

Book Reviews

***Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball.* By Colin D. Howell. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995. Pp. xvi, 285. \$50.00. Paper, \$18.95.**

It is a well-established prejudice in the academic community that only certain subjects are worthy of serious study and other subjects, like baseball, are not. For reasons rooted in a past where the life of the mind was clearly separated from the life of the body with the latter being at best frivolous and at worst sinful, serious analysis of sport and recreation has, until recent times, enjoyed little status in the hallowed halls of academe.

This book, which makes a serious attempt to analyse the social significance of baseball in historic New England and Atlantic Canada, is a welcome antidote to the miasma of snobbery about sport which suffuses scholarship. Having stated publicly that this work is the best piece of sport history ever done in Atlantic Canada, I nonetheless remain unconvinced by Howell's central argument:

Gradually detached from its roots in community and neighbourhood experience, the game was relentlessly drawn into the post-industrial consumer-oriented society, where it could be marketed as a commodity in a mass market place. Contemporary baseball has since become an integral component of the 'society of the spectacle', revealing all of the slickness, glitter, and seductive rationality of the modern capitalistic world. (10)

While the quote accurately describes the evolution of modern major-league baseball, to say that the change explains the demise of the sport in the Maritime Provinces assumes much which does not well withstand critical questions and comparisons. For example:

1. How is it that hockey, basketball and soccer, which underwent the same transition at the commercial level, are more popular than ever in the Maritimes?

2. Softball has usurped baseball's role in Maritime communities, a transition which took place for far more mundane reasons than these. Softball was played in street clothes, making it cheaper; required relatively little equipment; took up less space; could be played at a much lower level; and allowed for women participants (women generally being unable to make the long throw in from the outfield which baseball required). Softball also enjoyed a dedicated administration which developed youth teams with the inevitable progression to competitive levels.

Northern Sandlots debunks skilfully the myths surrounding baseball's origins; it explores well baseball's importance in the lives of Blacks, Native people and ethnic sub-groups such as Irish-Catholics. It explores the relationship between sport and theatre, it allows the reader to relive the "glory days" of Maritime baseball in all its nostalgic magic. It examines in detail semi-pro baseball and its failed attempt to make a profit. It treats the gambling ethic of the day and its preponderance in Maritime sport. Howell's youthful baseball days in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley have helped direct this very serious scholar toward a subject of which he is obviously enamored. The reader will learn much about baseball history and sport in society. The anecdotal materials allow all this to occur while the reader is constantly smiling.

Dalhousie University

A. J. "Sandy" Young

***Becoming Canonical in American Poetry.* By Timothy Morris. Urbana and Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1995. Pp. xviii, 173. \$34.95. Paper, \$12.95.**

Timothy Morris's *Becoming Canonical in American Poetry* is an important addition to literary scholarship on two grounds: the narrative it writes of the reception history of major American poets, particularly Elizabeth Bishop; and the useful complexity of its theory of reception. The book is organized around four poets: Walt Whitman, Emily

Dickinson, Marianne Moore, and Bishop. For Morris the central way of defining what is valuable in American literature begins with the reception history of Whitman. Morris argues that Whitman became canonical because his texts were seen as the embodiment of Whitman, of his poetic presence. Morris deliberately defines presence loosely, as "the belief that a work of art conveys the living presence of the artist, and the implied value that a work is better as the artist is more present in it" (xi). This idea of presence—a system which has power because for critics it is so untheorized—shapes how American critics have read Whitman and every poet since: poets are more or less valuable depending on how much their texts can be read as indicators of the poet's presence. Morris argues that critics take on some things they might not want to when they take on this model of poetic value. For example, such a theory tends to read the artist as hero, it tends to monologic readings of texts (or dialogic readings controlled by the mastering presence of the poet), and to stress the primary importance of originality and organicism.

Morris is also good on how critics have contained the work of two major women writers of this century by delimiting their subject matter: for early critics Moore purified the language, and Bishop's *forte* was description. Thus, R. P. Blackmur connects Moore to Dickinson, "as a writer interested both in 'sophistication of surfaces' and in 'the genuine'." For Morris, the consequence "is to canonize the poetry while denying its power to engage the reader; it is left-handed praise of the highest order" (92). However, Morris also argues that this constriction is not always a bad thing. For example, what critics now see as the real Bishop was not available in Bishop's contemporary reception; this absence made it possible for Bishop at that time to be taken seriously, to be continuously present as an important writer, and consequently to be available to us today (123). While arguing this, Morris does some really fine work on Bishop and poetry of the closet. Throughout this study Morris argues that we need to return to the idea of text: not as an attempt to remove history, but to show how text might become part of history: "When we read texts by women as texts (by women) rather than as women themselves, we begin to forge connections that recognize culturally constructed sexual difference while genuinely bridging that difference from both sides." And we need to read texts, even by Whitman, "as texts rather than as embodiments of culture heroes" (xvi).

Becoming Canonical in American Poetry has some problems. For example, Morris could have proposed a much fuller alternative to histories of presence, and at times his theoretical apparatus goes further afield than it needs to, containing even a glance at chaos theory. But it is a pleasure to read a reception history that goes beyond generalities about "horizons of expectations" and demonstrates reception history's usefulness and importance for contemporary criticism.

Dalhousie University

Leonard Diepeveen

***Chrétien. Vol. I. The Will to Win.* By Lawrence Martin. Toronto: Lester, 1995. Pp. xii, 404. \$32.95.**

Some of Jean Chrétien's home-town contemporaries might not have been surprised in February 1995 by the Prime Minister's assault on a mouthy protester. A college buddy of Chrétien and another up-and-coming lawyer in Quebec's Mauricie region, Marcel Chartier differed in politics. At a lawyers' banquet in the early 1960s, he began by abusing one of Chrétien's Liberal heroes and then turned on Chrétien himself. According to Chartier, Chrétien's advancement depended on his doctor-brother, not on talent. In a flurry of punches, Chrétien floored Chartier. The victim's head narrowly missed a glass-topped table.

The matter was hushed up. In *Straight From the Heart*, the best-selling autobiography Ron Graham ghosted for him in 1985, Chrétien said nothing about the Chartier fight, nor about lining up a friend to run for the Tories to split opposition votes in his Shawinigan riding, nor about the appendicitis he faked to escape from his classical college at Joliette. The elaborate fakery led to a real appendectomy, and elaborate efforts by other members of his family to keep the secret from his stern father.

Martin has not followed the Parson Weems tradition of political biography. Canadians may be relieved to learn that a gangly, mildly-misbehaved youth can become prime minister without becoming a saint or a savant. A mediocre student, a school rebel and a sports fanatic, "Tit-Jean" seemed certain to end on the mill floor in Shawinigan. He was saved by a driving ambition, a grasp of such tools of leadership as

loyalty, willpower and guts, and the great good fortune of meeting and marrying Aline Chainé. From the moment of their meeting, Chrétien focussed his goals, completed college and law school, stopped drinking and made himself a successful Shawinigan lawyer. After winning his home-town riding in 1963, he passed through an unrivalled array of cabinet portfolios, from Indian Affairs and Northern Development to External Affairs.

Martin's Chrétien is a man with a second-rate mind, taking his ideas ready-made, either from Trudeau or from his advisors Eddie Goldenberg and John Rae. Did it matter? What other minister would have survived the Trudeau-inspired attempt to abolish aboriginal status under the Indian Act? During Chrétien's time at Finance, the federal debt rose 44 per cent but journalists chuckled at such ministerial wisdom as "a floating dollar means it floats." In 1980, when Trudeau needed a loyal agent for his constitutional program, Chrétien became Minister of Justice, a post for which he was ill-prepared. Loyal and unimaginative to a fault, blinded a little by his own contempt for separatists, Chrétien did his master's bidding. Would a wiser, more intellectually self-confident politician have rescued Trudeau from his *hubris* and saved Canada from René Lévesque's strategic victory?

In 1984, Chrétien was denied the prize he had come to expect. Ottawa may have been transformed from a town where the French knew their place into a bilingual city where merit counted, but Liberals believed in *alternance*: party leadership alternates between French and English. Or was it that insiders prayed that John Turner would rescue them from Trudeau's terminal unpopularity. Abandoned by those he had trusted, Chrétien also lost his hitherto unquenchable optimism and his political smarts. A dull, over-rehearsed speech cost him any small hope of capturing the convention; the party's post-election decision to stick with Turner seemed to forfeit his political future. For once, he quit.

But not for long. By 1991 he was Liberal leader and, in 1993, Prime Minister, though it was in a Parliament designer-built to dissolve the Canada he loves. In the West, where Chrétien had long been the only popular Liberal, voters turned to Preston Manning. In Quebec, his enemies had triumphed behind Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard. Even his own Shawinigan would vote Yes in the 1995 referendum.

Martin's biography carries Chrétien only to the doors of Sussex Drive in 1993. His career as Prime Minister still cannot be predicted, but the strengths and the limitations set out with sympathetic objectivity by Lawrence Martin are a fair preliminary measure of a man who has never stopped revelling in what "a little guy from Shawinigan" can do.

McGill Institute for the Study of Canada

Desmond Morton

***Timely Meditations: Martin Heidegger and Postmodern Politics.* By Leslie Paul Thiele. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995. Pp. xii, 263. \$49.50. Paper, \$14.95.**

This book is a thoughtful contribution to recent debates regarding the political dimension of Martin Heidegger's thought. Leslie Paul Thiele, an American political philosopher, looks carefully not only at Heidegger's support for the politics of the Third Reich, but at his call for a freedom which might be at one with the powers of the universe, with the primal elements of Being as such, under the direction of the Nazi Party. That there is no freedom when one seeks it in this way was the great discovery of Heidegger's philosophical career. To his credit Thiele sees that there is a lesson in this for all of us (6-9). The early Heidegger affirmed a pagan Germanic freedom in opposition to the scientific-technical reason of modern liberal and socialist societies. This love of the particular, of the elemental in its many forms, is still with us, as is the conviction that technological reason threatens our cultural survival. But Thiele argues that the later Heidegger moved beyond this opposition to reason and found a truly thoughtful (=non-metaphysical) sanction for our freedom in the world. During the course of the 1930s Heidegger was able more and more clearly to distinguish his vision of freedom from the subjective and voluntaristic aspect of modern technology. By the end of the Second World War he had uncovered a whole new world, or rather a very old one, a world logically anterior to the division of reason from its objects, of will from its possessions (71-79).

Thiele prefers Heidegger's "disclosive freedom" to modern (and post-modern) theories of "possessive mastery," but is not as radical in his

conclusions as Heidegger himself was (149-51). It is doubtful, for example, that Heidegger's philosophy can contribute anything positive to the ecological politics Thiele is intent on pursuing. To be sure, Heidegger wants to protect nature from the ravages of modern technology. But the nature he brings to light cannot possibly ground a political movement or justify demands for a less aggressive society. On the contrary, Heidegger insists that we return to the origin of Western thought, and interpret the long history that separates us from the origin as a progressive loss of knowledge of Being. Thiele himself makes this point (185ff.). But then modern technology and the moral will that animates it must be seen as completely destructive of the finite world and our place in it. Thiele's reflections on democratic politics suggest that he does not really see the radical nature of this position. He maintains that the "political counterpart" to Heidegger's critique of Western thought is "a democracy . . . that celebrates relations of self and other in all their contingency" (168). Yet it must be remarked that the democratic politics Thiele wants to vindicate is the result of the very tradition to which Heidegger's philosophy is so implacably opposed. Democracy is not, one should say, contingent, but the demand made on institutions by a European and Christian tradition that is certain of itself and of the truth to be found in public life.

It is not in the universality of traditional philosophy and religious belief that Heidegger finds his freedom, but in the contingent and particular. He invites us to look beyond the limits of our tradition and give up the politics (revolutionary or reactionary) that is bound up with it. Thiele sees this argument clearly enough, but is reluctant to accept its consequences: "the enigmatic nature of a freedom discovered in finitude need not derail our resolve to exercise its potential" (251). This is all to the good. But we are never shown how to take the measure of Heidegger's philosophy, nullify the absoluteness of his critique, and relate all the riches of his revelation to the substance of the tradition.

This book is suitable for undergraduates with an interest in the history of philosophy and political philosophy.

The Specter of Dido: Spenser and Virgilian Epic. By John Watkins. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995. Pp. xi, 208. \$20.00.

Spenser places himself confidently in the company of the great ancients in the Letter to Raleigh. In the Proem to *The Faerie Queene* 1, he aligns his career to the *rota Virgilii* in a process of "Virgilian self-fashioning" (69). John Watkins begins by showing how Virgil reinscribed Homeric epic, condemning corrupt Greek values, including the "subversive agency of desire" (25). Virgil's epic underpins the Emperor's program of national *renovatio*: Aeneas's bitterness at leaving Dido reinforces Augustan values and the epic teaches "hard lessons in self-sacrifice" (28). The price of Augustan laureateship is a commitment to a fundamentally didactic epic vision.

Watkins traces the development of the laureate tradition of Virgil through the reception of his epic from antiquity to the Renaissance, locating influential commentaries on memorable *loci*, the manipulation of which defines the relationship of later writers to that tradition. The topos of the abandoned woman, Dido, is central. The more sympathetic Dido appears, "the more Aeneas's rejection of her proves his exemplary commitment to duty" (20). Later, after Augustine and Fulgentius, Dido could be seen as a figure of lust or temptation, while Mercury was read as an allegory of reason. The *Aeneid* actually provided "two Didos" for poetic imitation, the other being the "historical" Dido, chaste and selfless before Aeneas's arrival, refusing barbaric suitors and devoting herself to building her kingdom. Watkins skilfully shows how Dante, Chaucer, Ariosto, Tasso and, then, Spenser modify these traditional places to define the reception of their own fictional characters, or the moral positions of their own works. Renaissance laureate poets must urge their readers to virtuous discipline to earn "their canonization as vernacular Virgils" (52), so "the Carthage of Petrarchanism" (70) was "the greatest threat to Spenser's own Virgilian ambitions" (64).

Watkins examines the narrative and imitative strategies of his subjects, with clear, sensitive analyses of their management of crucial *topoi*, such as Aeneas's meeting with Polydorus, transformed into the meeting of Redcrosse and Fradubio, with its doctrinal Christian significance (95). Mercury's rational direction of Aeneas is adapted in Despair's temptation to show the insufficiency of Reason for salvation,

which demands the power of prevenient grace (103). Spenser recuperates the Pan-Syrinx myth to give Elizabeth a "mythic status," effectively cleansing it of its associations of rape, "unbridled desire and threatened chastity" (78). The absorbing study of *The Shepherd's Calendar* makes much highly forgettable verse in it appear interesting, as Watkins outlines its relevance to Spenser's career as a laureate poet but perhaps the readings of *The Faerie Queene* 1 and 2 are the best chapters in the book. The medieval and Renaissance interpretations of the *Aeneid* as an account of the hero's moral education form the basis for the spiritual biography of Redcrosse but Spenser must move epic "from martial to Protestant heroism," conforming it to the Christian enterprise, in which human effort counts for nothing without God's grace. Spenser "identifies himself as an English Protestant in the Virgilian tradition" (93), corrects Pelagianism, redeems Virgilian narrative from Catholic hermeneutics on the one hand and Ariostesque despair on the other (103). The lustful Dido who must be abandoned is the model for Duessa. But Spenser glorifying Elizabeth must also counter Virgil's anti-feminism. He recuperates the other Dido, the incorrupt, unfallen magistrate, "transforming Dido into various figures who conform to Elizabeth's code of honor in all its austerity" (126).

In the discussion of Book 3, Watkins gets himself into difficulty, having pretty well demonized the romance genre and especially Ariosto's structure and values. He offers an awkward explanation of the change from linearity to *entrelacement*, and what he sees as a shift to sexual "consummation as the goal of labor" (146). This is "an exchange between alternative notions of what poetic forms inherited Virgil's cultural authority" (145). There is more than a touch of Houdini in the author's efforts here. The more economic answer is that romance is a more suitable model for a narrative of love, including the Christian sacramental love idealized in Britomart. There really is no inconsistency between the treatment of sinful sensuality in Duessa and Phaedria earlier and that of Malecasta or Hellenore or Argante here. However, there remains a good deal of useful commentary in this chapter on Spenser's treatment of the "ludic" Chaucer, on the "dialogic" rather than Bakhtinian "monologic" nature of this poetry and also on Spenser's defiant criticism of Elizabeth's virginity (156). The two Didos help towards the fashioning of Hellenore and Malecasta as well as Britomart herself.

Watkins's sometimes narrow concentration on the manipulation of genre, topos and allusion can result in the loss of a dimension in his poetics. He dismisses the "melancholic" Virgil, presumably that of Wilson Knight, Bowra and Fraenkel, but the business-like Augustan propagandist he gives us does not explain the ambivalences of *lacrimae rerum*, of Aeneas's despondency after the treaty with Latium or his surprise in Hades at the souls' desire for life, and other such moments. He sometimes reads narrative as practical literary theory but the tragedy of Dante's Francesca is more than an indictment of romance form (42). "*Quel giorno piu non vi leggemmo avante*" (*Inferno* 5.138) dramatizes literature's power to subvert morality but also the power of passion and imagination and Dante's own sad empathy with the damned. When the transformation of Armida into Phaedria is seen as "a critique of the *romanzi*" (137), perhaps this reveals an approach that risks being too reductive. Typically, he finds nothing of ambivalence or of a divided self in the destruction of the Bower of Bliss and typically he seems mildly baffled by critics who find the Alma and Medina episodes dull. He glances disapprovingly at supposedly "objective" critics who "resort to evaluative language" (134).

There are a few minor errors or oversights: "Britomart's projected union with Arthur" (173) is one, and Redcrosse does not drink from "Duessa's well" (99). Watkins likes that irritating solecism "centred around" and his use of "subtext" to mean "source text" is idiosyncratic, where an intertextual theorist has terms like "pre-text" or "hypertext." These are minor intrusions in a style that is clear, readable and often felicitous. This clarity makes available to the junior student a book that will be valuable to the specialist scholar.

St. Francis Xavier University

Derek N. C. Wood

***The Barbed-Wire College: Re-educating German POWs in the United States during World War II.* By Ron Robin. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995. Pp. xii, 217. \$29.99.**

During the fall of 1943 my future father-in-law became one of the 378,898 captured Germans transported across the Atlantic to prisoner-of-war (POW) camps located all over the United States. As both an aspiring officer in the *Wehrmacht* and a member of the Nazi Party, he would not have been regarded as a particularly promising candidate for the cautious program of political re-education that the Americans conducted among selected POWs from mid 1944 until their repatriation to Europe nearly two years later. His family certainly did not have the impression that he had undergone an ideological transformation by the time he returned home from an additional incarceration in England on 19 May 1947. That, I can attest, came later through the impact of Germany's phenomenal revival under democratic aegis when he joined Willy Brandt's SPD (German Social Democracy). Yet, as Ron Robin's thoughtful and persuasive monograph suggests, the experience of Heinrich Langfeldt seems to have been broadly representative of that of the great majority of these former German POWs: not tentative efforts at de-nazification while in American captivity, but rather the shock of their country's total defeat and massive destruction—only fully perceived upon their release—freed their minds to pursue national reconstruction along new moral and political lines.

Robin begins his study with the frank admission that re-education as practised by the U.S. army upon German captives was a "manifestly ineffectual" (ix) weapon of warfare; his task is to explain this failure. Drawing mainly upon the records of the Office of the Provost Marshal General (the supreme military commander of the prisoner camps) as well as the unpublished official histories of the various sections of its so-called "Special Projects Division" that ran the program, and the recollections of participants on both sides of the barbed wire, the author presents a comprehensive indictment of the entire undertaking. Thus, the initially covert operation (for fear of violating the Geneva convention, which forbade the indoctrination of POWs, and thereby provoking retaliation in kind against American troops in German hands) took almost no account of the peculiar social dynamics of a military internment camp. Col-

laboration with the enemy there was regarded as destructive of discipline without any necessary reference to the tenets of Nazism. Recruits for rehabilitation were therefore usually service misfits, not typical soldiers or leaders likely to influence their fellow captives in a similar direction. In fact, a disproportionate number of those chosen to be re-educated were disaffected intellectuals whose favored method of proselytism was writing for an all too high-brow prisoner newspaper, *Der Ruf* ("The Call"). Its editor-in-chief, Dr. Gustav René Hocke, was a Catholic Anglophile, indeed the sole POW repatriated to an Allied country, England, where his wife and son resided by war's end (63); while Hans Werner Richter and Alfred Andersch, both prominent postwar novelists and co-founders of the famous literary *Gruppe 47*, were among the most frequent contributors to *Der Ruf*. The socialist Richter and the ex-communist Andersch were subsequently plagued by guilt about their ambivalent role in wartime America, and Robin bluntly exposes the fallacies in their latest attempts to rationalize their behavior and its motivations (see 66f, 83).

However, even more fundamental contradictions in the re-education program, which "predictably" (a term the author overuses) deprived it of success, are to be found in the type of American personnel that managed it, their philosophical predilections, and ultimately what Robin identifies as their hidden agenda. The project was headed by Edward Davison, a minor poet and college professor temporarily in uniform "with no academic or professional" knowledge of German culture or "meaningful" command of the language (43f). His principal civilian associate was Harvard Dean and man of letters Howard Mumford Jones who largely provided the intellectual rationale for the course of studies offered the prisoners. These two humanists, supported by the University of Chicago philosopher T. V. Smith and a pair of recent refugees from the Third Reich, historian Henry Ehrmann and writer-journalist Walter Schoenstedt (also fresh converts from socialism and communism, respectively), were convinced that German soldiers could only be weaned away from their Nazi mentality by a patient cultivation of Germany's past glories in the realms of thought, literature and music. Combined with an often tendentious reinterpretation of recent German history, in which for example any implication of mass culpability for the triumph of Hitlerism was carefully omitted for fear of antagonizing the nationalists sympathies of the POW audience, was an equally homogenized version of the

American accomplishment. A textbook by Charles and Mary Beard, *Basic History of the United States*, was deemed unsuitable for camp libraries: it called into question the efficacy of democracy in the U.S. by arguing that "public opinion rarely affected the concerns of American politicians" (94f). Excluded as far as possible from the curriculum, too were vehicles of popular culture, especially Hollywood movies, along with the influence of social scientists, which together were suspected of seeking superficially to indoctrinate rather than rationally to convince the inmates. And herein, according to Ron Robin, lay the true purpose and fatal weakness of U.S.-style re-education: it represented above all else a rearguard action of embattled humanism against the relentless advance of social science in the struggle for pre-eminence within American scholarship.

This far-reaching conclusion—namely that the project of politically rehabilitating the German POWs had a primarily inner-American academic objective of demonstrating the war-worthiness of allegedly impractical humanistic studies—seems plausible, notwithstanding the necessarily speculative language ("presumably," "conceivably," etc.) in which the author must clothe it (183ff). For none of those involved ever explicitly conceded such a goal. But Robin's book is a model of extracting significant lessons from unpromising sources on a topic of seemingly secondary importance. Neither embarrassing misspellings (eg., of the name of German novelist Frank Thiess), the resort to colloquialisms ("movers and shakers"), nor the odd oversight of the one commercial film, Anatole Litvak's *Decision before Dawn* (1951), which dealt with anti-Nazi Germans in U.S. custody, diminish the value of this worthwhile addition to the literature on the Second World War.

Dalhousie University

Lawrence D. Stokes

Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory.
By Ian Hacking. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995. Pp. ix, 336. \$24.95.

In this book our leading philosopher of science reflects on the recent epidemic of cases of multiple personality disorder (MPD). Most philosophers have contented themselves with sideways glances at

phenomena like these while developing theories of personal identity. Hacking looks instead at the real-life causes which have generated so much heated debate in recent years and uses philosophical insights to illuminate that debate. He repeatedly adds coherence and intelligibility to controversies that would otherwise seem impossibly baffling.

For example, the apparent fact that multiple personality has blossomed in recent years, and seems confined to North America, is made less odd by a history of the "multiple movement" among therapists and their public, and by sensitive comments which balance the clinical facts and the ideologically-charged interpretations. Again, the apparent preponderance of females among multiples is examined with proper alertness to the influence of ideology on likely explanations. The notorious problems associated with the thesis that multiple personality is the adult result of childhood sexual abuse, and that the abuse is recovered to memory by therapy, are extensively described; they lead the author to develop an ingenious middle position between those who simple-mindedly accept that patients' memories reveal the past causes of their disorders, and those who think that both the disorders and the memories are invented by the therapists who diagnose them.

The position, roughly, is that at least some of the childhood traumas recalled in therapy are real, but that the perpetrators of them, however cruel, cannot have been guilty of offenses for which the concepts (like child abuse) under which they are now classified did not then exist. The patients who recover buried memories of such trauma are involved in redescribing and therefore *in part* re-creating, their own pasts. This does not, of course, answer the aggrieved parent accused of a form of cruelty that he or she insists did not happen under *any* description. Nor, in my view, does it address the guilt that would be experienced by someone who later comes to realize that his or her past actions were far graver, in clinical retrospect, than he or she saw at the time. But it is a most valuable lever for understanding the mutual incomprehension that characterizes debates of this sort.

The book, which is stronger on detail than on form, has three interconnected narratives in it. The first is that of the development of the "prototype" of the patient with MPD, as this has emerged in the last two decades, together with the associated diagnoses of childhood trauma and sexual abuse. The second is the emergence of similar cases in France in

the last quarter of the nineteenth century. What had been thought of only as double personality gave place to *multiple* personality as a result of the way a group of doctors responded to the case of Louis Vivet, and the way Vivet responded to them. The third is an account of the development of the sciences of memory, also centred on the '70s and '80s of the nineteenth century; Hacking argues that this development sublimated moral and spiritual disputes about human personality and transformed them, nominally, into scientific ones. This latter point helps us to understand how value-laden apparently factual arguments about the reality of recovered memories have become: each side, as it were, sees the other as guilty of a (secular) heresy.

The book ends with a plea for not subordinating truth to therapeutic success. The passion, here and throughout, is controlled, but clearly there. This book is fascinating but very hard to summarize; that is because it regularly clarifies complex issues and avoids the philosopher's temptation to tidy them up. It is a fine example of philosophy in the service of cultural betterment.

University of Calgary

Terence Penelhum

***Playtexts: Ludics in Contemporary Literature.* By Warren Motte. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1995. Pp. ix, 233. \$31.50.**

Warren Motte's study on the role of play in contemporary literature is a competent work: it is coherent, consistent and logically structured. While strictly speaking an independent investigation, his latest book is also a natural extension of his previous research on the work of the *Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle* (Oulipo) group. The author's knowledge of the subject is considerable, his selection of texts interesting, and his methodology academically impeccable. Yet, the book fails to excite. In spite of the appeal of the topic and the pertinence of Motte's critical apparatus, *Playtexts* succumbs to the main danger of scholarly writing: it substitutes for the originality, comprehensiveness and passion of theory the predictability, specialization and complacency of interpretation. In reading this study, one almost wishes that Motte, instead of spending so

much time on the verification of his hypotheses, had devoted himself more thoroughly to the conception of new ideas.

Nowhere is the lack of theoretical audacity more noticeable than in the initial chapter of the book. After a brief historical survey of various definitions of play and game, three basic theoretical models are discussed: Johan Huizinga's concept of *homo ludens*, Roger Caillois's division of games on *agôn*, *mimicry*, *ilinx* and *alea*, and Jacques Ehrmann's perception of play as economy, communication and articulation. Though in the rest of his argument Motte draws heavily from all three theories, as well as from Wittgenstein's notion of language-games, he initially attempts to find inconsistencies in Huizinga's understanding of real life and Caillois's definition of social value of games. Unfortunately, Motte's critique never manages to reach beyond its sources and significantly improve on their ideas; instead, it makes us miss their presumptuous inventiveness and crave their nonchalant universality. His own definition of play originates in Derrida's construct of "free play" and in an intriguing idea that all play is motion. Based on this view, play is seen as "an essential, if variable, dimension of both writing and reading," which, in turn, are "characterized, more or less globally depending upon the case, as games" (4). A literary work is thus described as a "play-text," that is, a constrained, yet disinterested and fundamentally interactive textual contract between the reader and the writer.

This short theoretical introduction is followed by a detailed interpretation of 10 twentieth-century texts, ranging from André Breton's *Nadja* (1928) to Umberto Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988). Each chapter approaches the selected literary work from the perspective of a different literary game: Italo Calvino's *The Castle of Crossed Destinies*, for instance, is described as a "construction set" (143) and a "crossword puzzle" (147), Witold Gombrowicz's *Ferdydurke* as a labyrinth, while René Belletto's *Film noir* is compared to "a hall of mirrors in a carnival" (167). The analyses themselves are uneven. While some of them, especially the ones on Georges Perec's *La Disparition* and *Foucault's Pendulum*, are quite interesting and successfully explain the nature of postmodern writing as a process of "constructing the reader" (184), several others appear overly cautious in their applications of theory. This tendency is perhaps most obvious in the essay on Nabokov's *Pale Fire*. Motte's examination of the role of chess and the use of appropriation in

subdued that it occasionally seems as if the author himself did not completely trust it.

In general, *Playtexts* is probably more interesting when it becomes a historical document on literary strategies than when it ventures into the realm of critical discourse. Inasmuch as one might be tempted to argue with Motte's choice of literary works and perhaps suggest some additional useful examples, it is even more difficult to understand why there is not even a passing reference made to Hans Robert Jauss's and Wolfgang Iser's theoretical contributions. Not only would their arguments organically complement some of Motte's hypotheses, but they would also fill an important gap in the scope of his study.

Dalhousie University

Jure Gantar

***Dream Museum.* By Liliane Welch. Victoria, BC: Sono Nis, 1995. Pp. 119. Paper, \$12.95.**

The recurrent narrator of *Dream Museum* is almost the poetic equivalent of one of Canada's "snowbirds"—those of us who, being either too old or too smart to endure a Canadian winter, flee south for the season. I say "almost" because this particular Canadian has reversed the pattern: she winters in Canada, and summers in Europe. But the result is the same: like the snowbirds, Welch's narrator is caught between two spaces, at home in neither. She draws her subjects and her language interchangeably from the Old and the New Worlds, from San Martino and Sackville. At times, there's a hint of colonial anxiety in her continental comparisons, as when a maritime artist in the final poem writes to another maritime artist, Alex Colville, that "We're fighting / with the beast, European culture" (108). But more often than not, the poems in *Dream Museum* are more concerned with making connections than with lamenting imbalances.

The tie that binds Old and New Worlds together in this collection is the image. Here, perhaps Welch is revealing the side of herself that is attracted to the French writers she teaches at Mount Allison University—poets like Verlaine and Rimbaud, who themselves used images (or

symbols, if you prefer) to bridge two worlds, the known and the unknown. But whatever the impetus, the intention seems clear enough: as the narrator of "Seeing Canada through a Monotype-Collage" asks, "I wonder / if images are the windy fields / which hold our lives together, / our old and new worlds" (40).

Many of the poems in *Dream Museum* succeed in their attempt to use images to "hold our lives together," to bridge the different realities and perceptions of the Old and the New World. "The Miner," for instance, is a highly concrete yet highly evocative portrait of an Emile Hulten sculpture in Luxembourg:

Solemn and sovereign, all year round, where
a black river of cars whirls between
dusty façades with shutters rusted open,
he stands in his heavy boots watching . . . (47)

The details in these lines are as rock-solid as the sculpture itself, but as the poem progresses, the statue acquires a significance beyond mimesis. Simply, I myself have never been to Luxembourg, much less seen this sculpture, but I can see it here in Welch's words—and not just its physical extension, but more importantly the aura or mood that it emits. In this poem, as in many others in *Dream Museum*, Welch's images make possible a transatlantic crossing of the imagination.

Too often, however, Welch smothers the clean lines of her images under a layer of intellectual clutter. In fact, many of her poems are aptly described in the words one of her characters applies to Rimbaud's work: "[a] broken script crowded / by learned sounds" (68). The "learned sounds" in *Dream Museum* take a variety of forms: there's a plethora of foreign place names, ranging from cities to streets to shops; her speakers employ several specialized lexicons, such as those of climbing, cooking, and music; and there are dozens of references to famous and obscure European painters, writers, and composers. In short, this is a learned and well-travelled volume, for learned and well-travelled readers. A degree of difficulty in modern poetry is hardly out of place (some might say it's the defining feature of modern poetry), but what is bothersome about this particular manifestation of difficulty is that it exists side by side with the simple and the sentimental; phrases like "Cats asleep on cupboards" (15), "churches quaint and snug" (58), and "Winter nights, cosy / kitchen" (89)

co-exist with dense, complex images and esoteric allusions. The combination is, to say the least, a little shocking: it is like discovering a Hallmark card in the middle of *The Waste Land*.

That said, there is still much to be admired in Liliane Welch's latest collection. The long poem that concludes the volume, "Twilight Toccatas," a narrative recounting the intermingled lives of a Canadian and a European couple, is particularly strong, as are "Ski Lift," "Benedictine Prayer," and "Rimbaud in Sackville" (the last two have already won prizes). When Welch's poems work—which is most of the time—they work because of the compact clarity of her images, and the power of the voice that creates those images (oddly, the voice seems more assured, less given to esoteric props, in the third-person narratives than in the first-person "lyrics"). When they don't work, it seems to me that it's because intellectualism gets in the way of sincerity. Thankfully, the former is far more often the case than the latter.

Dalhousie University

Nick Mount

***The Gothic Sublime.* By Vijay Mishra. Albany: State U of New York P, 1994. Pp. x, 342. \$19.95.**

Vijay Mishra's well-documented study, a work of both synthesis and vision, is a significant contribution to the poetics of the sublime. Mishra differentiates the Gothic sublime from other forms—the American, the female, the religious, the moral, the technological sublime. Referring to the Gothic sublime as a "symbolic structure," Mishra notes that both its rhetorical and natural forms (his book is concerned mostly with the former) are "incommensurable with each other and in excess of language" (23). From Burke's sensationalist aesthetics to Schopenhauer's version of oceanic consciousness, Mishra historicizes the sublime. But where the Gothic truly parts company with the historical sublime is in the concept of the post-Kantian/Romantic sublime: the Gothic, unlike the Romantic, knows no self-transcendence, no return to reason's solace in its presentation of the "unpresentable" as the subject's plunge into the self-dissolving abyss.

With Freud, the Gothic sublime can now be foregrounded as a projection of a psychic terror, signalled by the presence of the "uncanny" in the form of the return of repressed memories. The recontextualizing of Freud by Lacan, Derrida's deconstruction of the Kantian sublime, Fredric Jameson's linkage of the sublime with stages of capital and Jean-Francois Lyotard's essay on the sublime and the avant-garde denote differing and significant theoretical formulations by post-structuralists, all of which contribute to the new reading of the Gothic. Mishra's apparatus is thoroughly grounded in post-structuralist theory—essential, given his thesis that the Gothic sublime can be read as an early moment of post-modernism.

But in his commentaries on key Gothic texts, a related but more fully articulated thesis emerges: the Gothic should be read as one discontinuous text. Mishra firmly establishes the heterogeneity of the Gothic, delineating it as "a particular kind of literary (re)negotiation" (209). Thus, the 1764 precursor text, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, needs to be "expanded" through Walpole's letters and his later work, *The Mysterious Mother*, along with the 1781 dramatization of *The Castle of Otranto*, and Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron*, self-consciously composed in the shadow of its precursor. Similarly, with the other key texts, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, and Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* and *Frankenstein*, Mishra probes the role of intertexts, along with biographical, historical and political archives; insisting that *Frankenstein* should not be read as a single text, he deploys a feminist commentary whereby *Frankenstein* is effectively "a 'process' inextricably linked to other, not necessarily novelistic, semiotic systems" (210).

Surprisingly, Mishra affords uncanonical Gothic fragments (John Polidori's *The Vampyre* and *Ernestus Berchtold*, Mary Shelley's *Mathilda*, and Wordsworth's *Fragment of a Gothic Tale* are examples) a high status, claiming they raise issues hidden by the "complete" texts. Mishra continues to return to the fragmentary nature of other "complete" works, such as Shelley's *The Last Man* and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, both apocalyptic narratives of ends. His assertion that to read a Gothic fragment is to engage with "the real, repressed Gothic form" (97) is tantalizing but inconclusive. These narratives of "circularity and repetition" (126) present a greater thematic intensity or excess of

dissociation, perhaps, but to examine them somehow as purer forms of the Gothic seems questionable.

At the level of theory, Mishra's thesis that the postmodernist trope of the sublime is anticipated by the Gothic texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries works well. Mishra successfully identifies problematics which link the historical Gothic with the postmodern: both repudiate "totalizing reason with its grand narrative" (42) and use a form of "antilanguage" (54) in their concern with the disjunction between words and the world (229); "character" is fragmented (54), and Mishra also notes the tendency toward game-playing (243), the weakening of historicity (254) and the postmodern questioning of perception, representation and subjectivity in Gothic texts (229). Though the logic of Mishra's thesis is apparent, specific linkages to the postmodernist texts are not. His study of Gothic texts stops with Melville's *Pierre* (1852). In spite of his conclusion that the Gothic sublime "is crucial to our understanding of the postmodern sublime in literature" (256), there are only two brief allusions to postmodernist literary texts (42) in this study. One would expect at least to hear something of the postmodern Gothicists, those who self-consciously deploy Gothic intertexts, such as John Hawkes, Don DeLillo or Joyce Carol Oates. Certainly, Mishra's careful but limited coverage of the field makes extension of his program not only possible, but desirable.

University of Victoria

Eric Henderson

***The Reception of Myth in English Romanticism.* By Anthony John Harding. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1995. Pp. xiv, 289. \$39.95.**

The penultimate sentence of *The Reception of Myth in English Romanticism* renders the final word on what Anthony John Harding has accomplished: a book that "may suggest a way of uniting the study of myth with a deconstructive, or ideologically alert, approach to the use of myth in Romantic writing" (259; emphasis added). The verb phrase is just right, for Harding's study works finally more by implication than by conclusion, and its several analyses will indeed suggest much more than what Harding himself directly claims and demonstrates. Insofar as he

intended it only to inaugurate thought about the reception of myth in English Romanticism, his book is a certainly a success. Yet, given the title and the introduction, one wonders why Harding has attempted so little synthesis, contenting himself instead with astonishingly discrete observations about the "work on myth" performed at various times and in various texts by Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats.

The introduction misleadingly announces a rather different kind of study. Distancing himself from the archetypal myth criticism of Northrop Frye and others, Harding calls for "a truly historicist myth criticism" that "will address the question of how the writers in a given period understood and received myth. . . . For their understanding of 'the mythic' will certainly not be coterminous with ours" (7). Such a criticism, he argues, must distinguish "both the historically determined nature of the sources from which the [mythological] archetype is constructed *and* the historical situation of the critic who is doing the constructing"; it thus "involves some complex negotiations between what we *now* consider the mythic to be and what the text's author might have understood about the mythic" (3, 11). These are sensible enough principles, but only the first of them guides the readings Harding later advances. The others, requiring the critic's differentiation of his own historical position from that encoded in the objects of his study, seem to be abandoned as soon as they are stated.

Apart from the conventional summary of myth criticism to date, in other words, Harding shows little awareness of the historical imperatives controlling his own discourse. The language of the introduction is itself historically compelled, as in this passage faulting two recent myth critics for writing "as if the different archetypalisms of C. G. Jung and 'early' Frye had never been challenged":

Both ignore the *subtle and useful revaluation* of the concept of archetype contained in Eric Gould's *Mythological Intentions in Modern Literature*, which proposes that "the archetype is not essential but a function of the open-endedness of discourse." Gould *recognizes* that an archetypal pattern is *never* a self-subsistent, extralinguistic entity, or a "reality" to which we can confidently refer in explicating this or that expression of the archetype, but is "*transactional*," operating within the *normal* conditions of semiosis, that is, "revealing its form *only* in language and interpretation." (6; emphasis added)

The italicized terms all endorse the values and affirm the validity of current critical thought, which Harding later offhandedly dubs "orthodox deconstructive criticism" (144). Yet precisely because he fails to account for the "complex negotiations" and various "orthodoxies" of his own discourse, his study performs the very thing it proscribes in principle: projecting his own understanding back upon the Romantics, Harding finds, as often as not, that what they understood of the mythic is indeed "coterminous" with what we understand. Equipped with the method and language of critics such as Gould, Harold Bloom, and Paul De Man, Harding uncovers "the *subtle transactions*, the *purposeful misreadings* and *reinterpretations*, that are *in fact* taking place" in Romantic texts (20; emphasis added). Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* thus illustrates "the impossibility of separating event from interpretation"; Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" reveals "the beginning of a new line of analysis that assumes the human, social origins of myth and their function as encoding a particular social order"; and Keats's two *Hyperions* record "the very moment of the modern reception of myth" (51, 169, 208). In these examples and many others, the Romantics appear to have anticipated Gould, Bloom, De Man, and Harding, and to have already refuted the archetypalists who somewhat awkwardly intervene. What's missing here is just that sense of historical development and difference that would make *The Reception of Myth in English Romanticism*, by its own definition, an example of "truly historicist myth criticism."

I am willing to be persuaded that the Romantics articulated notions very much akin to those we now (or still) cherish, and the three discussions I've cited are, individually, quite convincing and would support such an argument. But Harding seems disinclined to reason inductively from the particular to the general in order to define a *Romantic* reception of myth. Only the final chapter offers a sustained comparison of two poets' approaches to similar mythological material; elsewhere, the discussion of one poet simply abuts that of another, and each proceeds with but passing reference to or anticipation of any other. Parallels and contrasts, important ones, are merely noted (cf. 226, n.19) or, more often, simply neglected. For example, Harding argues in the two chapters on Shelley that "'work on myth' is a constant process of demythologization" (169). For Shelley, as Harding's extraordinarily perceptive reading of "Mont Blanc" in particular shows, this process

involves the "dehumanization" of nature, the realization that nature authorizes none of the myths that the human imagination projects. Shelley's mythopoesis thus begins in the perception that "this world lacks a stable point of reference" on which to ground myth (175, 177). Reading this, I was reminded instantly of the discussion several chapters earlier of Wordsworth's *Prelude*, where Harding argues, again persuasively, that the "animistic spirits" of nature are, in the 1798-99 version, "credited not only with the educative process that forms the theme of all versions of *The Prelude* but also with the authorization of poetic language" (70). Harding notes that Wordsworth abstracted or deleted references to these spirits in the revisions leading to the 1805 and 1850 versions of the poem, yet he offers no more explanation of Wordsworth's alterations to the originary spots-of-time passages than the vague suggestion that "more is at issue here than tidying verbose language. The revisions involve and perhaps result from a reinterpretation of the significance of the episode[s]" (75-76). No doubt they do, and Harding's analysis implies that it is nature itself, or rather the authority of nature, which is being reinterpreted. Like Shelley, Wordsworth in revising *The Prelude* appears to have been "demythologizing" and "dehumanizing" his earlier representation of nature, yet in almost exactly the opposite way. Where Shelley begins with the rejection of God's authority, then rejects nature's authority, and arrives at a "new and more human-centered kind of mythologizing" (178), Wordsworth proceeds from a nature-centred mythology to one which increasingly points to a transcendent authority. Wordsworth himself summarizes this poetic development, and thus the trajectory of his revisions, as a movement *from* "the ways of Nature" *through* "the works of man, and face of human life" *to* "the one thought / By which we live, infinity and God" (1805, XIII.166-84). Harding repeatedly asserts in his introduction that "reinterpretations of myth serve an ideology that requires historicist analysis," but in failing to explore parallels such as this one, he misses the opportunity to clarify his point. Surely the evidence confirms that, comparatively speaking, Wordsworth's reinterpretations of myth tend toward the conservative and reactionary, Shelley's toward the liberal and revolutionary. And that suggests that while Romantic mythopoesis may begin for all Romantics in the "process of demythologization," the ideological purposes or ends of that process are by no means uniform, but rather multiple and conflicting.

Some such conclusion would not only justify the book's title and introduction, but also remedy its structural incoherence and analytical disjunctions, most apparent in Harding's treatment of Coleridge. While he devotes contiguous chapters to both Wordsworth and Shelley and confines his discussion of Keats to a single chapter, he inexplicably divides his discussion of Coleridge between chapters one, five, and nine. Moreover, these separate analyses, of *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and Coleridge's late essay "On the Prometheus of Aeschylus" respectively, are, though able in themselves, neither integrated nor cumulative. Following Jerome McGann, Raimonda Modiano, and, though she is not cited, Susan Wolfson ("The Language of Interpretation in Romantic Poetry"), Harding in chapter one reads *The Rime* as a "superbly indeterminate text" that "comes close to putting in question *all* extrapolations from psychic experience, including its own" (28, 49). The Mariner and glossist offer not objective reports, but rather acts of interpretation, of myth-making, that are constructed, ideological, and finally insufficient. This sound point, however, nowhere resurfaces in Harding's reading of *Christabel* in chapter five, which finds Coleridge staging in mythological terms an unresolvable conflict between the poetic or integrated self and the fleshly or divided self:

that-which-is-Christabel is deeply compromised by its contact with that-which-is-Geraldine, and the consequences are fatal to poetry itself: to be forced into silence, robbed of the power of utterance, is equivalent to the complete loss of "poetic space," the power of projecting from the self an answering and reciprocally self-confirming otherness, the power to affirm Being as the ground of self. (156)

This locally astute comment contains the ground of a comparative question Harding might well have pursued: why does the Mariner's encounter with elemental forces generate myth and authorize evermore his "strange power of speech," whereas Christabel's similar encounter results in "tongue-tied silence" (157), her inability to author any utterance, mythological or otherwise? Taken together, what view of mythology do these two ballads, written within two years of one another, express? And how does that view relate to the one Coleridge much later advanced in his essay on Aeschylus, treated in chapter nine, suggesting that Greek mythopoesis is inferior to Hebraic? Can we say, borrowing the terms of

Harding's last analysis, that the Mariner's myth, like the Hebraic one, "puts itself forward as a symbolic code for what cannot be expressed directly, for the moral nature of humankind in relation to what is infinite and mysterious," whereas Christabel *lives* a myth that, like the Greek kind, "confines the hearer's imagination to the world of phenomena, and . . . the life of individual beings in nature" (235)? Finally, would Coleridge's distinction of these "beneficial" and "harmful" modes of mythopoesis then correspond to Shelley's view of mythology "as a manifestation of what human beings [are] *capable of imagining*, and as embodying, in imaginative form, certain powers and qualities, both good and evil, that it projects as universal" (162)?

Harding's *The Reception of Myth in English Romanticism* does not answer such questions, but it must be credited with provoking them, and with laying out in consistently readable and intelligent prose much of the evidence for answering them. A useful preparation for the sort of historicist criticism outlined in the introduction, Harding's study will be most satisfying and rewarding to the reader who "purposefully misreads" the title as *Essays on the Reception of Myth in English Romanticism*.

Dalhousie University

Mark Bruhn

***Their Lives and Times: Women in Newfoundland and Labrador, A Collage.* Edited by Carmelita McGrath, Barbara Neis, and Marilyn Porter. St. John's, NF: Killick, 1995. Paper, \$19.95.**

Their Lives and Times is essential reading for students of Newfoundland and Labrador society. This anthology of 34 pieces integrates academic articles with poems and stories, and carries a chorus of Newfoundland women's voices ranging from the Innu of Labrador, through the protesters of Burin, to the "shore skippers" of Conception Bay. The volume combines previously published articles with new material to present the joys, sorrows, challenges and obstacles faced by Newfoundland and Labrador women and to trace the development of feminist theoretical approaches to these questions. The editors draw attention to the changes in the focus of the academic enterprise, beginning

with the Marxist-Feminist approach of the 1970s and early 1980s focussing on family, household and community, and ending with the present focus on individual development, intimate relationships, and violence and abuse within these relationships. The articles also reflect the range of methodology used by researchers—participatory observation, historical analysis, ethnomethodology and content analysis. Interspersed are literary works that animate and illustrate the situations discussed in the academic pieces.

It is impossible to discuss each piece in a collection of readings in the detail it deserves; however, I will present a sample of the readings to give a hint of the richness of the offerings. Many of the pieces focus on women's economic contributions to the fishery and their lives in outport communities. Marilyn Porter's "She Was Skipper of the Shore Crew" first published in 1985 in *Labour/Le Travail*, has become a "classic." Written from a Marxist-Feminist perspective, it was the second academic piece after Ellen Antler's (1977) "Women's Work in Newfoundland Fishing Families" to address Newfoundland women's contribution to the salt fishery. By piecing together historical material, Porter outlined the sexual division of labor in fishing households that divided the male inshore fishing crew from the female onshore fish processing crew. This division of labor developed in the late eighteenth century and persisted basically unchanged in Newfoundland outports until the 1950s. Porter compared her findings to research in other North Atlantic fishing communities, notably Scotland, and argued that Newfoundland women had more autonomy and power than their counterparts in these other communities because of their direct involvement in processing the fish. Dona Davis's "Women in an Uncertain Age: Crisis and Change in a Newfoundland Community," Bonnie McCay's "Fish Guts, Hair Nets and Unemployment Stamps: Women and Work in Co-Operative Fish Plants," Carmelita McGrath's "Women's Economic Lives: Research in South East Bight," Barbara Neis's "Doin' Time on the Protest Line: Women's Political Culture, Politics and Collective Action in Outport Newfoundland," and Jane Robinson's "Women and Fish Plant Closure: The Case of Trepassey, Newfoundland," document women's continuing economic struggles as the fishery develops.

Company or military towns such Labrador City, Grand Falls, Stephenville or Happy Valley present a stark contrast to fishing outports.

In "Urbanizing Women Military Fashion: The Case of Stephenville Women" Cecilia Benoit discusses the impact of the American military base on the women of Stephenville from World War II until 1980. Evie Plaice's "Honourable Men," a fictional account of doing field work in the 1990s at a Labrador Nato Air Force base resembles life in Stephenville during World War II. Elke Dettmer in "What is Women's Work? Gender and Work in Grand Falls" discusses the type of work available to women in a company town. In "Labrador City by Design" Linda Parson indicates some of the challenges faced by women who live in these towns. By describing policies of the Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) which ranged from sexist hiring and recruitment practices, to control of company employees' spouses' job choice and housing, she indicates the uphill struggle that company wives faced in trying to bring up their families in Labrador City in the 1970s and early 1980s. Women in the community described their limited employment opportunities, their costly and limited food and consumer goods choices, and the cloying social atmosphere dominated by the company management. They also complained about the easy access to pornography, strippers, and prostitutes which undermined the "family man" ideal that was central to company policies. However, marriage to a "company man" was their safety net and the only way they could adequately survive in this community. Discarded wives had few places to turn given their limited employment and housing options and the few social services. For these women, returning home to their parents or going on welfare appeared to be the most common outcomes. Parson argues that the outdated approach of companies such as IOCC must change to reflect current social and economic situations. In her conclusion, she writes about an emerging women's support group, the establishment of a women's shelter for battered wives and a crisis centre. "Take Off Your Shoes! The Culture of Feminist Practice in Bay St. George" by Glynis George discusses a similar empowering of a group of Stephenville women and their struggles to redress these problems and to make their community a better place to live.

A later section of the anthology focusses on a darker side of Newfoundland and Labrador culture—violence against women, child abuse, and the difficulty of procuring a safe and legal abortion. For me these pieces were painful to read. For example, Jaya Chauhan, an immigrant

woman living in St. John's, writes about her experience in procuring an abortion. But it was Virginia Ryan's story of Mary Conway, an outport woman, who struggles to deal with her unwanted pregnancy, that haunted me for days. In outport Catholic communities such as the one described, there are no support networks. There is no one to turn to. Information about birth control and access to it and abortions are non-existent. There are few choices for these women: Mary's answer to her dilemma was to commit suicide.

The anthology also addresses other topics concerning the women of Newfoundland and Labrador. These include indigenous women's roles and concerns (Mary Dalton, Camille Fouillard, Barbara Neis, Anuta and Heluiz Washburne, members of the Innu Nation); European women's historical contribution to the development of the province (Isobel Brown, Roberta Buchanan, Sean Cadigan, Greta Hussey, Carmelita McGrath, Bernice Morgan); gender bias of government in policies and legislation related to fishing, and marketing of fish products (Victoria Silk, Miriam Wright); women's political culture and organizations (Linda Cullum, Noreen Golfman, Linda Christiansen-Ruffman, Helen Porter); the impact of the Roman Catholic Church on women's religious orders, laywomen and children (Lorraine Michael, Robin Whitaker); and women's life in St. John's (Nancy Forestell).

The volume deserved more consistent editing. The "Editors' Notes" used to connect the diverse sections of the text vary in quality. The use of a short introduction to each piece is inconsistent. Articles published previously lack full citation and some references in the text (e.g., Miriam Wright, Elke Dettmer) fail to appear in the compilation of "References" in the back matter. Although these are flaws, they do not detract substantively from the reader's use of the text.

This is a powerful anthology about the women in Newfoundland and Labrador society but it is not the last word on the subject. The editors state it is "not possible to collect in one book all that now exists on women in Newfoundland and Labrador" (xi) and they challenge the reader to create future collections. I hope readers take up this challenge and produce equally stimulating and challenging collections.

***Identity and Community: Reflections on English, Yiddish, and French Literature in Canada.* By Irving Massey. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1994. Pp. 205. \$26.95.**

Irving Massey's book *Identity and Community* operates on the assumption that the author, in examining the disparate elements of his own background, can arrive at a series of general theories on or definitions of the Canadian identity. Having grown up as a Jewish Montrealer living within the immediate setting of French Canada against the wider backdrop of English Canada, Massey believes himself to be the embodiment of the complexities and contradictions of Canadian society. Despite the originality of this approach, Massey's experiment fails not only because the flaws in his premise manifest themselves throughout the book, but also because the study is unevenly executed.

The unorthodox nature of Massey's approach is compounded by the fact that, in using himself as his own case-study, he further confines his analysis of the entire Canadian identity to his engagement with only three writers, one of whom is his mother. These writers are Charles G. D. Roberts, Michel Tremblay and Ida Maza, who, respectively, come to represent in the book the English, French and Jewish (or immigrant) populations of Canada. Massey's discussion of Roberts revolves around his discovery that his own prose style might be influenced by that of Roberts's short stories, which Massey feels confirms that he is participating in the broader English Canadian experience. The chapter on Maza is more a nostalgic return to the author's childhood milieu than a literary investigation, though as such it is by far the most poignant and readable chapter of the book. Finally, in the study of Tremblay's marginal Québécois characters, Tremblay himself becomes lost as Massey ambitiously attempts to offer a series of sweeping general theories on the intricacies of the Canadian social dynamic.

The one element tying all three chapters together is Massey himself, who, more than the writers he is examining, is the focus of the book, and he must therefore convince the reader that his own cultural experiences are capable of advancing the existing understanding of the Canadian national character. It is not surprising to discover on the jacket cover of *Identity and Community* that Massey's graduate and professional careers have been based primarily in the U.S., since there is in the book an

evident distance, manifested both in the study and in the assumption that such all-encompassing theories may be possible or even helpful. Although some of Massey's ideas, taken independently, are intriguing, the book ultimately only appears designed to advance the argument that all lives intersect, and therefore Canada is still relevant to Massey and Massey's life, despite his distance, still possesses a relevance to the community that he left behind.

University of Western Ontario

Harold Heft

Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust.
By Daniel Jonah Goldhagen. New York: Knopf, 1996. Pp. x, 622.
\$39.95.

When Justice Robert Jackson, the U.S. chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg International War Crimes Tribunal, charged Goering, Hess, Ribbentrop and others with war crimes and crimes against humanity he explicitly exempted the German people from the charge, arguing that ". . . if the German people had willingly accepted the Nazi program, no storm troopers would have been needed . . . or concentration camps or the Gestapo." While this made legal and political sense at the time, it was unwise psychologically and morally. Not only did Jackson then barely understand the Holocaust, he also helped the Germans construct the lie that they had hardly known about the extermination of Europe's Jews let alone that they had massively participated in the genocide. Of course, this lie could not be maintained. Over the past 50 years historians destroyed it in small painstakingly documented instalments. Partially provoked by a succession of trials as well as the "Holocaust" TV series and the highly political historians' debate regarding the uniqueness of the Holocaust in the mid eighties, research has uncovered a dense web of elite collusion in the systematic elimination of Jews, Rom and Sinti, mentally handicapped, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, and Serbs. One of the most disturbing revelations was C. Browning's *Ordinary Men*, published in 1992, which documented the involvement of the auxiliary police (Orpo) in the slayings and shootings of Polish Jews. Now Daniel Jonah

Goldhagen, using the same sample in addition to an analysis of work camps and death marches, drives the probe deeper and shows in horrifying detail that knowledge of, and participation in, the Holocaust had been much more pervasive than previously recognized and admitted. He takes issue with most historians, including Browning, arguing that they failed to recognize the unique social structure of the genocide and therefore tried to explain it on the basis of individual motivation such as ideological disposition, fear of reprisals, hope of promotion, peer pressure, opportunism, mechanical efficiency and authoritarianism. Goldhagen reasons that the magnitude and the viciousness of the slaughter defies not only conventional categories of explanation but also Hanna Arendt's famous contention that modernity has turned radical evil into a banality. Instead he suggests that the Holocaust was a communal act, a "national project," based on a "moral consensus," that for Germans killing Jews was "common sense." Jews and other Nazi victims (Goldhagen focusses exclusively on the Jews, but this does not at all impair his explanatory model) were rendered "socially dead" before being killed, i.e. they were first systematically eliminated from their social context. This goes beyond stigmatization and discrimination and distinguishes the Holocaust from traditional pogroms. Goldhagen interprets the "war against the Jews" (Davidowicz) as the consequence of a "symbolic and cognitive structure" he labels "eliminationist anti-Semitism." He believes that this patterns differs from traditional Christian anti-Semitism and that it developed only in Germany. He argues furthermore that this form of anti-Semitism could be dormant for a certain period of time only to resurface with much more force. As it is eliminationist in nature it is constitutive of the specific sense of national community. Once a community is understood as an organically bounded unit, the "Volk" in German historiography, philology and jurisprudence, Jews (or any other non-ethnic Germans) appear as an irritant and as a morbid agent. Anti-Semitism then becomes a speciality of public hygienics. Similarly, if the "Volk" is understood to be the vital centre of a culture then those not belonging to the "Volk" can be considered to be destructive of its culture. Goldhagen shows that by the time Hitler assumed power and removed whatever checks and balances had existed in the Weimar Republic, "eliminationist anti-Semitism" had penetrated every strain of German society. "The eliminationist mind-set . . . characterized virtually all who

spoke out on the 'Jewish Problem' from the end of the eighteenth century onward. . . . (It) was (a) constant in Germans' thinking about Jews." (69) Hitler's pathological anti-Semitism found a sympathetic partner and hence the Nazis only needed to breach the threshold of legal convention and common decency in order to solve the "Jewish Question" once and for all to the satisfaction of the large majority of Germans. They did not invent the "Jewish Question"—the "Jewish Question" invented them. "*The eliminationist mind-set tended towards an exterminationist one*" (71; emphasis is Goldhagen's).

Goldhagen establishes this thesis by uncovering the anti-Semitic paper trail left by the churches (including even Niemoeller and Barth), corporate and academic elites, political parties, the army and ordinary people. He shows that the defensive notion of a closed national community did originate spontaneously within German culture and did not have to be imposed on Germany. "The foundational concept for German popular political thought, the *Volk*, was conceptually linked to, and partly dependent upon a definition of the Jews as the *Volk's* antithesis" (77).

The documentation, however, for this analytical model is relatively brief. Goldhagen relies on the research of Bankier, Felden, Jochmann, Krausnick, Pulzer, Sterling, and Tal among others but goes beyond his sources when he argues that German anti-Semitism was qualitatively different from other forms of European anti-Semitism.

The bulk of his book is devoted to providing the evidence on the actual physical participation of many "hundreds of thousands" (166) in the Holocaust. For this purpose Goldhagen focusses on the involvement of auxiliary police battalions in the crude shootings of Jews, the over 10,000 special labor camps in which Jews were selectively and purposefully worked to death, and the death marches toward the end of the war in which Jews were marched from one camp to another for the purpose of eliminating them through privation and exhaustion. Goldhagen shows that in all these measures ordinary Germans representing all facets of German society participated voluntarily, with gusto and pride, and frequently convinced that they were performing a moral duty. Particularly his analysis of the work camps and the death marches (chs. 10-14) adds much new knowledge about the Holocaust. But while he thereby demonstrates that the Holocaust was as much a uniquely German deed as

it was a Nazi measure, he does not succeed in proving that it was a necessary consequence of German eliminationist anti-Semitism.

Indeed, his thesis is widely contested. Particularly in Germany, where his book appeared in August 1996, critics have accused Goldhagen of refurbishing the discarded thesis that the German character was deficient of a common humanity and therefore given to extraordinary barbarism. To be fair, this is not what Goldhagen says. He clearly points out that it is the cognitive structure of German anti-Semitism rather than the German character which is barbarous. And he argues correctly that what is so disturbing about German anti-Semitism is that its viciousness pairs so easily with a general goodness so that even philo-Semites like van Dohm were and seemingly still are unaware of it. Nor is it very helpful to treat Goldhagen's book as a historical dissertation. Of course, Goldhagen's evidence is historical but the argument is not. It is behavioral. Its crucial concept is structured social action or the perpetrators' phenomenological reality (21). Goldhagen does not simply offer another history of the Holocaust. He offers a study of the genocidal mentality which could expand our still limited psychological view of it.

Goldhagen overcomes the notorious division of Holocaust historians into intentionalists and functionalists by focussing on the perpetrators and by analyzing the social structure of their deeds rather than by contrasting individual motivation with developmental patterns. His approach is fresh and original because it moves the discussion from a preoccupation with character, collective or individual, to the theme of the structure of deeds. In this respect, however, a critical note may be appropriate. Goldhagen deliberately bracketed from his analysis the administrative collusion of elites—perhaps because so much work has been done on it already. I believe that this diminishes the persuasiveness of his model. Elite perception of administrative constraints and opportunities are an essential component of the social structure of deeds. Goldhagen also hardly discusses the biological-hygienic dimension of the Holocaust, nor does he pay much attention to what Fritz Stern has called "cultural pessimism." In order to establish his thesis of the easy slide of eliminationist into exterminationist anti-Semitism these dimensions are indispensable. It is the fusion of neo-romantic nationalism with the ideology of public hygienics and the cult of physical strength which facilitated this slide. This may well be coincidental. If so, then Goldhagen's alarming thesis

about the principal possibility of exterminationist anti-Semitism being latent for a certain period and becoming manifest again may need to be established much more firmly than he has succeeded in doing in this extraordinary and pathbreaking book.

Dalhousie University

Florian Bail