

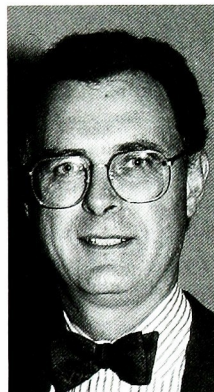


THE KEY REPORTER

BOOKS ON CHAUCER, DARWIN, AND AMERICAN REVOLUTION WIN 1992 PRIZES

Lee Patterson, Ernst Mayr, and Gordon S. Wood received the three Phi Beta Kappa awards to authors for outstanding contributions to humanistic learning in 1992. The prizes, \$2,500 each, were presented at the annual ΦBK Senate banquet on December 4, 1992, at the Embassy Row Hotel in Washington, D.C.

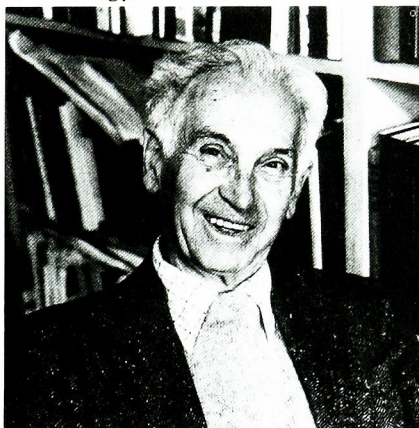
Patterson, professor of English at Duke University, received the Christian Gauss Award for his *Chaucer and the Subject of History*, published by the University of Wisconsin Press. In presenting the prize, University of Maryland English professor Calhoun Winton said that Patterson's book is "of such scope, precision, learning, and understanding" that Dryden's compliment to



Lee Patterson

Chaucer—"Here is God's plenty"—would be appropriate for this work. "Here is plenty for the social historian, for the student of comparative literature, for the scholar of cultures, and for the general reader."

Mayr, Alexander Agassiz Professor of Zoology, Emeritus, at Harvard University, won the Science Award for his *One Long Argument: Charles Darwin and the Genius of Modern Evolutionary Thought* (reviewed in *The Key Reporter*, Summer 1992), published by



Ernst Mayr

Harvard University Press. Dorothea J. Widmayer, professor of biology at Wellesley College, presented the award, saying, "Mayr defines the compound nature of Darwin's theory identifying five major evolutionary themes: environmental change through time, common descent with modification, increasing

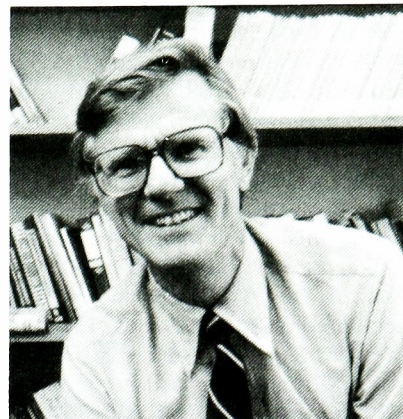


Photo by John Foraste

Gordon S. Wood

University of Wisconsin Press.

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ΦBK SENATE CHARTERS, RECOGNIZES ASSOCIATIONS

At its December meeting the Phi Beta Kappa Senate chartered the Shenandoah association, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and recognized four other unchartered associations of ΦBK alumni: Denver, Colorado; Guilford County, North Carolina; Kentuckiana, in southern Indiana and northern Kentucky; and northeast Missouri, in Kirksville.

STATE AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES DISCUSS FUTURE PROGRAMS FOR PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOLS

"Phi Beta Kappa and Pennsylvania Schools" was the topic of a conference held at the State Museum, Harrisburg, on October 5, 1992, for representatives of the state's chapters and the region's associations. Co-hosts for the conference were Brian Mitchell, president of the Commission of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Sondra Myers, cultural adviser to the governor.

ΦBK President Joan M. Ferrante urged the conferees to explore ways to support the schools in their communities, in line with resolutions at the two past ΦBK Councils encouraging the Society to become more con-

cerned with the maintenance of excellence at all levels of the U.S. education system. Donald Clark, Pennsylvania's director of curriculum and academic services, told the group that school administrators in Pennsylvania were eager to accept assistance from community groups.

Three panelists talked about their organizations' efforts: Robert Kirkwood, representing the Delaware Valley Association, described its work with the Philadelphia metropolitan schools. George Oliver, chairman of ΦBK's South Atlantic District, talked about the weekend workshops that

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biodiversity, gradualism, and the role of natural selection in effecting change. He examines the ideological opposition these theories engendered and places them in modern perspective. Mayr also reminds us that despite Darwin's title, he never really resolves the issue of speciation."

In his acceptance speech, Mayr noted that he was 88 years old and that this was his 17th book.

Wood, University Professor and professor of history at Brown University, won the Ralph Waldo Emerson Award for his *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. The chairman of the Emerson committee, Charles M. Gray, professor of history, University of Chicago, said that the award recognized both "the depth of Wood's historical understanding . . . and the lucidity and grace of his writing." He added that this book represents "the gathering of many strands, from a great fund of learning, into a unified picture of how people in the past saw their world and shaped it—in the image of their vision, yes, but also through the subtler action of visions, in ways they never dreamt of. Articulation of such a historical picture is necessarily a literary achievement."

The 1993 Phi Beta Kappa book awards are open to qualified books

Introduction

(Excerpt from *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, pp. 7-8, by Gordon S. Wood. Copyright 1991 by Gordon S. Wood. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

To focus, as we are today apt to do, on what the Revolution did not accomplish—highlighting and lamenting its failure to abolish slavery and change fundamentally the lot of women—is to miss the great significance of what it did accomplish; indeed, the Revolution made possible the anti-slavery and women's rights movements of the nineteenth century and in fact all our current egalitarian thinking. The Revolution not only radically changed the personal and social relationships of people, including the position of women, but also destroyed aristocracy as it had been understood in the Western world for at least two millennia. The Revolution brought respectability and even dominance to ordinary people long held in contempt and gave dignity to their menial labor in a manner unprecedented in history and to a degree not equaled elsewhere in the world. The Revolution did not just eliminate monarchy and create republics; it actually reconstituted what Americans meant by public or state power and brought about an entirely new kind of popular politics and a new kind of democratic officeholder. The Revolution not only changed the culture of Americans—making over their art, architecture, and iconography—but even altered their understanding of history, knowledge, and truth. Most important, it made the interests and prosperity of ordinary people—their pursuits of happiness—the goal of society and government. The Revolution did not merely create a political and legal environment conducive to economic expansion; it also released powerful popular entrepreneurial and commercial energies that few realized existed and transformed the economic landscape of the country. In short, the Revolution was the most radical and most far-reaching event in American history.

published in the United States between May 1, 1992, and April 30, 1993. Entries must be submitted, preferably by the publishers, by April 30, 1993. Inquiries and entries should be addressed to the appropriate award committee at 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

Afterword

(Excerpt from Chaucer and the Subject of History, p. 424, by Lee Patterson. Copyright 1991 by Lee Patterson. Reprinted by permission of University of Wisconsin Press.)

In this book I have tried to think socially about Chaucer. In terms of scholarly practice, this has meant locating each of his texts in relation to a discourse—a specific set of texts and practices—that can make explicit the social meaning of his poetry. It is for this reason that so many pages have been spent describing a few of the ways in which some medieval people thought about and acted out questions of history, class, gender, family, and religion. Although I hope that these descriptions will contribute a sense of depth and persuasiveness to the readings of the Chaucerian texts, their purpose is not to guarantee correctness: historical description can never provide a norm of interpretive rectitude. But it can make visible social meanings and so show how Chaucer, both in his championing of a sovereign selfhood and in his critique of it, participated and continues to participate in the making of our world. And perhaps it can help us to think socially about other, more urgent matters as well.

Preface

(Excerpt from *One Long Argument: Charles Darwin and the Genesis of Modern Evolutionary Thought*, p. ix, by Ernst Mayr. Copyright 1991 by Ernst Mayr. Reprinted by permission of Harvard University Press.)

The facts of evolution as well as particular problems of phylogeny are hardly mentioned in this book. It is of little relevance for evolutionary theory whether the ancestors of the molluscs were metameric (segmented) or not (almost surely they were), whether the coelenterates have the same ancestry as the flatworms, whether the tetrapods arose from lungfishes (as now seems more probable) or coelacanths. An enormous literature already exists on these concrete problems of phylogeny. Instead, I have concentrated on the mechanisms of evolution and on the historical development, from Darwin on, of the major concepts and theories of evolutionary biology.

Finally, my attention to underlying concepts in this book represents an effort to combat a disturbing trend in our modern view of basic scientific research. Science, in the minds of too many scientists, is considered to be merely a sequence of discoveries or, worse, a steppingstone to technological innovation. In my writings I hope to have established a better balance in the evaluation of science by showing the close connection between the questions raised within certain fields of science and other more general aspects of modern thought and inquiry. This endeavor automatically leads to a consideration of Darwin, for no one has influenced our modern worldview—both within and beyond science—to a greater extent than has this extraordinary Victorian. We turn to his work again and again, because as a bold and intelligent thinker he raised some of the most profound questions about our origins that have ever been asked, and as a devoted and innovative scientist he provided brilliant, often world-shattering answers.

WHY JOHNNY NEEDN'T READ

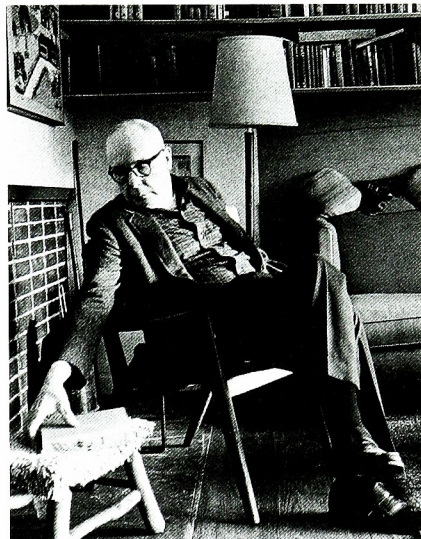
BY J.C. FURNAS

During Prohibition, standard brands of French vermouth—dealcoholized to make selling them legal—were advertised in American magazines. The bottles carried printed labels sternly warning purchasers *not* to add several ounces of potable alcohol to the contents.

That came to mind when I saw in capital letters in the front matter of the Cliffs Notes “study guide” to *The Pickwick Papers* (“Your Key to the Classics,” \$3.95): “These notes are not a substitute for the text itself. . . . Students who attempt to use them in that way are depriving themselves of the very education that they are presumably giving their most vital years to achieve.” That notice appears in each of the 230-odd Cliffs booklets (some contain more than one title) devoted to freeze-drying “classics” from *Absalom, Absalom!* to *Wuthering Heights*. Cliffs’ upscale competitor, Monarch Notes (191 items, at \$3.50–\$4.95), chimes in crisply.

The smaller rival, Barron’s Book Notes (102 items, at \$2.00–\$2.50), pluckily fields the hardest-selling blurb: “Makes Literature Come Alive. Recommended by Teachers. Helps you develop your own ideas. Improves your performance in class. Prepares you for exams. Paves the way to

these study-guide publishers in 1992 are all deeply chagrined when unscrupulous young folks disregard their warnings. Yet this mass delinquency has been gaining momentum these 30 years. In a single day in my semirural county I asked 14 thirtyish-to-fortyish people, male and female, with whom I chanced to be dealing—minor hospital staff, pharmacist, bank officer, store manager, dental hygienist, typewriter repairman, and so on—whether Cliffs Notes had infiltrated their schooling. Of the 11 who answered “Sure,” several added: “So you didn’t have to read the book.” For



J.C. Furnas

Johnny, that notoriously reluctant reader, Barron’s, Cliffs, and Monarch (hereinafter referred to collectively as BCM) are a national institution in the high school and two- and four-year college cultures, and are widely relied on to get passing marks in required literature courses.

My overseas operatives report that similar infestations appear in Britain and France but thus far not so elaborately or on the same scale as in America.

MY APPROACH

My procedure in examining this phenomenon was to study 40-odd specimen “guides,” mostly chosen at unscientific random. The literature that BCMs honor is of unmistakably high average quality. (Shortcomings will be noted later.) It constitutes a rich compost of indispensable writings, not in the Great Books way, though that has its merits, but as a

miscellany of augustly famous stuff that you would sorely miss if some cerebral accident erased it from your mental storehouse. You probably came by much of what you believe in by reading those writings; but though the big letters on BCM covers say *MOLL FLANDERS* or *ANIMAL FARM*, the hundred-or-so printed pages inside make those “joys forever” sound as dull as the begat chapters in the Pentateuch and could not conceivably persuade any but determinedly bookish youngsters to try the books referred to.

Barron’s *Tom Jones* is a fair sample. Its cover promises and its 122 pages supply “Plot Synopsis, Lively Scene-by-Scene Discussion, Analysis of Characters, Style, The Author’s Life and Times, Sample Tests With Answers, Term Paper Ideas.” (Most BCMs throw in weighty paragraphs showing Johnny how to write that term paper as though he had thought it all up himself.) A state university instructor—BCM title pages identify many such as midwives—performs this delivery with some credit. His bouquet of snippets of critics’ opinions of *Tom Jones* cites V.S. Pritchett, F.R. Leavis, and J.B. Priestley, better choices than BCMs usually show. For a scholar-teacher, he is curiously shaky on the exact meanings of such words as *infidelity*, *evidently*, *apparently*.

The explorer of BCMs soon gets used to such failings. Cliffs’ author who eviscerates *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* not only confuses Mississippi steamboats with ships, and cotton plantations with New Orleans town mansions, but also shows a fumbling grasp of English: “. . . [a certain phrase] would disconcert the reader from Stowe’s message.” Cassie [Simon Legree] that she has other-worldly powers,” and the author actually employs that most half-witted of maimed clichés, “Topsy could care less.”

Not that such gaffes would bother most readers. But in readers’ terms, the relative uselessness of the *Tom Jones* “Plot Synopsis” should. A weak attention span, malnourished by MTV and comic books, makes students shun contemplating reading anything as long as *Tom Jones*. But even this guide’s oxymoronic “synopsis” runs 15,000 words—a dense slab of verbiage far longer than most readers can tolerate, and not just because its clotty

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

For Johnny, that notoriously reluctant reader, Barron’s, Cliffs, and Monarch . . . are a national institution in the high school and two- and four-year college cultures . . .

better grades. Expert analysis of plot/characters/themes/style. Livelier writing, more up-to-date comment than any other series. The only book notes with multiple-choice and essay tests. Clear, concise, fun to read. GIVE YOURSELF THE BARRON’S ADVANTAGE.” Its warning, though brief, is as firm as any: “We shouldn’t have to remind you that Barron’s Book Notes are not substitutes for the originals.”

Newsweek, however, recently chuckled: “Admit it, in college you probably used Cliffs Notes to avoid having to read ‘Paradise Lost.’” Only a cynic could doubt that, like the French vermouth industry circa 1928,

WHY JOHNNY NEEDN'T READ

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

style makes even Fielding's clamorous slapstick a bore. Add 5,000 words more of interpolated notes thick with analytical patter about underlying "ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE" in hopes, presumably, that themes, metaphors, and "BALANCE, SYMMETRY, AND THE SEARCH" students will regurgitate some of it on cue in the classroom. Students get better value, however, in those sample exam questions that, the preface promises, will "give [them] an extra edge . . . better grades." The questions are in the reassuringly familiar three-choice form.

Here is the crux of the BCM issue: the teacher's purpose in inflicting exams and term papers on the student is to check whether the student has read the assigned stuff. Whatever the BCM industry's motive in supplying the sample exam questions and answers, what students get is a crude but effective means of faking compliance without even knowing the color of the book's binding. That is why one needn't question the publishers' claims of millions of student customers. To skim the so-called synopsis gives data enough on major characters and setting; a dry run through the canned questions and answers the evening before the test briefs and refreshes a student to the getting-by point.

Did Squire Western and Sophia love each other? Justify your opinion. In a seizure of metaphormalady, page 27 provides an oblique answer: how significant that Sophia, riding with the Squire, falls off her horse into Tom's arms! If Johnny can spell *metaphor*, even a vague recollection of that scholarly fantasy gives him a sporting chance—and gives a nonacademic reader a shuddery glimpse of what classroom discussions may be like these days.

What Fielding would certainly have said about that question and the response would be unprintable even now that the community college instructor who did *The Canterbury Tales* for Barron's can describe Absolon of "The Miller's Tale" as "particular about his scent; which could explain why he is squeamish about farting."

Many such absurdities bear out Barron's claim that BCMs are fun to read. Why so many plot coincidences in *Tom Jones*? Why did Swift put so

much obscenity into *Gulliver*? Answer those intelligibly. Does love or lust dominate Antony's affair with Cleopatra? Explain your choice. Barron's *Silas Marner* (p. 106) rewards the student for getting that far by telling him now to go read the whole Book of Job for comparison with Silas's troubles. The Cliffs *Catcher in the Rye* has a masterful tautology: "Discuss the unity of the novel as a whole." The Cliffs *Merchant of Venice* wants Venice described "as a setting" using the script's "references . . . quotes, allusions, etc." The local-color data in the whole five acts consist of one mention of a gondola and three mentions of the Rialto with no indication that it is not just a street.

The State-U department of theater chief who did Cliffs' *Macbeth* also wanted bricks made with practically no straw: "Describe the Macbeths' marital relations." Suppose an instructor has borrowed this as, one understands, instructors sometimes do, and one of his smart-alecky students has actually read the play and resents faker-entrapment questions:

Probably stable to begin with. Macbeth calls his wife "dearest chuck" and the dialogue hints they share a bedroom. Eventual estrangement is plainly hinted, however, when, on hearing "The queen, my lord, is dead," Macbeth doesn't bother to ask what did her in but just takes it as cue for grumbling that it was bound to happen sometime, and what's the use of living anyway? In act I, scene viii, she says she has "given suck" to a "babe," yet in act IV, scene iii, Macduff says, "[Macbeth] has no children." Since she probably never acted as wetnurse, was this a child of conjugal intercourse so long dead that she must remind him she was once a mother? Or does she thus give it away that she once bore a bastard to a probably lower-class lover before Macbeth came courting? Was it secretly destroyed to guard her good name? Or cruelly sequestered like the Man in the Iron Mask?

The poor little thing was probably a girl, else why is Lady Macbeth urged to "Bring forth men children only!" If Macbeth now learns for the first time that she proved fertile before marriage, does her present barrenness confirm his suspicion that he is sterile, doomed to lack legitimate heirs? Was that why the witches' insistence that Banquo's line will succeed him

upset him so? Bad enough for the macho Thane of Glamis to lack heirs. But now a crown is involved. If my get can't wear it, neither shall Banquo's!

With a few words here and there Shakespeare could have taken care of all that. He often left gaps. He failed to explain why Macduff took off, leaving his family unprotected, about which his wife complains so understandably, and how Lady Macbeth could hold a lighted candle while mimicking handwashing.

Cliffs' *Treasure Island*, processed by another State-U M.A., does compress Stevenson's energetic 100,000 words into 9,000 pedestrian ones. But that brief space shows 20 instances of faulty word usage or distorted sense. Some are eerily out of focus: Silver's "wooden leg, his temper, and his shrill-voiced parrot make him almost inhuman." Stevenson is reproached for "never attempting a serious masterpiece." Is the chill, brooding brilliance of *Dr. Jekyll* just a barrel of laughs? What about *Weir of Hermiston*?

The Cliffs version of *Alice in Wonderland* makes one wonder in what field its author, a visiting scholar on an Ivy League campus, majored. He misapplies *unfurl* and *mayhem*. Neither Isaac Watts's "busy little bee" nor Jane Taylor's twinkly little star was of Victorian origin. The Mock Turtle's song is not in heroic couplets. The bibliography neglects Martin Gardner's *Annotated Alice*, that triumph of combining scholarship with common sense. (These scholars in the BCM stable also fail to mention such indispensable classic comments as Dryden's "God's plenty" on Chaucer and De Quincey's "On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*.") He shields students from seeing *Alice* as buoyantly carefree by calling it "an inexhaustible mine of literary, philosophical and scientific themes: such as "Abandonment/Loneliness . . . Time and Space . . . Death . . . symbolized by the White Rabbit's fan."

The flaws in Cliffs' *Billy Budd*, as a State-U Ph.D. works it up, are fewer, but they are as irksome as a stuck eyelash. Billy's farewell to his first ship is unaccountable baby talk: "goodby-by." Kaspar Hauser's name is misspelled two ways. In 14,000 words of lame erudition the author rings the changes on 40 years of critics' mastication of Billy. That doomed young salt is pilloried as an avatar of Adam, of Christ,

of Everyman, of a Handsome Sailor persona, of something called the "simple, more universal He," and so on until one expects Balder and Roland of Roncesvalles to weigh in too. Little of it is of any use to Johnny. He can't conceivably stagger the jargon those fellows swim in; and because the teacher must know that he has never even heard of most of them, he dare not try to parrot such arcane lore.

Neglect of students is even worse in Cliffs' *Old Testament* and *New Testament* as a State-U Ph.D. in philosophy handles them. His *New Testament* gives a mere 1,200 words on the life of Christ before embarking on 20,000, higher-criticism-style, on the epistles, gospels, Acts, and Revelation, in that order. He analyzes the Old Testament in terms of history and ideas. An encyclopedia editor could use this man; his skillful deployment of recondite materials contrasts tactlessly with the clumsy forceps work of other Cliffs' midwives. But it also calls for more familiarity with the originals than today's students usually have. The expert gives students no detailed synopses, no character analyses of Judas and Nebuchadnezzar, no BB-shot questions such as "Did they give Ananias and Sapphira a square shake?" and "Was it Jezebel's heavy makeup that made Jehu drive so fast?" Monarch's dehydration of Holy Writ ruthlessly piles the Apocrypha on top of the canon. Yet those biblical BCMs often show "SOLD OUT—REORDER" flags in the bookstores' display racks. There must be a lot of divinity students nervous about exams and many Sunday-school teachers needing something to say to the class.

BCM publishers must get some protective coloring from such workman-like instances of canned scholarship. A specially generous one is Monarch's *The Waste Land*, in which an erudite woman (degree not stated) at a small college supplements Eliot's testy notes with many of the full texts referred to. Where Eliot merely identifies the refrain from Spenser's *Epithalamion*, she prints all of its 191 gorgeous lines. Where glancing bits from Middleton's *Women Beware Women* are merely acknowledged, she gives all 161 lines of the scene involved. Where alien tongues intervene, she sometimes supplies the originals in Latin, French, German, Italian. But she stoops to no term-paper themes and avoids the subliterate errors that disfigure other

BCM work. This guide could be useful to students in libraries too small to come up with Gérard de Nerval et al.

Soon after publication (copyright 1971), discovery of Eliot's precompression version undercut much of this guide. Yet Monarch still sells it, and quite rightly. Otherwise its customers would be deprived of her explanation for Eliot's tag from Goldsmith ("When lovely woman stoops to folly . . ."): Once upon a time, "a sexual encounter between unmarried adults was considered a serious offense. In that era virginity was a prized state." Yes, Virginia, in antediluvian days there were not only giants but also things undreamed of in your philosophy.

CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED

The BCMs' \$2.00-to-\$4.95 price range reflects inflation almost as severe as that of movie tickets. Before 1960 the need for quick fill-ins as exam time loomed was more simply met by Classics Illustrated (formerly Comic Classics), which provided, at 15 cents a throw, 40-odd pages of comic-book-style drawings and simplified words covering the gist of the originals. I asked my dentist whether Cliffs had infiltrated his schooling; he said: "No Cliffs back then, but those Classics Illustrated were a big help." A friend of mine still remembers the explosion when her father found her high school brother polluted by the Classics Illustrated version of *Robinson Crusoe*. She said the old man could not have carried on worse had it been pornography.

Of course, Classics Illustrated are now collectors' items. They billed themselves as "Thrilling—Exciting—Romantic—Adventure . . . by the World's Greatest Authors." They did supply recognizable versions of Dumas, Rider Haggard, Jules Verne but also, doubtless with an eye to placating parents intolerant of the comic-book format, such adrenalin-rousing page turners as *The House of the Seven Gables* and *Silas Marner*, while the back matter intoned: "Now that you have read the Classics Illustrated edition, don't miss the added enjoyment of reading the original" and threw in supplementary education in the shape of a grand opera plot and a one-page biography of a renowned artist, scientist, or writer.

The Classics Illustrated imprint recently upgraded itself into a slick-paper, high-ticket (\$3.75) series

employing pretentious artwork as well as reminiscences of the comic-book technique. The targets often coincide with BCMs: *Dr. Jekyll, Alice, Great Expectations*. "Classics Illustrated are not substitutes for the originals." On the same page, however, appears the claim that they offer "accurate representation of the original work . . . true to the intent of the author." In the Classics Illustrated treatment of *Moby Dick*, snippets of disjointed text (they are scattered through the murky illustration swamping the first page) compress into 250 words the 2,700 that Melville seemed to have needed if his opening was to be true to his intention. Well, both versions begin: "Call me Ishmael."

PACESETTERS AND PURCHASERS

Moby Dick, Silas Marner, and Don Quixote are typical pacesetters among the 90-odd titles that the three BCMs unanimously choose to celebrate after their fashion. Take that group as the tacit consensus canon of literature in which the teachers in our high schools and community and four-year colleges work. It is also the conglomerate bedrock of the BCM industry probably laid down in several strata.

B, C, and M doubtless keep a competitive eye on one another's lists—"our mole over there says they are dropping Dylan Thomas and adding Wollstonecraft"—and study the statistics on current reading lists. They can also command advice from Barron's ancillary board, which boasts three teachers from high schools, one from a community college, five from State U's and one from a private U, plus three administrators.

How teachers thus abetting BCMs reconcile themselves to youth's blithe abuse of their devoted handwork is their affair. It may somewhat salve misgivings when they observe that many universities' campus bookstores countenance literary faking just as blithely by selling Cliffs and sometimes Monarch or Barron's too. A few hours on the phone assured me that most of the Ivy League and a random pick of the weightier State U's and Land Granters do so. (Feminists, take note: Mills, Sarah Lawrence, Bennington, and those of the Seven Sisters that are independent of the Ivy League came up clean.) Why does Higher Learning thus promote sabotage of its intellectual obligations?

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Does Alma Mater figure that the students will buy BCMs downtown anyway, so she might as well get some share in the profit?

Doggedly the BCM industry goes right on exhorting youth to make only legitimate use of its wares. They are, Cliffs insists, "only a supplementary aid to serious students, freeing them from interminable and distracting note-taking in class . . . helpful in preparing for an examination, eliminating the burden of trying to read the full text under pressure. . . ." A Monarch fan's testimonial purrs that Monarch guides "outline the material and make it so much clearer for me without being a substitute." A "School of the Arts" Ph.D. admires the way they "supplement classroom lectures and help students ask the right questions."

According to bookstore personnel questioned, she-students buy BCMs about as often as he-students; and teachers are occasional customers. Knowing the BCM treatment of an assigned text enables one readily to call foul when a jock in the back row hands in a paper with a Freudian view of Lady Macbeth's reluctance to stab Duncan. The few BCMs that are well handled can suggest points of view and areas of data of which the teacher was unaware. "Synopses" can be useful before review period. Not all multiple-choice questions are too absurd for use in snap quizzes.

Most teachers, however, would probably welcome a magic spell obliterating BCMs. No more uneasy suspicions; one veteran stopped taking notice of BCM-addiction in her classes because she preferred not to tempt her kids to go sneaky about them. Another says that, in a straitened economy where even having shoes to go to school in can be a problem, only better-off students can afford BCMs; the worse-off students, she ironically points out, with no choice but to read *The Scarlet Letter*, are likelier than students with weekly allowances to get some of the education that taxpayers finance. A good point—only at that rate the fair thing would be for the schools to make BCMs available for all. Alternatively, if the state board of education would allow it, the teacher might have fun replacing an approved reading list with one including no BCM items, to see what kind of riot ensues.

THE SHIFTING CANON

Imbalance may be the worst thing about BCM lists. The proportion of American to exotic titles is barely passable. And what a plethora of Shakespeare! Cliffs does 31 of the Bard's 37; in Barron's, 13 in a total of 108 titles are Shakespeare. To drop a few of the less-nourishing scripts, say, *Two Gentlemen*, *King John*, *Henry VIII*, *Pericles*, would leave room for *Volpone*, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, *R.U.R.*, *Liliom*. . . . And the whole canon is top-heavy with fiction. Cliffs' 251 titles show 132 novels but only 9 anglophone poets and even fewer examples of expository English prose. Feminists, take note again: even this skewing toward fiction, where women writers have long been getting better dug in, still skimps them. George Eliot is represented, yes; but the Brontës, Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf are poorly represented; there is only one Wharton, one Cather, one Beauvoir, no Gaskell, no Edgeworth, no Glasgow, no Rebecca West, no George Sand, no Lagerlöf.

None of that, however, implies cultural malfeasance among BCM publishers. They are necessarily wax in the hands of the faculties of Private U, State U, Homestead Community College, and Zenith Central High. Subliminally, at least, those trustee-guardians of literature regard it as primarily fiction, only most secondarily plays and poetry, and hardly at all prose-as-such—a medium once so rewardingly employed by Montaigne, Bacon, Milton, Burke, Hazlitt, Holmes, Lincoln—as though furniture should consist overwhelmingly of beds with few chairs and practically no tables.

This tunnel vision is occupational, automatically imposed by Alma Mater's faculty on not only her own curriculum but down the academic social scale to the middle rungs of education. The notorious "publish or perish" tradition forces college-level scholar-teachers of literature to keep rehashing and embroidering in terms that sound professional enough to warrant getting printed. Hence a hundred years' pile-up of exegesis far, far bulkier than the core works on which it is parasitical—those conceded tacitly by incumbent Ph.D.'s to be eligible targets, usually because they present the most hooks on which to hang symbols, metaphors, analysis or ambiguities, and amateur-psychiatric no-

tions about the writers' cryptic intentions. Consequently, minor academics timidly following suit tend to restrict the subjects of literary lectures, seminars, critical papers, and books to an arbitrary elite of works already smothering under that ready-made babble that the dreary midwives of BCMs struggle to pre-digest for appearance' sake.

This indirect control does not, however, rule out minor attrition that resembles hesitant flexibility. One might call BCM lists at any given time a slightly loose canon. Compare Monarch's 1965 list—343 titles, then longest in the field—with its current 213. That shrinkage dropped 7 Shakespeares but 10 prose-as-such items, which almost wiped that genre out, and 13 poets.

Such cuts may indicate not thoughtful revision but making room for the university's current hankering to get with it. Since 1965 Monarch has gradually added such trendy things as *Step-penwolf*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *A Separate Peace*, *Slaughter-house Five*; for multiculturalism, *Cry, the Beloved Country* and *Native Son*. Cliffs has all those too, plus *The Color Purple*, *Black Like Me*, *Manchild in the Promised Land*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. . . .

Today's pressures are bound to thicken that thin edge of the wedge. The consequences are hard to predict, except that as BCMs thus drop titles to make room for a miscellaneous trendiness seeping down from the colleges and universities, the high level of literary quality in their lists—now their only merit—is likely to fall off. That will be no skin off Johnny's nose as long as the new BCMs keep coming in to spare him from reading the originals. Those Ph.D.'s and M.A.'s can be trusted to serve up triple-choice questions about the works of Nadine Gordimer that are just as absurd as those about George Eliot's.

My desk is inches deep in 40-odd paperback samples—roughly 1,200,000 words of inadvertent parody of secondhand scholarship. I shall keep only the three *Macbeths* as souvenirs. The township has an efficient recycling program. ■

J.C. Furnas's most recent book is his autobiography, My Life in Writing: Memoirs of a Maverick (Morrow, 1989). This article originally appeared in The American Scholar (Spring 1992).

RECOMMENDED READING

BOOK COMMITTEE

Humanities: Frederick J. Crosson, Robert P. Sonkowsky, Jean Sudrann, Lawrence Willson

Social Sciences: Earl W. Count, Richard N. Current, Leonard W. Doob, Thomas

McNaugher, Madeline R. Robinton, Victoria Schuck, Anna J. Schwartz

Natural Sciences: Ronald Geballe, Russell B. Stevens

Anna J. Schwartz

The Governmental Habit Redux: Economic Controls from Colonial Times to the Present. Jonathan R. T. Hughes. Princeton, 1991. \$29.95.

This timely study, which updates a predecessor first published in 1977, traces the origins of federal nonmarket controls over economic activity. The controls—the product of direct regulation, rule-making, taxation, subsidies, and licensing, administered by agencies, bureaus, offices, councils, managements—change the allocation of resources that the market would have produced in their absence. The author shows that nonmarket controls are a deep-seated characteristic of American economic development, dating back to colonial times. Even the Reagan administration did not succeed in achieving deregulation. The author concludes that we have not found the right balance between the requirements for continued growth and the multiplicity of controls imposed for whatever reasons on economic processes.

Human Capital and America's Future: An Economic Strategy for the '90s. Ed. by David H. Hornbeck and Lester M. Salamon. Johns Hopkins, 1991. \$45; paper, \$16.95.

The contributors to this volume assume that private-sector investment is inadequate, and thus believe that the optimal level of human capital investment cannot be achieved without significant public-sector involvement. Technological advances, expanded international competition, a changed American economic structure, and increased pressure for productivity improvements over the past two decades, they argue, make attention to human capital investment urgent. These changes increase the demand for skilled workers, but demographic changes indicate that such workers are likely to be in short supply. The

major human capital investment institutions—elementary and secondary schools, higher education, research and development, work force training, supportive services in health care, nutrition, day care—all need additional financing. The authors suggest applying half the growth of the Social Security surplus after 1993 to investments in human capital.

Social Security: What Every Taxpayer Should Know. A. Haeworth Robertson. Retirement Policy Institute. Science Press, 1992. \$40.

The author, who was chief actuary of the U.S. Social Security Administration from 1975 to 1978, has provided a ready source of information on the basics of the system in effect on January 1, 1990. (An appendix contains a summary of amendments since that date.) The author notes that Social Security is a program of future promises made about benefits during the next 75 to 100 years. The question is whether we can make good on the promises.

The book discusses retirement insurance, survivors insurance, disability insurance, and Medicare for the aged and disabled—four programs that provide coverage for approximately 94 percent of workers. All are financed on a current-cost basis, for no sound theoretical reason, primarily by the Social Security payroll taxes paid by employees, employers, and the self-employed. The taxes since 1983 are projected to exceed expenditures and to produce a significant buildup in the trust fund during the next two decades. The hospital and supplementary medical insurance programs, however, are projected to incur deficits from the mid-1990s. For hospital insurance the deficit during the next 75 years has been estimated but not acknowledged. High future costs of supplementary medical insurance have not been even officially computed, much less aroused congressional concern.

The trust funds are invested in interest-bearing obligations of the government and federally sponsored agencies; general revenue is used to pay interest and to redeem the Treasury bonds held by the trust fund. One possibility is the liquidation of trust fund assets from 2017 through 2043 to offset a projected excess of expenditures over payroll tax income. Thereafter general revenue and payroll taxes would need to be increased gradually, following depletion of assets to make benefit payments.

The gaps between income and outgo of all the insurance programs, based on actuarial forecasts of the future, will have to be closed eventually by raising taxes or lowering benefits. Persons who have participated in the Social Security system during the past 50 years have received or accrued benefits greater in value than the taxes they have paid. Their excess value is equal to an unfunded accrued, but unacknowledged, liability of the government of approximately \$12 trillion, about four times the estimated national debt—a liability the government acknowledges. Had taxpayers paid the full cost of the benefits, their taxes would have been more than double what they actually paid.

Trading Partners or Trading Blows: Market Access Issues in EC-U.S. Relations. Stephen Woolcock. Council on Foreign Relations for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1992. \$14.95.

This study attempts to identify differences in underlying factors that influence market access in the European Community and the United States. In case studies of financial services, investment, public purchasing, and technical standards, it assesses efforts to enhance access at the national and international levels. The main systemic factors on which the EC and the United States hold divergent views are regulatory barriers vs. structural impediments, the relationship between federal and state policies, and the role of the state and the degree of its intrusiveness in the economy. The author concludes that neither GATT nor a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round will assure open markets unless the systemic differences in approach to market liberalization by the EC and the United States are resolved.

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RECOMMENDED READING

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Richard N. Current

Making America: The Society and Culture of the United States. Ed. by Luther S. Luedtke. Univ. of North Carolina, 1991. \$34.95.

This book "is addressed to anyone seeking a vivid explanation of 'who we are.'" It was originally commissioned by the U.S. Information Agency as a text for foreigners; an updated and enlarged edition is now available for readers at home. In this edition 28 historians and social scientists elucidate many aspects of American social and cultural history, among them immigration, urbanization, manners, art, literature, sports, the family, race relations, social class, education, religion, political thought, and gender. The brief, sharply focused essays make good browsing, or they may be read seriatim, with cumulative effect.

Fantastic Archaeology: The Wild Side of North American Prehistory. Stephen Williams. Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1991. \$28.95.

"Fantastic Archaeology covers those alternative views of the past that use data and interpretations that will not stand close scrutiny." Examples include the belief that the Mound Builders were a mysterious superrace, that the Kensington rune stone and the Newport tower are Viking artifacts, that the American Indians descended from the lost tribes of Israel, and that the Cardiff giant was the petrified corpse of an early man. This book presents an exposé of these and other phenomena of an imaginary past and concludes with a summary of what is really fantastic (i.e., strange and remarkable)—the plain truth of American prehistory.

Ill-Advised: Presidential Health and Public Trust. Robert H. Ferrell. Univ. of Missouri, 1992. \$19.95.

There have been, so far, "seven medical cover-ups in the White House," the purpose of which was to "keep the inquisitive noses of the American people out of what, according to the people in the White House, was none of their business." The following presidents suffered from physical impairments the seriousness of which was kept from the public: Cleveland, Wilson, Harding, F.D. Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and

Reagan. After a fascinating exposure of each case, the author raises the question whether the Twenty-fifth Amendment, adopted in 1967, can resolve the issue of presidential disability.

Deromanticizing Black History: Critical Essays and Reappraisals. Clarence E. Walker. Univ. of Tennessee, 1991. \$29.50.

These essays are "intended to fill a gap in the historiography of black Americans by looking critically at the problems of race, nationalism, slavery, and history." The author takes issue with those historians, black and white, who have emphasized class rather than race as a divisive force in 19th-century America. He also questions "romantic" views of the slave community, the black family, the back-to-Africa leader Marcus Garvey, and the effect of oppression on relationships among blacks. The essays, if provocative, are informed, insightful, and persuasive.

Speaking of Diversity: Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-Century America. Philip Gleason. Johns Hopkins, 1992. \$40.

Such terms as *melting pot*, *minority*, *cultural pluralism*, and *multiculturalism* have meant quite different things to different people, as Philip Gleason demonstrates in this collection of his essays, expertly blending history, sociology, semantics, and common sense. He undertakes to clear up "the conceptual muddle into which Americans have so often been led by the genuine complexities of intergroup relations and the ambiguities of the language we must use in discussing them." In dispelling the confusion, he provides a rational approach to contemporary problems and makes a significant contribution to intellectual history.

The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose. Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson. Council on Foreign Relations, 1992. \$22.50.

In this temperate but searching critique, two political scientists cast serious doubt on ex-President Bush's claim to expertise and triumph in the conduct of foreign affairs. According to the authors, the Bush administration failed to recognize the "new global realities" resulting from the sudden end of the cold war and made a "disproportionate

and inhumane response" to the Gulf crisis in bringing on war with Iraq. Here, presented in the perspective of the longtime American diplomatic tradition, is a readable if controversial review of the recent foreign policy of the United States.

Earl W. Count

The Encyclopedia of Evolution: Humanity's Search for Its Origins. Richard Milner. Facts on File, 1990. \$45.

Dictionaries and encyclopedias are useful, but they seldom pretend to be literature. This work is a grand essay in encyclopedic form, informative and urbane, while demonstrating an awareness that human evolution is a tale within a wider scientific context, and a scientific adventure within a particular sociocultural context. Leading paleontologists have herein their dinosaurian day, as do some intrusive and powerful amateurs, like Andrew Carnegie; showmen and hoaxes, like P.T. Barnum, the Cardiff giant, and Piltown man; and eloquent enemies, like W.J. Bryan.

"The noble tradition of reference books stamped with the vibrant idiosyncrasy of true scholarship." (J.S. Gould)

Joshua's Altar: The Dig at Mount Ebal. Milt Machlin. Wm. Morrow, 1991. \$22.95.

Vague though believable legend turned to compelling stone and further words added thereunto, a familiar happening in biblical narratives. The Ebal discovery is signally meaningful: here the Joshua of legend and history swore the tribes who worshiped Yahweh into a nation that has not died yet. The assembled virgin stones are, say the archaeologists, authentic. The author, who assisted the dig, tells a measured yet exhilarated tale.

The Nahuas After the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Seventeenth Through Eighteenth Centuries. James Lockart. Stanford, 1992. \$66.

The Nahuas (the name is preferable to "Aztecs") still are not completely hispanized or thoroughly documented. The earliest recordings, in Spanish, are voluminous and often praiseworthy; the authors are usually ecclesiastics. A worthy literature in



Nahuatl also exists; and Lockart, a gifted and undaunted historian, has learned Nahuatl that he may redress a serious imbalance. The Nahuas are unexpectedly adept at selecting and adapting from the Spanish dominance yet maintaining their identity. The three ethnic divisions—urban Spanish, mestizos, peasant indigenes—are readily identifiable, with ingenious ways of interrelating.

In the first quarter-century after the conquest the Nahuatl language changed little. The next century-plus saw the adoption of many Spanish nouns. The third period, which continues, has seen a flood of Spanish idiom and vocabulary.

One lays the book down with the impression that the Mexicans are a people still a-forming. Two sophisticated cultures met, clashed; one was far superior militarily, in certain other ways, too. But the victory was not all one-sided.

Lockart's study invites a further host of historians and sociocultural scientists. It bids to become a classic.

Cochise: Chiricahua Apache Chief. Edwin R. Sweeney. *Univ. of Oklahoma, 1991. \$27.95.*

An American Indian who set himself hopelessly against the inexorable inroads of an intruding people and culture is not a likely candidate for a postage stamp from the intruders. Without fear or favor, Sweeney starkly indites the many and never happy events that had their inevitable dénouement. Was Cochise a great leader or just a marauder? The answer depends on whether you are Apache or white.

Frederick J. Crosson

Renewing Philosophy. Hilary Putnam. *Harvard, 1992. \$25.*

Based on the esteemed author's Gifford Lectures, this work is especially interesting because it both calibrates Putnam's present views against his earlier ones and surveys, from his present perspective, a spectrum of philosophical controversies, which range from artificial intelligence (no ground for optimism) to religious belief (defensible à la Wittgenstein). Putnam is critical of the scientism of much analytic philosophy and of the irresponsibility of some deconstructionist writing, but his aim is positive: to reanimate a kind of reflective think-

ing that keeps the human condition in view.

Fear of Diversity. Arlene W. Saxenhouse. *Univ. of Chicago, 1992. \$29.95.*

Diversities of many kinds seem to divide us today, and some people long for a politics that would surmount them. This stimulating and literate study of the origins of political science in Greece analyzes the impetus to move from the many to the one in the study of nature and then in politics. It also considers how diversity seemed to threaten disorder, and how the conflict of male and female became a focal theme of dramatists and philosophers. Saxenhouse's intelligent and judicious readings of the dramatists illuminate the issues, to which Plato's *Republic* responded by suppressing the political role of gender. Only with Aristotle's work, she argues, does a politics that gives an integral role to conflict and diversity come into view.

Idolatry. Moshe Halbertal and Avisbai Margalit. *Harvard, 1992. \$39.95.*

An unusual book, a singular approach to a perspective on religiousness through an analysis of the notion of idolatry, primarily in Judaism. Idolatry is not a univocal notion, even in the Hebrew Bible, and tracing its meanings as infidelity and as misdirected worship leads to the Talmud, to exploration of myth and metaphor, of religious plurality and intolerance, and to discussions with such philosophers as Maimonides and Hume. Wide-ranging, sober, and interesting.

The Rediscovery of the Mind. John Searle. *MIT, 1992. \$22.50.*

A vigorous critique of reductionist theories of mind which aims to put the "final nail in the coffin of the theory that the mind is a computer program." For decades now, theories of mind and brain (and "cognitive science") have been dominated by computer models. Searle argues not for dualism, because he thinks the mind is nothing more than biological, but for recognizing the fact that consciousness is different from and irreducible to neural processes—although caused by the latter. Reality is not exclusively objective: there is a subjective mode of existence which has to be acknowledged but which many theorists try to explain away ("reduce"). Searle writes

clearly, and part of the fun is that he does not mince words.

Nietzsche: The Body and Culture. Eric Blondel. *Stanford, 1991. \$39.50; paper, \$14.95.*

Nietzsche's text appears to be, in Blondel's terms, a *discourse*, a logically coherent argument for a position. But the text as it proceeds subverts that appearance. To read him properly, one has to avoid taking him to be using language simply to convey an ordered set of concepts, as Blondel thinks Heidegger and others have tended to do by reading him as the culmination of the history of Being. Conversely, deconstructionists have read him as denying content, as relegating meaning to metaphysics, as concerned only with textuality. Blondel tries to formulate a middle position and to read Nietzsche as a genealogist of culture, a culture that never escapes from its embodiment in the particularity of language.

Negation and Theology. Ed. by R.P. Scharlemann. *Univ. of Virginia, 1992. \$30.*

One way to talk about what cannot be spoken of is by talking about what it isn't: the *via negationis* of classical theology, which finds analogues in Zen Buddhism and, perhaps surprisingly, in the work of Derrida. This volume has some sensible and some nonsensical writing on Derrida's relevance to thinking about what is unsayable, in addition to essays on Tillich and Buddha and on the classical problem. The book is more interesting than many such collections because the editor poses tough questions about the original essays and invites the authors to respond in a second round.

Victoria Schuck

On Reading the Constitution. Laurence H. Tribe and Michael C. Dorf. *Harvard, 1991. \$18.95.*

The Constitution in the Supreme Court: The Second Century, 1888–1986. David P. Currie. *Univ. of Chicago, 1990. \$70.*

These two books delve into myriad ways by which the U.S. Supreme Court interprets the Constitution. Tribe and Dorf discuss principles of

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interpretation, scan the concepts of other scholars and lawyers, and, while offering “no grand unified theory,” support the Court’s proceeding by a common-law method of case-by-case formulation and reformulation of legal precedents. The authors reject the attempt to obtain value-free neutrality of fundamental rights based on historical traditions.

Currie’s mammoth second volume, which is about the past 100 years of the Supreme Court’s history, serves somewhat as a follow-up to some of the issues raised by Tribe and Dorf. Currie organizes his study around the tenure of each of the eight chief justices from Fuller through Burger. His balanced, fast-moving, analytical style penetrates issue after issue. As the author points out, in the first half of the period the Court was occupied with problems of the Industrial Revolution, in the second with enforcement of civil rights. He rigorously evaluates the timidities and excesses of the Court without omitting its achievements. A fascinating account for lawyers and nonlawyers.

A Culture of Rights: The Bill of Rights in Philosophy, Politics, and Law, 1791 and 1991. Ed. by Michael J. Lacey and Knud Haakonssen. Woodrow Wilson Center/Cambridge Univ., 1991. \$49.95; paper (1993), \$17.95.

Creating the Bill of Rights: The Documentary Record from the First Federal Congress. Ed. by Helen E. Veit, Kenneth R. Bowling, and Charlene Bangs Bickford. Johns Hopkins, 1991. \$10.95.

Joseph Story and the American Constitution: A Study in Political and Legal Thought. James McClellan. Univ. of Oklahoma, 1990 (reprint of 1971 edition). \$17.95.

Political theorists, philosophers, historians, and legal scholars have contributed new scholarship that not only celebrates the 200th anniversary of the approval of the Bill of Rights but expands understanding of the federal government’s responsibility and the Supreme Court’s power of enforcement in the field of rights.

Lacey and Haakonssen have assembled essays by distinguished ac-

ademics concerning the 18th- and late-20th-century cultures and American experience which illuminate more clearly than ever the origin of rights and their modern-day complexities. The first four essays focus on the 18th century. The last three pick up 20th-century philosophy, explicate “Legal Realism” propagated by the legal community, and compare British and American institutions.

The complete legislative history of the Bill of Rights documented by Veit, Bowling, and Bickford opens with amendments proposed by constitutional ratifying conventions (beginning in February 1788) and continues with congressional proceedings and debates available from records of both Houses, newspaper reports of issues, and excerpts from letters of members of the First Congress (ending September 1789).

The early Supreme Court’s role in adjudication is encapsulated in McClellan’s account of Justice Story’s philosophy and opinions (1779–1845).

Thomas McNaugher

The End of History and the Last Man. Francis Fukuyama. Free Press, 1992. \$24.95.

If History ends with the emergence of liberal, capitalist democracies, as Fukuyama argues in this controversial book, then obviously History is far from ending. There just aren’t that many liberal, capitalist democracies around. Meanwhile, as Fukuyama’s critics have noted, History seems to be returning with a vengeance, as states like Yugoslavia and Azerbaijan fracture under the weight of accumulated historical animosity.

Perhaps Fukuyama is simply trying to tell us where History is going—where it will end when it ends. Yet even this less demanding argument is tough to accept—unless you’re a neoconservative who Knew It All Along. I for one remain unconvinced. Enlightenment optimism about progress in History was shattered by the discovery of the unconscious, the carnage of World War I, the Holocaust—compelling evidence that intellectual progress had no necessary moral content. Fukuyama agrees but is unconcerned: “One can question the fact of human **moral** progress,” he asserts, “and yet continue to believe in the

existence of a directional and coherent historical process” (p. 130). But how can amoral progress take us toward an avowedly moral system of government called liberal democracy?

To link intellectual progress and democracy, Fukuyama introduces the intriguing concept of **thymos**, the desire in all humans for recognition. Undoubtedly the discussion of thymos is the book’s most important contribution. Yet there is no compelling reason why thymos must take us toward liberal democracy rather than, say, the more socialized recognition inherent in the “Confucian model,” said to underlie stunning economic advances in Asia. Nor is it clear that “thymotic satisfaction” for some does not produce deprivation for others, and thus social contradictions that will push History toward still new syntheses.

Still, dramatic changes in the world around us seem to demand dramatic explanations, and Fukuyama’s is certainly that. Whether readers accept or reject his arguments, they will benefit profoundly from grappling with them.

Lawrence Willson

The Southern Connection: Essays by Robert Bechtold Heilman. Louisiana State Univ., 1991. \$29.95.

In this book, Heilman, for many years the dean of this section of *The Key Reporter*, recalls his adventures, personal and professional, mental and physical, as an academic carpetbagger in Louisiana, arriving (and actually present) at the end of Huey Long’s heyday, and staying long enough (12 years) to learn the shifting temper of the South, the land of paradoxes, to contemplate its ironies and contradictions objectively and often affectionately, to become, if not exactly a son of Dixie, at least a devoted stepson, who reminisces warmheartedly about the academic life in Baton Rouge, about such eminent colleagues as Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren (who subsequently reversed the route of the carpetbagger by removing to New Haven) and a few more than merely regional writers like Katherine Anne Porter and Eudora Welty, herself a carpetbagger, who, like Heilman, added luster to the artistic and intellectual life of the South. *The Southern Connection* is, to coin a phrase, a feast of wit and wisdom.

SOCIETY RECEIVES COPY OF JOSEPH STORY'S 1826 ΦBK ORATION AT HARVARD

Michael Price, executive director of the Providence Athenaeum, has donated a copy of Joseph Story's 1826 Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard College to the Society. Story, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard in 1798, served on the Supreme Court for 34 years (1811-45) and, according to R. Kent Newmyer, author of "The Lost Legal World of Joseph Story" (*Constitution*, Winter 1992), was the "preeminent legal scholar" on the Court:

His working relationship with Chief Justice John Marshall, one of the most productive in the Court's history, was the intellectual axis on which the Court turned during its most creative period. In the struggle to preserve constitutional nationalism from the onslaught of

states' rights doctrines, Marshall could always count on Story. Indeed, evidence suggests that in the Court's deliberations, Story was more uncompromising on this issue than the Chief Justice. . . . Among his leading opinions were such great ones as *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee* (1816), which set forth with unassailable logic the appellate authority of the Court to review state judicial decisions on federal questions.

Along with former president John Quincy Adams and Edward Everett, Justice Story was instrumental in transforming Phi Beta Kappa from a secret society to an honors organization in 1831.

Studies in the American Renaissance, 1991. Vol. 15. Ed. by Joel Myerson. Univ. of Virginia, 1992. \$40.

Myerson's editorial skills show no signs of weakening in this 15th volume of an indispensable series, which contains a bundle of letters from Convers Francis to F.H. Hedge; a couple of articles about Margaret Fuller (as teacher and feminist); some new letters of Gansevoort Melville; a manuscript by Poe ("The Living Writers of America"); a survey of Whitman's representation in contemporary textbooks, handbooks, and anthologies; three papers on Hawthorne (including one on his superior qualities as a father, who made Sophia's maternal cares "forever light" as he took his turn at tending to the demonic Una, his model for Pearl in *The Scarlet Letter*; and Julian, the "heavenly infant"); and a third installment of the letters of William Ellery Channing (59 letters written between 1859 and 1864), marked by his usual complaints about cold hearts and cold weather, the "odiousness" of unmarried women, and other animadversions of one who sees "everything wrong side out." Between late 1860 and 1862 Channing was industriously reading medical treatises so that he could minister to the dying Thoreau, a most ungrateful

and unaccommodating patient, none of whose "joys [and] diseases are like anybody's else. He is of a strange nature and so more difficult to treat."

Annie Adams Fields: The Spirit of Charles Street. Judith A. Roman. Indiana Univ., 1991. \$27.50.

The Boston of Mrs. Fields was far from being an imagined place: it was the very real literary capital of the nation and she, initially by virtue of her marriage to its principal publisher, James T. Fields, became "the preeminent literary hostess of the day," on intimate terms with the Sage of Concord and the Harvard professors who presided over the renaissance of American literature. In her editorial assistance to her husband she carried on a correspondence with most of the aspiring female writers of the century and developed close friendships with some of them: Rebecca Harding Davis, for example, and, toward the end of her life, Willa Cather. In her widowhood she was also for 20 years a partner, with Sarah Orne Jewett, in a "Boston marriage," not—certainly not in this instance—to be identified as a lesbian liaison, but, in the careful phrasing of Henry James, a situation of "an emphasized susceptibility."

Mrs. Fields reigned over literary Boston as Isabella Gardner ruled over artistic Boston and Julia Ward Howe

over its cultural politics. She "was not a radical feminist" (being repelled by "so many hard faced unlovely women full of forthputting-ness" among the suffragettes), "but she ardently held a number of feminist views and supported a woman's right to live an independent, fulfilling life unhampered by the prejudices and restrictions of a narrow-minded society." She was ambitious to become not only Mrs. James T. Fields but Annie Adams Fields, and her ambition was happily realized.

Bracebridge Hall, Tales of a Traveller, and the Alhambra. Washington Irving. Ed. by Andrew B. Myers. Library of America, 1991. \$35. (Volumes of the Library of America are offered at \$24.95 each to subscribers to the entire series.)

Although this second volume of Irving's writings does not match in quality its predecessor, published in 1983 and containing such masterpieces as "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Rip Van Winkle," it nevertheless merits attention as offering examples of the kind of production characteristic of the Romantic Period of American literature, drawing its inspiration, not to mention its content, from the folklore of England, Germany, France, and Spain, at a time when America had no romantic past to call upon. Irving, having removed to Europe and basking in his fame as "America's first international literary celebrity," turns away from the religion and politics of his earlier works to pure belles lettres, free of didacticism and moral earnestness.

Early Works: Lawd Today! Uncle Tom's Children, Native Son. Later Works: Black Boy (American Hunger), The Outsider. Richard Wright. Ed. by Arnold Rampersad. 2 vols. Library of America, 1991. \$35 each.

A very far cry from the elegance of Washington Irving's works are the novels of Wright, exemplary, like the novels of Dreiser, of the literature of power, but extending beyond Dreiser in their emphasis on the violence and terror, the rage and pain, of being black in the slums of Chicago in the 1940s (or for that matter in the 1990s, and by no means only in Chicago). These are timely books, "forged in injustice as a sword is forged." This edition is specially important because

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it restores passages censored when the books were originally published (by Harper's) and disseminated by the nervous Book-of-the-Month Club. It would be politically—and humanly—disgraceful at this point in history to bowdlerize the tragedy of Bigger Thomas or any black man who rises up in “defiance of assigned fate.” But Wright was no apologist for Black Power. “The whites were as miserable as their black victims, I thought,” he wrote. “If this country can't find its way to a human path, if it can't inform conduct with a deep sense of life, then all of us, black as well as white, are going down the same drain.”

Stories, Poems, and Other Writings. Willa Cather. Ed. by Sharon O'Brien. Library of America, 1992. \$35.

This third volume of Cather's writings to be issued by the Library of America is no mere catchall of leftover scripts or juvenilia best forgotten. It contains her first (and uncharacteristic) novel, *Alexander's Bridge*, and six other books separately published, from *April Twilights* (1903), *Youth and the Bright Medusa* (containing such classic short stories as “Paul's Case,” “A Wagner Matinee,” and “The Sculptor's Funeral”) (1920), through *My Mortal Enemy*, *Obscure Destinies*, *Not Under Forty*, and *The Old Beauty*. It is a rich collection indeed with which to complete the publication of the works of a major writer.

Leonard W. Doob

Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong: Moral Illiteracy and the Case for Character Education. William Kilpatrick. Simon & Schuster, 1992. \$23.

An impressive, documented plea for teaching and modeling moral values in American schools and families as one of the significant ways to combat drugs, promiscuity, and violence among today's youth. Ignore the book's cheesy title, and concentrate on its sensible subtitle, which states the problem. It is not necessary to argue with the author's trenchant criticism of ways alleged to improve decision making per se; rather, it is useful to appreciate his praise, as pedagogical tools, of music and especially of stories that provide compelling ways to behave in real life. Television view-

ing is appropriately and deservedly blasted; the final chapter lists and summarizes “Great Books for Children and Teens.”

Homo Aestheticus: Where Art Comes From and Why. Ellen Dissanayake. Free Press, 1992. \$24.95.

A superb collection of the decided views and arguments of the author and of a vast array of philosophers, biologists, critics, and especially anthropologists in an effort to place “art” in a “Darwinian perspective” and hence as “a biological tendency” that is “making special” our adaptations to “culture” and ourselves. The breezy, optimistic, wide-ranging exposition deeply challenges one's preconceptions. Here and there, as the author says of dogmas by Jacques Derrida, her theses are “expressed with typically obscure profundity, or profound obscurity—one is never quite sure which,” yet they are ever fun to read and seductive in their implication that art in all forms is “a normal and necessary behavior of human beings.”

Writings, 1878-1899. William James. Library of America, 1992. \$35.

A convenient reprinting, in more than 1,200 pages, of James's “writings” during the last quarter of the 19th century, including “Psychology: Briefer Course,” miscellaneous essays,

and “Talks to Teachers and Students.” Why dip into James right now? It is too easy to believe that only current wisdom merits attention and to forget its sources. First-time and repeat readers of James will both be astonished by his brilliant insights. Evidence? A scattering of James's phrases and headings must suffice here: “habit...the enormous fly-wheel of society”; “great splitting of the universe into two halves”; “Is Life Worth Living?”; “We have no sense for empty time”; “a divinely beautiful poem”; and “The Importance of Individuals.”

Single Parents by Choice: A Growing Trend in Family Life. Naomi Miller. Plenum Press, 1992. \$24.95.

An absorbing recital of the viewpoints and reactions of an unspecified sample of American single parents who were interviewed straightforwardly by the author, a scholarly clinical social worker. Included are biological mothers, singles who have adopted a child, and homosexuals of both genders. Emerging from the interviews is “no single explanation” concerning the deeper reasons for the adoptions other than perhaps that unwed status may be somehow related to the ways in which these persons have been previously treated by their own parents. A quick reference is made to similar singles in Britain, Israel, and Sweden. Perforce at this

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Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post*

The Spring 1993 issue promises to be another fine collection of articles, essays, book reviews, and poetry. This quarterly journal is so well-written, so interesting, so diverse in its choice of topics that it remains today, after sixty years of publishing, more widely read, more influential than any other journal in its field. Among the articles featured in the forthcoming Spring issue are “The Bill of Rights in Its Historical Context,” by Oscar Handlin; “The Biographer and the Angel,” by Herbert Marder; and “Academic Freedom,” by Edward Shils. Also appearing in the Spring issue will be “Such Good Taste,” an essay by the *Scholar's* editor, Joseph Epstein.

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stage of the author's research only a glance is directed to the adoptees. Not necessarily typical is a question by one boy under three years old: "Where is my daddy?" And then: "I said, 'Some families don't have daddies,' and that was it." Was it really, especially later on?

The Culture of Pain. *David B. Morris. Univ. of California, 1991. \$29.95.*

A stimulating, painless attempt by a humanist, with some clinical experience in a hospital, to "achieve a new understanding of pain" through a careful analysis of the views of philosophers, physicians, literary critics, creative artists, and the rest of us from classical Greece to this moment. Admittedly "no conclusion" emerges, yet it becomes clear that to comprehend pain we must consider not only medical diagnoses but also cultural and individual differences. Love and pain are linked; so are satire and comedy, boxing and couvade, pratfalls and phantom limb aches, Keats and the Marquis de Sade. Numerous photographs of paintings and sculptures illustrate and enliven the exposition.

Robert P. Sonkowsky

Introducing New Gods: The Politics of Athenian Religion. *Robert Garland. Cornell, 1992. \$47.95.*

Garland's view of Greek religion is both holistic and sympathetic. Focusing on Attica as the land most favored by and devoted to the gods, he examines the broad political, as well as the economic and religious, circumstances surrounding the establishment of new cults in the period from the Persian Wars to the trial of Socrates. Not only Classicists but all students of religion can benefit from his sensitive approach, which strives to free us from intolerance resulting from the inability of our own belief systems to understand other religions.

Nomos: Essays in Athenian Law, Politics, and Society. *Ed. by Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Stephen Todd. Cambridge Univ., 1991. \$49.50.*

A collection of 10 well-argued papers on the relationship of law to society and politics in classical Athens and a 25-page glossary of Athenian and other legal terms. Nine scholars discuss such topics as the differences in

the use of evidence in ancient Athenian and modern courts; Plato on the law of theft; the law of *hubris*; adultery; and sycophancy (vitiligation). These lively discussions are models of methodology. The glossary makes them also quite accessible to the non-specialist.

A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theater. *Graham Ley. Univ. of Chicago, 1991. \$5.95.*

Greek Tragedy: An Introduction. *Bernhard Zimmermann. Tr. by Thomas Marier. Johns Hopkins, 1991. \$8.95.*

Ancient Sun, Modern Light: Greek Drama on the Modern Stage. *Marianne McDonald. Columbia, 1992. \$35.*

The first book is a timely little manual for the growing number of persons today interested in the performance of ancient Greek plays. It contains a succinct account of the physical theater (its scenery, masks, etc.); a discussion of ancient acting, choral song, and action; a comparison of modern translations and adaptations; and plates and diagrams.

Zimmermann's book is also short and to the point; it carefully summarizes our present knowledge of the three tragic playwrights and their stagecraft, describes the content of their plays in an organized manner, and discusses their influence on the development of European drama. Both Ley and Zimmermann conclude with suggestions for further reading.

McDonald's book—a sympathetic examination of the work of some directors and adapters who not merely produce ancient Greek plays but re-create them with special relevance to the modern world—is a much needed contribution not only to dramatic criticism, but also to the theater itself. McDonald discusses production details (illustrated by 20 pages of photos) and directorial principles of Suzuki Takashi, Peter Sellars, Tony Harrison, Heiner Müller, and Thomas Murphy. The book also includes comments by Sellars, Harrison, and Murphy, as well as a talk by Theodoros Terzopoulos, who directed Müller's *Medeamaterial*. Productions of the sort discussed in the book reveal the vitality of the Classics for our diverse culture more effectively than do the standard, more academically correct and operatically declaimed productions.

The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450. *David C. Lindberg. Univ. of Chicago, 1992. \$19.95.*

The Geography of Science. *Harold Dorn. Johns Hopkins, 1991. \$35.95.*

Methods and Problems in Greek Science. *G.E.R. Lloyd. Cambridge Univ., 1991. \$59.50.*

Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians. *Owsei Temkin. Johns Hopkins, 1991. \$39.95.*

Lindberg's book is a learned, well-illustrated outline of the history of science in antiquity and the Middle Ages. Lindberg starts with prehistoric attitudes toward nature and the earliest literate evidence in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Greece; he includes the relevant speculations of Greek philosophers from Thales onward as well as the work of Aristotle; he describes the contributions of Hellenistic philosophy and Greek and Roman medicine while providing a context of educational development (e.g., the sophists, the Academy, the Lyceum). He also discusses ancient mathematics, optics, and astronomy/astrology and provides a balanced, duly appreciative account of the Roman transmission to the Middle Ages. The analysis of the Islamic transmission and contribution is particularly valuable, as is the whole portrait of the medieval cosmos. Lindberg is particularly careful throughout not to identify modern with ancient or medieval science, thereby viewing them as defective modern science, but to put each into its own context.

While Lindberg emphasizes the history of scientific theory, Dorn's book is directed more toward practical application. The title refers in fact to the effects on scientific research of practical problems associated with location, the classic case being the polarity between research conducted under "oriental despotism" and that of "Hellenic" individual enterprise. In the former, the aridity of the land requires government to encourage scientific solutions to problems of irrigation and soil productivity for the common good. In the latter, sufficient rainfall and abundance of agriculture allow leisure for individual speculative science. Many complexities attend this polarity, but Dorn uses it to analyze in a telling manner the practice of science from ancient Mesopotamia

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RECOMMENDED READING

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mia and China through modern Europe and the United States.

Lloyd, the distinguished professor of ancient philosophy and science at Cambridge University, presents several of his most interesting and stimulating papers published over the past three decades plus a few new papers. He prefaces each with a brief discussion of related subsequent bibliography and resulting modifications in his own thinking. Topics include Aristotle's theory of the classification of animals, the early history of dissection, and questions of Hippocratic authorship; virtually all periods and areas of Classical and Hellenistic Greek science are touched upon. A wonderful, miscellaneous introduction to Greek science through the mind of one of its finest historians.

The equally distinguished Temkin of Johns Hopkins focuses on the development of the Hippocratic tradition in relation to religion. He compares attitudes and practices concerning health and the body as revealed in medical, literary, biblical, and patristic texts from early to late antiquity and the Christian world. He not only shows perceived similarities and differences between the relation of Hippocrates to Asclepius and of Christian physicians/healers to Jesus, but also traces the degree of assimilation of Hippocratic wisdom to Christianity, with emphasis on the autonomy of medicine as a sphere of life in its own right separate from religion (including, for example, medical attitudes to abortion and other issues of Hippocratic origin that persist today). Not only scholars of the history of medicine, but practicing physicians, historians of religion, and the general reader will find much of interest here.

Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece. *Lisa Raphals.* Cornell, 1992. \$39.95.

This is a canny and technically skilled comparison of "metic" (from Greek *metis*) thinking in Classical Greek and classical and later Chinese language and literature. Metic thought falls between everyday thought and its more formally defined concepts in philosophy or science; yet Raphals argues that metic thought is not exactly the same as practical/applied as op-

posed to theoretical wisdom. The concept includes the range of meanings from wisdom to cunning or deception, as exemplified in the West by the wily Odysseus. Raphals explores similarities and differences in various Chinese and Greek approaches to this concept in preimperial and Ming fiction and in Homer's *Odyssey*.

Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition. *Ed. by James L. Kugel.* Cornell, 1990. \$12.95.

A well-planned collection of papers by excellent scholars on the relationship of poetry and prophecy in Judaic, Classical, Christian, Islamic, and other sources in ancient, medieval, and later times. All students of modern literature will enjoy the linguistic, historical, and literary analyses of this deeply interesting array of concepts in varying contexts illustrating differences, similarity, conflicts, and agreement between poet and prophet and between their associated mental states and kinds of inspiration.

Ronald Geballe

Michael Faraday: Sandemanian and Scientist. *Geoffrey Cantor.* St. Martin's, 1991. \$45.

Experimental Researches in Chemistry and Physics. *Michael Faraday.* Taylor and Francis (London), 1991. \$55.

The year 1991 was the bicentennial of Michael Faraday's birth; here are two volumes that commemorate it in quite different ways. Faraday was one of the greatest experimentalists of all time; his name is affixed to more chemical and physical laws, effects, and units than, I believe, anyone else's. As a boy, an untutored blacksmith's son, he applied to the great chemist Sir Humphry Davy, and was appointed assistant in the Royal Institution. His originality, intellectual acuity, versatility, honesty, and physical intuition soon won him independence as an investigator. Lacking mathematical training, he was forced to conceptualize his view of nature. He found ways of doing so that led, for example, to his notion of "lines of force" and the discoveries of electromagnetic rotation and of electromagnetic induction. These and other experiments formed the basis for the theory of electromagnetism and the electricity-based technology that fol-

lowed. Believing in the unity of nature's forces, he struggled in vain to find experimentally a connection between electricity and gravitation, a connection that still eludes us. Appointed to the professorship at the Royal Institution, he received all kinds of awards at home and abroad and invitations to court. Yet he was as well known for his modesty and the excellence of his frequent lectures and demonstrations before lay audiences and children.

The first of the two books deals with a touchy subject, Faraday as a "cautious yet courageous" scientist searching for deep natural truths and as a deeply religious member of a tiny, demanding sect. Although scientists today know his many contributions and admire him as a person, few are aware of the profound and explicit effect of his religious beliefs on his personality and scientific work. For those interested in making closer contact with him, the second book is a facsimile reprinting of a collection of his published work (excluding his studies in electricity), assembled by Faraday in 1859. By reading it, one can gain a view of the way in which his mind, uncluttered by the need (or indeed, the training) to express his understanding of nature in mathematical terms, worked its way to basics that still stand as such.

An Eye for Fractals: A Graphic and Photographic Essay. *Michael McGuire.* Addison-Wesley, 1991. \$29.95.

"This book is about a way to see." It is about the irregularly shaped objects that surround us, objects whose geometry is not that of Euclid. Their mathematics was out of bounds to mathematicians until about two decades ago, when Benoit Mandelbrot found a way to characterize their structure and coined the term "fractal" as a name for them. They turned out to be related to the developing theory that deals with the actual, rather than the idealized, behavior of even seemingly simple systems. Computers have made it possible to visualize these intricate forms and to show how they reproduce themselves (self-similarity) on continually decreasing dimensional scales. McGuire, a physicist for whom photography is a hobby, has produced striking examples with his computer and complements them with beautiful examples in nature. His book is a delightful vol-

ume, to be enjoyed as much for the sensations it creates in the viewer as for its intellectual content.

Continents in Motion: The New Earth Debate. 2nd edition. Walter Sullivan. American Institute of Physics, 1991. \$25.

This thoroughly revised and updated volume enriches the story about the way in which the earth's surface came to be the way it is by incorporating the many significant developments in technique and theory that have taken place since the 1974 edition. Sullivan is more than just a distinguished science writer; he has witnessed many of the discoveries reported here. He leavens his comprehensive treatment with tales about the people who made the contributions he reports. The grand picture is complex and fascinating. To put it together in such a skillful manner and tell the story with style requires an author of Sullivan's experience and taste.

Pi in the Sky: Counting, Thinking, and Being. John D. Barrow. Oxford, 1992. \$25.

Just what is mathematics, and why does it work? Did we invent it or does it exist outside us? What does it have to do with the Universe? Will computers make a difference in how we regard and do mathematics? These questions and other puzzling ones are the subject of this book by a theoretical physicist who must necessarily use mathematics while contemplating its nature and validity. His treatment is neither a history of mathematics nor a treatise on mathematics; it deals with the historical development of mathematical ideas, with the personalities that brought about the development, and with basic mathematical concepts. Its style is light, yet clear and penetrating.

Russell B. Stevens

The Social Creation of Nature. Neil Evernden. Johns Hopkins, 1992. \$38; paper, \$13.95.

Alternatives to Deforestation: Steps Toward Sustainable Use of the Amazon Rain Forest. Ed. by Anthony B. Anderson. Columbia, 1992. \$19.50.

Forests: The Shadow of Civilization. Robert Pogue Harrison. Univ. of Chicago, 1992. \$24.95.

As strikingly unlike as these three works are, they address much the same issue as Oelschlaeger does in his *Idea of Wilderness* (reviewed in *Key Reporter*, Winter '91-92). Thus they

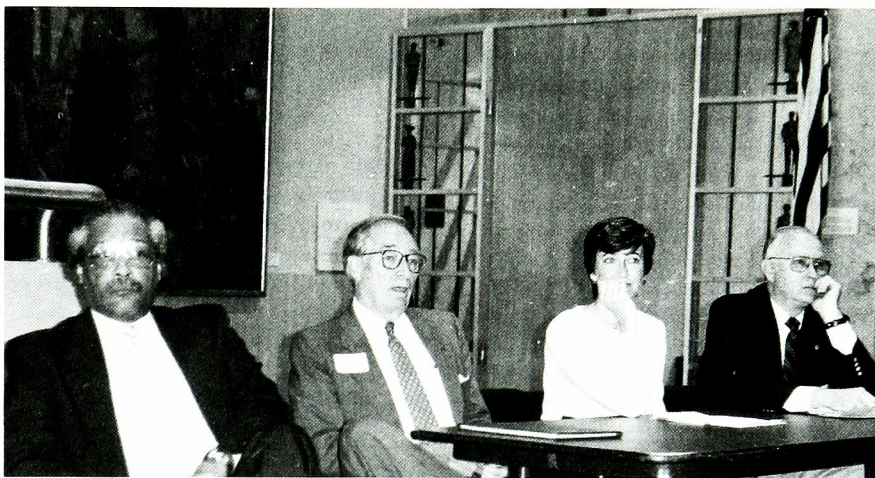
STATE AND REGIONAL CONFEREES DISCUSS PLANS FOR SCHOOLS

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Virginia chapters recently sponsored for secondary school teachers. And Ellen Trout, director of Commonwealth Partnership, based on the Franklin and Marshall campus, discussed this organization's workshops for teachers and encouragement of mentor relationships between high school and college faculty.

In the afternoon small-group discussions, the conferees considered numerous proposals for possible chapter action including holding more weekend workshops modeled on those in Virginia, extending existing programs

such as the Commonwealth Partnership to other localities, working with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation to obtain local recognition for participants in their Younger Scholar programs, and fostering a Pennsylvania version of the Visiting Scholar program for local schools. The conferees unanimously resolved that each Pennsylvania chapter and association should hold a special meeting to discuss the conference proposals and report the results to the national office by summer 1993.



Pictured at the conference in Harrisburg are (from left) Pennsylvania education official Donald Clark and panelists Robert Kirkwood, Ellen Trout, and George B. Oliver.

concern humankind's mixed and changing concepts and attitudes toward the natural world, especially the forested portions thereof. Evernden, as his title suggests, is concerned with how, over time, the concept of nature has changed and what that means in the climate of the "environmental movement." Anderson's volume reports a symposium in which a variety of specialists set out practical steps to alleviate the deforestation of the rain forest—a welcome relief from endless hand-wringing about it. And Harrison—humanist rather than scientist—explores, through analyses of literature, how the perception of forests has, in a sense, hovered over Western civilization for centuries.

Crops and Man. Jack R. Harlan. American Society of Agronomy/Crop Science Society of America, 1992. 2nd ed. \$34.

This is much more than another economic botany text; it is a concise but

far-reaching analysis of such things as the range of factors that may have led to present-day agriculture, the characters of crops and weeds, the processes of plant domestication, and the various patterns of agriculture about the world. As the percentage of practicing agriculturists shrinks ever lower in the "developed" countries, it is essential to be reminded, as by Harlan, of our critical dependence for food and fiber.

New World Parrots in Crisis: Solutions from Conservation Biology. Ed. by Steven R. Beissinger and Noel F.R. Snyder. Smithsonian, 1991. \$35; paper, \$16.95.

A welcome complement to the numerous publications on the general question of wildlife conservation and diversity, this book is a detailed examination of the plight of a specialized, albeit visually spectacular, group of birds—what causes the difficulty, how serious the threat is, and what may be

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done about it. Not surprisingly, because the same issue arises time and again, it turns out that far too little is known of the biology of the parrot species.

Anti-Evolution: A Reader's Guide to Writings Before and After Darwin. Tom McIver. Johns Hopkins, 1992. \$15.95.

No fewer than 1,852 annotated entries are to be found in this catalog, first published in 1988 and updated by a prefatory comment in 1992. The author, although making no attempt to refute points made in individual items, is careful to remind readers that he does not by any means necessarily agree with all the entries. If nothing else, the sheer number and diversity of the entries testify to the intensity with which the argument has been joined over the years.

Human Culture: A Moment in Evolution. Theodosius Dobzhansky and Ernest Boesiger (ed. and completed by Bruce Wallace). Columbia, 1983. \$18.50.

Only relatively recently has it been possible to deal with the evolution of

the human species in much the same way as for other living organisms. Much of the delay has been occasioned by the complexity attributable to cultural factors, and their own evolution. Here is a relatively brief, easily readable, summation of the key points.

Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness. Megan Vaughan. Stanford, 1991. \$37.50.

In one sense this is an account of the ways in which medicine and public health were carried out by the British during a period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in several African dependencies. As such it makes interesting reading. But a more telling message is perhaps a commentary on the extent to which political considerations and widely held perceptions of "the African" strongly influenced—more often than not, unwisely—the day-to-day practice of diagnosis and treatment.

Living Fossil: The Story of the Coelacanth. Keith Stewart Thomson. W.W. Norton, 1991. \$19.95.

The coelacanth is, in impressive degree, to biology what the Dead Sea

Scrolls are to the biblical scholar. One finds here the same array of blind luck, theft, chicanery, unlikely coincidence, politically motivated actions, national jealousies, professional pride, and the like that has characterized the far better known Scrolls story. Thomson's book may read in parts like a detective fiction, but so much the better.



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