond's book is clearly intended to help satisfy and to take advantage of this interest. Unfortunately, it is unlikely to do either.

First of all, it is not a book; it is a doctoral dissertation masquerading as a book. If Vipond is aware of the differences between the two (as identified in the splendid little volume on the subject edited by Ian Montagnes) he gives no evidence of it. His dense and endnote-laden prose makes few, if any, concessions to readers who don't specialize in constitutional history. It is greatly to be doubted that any politicians will try to work their way through his pages for whatever insights may be gleaned from them.

Secondly, the title is misleading. The book examines the constitutional struggle between Ottawa and Queen's Park between 1867 and 1900. And although Vipond has a few things to say about current affairs, his suggestion that an analysis of the late nineteenth-century autonomist view can shed light on the debate today is tentatively stated and of dubious validity.

Thirdly, the author leaves out things that are necessary to put the federal-provincial debate in context. He describes the ideas of Ontario's autonomist thinkers almost as if they existed in a vacuum. How else can

one explain the failure to mention the very nasty and protracted quarrel between the governments of Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald and Premier Alexander Mowat over the boundary between Ontario and Manitoba, and of the business and economic realities that gave this quarrel its point? Where, indeed, are the businessmen whose views and competing interests played such a significant part in the struggle between Ottawa and the provinces?

Fourthly, the author does not always seem to be in full command of his subject. He states that the British Foreign Office intervened in Canadian politics (50); it was the Colonial Office that supervised Canadian affairs in the late nineteenth century. He writes: "When the Manitoba government acted in 1890 to dismantle the separate school system in the province, the Laurier government professed its dismay, but it refused to enact 'remedial' legislation to force Manitoba's hand" (96). Laurier was not in office until 1896. (To do Vipond justice, he makes clear elsewhere that he is aware of this fact, but that makes the sentence all the more peculiar.) Vipond discusses Laurier's choice of "sunny ways" in the Laurier-Greenway compromise settlement of 1897 without also mentioning that the provincial government nullified it within twenty years, not an irrelevant fact.

Vipond states that the Ontario autonomists' ". . . vision of federalism was as powerful as it was because it drew upon the heavy symbolism associated in late nineteenth-century English Canada with the value of responsible democratic government, imperialism and the rule of law" (151-52). A more realistic view would surely be that their vision was powerful because it was that of men in political charge of Canada's richest, most populous province. A similar vision enunciated by Nova Scotians or British Columbians would have been much less powerful. Finally, there is indeed a tension between liberty and community in Canada, but to associate the one primarily with the federal government and the other primarily with the provincial governments, particularly Ontario, seems too simple, even contrived.

On the positive side: Vipond does give a better account of the autonomist arguments than is available elsewhere, more particularly of the ideas of David Mills, a lawyer, newspaper editor and parliamentarian from southwestern Ontario who served for several years as Laurier's Minister of Justice. Vipond shows that, in spite of many internal contradictions and incoherences, there was a common thrust to the efforts

of the Ontario Reformers, who were all but coterminous with the provincialist camp. That thrust was to reduce the power of a strong central government dominated by Macdonald and his supporters from Quebec.

Vipond shows that the desire of the Reformers in 1864-67 was to free themselves from what they liked to call "French domination." When it appeared that the Confederation settlement had not accomplished this goal, that the new federal government, dominated by Macdonald, was frustrating the wishes and hopes of the majority of Ontarian voters, much as the government of the Union had before 1864, Reformers angrily turned on Ottawa. The localism that was part of Reform sentiment asserted itself with a vengeance. It is not surprising that the arguments that emerged were often incoherent: rage is not an emotion notably productive of clear thought.

The centralizing constitution of 1867 failed not because it was a mistake the Reformers initially agreed to and later repented of but because the Macdonald government deeply offended the leaders of Canada's strongest province. If the Reformers/Liberals had controlled Ottawa for most of the early years, those leaders might well have been satisfied with centralization. But they might also have been tempted to turn Canada into a larger Ontario. This would have been unacceptable to Quebec. All of which raises a question: was any constitutional settlement possible that could, in the long run, have satisfied the leaders of both Ontario and Quebec?

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***A Meech Lake Post-Mortem: Is Quebec Sovereignty Inevitable? By Pierre Fournier. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991. Pp. xi, 154.***

In this time of constitutional upheaval, Quebec political scientist Pierre Fournier provides us with a crucial insight into nationalist sentiments in Quebec. Fournier originally wrote the book in French to persuade his fellow Québécois that the reasons for Meech Lake's failure leave little option but sovereignty if Quebec is ever to achieve its aspirations. His

arguments are at once enlightening and depressing for Canadians outside Quebec.

Fournier devotes the first half of his book to a summary of the successive failures of "English Canada" to deliver on its promises to accommodate Quebec's needs. The first four chapters are essential reading for any Canadian who doubts the moral obligation we have to try to reach an agreement with Quebec. Fournier reminds us that the campaign against sovereignty association during the 1980 referendum was based on promises for a renewed federalism. Instead, the next round of constitutional negotiations led to Quebec's isolation and the imposition by the rest of Canada of limits on the powers of the Quebec legislature, under the 1982 Constitution Act. While Fournier recounts with pleasure the good will of politicians across this country that culminated in the signing of the Meech Lake agreement in 1987, it is the unravelling of this agreement that he understandably emphasizes. But it is in these discussions, that Fournier expresses oversimplifications about "English Canadians" that are often perpetuated in the Quebec media; while he discusses differences across Canada, the significance of those differences seem to be minimized.

The book becomes more discouraging as Fournier tackles the thorny questions of Quebec's language policies and economic development. A lack of interest in the federal government's official bilingualism programs shines through, except in illustrating the failure of federal policies to prevent the assimilation of francophones in other provinces. This continues in Fournier's failure to delve into the dislike of Quebec's own language laws that federal bilingualism has generated elsewhere. These weaknesses are important since Fournier gives such a strong argument for the need to maintain Quebec's language regime. Fournier personally would like to see the day when "crutches" like language laws are not needed, but it is clear that he sees their necessity for the present. He concludes that only Quebec's sovereignty will bring non-francophones to accept their minority position and allow francophones to feel unthreatened. Fournier's central messages about the Quebec economy are that the federal government and system have done little if anything to increase economic development in Quebec, and that only a sovereign Quebec government can properly direct an economy that has a regrettably large number of non-Quebec enterprises.

In his final chapter, Fournier deals with some of the deep divisions within Quebec as he discusses several myths about sovereignty. Here he indicates that powerful political figures and business interests are not sovereigntist at heart, but he remains optimistic about the prospects of Quebec gaining a new independent position within a North American customs union.

One must be aware that a number of the statements Fournier makes to support his argument are contentious at best, and sometimes quite misleading. For example, he talks about Saskatchewan and Alberta having repealed in 1988 francophone language rights that had been enjoyed for 75 years (102); Fournier deftly avoids mentioning that these measures had been dormant for much of this century before the Supreme Court ruled on their technical validity in the 1988 *Mercure* decision. His contention that the federal government has not only failed to develop Quebec industry, but may have done so to protect Ontario from competition, will not sit well with many readers (116). Another concern is Fournier's assertion that the federal government raised \$1.8 billion more than it spent in Quebec in 1987 (115); this is at variance with other studies that show that Quebec is the net beneficiary.

While much of what Fournier argues in this book has been said before by other nationalists, it remains compelling because of the saliency of the topic. It is a cogent book that provides Canadians outside Quebec with a powerful image of the perceptions and misperceptions held by many Québécois.

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***American Hegemony and World Oil: The Industry, the State System and the World Economy.* By Simon Bromley. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press; University Park, PA: Penn State P, 1991. Pp. viii, 316. \$39.50.**

Consider the treatment of monopoly in modern neoclassical economics. The monopolist is the sole seller of a product for which there are no close substitutes. It attempts to achieve a supernormal profit by causing an artificial scarcity of the monopolized product.

A cartel is treated in a similar fashion: a group of sellers orchestrates its actions so as to achieve the same profits a monopoly would. However, each member of the cartel knows that additional amounts can be sold if a discount from the monopoly price is offered. If individual members act on the incentive to increase sales by undercutting price, the cartel will collapse.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) often appears in neoclassical discussions as an example of a cartel that was, for a time, highly successful. It achieved massive increases in the price of oil both in 1973-74 and in 1980. By the mid 1980s OPEC's effectiveness had fallen victim to the usual forces that operate against cartels, but a huge shift of income and wealth had been achieved. Macroeconomic analyses treat these price increases as exogenous shocks to national economies and argue that they were at least partially responsible for the stagflation of the early 1980s.

Bromley argues that while this analysis does contain some insights, it is both deficient and misleading. It is deficient because it makes no account of oil as a strategic tool in America's projection of its hegemony throughout the world. It is misleading because at most, these price increases precipitated a crisis that stems from the nature of capitalism and that was bound to happen anyway. Furthermore, argues Bromley, the pricing of oil is not exogenous. The events of 1973-74 and 1979-80 are best understood within the context of actions by the United States to control the international supply of oil. These actions include the support of client states and American oil companies and date back several decades. Bromley builds his case by constructing an interdisciplinary synthesis of literature concerned with a state's exercise of power, the history of oil and Marxian accounts of modern capitalism.

Oil may be strategic, but hegemony includes military and economic predominance. The share of the world's oil, economic activity, and

military spending controlled by the United States has declined in recent decades. This would seem to indicate that American hegemony has eroded but, according to Bromley, this impression is false. While quantifiable measures of its military and economic preponderance indicate decline, America's ability to maintain or improve its privileged position in a variety of the world's institutions means only that the form of its hegemony has changed. Its strength is undiminished.

Consider a few examples. The American dollar is still the predominant medium of international trade. American oil companies continue to control most of the petroleum outside the former communist parts of the world. The American economy is so large that access to it is important to the economic success of other countries. American banks and financial companies exert global influence. The United States has been able to maintain a number of client states throughout the world, and it exercises tutelage over Western Europe and Japan. These practices have magnified American military and economic power. Furthermore, similar attempts by the Soviet Union produced the opposite effect, draining the Soviet bloc. Because of this and internal problems, the Soviet Union could no longer check American hegemony. The collapse of the U.S.S.R.—after Bromley's book had been published—greatly reinforces this argument.

Because modern economies depend on petroleum, the international supply of oil remains strategic to American hegemony. Therefore, argues Bromley, any event that threatens American control of oil produces a response, and he links a number of political, diplomatic, economic and military actions to this motive. Completed after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait but before the outcome of the war against Iraq was known, Bromley's framework is consistent with America's actions in this war. The United States had, after all, regarded Iraq as a useful counterweight to the Iranian revolution, which had cost the U.S. an important Middle Eastern client and precipitated large increases in the price of oil. Furthermore, while Western Europe and Japan are far more dependent on Middle Eastern oil than is the United States, the military force arrayed against Iraq was primarily American. Saddam Hussein's actions were, however, a threat to America's use of petroleum as a strategic element in its practice of hegemony. His actions could not be countenanced.

Bromley's synthesis of a large and very wide ranging literature is masterful. He provides an important and original contribution by analyzing power as a political and economic motive. The actions of large,

transnational firms are intertwined in his framework with the actions of hegemonic governments to the extent that it is difficult to distinguish between the two. This can be contrasted with the neoclassical theory of the firm, where maximization of wealth is the motive. Neoclassical economics does not offer a theory of the state.

There are, however, some rough edges. Many will not be convinced by arguments that play down the importance of high oil prices to the stagflation of the early 1980s. They will muster standard economics and econometrics in their favor. Some will question Bromley's arguments on important pricing strategies. He notes, for example, that in western Europe during the postwar period the price of residual fuel oil was held far below the price of gasoline. This, he argues, was done to wean Europe from coal and make it dependent on Middle Eastern oil controlled by the U.S. Two questions are left unexamined: first, is it possible to adjust the refining process so that no residual fuel oil is produced? Second, if fuel oil is indeed a residual of the refining process, what evidence is there that higher prices could have been obtained for it? Finally, some may prefer interpretations that allow greater latitude for human error and for interests to converge and use the political process to obtain access to the pork barrel. All of this notwithstanding, Bromley's analysis of power as a motivating force remains intact and commands attention.

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***Maritime Capital: The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914.*** By Eric Sager with Gerald E. Panting. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1990. Pp. xviii, 289. \$39.95.

The rise and fall of the golden age of wooden ships and iron men has long occupied a central place in the historical image of Atlantic Canada. Many years ago the late S. A. Saunders, in *The Economic Welfare of the Maritime Provinces* (1932), called on historians to take the romance out of the story and reveal the hard economic facts. Until recently, however, surprisingly little historical scholarship had been devoted to the subject. The principal reason for the change has been the remarkable work



undertaken by the Maritime History Group at Memorial University over the past 15 years. The huge collection of shipping documents assembled at Memorial has been subjected to extensive computer analysis and has allowed researchers to produce exceptionally well-informed conclusions about the nature of the industry. In 1989 Eric Sager published *Seafaring Labour*, a fine study of the age of sail as seen through the experience of the workforce in the industry. Now in *Maritime Capital* he and Gerald Panting have produced a penetrating and highly readable economic history of the region's most important nineteenth-century industry.

The origins of the industry are firmly located in the geographic and political assumptions of British imperial policy in the early nineteenth century; shipbuilding was essentially a British manufacturing industry transplanted across the Atlantic, and the rise of a domestic merchant marine in British North America represented the successful flowering of commercial capitalism on the colonial frontier. Ownership of the fleet was widely dispersed but also became highly concentrated; in Saint John, for instance, in the century from 1820 to 1914 there were more than 6,200 individual shareholders investing in vessels, but a much smaller group of 368 major owners accounted for almost three quarters of the total tonnage and it was these maritime merchants (and most shipowners were indeed merchants) who dominated the industry. Under their aggressive leadership the industry prospered, successfully responding to the challenges of international commerce in the second half of the century: vessels increased in size and were better designed, they completed more voyages and with smaller crews, the turnarounds were faster, the deckloads larger, the wages lower. The rates of return were highly satisfactory: in 1873, Sager and Panting estimate that most vessels were earning annual returns of more than 20 per cent, returns much superior to investments in railway construction, for instance. In short the industry offers a model of successful entrepreneurship in the age of merchant capital.

But why did it ultimately collapse? Sager and Panting explicitly reject the "catastrophic" interpretation based on the change in technology from wood and wind to iron and steam. After all, surely these successful businessmen could have built and operated such vessels themselves. Instead Sager and Panting argue for a less tragic and more rational explanation: that the decline of the industry was a natural outcome of the structures which had brought the industry its original successes. Above

all else, the shipowners were merchants. Accustomed to earning their profits from the circulation of commodities, they were suspicious of protective trade barriers and uneasy with other forms of state intervention needed to develop a twentieth-century shipbuilding industry. They operated family-based firms and had relatively few links with the new corporations setting the pace for economic development at the turn of the century. When revenues from ocean shipping declined, they found new opportunities to invest in railways and utilities but played only a small part in the industrialization of the region. Efforts to establish steel shipbuilding at Halifax received mixed support from local capital and little at all from the Canadian state. Given these signals it is hardly surprising to find that Canada developed no national policy for ocean transport or maritime development equivalent to that of railway construction and western expansion. In short, the very success of shipping and shipbuilding in the nineteenth century had contributed to a "slow transition to industrial capitalism" in Atlantic Canada and this left the region as a whole badly prepared for the transition to an industrial economy and a national state. The authors point out that whatever the larger social implications of the decline of the regional economy, the predominant factor was quite mundane: "The age of sail came to an end in a large number of relatively minor decisions by merchant investors." In a fascinating series of comparative observations in their final chapters Sager and Panting argue that in the context of regional society in the late nineteenth century the collapse of shipbuilding was unavoidable and any alternative highly unlikely. In the end the region has had to live with the ambiguous legacies of capitalist development. In this kind of business history there is no reassurance that the region can depend for its economic success on the guidance of its entrepreneurs. In a new age of restructuring at the end of the twentieth century the answers are not hopeful ones.

For some years now it has been clear that readers of history in Atlantic Canada have been reaping the harvest of a new golden age in the writing of regional history. *Maritime Capital* provides an excellent measure of the achievements in the field and of the general interest of the conclusions. In a text of little more than 200 pages the authors address major questions covering more than a century of development and raise some of the classic issues concerning economic development in this region. It must also be added that this is a superbly written book, a fine

example of polished and forceful writing which does not pander to the specialist or condescend to the general reader. The age of sail will no doubt continue to attract the public eye and for this reason the publishers should be encouraged to bring out an edition which will be more accessible to the general public. A reading public that can still appreciate Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad need not be intimidated by *Maritime Capital* and will find much to appreciate here.

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***Samuel Johnson in the Medical World: The Doctor and the Patient.* By John Wiltshire. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Pp. x, 293. \$39.50.**

One of the many interesting observations in this study of Dr. Samuel Johnson's incursions into the world of medicine, both as a lifelong patient and as a would-be physician, is that Boswell, his best-known biographer, tended to play down his subject's ailments. The reason, argues John Wiltshire, is that Boswell wanted to believe in Johnson's physical and psychological invincibility, his unwavering manliness, and his rock-like consistency in an ever-shifting universe. Associating this desire with Boswell's search for a father figure to replace the dour, unbending and witheringly sarcastic Lord Auchinleck, Wiltshire goes on to suggest that the biographer became, in effect, his subject's own patient.

There is substance to this argument. Boswell, an inveterate hypochondriac, who faithfully recorded his symptoms almost every day in his journals, and even wrote a series of articles on the subject, often vexed and irritated Johnson with his bombardment of pleas to melancholia, "the English Malady," as Dr. George Cheyne had called it in a popular book with that title, and both incessantly sought remedies, or at least palliatives, for it.

Johnson no doubt had more reason than his biographer for concern over his health. Whereas Boswell's ailments were largely self-inflicted, through excessive drinking and habitual whoring, Johnson, who led an exemplary life, had been plagued from birth with a variety of ills, including scrofula (lymphatic tuberculosis, believed to have been contracted from his wet nurse), myopia, deafness, and a range of nervous

disorders involving uncontrollable tics, grimaces, mutterings, and bodily twitchings. (One of these conditions has been expertly identified by Dalhousie's Dean of Medicine, Dr. T. J. Murray, as Tourette's Syndrome, discussed on pp. 29-32 of this book). In a sense, then, Johnson was the eighteenth-century's most distinguished and most charted patient, and it is not surprising that he also became its most outstanding amateur physician, well able to diagnose and prescribe, and well known to the professional medical community, some of whose most eminent members, like Richard Brocklesby and William Heberden, were close friends of his.

Wiltshire's book explores at length Johnson's extraordinary medical history, as well as his relationships, at times adversarial and stormy, with these physician friends and acquaintances, including some "irregulars" like Robert James, inventor of the famous cure-all Fever Powders, and Robert Levet, a seedy apothecary who lodged with Johnson for many years and whose selfless ministrations to the London poor were movingly described in an elegy Johnson wrote shortly after Levet's death, in his eighties, in 1782.

Though the author of *Samuel Johnson in the Medical World* is a professor of English (at La Trobe University in Australia), his knowledge of eighteenth-century medicine is remarkably extensive, indeed in many ways matching Johnson's own. It is nicely complemented, however, by an equal, if less surprising, flair for critical analysis, as shown in his chapter on "Medicine as Metaphor" commenting on Johnson's habitual use of medical terms in purely literary contexts and in his conversation.

At the end of his life, when grievously tormented by cardiac asthma and a host of other problems, Johnson appealed to Dr. Brocklesby with that agonized question from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*,

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseas'd?

which the scholarly Brocklesby answered, from the same great source,

therein the patient  
Must minister to himself.

With this response Johnson is reported to have been satisfied. Yet, as Wiltshire's study handsomely attests, the advice from that literary-minded doctor to that medically-minded patient was hardly needed.

***The Muses of Resistance: Labouring-Class Women's Poetry in Britain, 1739-1796.* By Donna Landry. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Pp. ix, 325. \$39.50.**

The latest fad in cultural studies is to challenge what some people see as the dogmatic power or conformity of the "politically correct" approach. "Politically correct" generally seems to refer to the whole range of Marxist readings, as well as indictments of colonial imperialism, which have become standard fare in humanist research in the 1970s and 1980s. In other words, the first trend in the 1990s is to question previous trends, to have us recognize that *academe* has subtly exercised an authority, of sorts, over the kind of scholarship that we have been producing. Thesis supervisors, journal editors, and manuscript readers have reflected this bias towards the "politically correct"; doubters need only glance at the MLA Bibliography for the last few years to see the evidence. Although many feminist readings and studies of women writers lean towards Marxist interpretation, it does not seem to be the case that these would necessarily fall into the "politically correct" category. Donna Landry's *The Muses of Resistance: Labouring-Class Women's Poetry in Britain, 1739-1796*, however, certainly does. It is very "politically correct," but readers should not allow the current trend to interfere with how they assess the quality of Landry's work, which is also first-rate.

Drawing on the work of Pierre Macherey (*A Theory of Literary Production*) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (*In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*), Landry begins her study by identifying the working-class portraits in Gay and Goldsmith as representative of only one tradition of the common laborer in poetry. Her task is to rediscover a number of female laborer poets from the period beginning with the publication of Mary Collier's "The Woman's Labour" (1739) and concluding with Ann Yearsley's "The Rural Lyre" (1796). All the poets selected for analysis are female and deemed to be "working class in that they were employed in laboring occupations, and . . . were the daughters of laboring families" (9).

Throughout *The Muses of Resistance* Landry is explicitly conscious of her own politicization of her subject; she draws a parallel between eighteenth-century patronage, a topic that dominates her examination of the Yearsley-More relationship, and the selectivity of her own project:

A materialist feminist project must remain vigilant against replicating both the exploitative and the sentimental tendencies of eighteenth-century "discovery" and patronage. To fail to do so would be to court what Dominick LaCapra describes as "the vicious paradox by which a certain class of scholars establish their own disciplinary hegemony through a vicarious appeal to the oppressed of the past." (17)

Later Landry warns her readers against the tokenization of these poets by including them in the literary canon only as exceptions that prove the rule "of unchanging class hierarchies" (22). Readers may agree that "we should be at least as bold, in the context of our own historical moment, as many of these poets were in theirs," but Landry offers no specific advice on what an instructor of an eighteenth-century poetry class can do to avoid "tokenization" (22).

Be bold but how exactly? Should we dump Dryden and Pope completely, or try to give equal time to the newly recovered and the established? Surely part of the process of recovery must be to confront the "tokenization" question squarely. Before students can come to their own conclusions on this matter they must know something about Dryden and Pope. They at least deserve to know why there are shelves of scholarship on the latter two while one remains hard pressed to find an Elizabeth Hands poem (however, this situation is now, thankfully, changing). Even a "cold war" attitude to male dominated literary history is better than trying to pretend that those Dryden and Pope shelves don't exist. Although the weighty theoretical emphasis of her study does not allow Landry to stoop to these pragmatic pedagogical planes, one wonders if there might not have been more for the generalist in *The Muses of Resistance* had she done so.

Landry does give us a series of penetrating analyses of poems by Mary Collier (whose "The Woman's Labour" suggests that the only difference between working men and women was that, not surprisingly, the latter still had to shoulder the burden of the domestic chores), Mary Leapor ("Crumble Hall"), Ann Yearsley, Elizabeth Hands, Janet Little, and Phillis Wheatley. Readers should be especially pleased about Landry's discussion of the latter two poets—Little was a Scottish milkmaid and Wheatley a negro slave—since they "remain more radically excluded from the mainstream than their English counterparts" (217). Both Little and Wheatley employ a "subversive mimicry" in their poetry

to question the political power of the dominant culture (237, 242). Throughout Landry is acutely aware of the marketplace interest/value of these poets as eighteenth-century literary curiosities.

On the subject of patronage, Landry makes excellent use of Barthes's concept of inoculation:

There is a conservative function to the patronage by elites of members of the poor, as examples of extraordinary genius. One might speak of this function as a version of Barthes's "inoculation," in which a small dose of ideological contradiction, in the guise of some localized injustice or form of "unpleasantness" that arouses indignation, is injected into the social body, neutralizing the threat of an epidemic of social change. (70)

Chapter 4, probably the best in the book, deals extensively with Hannah More's patronage of Yearsley. Here Landry argues that "the struggle between More and Yearsley indicates the degree to which Yearsley attempted to control the context of her own production within middle-class culture, and in so doing, endorsed resistance and not assimilation" (152). Although Mary Waldron has questioned Landry's "working class" characterization of Yearsley (most recently at a Women's Studies session at the International Congress of the Enlightenment, which was held fittingly enough in Yearsley's home town of Bristol), scholars of eighteenth-century poetry will now feel obliged to become thoroughly acquainted with *The Muses of Resistance*, which is sure to remain a standard reference work in the field for some time to come. On the "The Rural Lyre," Landry writes "far from being either a seamlessly Jacobin or proto-Owenite manifesto, [the poem] is fraught with contradictory tendencies to which we would do well to attend" (172).

It is essential for scholars to be aware of contemporary critical contexts, but they should not allow judgment or insight to succumb to the trendy. Hopefully, this is where considerations of what is "politically correct" will ultimately lead. Even if the challenge to "politically correct" approaches does not degenerate into Marxist bashing, there will certainly be a countermovement against what one might see as a retrenchment of conservative and repressive ideologies. But all this is besides the point of Landry's work. Some excellent studies will create fads, some will buck them, but all good scholarship will surely transcend the trendy. *The Muses of Resistance* is a book that all eighteenth-century scholars should read—"politically correct" or not.

***Postmodernism, Feminism, and Cultural Politics: Redrawing Educational Boundaries.*** Edited by Henry A. Giroux. Albany: State U of New York P, 1991. Pp. x, 308. \$16.95.

A new publication by Henry Giroux is an occasion for both public school and adult educators to consider new developments in critical thinking. In this work, Giroux has set himself an extraordinarily ambitious, perhaps impossible, project: to theoretically pave the way for an altered relationship between schooling and democracy, a relationship that will encapsulate the best features of modernism, postmodernism and feminism. He maintains that the democratic ideal at the centre of the modern tradition can accommodate the politics of difference that has emerged from both feminism and postmodernism. Excising what he typifies as the aesthetic of postmodernism and the separatist stance of feminism, Giroux ultimately envisions critically educated citizens working through dialogic encounter, using "a shared discourse of democratic public life" (6).

Giroux's introduction and final chapter make up a third of the book. Here, he outlines the way in which modern, postmodern and postmodern feminist discourse contributes to rethinking the boundaries of educational discourse (Introduction) and the way in which modern, postmodern and Black feminist discourse provides the basis for a border pedagogy by redefining the boundaries of race and ethnicity (ch. 8). Of the other seven chapters in the book, six are reprints from a 1988 edition of the Boston University *Journal of Education*, 170 (3), and one, by Sharon Welch, is new. These essays have been chosen, Giroux explains, because, in various ways, they

develop a language that both implicitly and explicitly raises questions as to how educators might contribute to an identity politics that is situated in democratic relations, and how analyses can be developed that enable students, teachers, and others to become self-reflective actors in the attempt to transform themselves and the conditions of their social existence. More specifically, this book demonstrates how postmodern and feminist theories can contribute to a critical pedagogy of race and ethnicity, how the body is schooled and engendered, how a politics of representation can be used to deconstruct specific subject positions, and how difference is central to a politics and pedagogy of ethics and solidarity. (58-59)



Douglas Kellner contributes "Reading images critically: Towards a postmodern pedagogy" in which he suggests that the development of critical media literacy will "empower individuals to become more autonomous agents, able to emancipate themselves from contemporary forms of domination and able to become more active citizens, eager and competent to engage in processes of social transformation" (63). Linda Brodkey and Michele Fine, in "Presence of mind in the absence of body," analyze responses to a sexual harassment questionnaire which suggest that women faculty, staff and students believe they must disembody themselves in order to pursue their goals within the university. They call for feminist activism within such institutions in order "to chronicle the varied ways of identifying, analyzing, interrupting, and, under exceptionally perverse circumstances, disrupting gender-based power asymmetries in the academy" (117).

Leslie Gotfrit, in "Women dancing back: disruption and the politics of pleasure," describes her experience of going dancing with a group of women and investigates "women's bodies as a conflicting terrain of oppression and potential empowerment, liability and pleasure" (175). Philip R. D. Corrigan, in "The making of the boy: Meditations on what grammar school did with, to, and for my body," suggests that "pedagogy works on the mind and emotions, on the unconscious, and, yes, on the soul, the spirit, through the work done on, to, by, with, and from the body. Of all the regulated expressive forms, the most central is that of the bodily, and a particular series of embodiments" (211).

Mariamne Whatley, "Raging hormones and powerful cars: The construction of men's sexuality in school sex education and popular adolescent films," explains her project of focussing on men rather than women: "given the two manifestations of a 'men's movement'—anti-woman or antisexist—my decision to bring a feminist perspective to issues of masculinity serves two purposes: [to] know the enemy . . . and to return support to those who identify as allies" (121).

Peter L. McLaren, in "Schooling the postmodern body: Critical pedagogy and the politics of enfleshment," tries to work through his ambivalence toward postmodernity and feminism to construct a critical pedagogy that incorporates a theory of difference within the political project of solidarity. In a typical fragment, using the language of "social-critical utopian praxis," he writes

We need to provide the marginalized and immiserated with power over the direction of their desiring. The project of critical pedagogy is positioned irreverently against a pedantic cult of singularity in which moral authority and theoretical assurance are arrived at unproblematically without regard to the repressed narratives and suffering of the historically disenfranchised. (169-70)

His need for a totalizing vision, however, his need to overcome what he sees as "divisiveness" leads to a position that is antithetical to many postmodernisms and feminisms. He believes, in the end that "we" must do for "them" what those who see themselves as privileged in education and insight have done before: both define the problem and supply the answer. Thus his "subversive praxis" and "concrete utopia" (173) are embedded in a language and vision that is ultimately inaccessible to the vast majority of those who resist oppression, of those who work in solidarity with the oppressed.

Sharon Welch, in "An ethic of solidarity and difference" perhaps more clearly relates to Giroux's project of conceptualizing a politics of difference within a framework of public democratic ideals. She develops a theoretical framework that rejects shared reason and a common human essence as the foundation for ethical judgments. Instead, she posits a communicative ethic that, unlike that formulated by Habermas, "presupposes [a] prior material interaction—either political conflict or coalition or joint involvement in life—sustaining work" (87). Thus, as she usefully demonstrates, when people with privilege want to enter into discussion with those they have excluded in the past, it is not possible to simply move into a position of dialogue. She suggests there must be proof that this is not yet another arrogant appropriation or exploitation. There must be evidence that solidarity will exist even when it is not possible to reach consensus on the process or the final goals?

I have these principles in mind as I review Giroux's nine principles of a reconstructed critical pedagogy and seven basic elements of an anti-racist border pedagogy. I recognize that many of my questions about the ways in which these conceptualizations are going to be embodied are also questions raised throughout Welch's article. For example, I wonder why those who embody difference will agree to articulate this difference to categories Giroux believes are "central to public life: democracy, citizenship, public spheres" (48). As a feminist, I have already cringed at

Giroux's stereotypical description of generic feminism as both separatist and guilty of collapsing the political into the personal. I have felt dismay when the decontextualized words of white feminists are set up to be knocked down by the decontextualized words of Black feminists. I have wondered when, as Giroux claims, postmodern feminists gave primacy to the political, as if feminists necessarily understand the personal and the political as hierarchical rather than interdependent. Finally, I question how the central concerns of this reconstructed pedagogy came to be so emphatically and exclusively located in the public sphere and why feminists or postmodernists would agree to this configuration when their understanding of the public and private, personal and political would seem to configure the inclusion of one within the other.

At what point have we evidence here of genuine conversation between the modernist, the postmodernist and the feminist? Giroux has, to use his metaphor, "mined" and "appropriated" elements of these discourses (17). Yet he has done so without problematizing his own subject location in relation to them. Although he suggests that "what border pedagogy makes undeniable is the relational nature of one's own politics and personal investment" (254), at no point has he outlined that relation in his own work. Many readers may be left wondering about his material engagement with those "other" than himself "in the service of [his] radical project of democratic struggle" (17). While none of the practice is evident in the theory, it does not preclude its existence. Yet, surely this pedagogical and political project must be both self conscious and clearly inclusive, rather than interpretive, if newly drawn boundaries are not to lie so closely to the old that the difference is only in the telling.

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***In The Shadow's Light.* By Yves Bonnefoy. Translated by John Naughton. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991. Pp. ix, 179. \$24.95. Paper, \$12.95.**

Yves Bonnefoy's 1987 collection of poetry, *Ce Qui Fut Sans Lumière*, awarded the Prix Goncourt for poetry that year, has been thoughtfully and revealingly translated into English by John Naughton, author of perhaps

the best single study of Bonnefoy's work to date, *The Poetics Of Yves Bonnefoy* (U of Chicago P, 1984). Naughton's translation respects the very rigorous organization and intentions of Bonnefoy's collection and the deliberate majesty of the original voice, while attaining a logic, a coherence, and a music of its own. Indeed, for the bilingual reader, Naughton's translation will serve to illuminate the French texts (which are included on facing pages in this edition).

"I am haunted by this memory, that the wind / All at once is swirling over the closed-up house." The return to the closed-up house indicated in the first verses of the collection implies a revision, a seeing-again of the key figures of Bonnefoy's poetic universe considered in earlier works, seeking, as the title of the volume implies, to cast light on aspects of the poetic *démarche* hitherto neglected, underemphasized, or unexplored. *In The Shadow's Light* is a reconsideration of what is present but tacit, of what is other, yet curiously central to poet and poem, of what is shadowed but necessarily luminous.

We are plunged into a poetry that is haunted by the possibility of dwelling on the earth. As Bonnefoy puts it himself in the fascinating 1989 interview with John Naughton that is included in this edition: "We want to be in the world don't we? We want to simplify desire so that it might be as universal, as transparent, as the thirst that fresh water satisfies." The simplification of desire is necessary because what is simple, one, absolutely immanent. The ongoing preoccupation with "les choses du simple," the things of the simple, with their accessibility and adequacy, is as urgent here as in anything the poet has written. Poetry, in Bonnefoy's vision, allows humanity contact with this simplicity, with Presence, by briefly short-circuiting the conceptual relations of language in favor of something more intuitive, something fleeting but essential. "For a moment, the usual reading of the world, that network of figures which keeps Presence hidden, is neutralized, torn open; we stand before each thing as though before the entire universe, in an absolute that seems to welcome us."

Naughton's lucid translations are the site of just such moments of contact with "ce qui excède le signe", that which exceeds the sign, as Bonnefoy puts it elsewhere. The lovely poem "La Rapidité des Nuages" has been beautifully rendered by Naughton and its first stanza is one instance of the respectful attentiveness of both Naughton and Bonnefoy, an openness on the translator's part which allows the character of the

poetic and existential moment given in the original to be transposed into English:

La Rapidité des nuages

Le lit, la vitre auprès, la vallée, le ciel,  
 La magnifique rapidité de ces nuages.  
 La griffe de la pluie sur la vitre, soudain,  
 Comme si le néant paraphait le monde.

The Swiftness of The Clouds

The bed, the window next to it, the valley, the sky,  
 The glorious swiftness of the clouds.  
 The sudden scratching of rain at the window,  
 As though nothingness were signing the world.

As we may note here, Naughton knows when to be literal and when to avoid it, he respects the directness of the original and respects, too, the possibilities and accidents of translation which allow for "sudden scratching of rain," all of which give his versions a delightful autonomy. He also demonstrates, throughout the translations, an enlightening way with a pronoun which frequently serves to clarify the original. Above all, he listens to the French and captures something resembling "the prosodic quality" of the French texts, precisely the quality which Bonnefoy (himself a great translator of Shakespeare, Yeats, Donne, and others) identifies in the 1989 interview as the most important aspect of the poetic text in its "approach to immediacy."

Though it is eminently a poetry of place, of natural objects, of Presence, of divine possibility lived among the things of the simple, Bonnefoy's poetry is also enriched by his engagement with great works of human culture. As is the case generally for Bonnefoy, visual artists are particularly pertinent. Two poems here explicitly engage paintings. "Psyche before the Castle of Love" addresses itself to a canvas by Claude Lorrain, while "Dedham seen from Langham" is an extended meditation on a painting by John Constable. The reflection on Constable draws together a number of elements of Bonnefoy's own poetic practice; "even when you are dreaming" he says to the landscape painter, "your eyes are open," a formula which echoes his own assessment of the centrality of the dream in this collection: "Dreaming in poetry is to stop dreaming." In the

appended interview Bonnefoy is very clear about the importance of what he calls the "'cultural' aspects of our relation to ourselves." Though part of the "space of existence," they ought to be understood as possessing something that makes of them the "mirror that reflects not so much the image, and not the thing, as the absolute that we look for in the latter."

In this quest for the absolute, poetry, art, indeed any human making must fall short. Bonnefoy has recognized in one of his best-known poems that "Imperfection is the summit." As "lessons in decentering," however, the poems of this collection offer a dialogue between immediacy and inaccessibility, a dialogue made vital and accessible to the English-speaking reader in this fine translation. In this dialogue hope is resurgent, poetry becomes conscious of its possibilities, as the poem "The Word *Brambles*, You Say" indicates:

Brief is the flame that goes out to sea,  
 But when it is quenched against the wave,  
 The smoke is filled with iridescence.  
 —The word *brambles* is like this sinking wood.

And poetry, if we can use this word,  
 Is it not still, there where the star  
 Seemed to beckon, but only toward death,

Knowing how to love this light? To love  
 To open the kernel of absence in words?

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***Black water 2: more tales of the fantastic.* Edited by Alberto Manguel. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1990. Pp. 941. Paper, \$16.95.**

This huge eclectic anthology contains 68 fantastic tales by 68 writers. Included are stories by Canadian writer Rohinton Mistry, English novelist A. S. Byatt, Romanian historian and fiction writer Mircea Eliade, American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald, German novelist and playwright Günter Grass, Irish playwright G. B. Shaw, Nigerian novelist Amos Tutuola, Chinese short story writer from the eighth century Chen

Xuanyou, and Chilean writer Isabel Allende. Each tale is introduced by Alberto Manguel, whose words provide, as one commentator astutely notes, "not so much explanation as provocative counterpoint to each story."

Actually, Manguel's contributions to *Black water 2*—epigrams, foreword, introductions—are as engrossing as the tales themselves. In his foreword, for example, Manguel makes a useful distinction between literature of fantasy and fantastic literature. Fantasy is concerned with worlds which are not our own, such as J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle Earth or Ursula Le Guin's Earthsea. The literature of the fantastic, however, "finds its bearings in our own landscapes, our cities, our living-rooms, our beds," where writers like Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortazar explore the merging of the strange, the supernatural or the spectacular with the mundane.

The "sodden reality [where the fantastic] flourishes" is, according to Manguel, that zone where "the impossible seep[s] into the possible," or, using Wallace Stevens's phrase, where "black water break[s] into reality." Another way of putting this is to say that the natural and the supernatural world exist side-by-side, albeit on different planes of reality. The supernatural world is closed to us much of the time, but, to borrow T. S. Eliot's words, there are places where "the impossible union of spheres of existence is possible"; moreover, it is at such "intersection[s] of the timeless / With time" that the domain of the fantastic is located.

In the realm of the fantastic, any clear-cut distinction between "realistic" and "fantastic" is, says Manguel, not feasible. Such literature does not oppose the natural and supernatural. Rather, the two are "tightly woven" and equally "real." Thus, although we consider the dream world unreal, at that crossroads where supernatural converges with natural, dreams can be all too real.

Manguel, in his introduction to Timothy Findley's "Dreams," hints at what this might mean when he discusses the Ona of Patagonia, who "believed that if a warrior dreamt of a hunt in which his prey escaped him, he would have to return to his dream until he found it, or go hungry." Thus in Findley's story a woman goes into the bathroom one night to find her husband removing pyjamas that are drenched in blood. He asks her to go away. She refuses and seats herself on the toilet lid. She then utters what is the final line of the story, "I'm waiting here . . . until we both wake up."

What is the role of fantastic fiction? Such fiction is sometimes used as a vehicle to comment on human nature or society. Thus Liliana Heker's "Berkeley or Mariana of the Universe" is both a story about her relationship with a sister and a story that, in Manguel's words, "casts a wise light on the tragic absurdity of Argentina that led to the Malvinas War of 1982." And Antonia White's "The Saint" is both about a miracle and about human nature's inability to believe that a miracle might be wrought by plain nun with a "small dour smile" when there is a beautiful, consumptive young nun with an "angelic smile" on the scene.

At other times, the fantastic acts to illuminate life's mysteries, by bridging the gap between the visible world and the invisible world. The natural and the supernatural complement each other, not changing our world, but changing us so that we see our world differently. In Manguel's words, "these weird and wonderful accounts will, by metaphorical association, reveal secret corners of the world [we] live in." Or, as C. S. Lewis put it, the fantastic tale enriches our everyday world: a child "does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods; the reading makes all woods a little enchanted."

Another trademark of the fantastic is that it has not so much to do with ideas and events as with emotion and imagination. This is because the unseen world, as Manguel quoting Virginia Woolf notes, "can only be given its fullest meaning by being cut free from facts." Or, in Ursula Le Guin's words, truth "is a matter of imagination. Facts are about the outside. Truth is about the inside."

"Fantastic" literature, then, replaces scientific laws with its own strange logic, an example of which is provided by I. A. Ireland's "Climax for a Ghost Story," from the first collection. A woman and a man are in a room and she accidentally bangs the door shut. He, seeing no inside latch, panics and cries out that she has locked them both in. The tale ends with the line: "'Both of us, no. Only one of us,' said the girl, as she passed through the door and disappeared."

The essential trait of the fantastic story, however, is its ambiguity with respect to whether what has happened is due to natural or supernatural causes. Joseph Conrad's "The Brute" is one of the most disturbing stories Manguel has collected. It is the tale of ship with a will and a life of its own, "a ravening beast," which manages to kill someone on every voyage. In one particularly dreadful incident, the ship's anchor reaches up "like something alive" and catches a young woman around the waist,



dragging her overboard to her demise. Afterwards the pilot can only mutter, "Killing women, now! Killing women, now!" And the reader is left to wonder: coincidence or conspiracy? Guiseppe Pontiggia has written—and this comment is included as one of Manguel's epigraphs—that "[n]othing is less mysterious than the solution of a mystery. Thus the strong point of any thriller is also its biggest weakness." In *Black water 2*, the mysteries are left unsolved.

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