
REVIEWS

John Hausdoerffer. *Catlin's Lament: Indians, Manifest Destiny, and the Ethics of Nature*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2009. 178p.

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George Catlin devoted his entire life to the preservation of American Indian material objects and to the protection of the American landscape. Often his efforts at preservation rebelled against popular nineteenth-century notions that declared the American Indian and the environment as sure casualties in the name of the nation's progress. In *Catlin's Lament*, John Hausdoerffer investigates George Catlin's personal viewpoints concerning westward expansion, American Indian removal, and the eradication of the natural landscape. Hausdoerffer explains that his monograph analyzes "the tenuous relationship between conscious ethical intentions and the unexamined cultural ideologies of George Catlin" (19). Hausdoerffer chose Catlin because of the artist's objection to nineteenth-century environmental and racial ideologies regarding the treatment of the American landscape as well as the American Indians, respectively. At the same time, Catlin's work (paintings, writings, a "wild west" show) involves stereotypical tropes of the American Indian, illustrating his partial "consent" of nineteenth-century ideology. Hausdoerffer's monograph attempts to flesh out the reasons for Catlin's contradictory ideas.

Hausdoerffer structures his book into five "snapshots" of Catlin's unexamined assumptions: his decision to devote his artistic and literary talents to American Indian environments and cultures; his journey west to document "vanishing" lifestyles; a critique of Catlin's presentation of the western frontier; Catlin's exhibitions of his work in European cities, such as his "wild west" show; and the effects of his death as well as his desire to found a national park (posthumously created as Yellowstone) on the American public. Hausdoerffer explains that Catlin viewed the commodification of nature as problematic simply because of the destruction such capitalistic ventures wrecked on the environment as well as the American Indians who inhabited these landscapes. While Catlin's objection illustrates his amazing foresight concerning the environment, at the same time, Catlin does not recognize the possibility of American Indian survival, thus demonstrating his reliance upon the Vanishing Indian trope, a commonality in nineteenth-century thinking.

Despite the precariousness of Catlin's position regarding the American Indians, Hausdoerffer does not attempt to glorify or vilify any of Catlin's ideological

assumptions. Rather, he examines them in order to understand the complexities of the nineteenth century as a whole. Hausdoerffer explains that, “Rather than a moral judgment of Catlin, this analysis indicts the logic of domination that engulfed a formative era in U.S. history—to the point that it reduced even its most visionary critics to participants in consensus” (159). In other words, because Catlin’s work embodied both consent and objection to American notions of race and modernization, his achievements illustrate that even the most freethinking, liberal-minded person cannot completely separate his/her belief system from the dominant society, in this case, the American nineteenth century.

Hausdoerffer gracefully demonstrates his main argument concerning Catlin’s intertwining notions of consent and objection through convincing examples taken from the artist’s writings about Indian removal and his paintings of famous figures such as Dewitt Clinton and Black Hawk. The most apt example of Catlin’s objection to nineteenth-century thinking emerges through his depiction of the West. Rather than portray the American West as an inviting pastoral region completely devoid of native inhabitants, Catlin reveals the conflicted landscape by juxtaposing open fields with industry and civilization. Although Catlin deplored the abuse of nature because of a budding American fixation on modernization, his opinions concerning American Indians repeatedly follow a less egalitarian route. When Catlin wanted to add Mandan religious artifacts to his collection despite the tribe’s rejection of the idea, for example, he collected the artifacts anyway. Similarly, in his “wild west” show, Catlin displayed American Indians as a spectacle for the amusement of Americans and Europeans alike. For Hausdoerffer, the root of this contradiction lies within the pressures applied by the white dominant culture on *all* members of nineteenth-century American society, whether these members realized it or not.

Catlin’s Lament thus illuminates how difficult it is to consciously or subconsciously break away from the society that forms us by focusing on one man who attempted to alter the United States’ sense of national self in a troubled age of burgeoning progress and racial unrest. ✱

Susan Sleeper-Smith, ed. *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. 362p.

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One of the most debated topics in museum, Native American, and Africanist Studies is who should have agency in displaying indigenous artifacts and culture in

museum exhibits. Susan Sleeper-Smith continues this debate in her compilation of essays gathered from the CIC/Newberry Library American Indian Studies Fall 2007 Symposium in *Contesting Knowledge*. Sleeper-Smith explains that typically, “Museums functioned as powerful rhetorical devices that created dominant and often pathological allegiances to a cultural ideal” (2). Her thorough compilation of essays thus works to obtain a consensus amongst scholars concerning shared and disparate cultural ideals and their subsequent visual presentation.

Sleeper-Smith argues that museum depictions of indigenous communities in South and North America have evolved over time: traditionally, curators depicted a binary system of civilized/primitive in early dioramas and “cabinets of curiosity” illustrating the early contact period between Euro-Americans and natives; followed by exhibits after the mid-twentieth century that incorporated native perspectives and curatorial work; and presently ending with indigenous tribal museums that focus on self-presentation and preservation through a multiplicity of voices. Although the essays denote a move away from the cultural imperialism of many museums’ previous exhibits, cultural disparity between natives and non-natives remains an obstacle in the curatorial process. This problem appears most poignant in the intent behind tribal self-representation in museums. While some tribal museums attempt to inform the general public about indigenous cultures, at the same time, their primary focus is the preservation of ways of life devastated by centuries of Westernized, imperialistic practices. Because tribal museums find exhibits a meaningful place to preserve their histories, the general public does not always understand the multi-faceted intent of their curatorial work.

Susan Sleeper-Smith’s *Contesting Knowledge* insightfully provides an approach to understanding the changes behind the curatorial process, while simultaneously illustrating how damaging stereotypical imagery of indigenous people has been and still is for those seeking to offer countering narratives. In “The Construction of Native Voice at the National Museum of the American Indian,” Jennifer Shannon, for example, recognizes that a deviation from traditional museum work may excite the native and non-native curators; however, the public’s critique of innovative representations usually involves the same rhetoric that made the traditional dioramas so popular. In other words, when natives define themselves according to their own terms, their artistic reproductions appear lacking in “enough scholarship” or, they are confusing because the emphasis centers upon the community (multivocality) versus the individual.

Finding a solution to the problem of audience reaction, especially considering the plethora of images that currently depict natives as an element of the past (for example, sports mascots and the appropriation of native religions by New Age

spiritualists), seems impossible to eradicate. While Jennifer Shannon states that an “authentic” representation of natives can be achieved only through native curators’ exhibits, Brenda J. Child claims that tribal museums can simultaneously speak for natives and speak to natives and non-natives alike. As a result of the contradicting solutions in this compilation, the answer for how museums should represent indigenous people appears as complicated as the history of the curatorial practice itself.

Despite the fact that this edition does not offer a conclusive strategy in handling native representation in the museum world, *Contesting Knowledge* succinctly details the ongoing indigenous struggle for self-presentation in the postcolonial world. Susan Sleeper-Smith metanarratively illuminates the deep-rooted complexities of distinct museum perspectives on native representation through a compilation of complimentary yet differing contributing voices. Sleeper-Smith’s edition thus presents a potent argument for those interested in understanding the history of curatorial depictions of indigenous people as well as what museum work culturally offers natives in the representation of tribal communities. ✱

Celia Malone Kingsbury. *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front*. Studies in War, Society, and the Military. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010. 309p.

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In *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front*, Celia Malone Kingsbury delivers a careful, and cautionary, historical analysis, one that focuses on World War I as a home-front battle in which women and children played vital roles. Her engaging five-chapter analysis begins with a late-twentieth-century historical frame, one that refers to the anti-war (anti-propaganda) song-smithing of Bob Dylan and Green Day, but from which Kingsbury quickly turns to focus on an investigation of the multi-dimensional home-front practices that prepared, encouraged, and steered Allied women and children for a particular kind of participation in the Great War. Kingsbury equips her readers in her introduction with critical terminology derived from “classic sociological theory,” in her phrase, which she relies upon throughout the study. Specifically, she employs two key concepts of Ferdinand Tönnies’ from the late-nineteenth century that concern “mass society” and “public opinion”: *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (the first of which may be “translated as ‘community’” and the second as “society”) (23). While Tönnies has been “sometimes overlooked” according to Kingsbury,

she deploys his terms regularly throughout her text, using them to ground her various examinations and to offer the study's crystalline and central message: that women and children were "enlisted" into war service through the work of various propagandistic media, ranging from the cover art of sheet music to the free promotional children's books distributed at jewelry stores. Kingsbury wishes her study to be fear-inducing because it reveals the carefully wrought work of propaganda texts and images, both of which were produced from within panoptic Allied governments as well as by obliging and "patriotic" private citizens.

"Propaganda violates one of the foremost tenets of democracy," Kingsbury writes, "that of the educated population making decisions based on facts" (267). Women at home—who were responsible for caring for children, managing household finances, and disseminating national(ist) ideals within the family unit (and sometimes outside of it)—were denied the brutal subtleties as well as certain facts concerning the war and were instead offered, or fed (along with their Crisco or cornmeal), propaganda texts and images. The purpose of these, Kingsbury argues, was to teach women to leverage the family unit, the *Gemeinschaft*, into a position of vital service to the *Gesellschaft*. This central idea of Kingsbury's study is one that she frequently repeats, as if a refrain. Her chapters include visual and textual analyses of "domestic science" materials (related to food production, consumption, and rationing), magazine fiction designed for women readers, textual representations of military and nursing roles for women (texts that depicted service to the Red Cross and Voluntary Aid Detachments, whose women were known as "VADs"), fiction series for adolescent girls that championed enterprising courage simultaneously with the preservation of traditional women's roles, and texts and cartoons specifically aimed at children.

To examine the manifold propagandistic media on which she focuses and to reveal how all of them collaborated to encourage women and children on the home front to "serve the state in the service of family" (to such a degree that the directionality of this "service" often reverses and perhaps "merges," as she says), Kingsbury includes rich and varied visual examples. Throughout the text, readers encounter argument-appropriate and representative images, which range from reasonably well-known World War I military enlistment posters to examples from Kingsbury's own personal collection of materials, such as children's books that bear the imprint of children's use of them (in one salient example, she includes an image from the British children's book *Ten Little Sausages* that reveals the child-owner's own attempt to draw a bayoneted sausage, a clear representation of the "Hun" enemy). Kingsbury shows how the family became a key strength of the Allies' war effort; the family became "a Kaiser-fighting unit" (100). Popular juvenile fiction

such as the “Somewhere” novels, whose audience was adolescent girls, presented images of young girls who, with “brave independen[ce],” defended their families; they fought for the defeat of the martial nemesis in intelligent, enterprising, and brave ways, seemingly proto-feminist ways. Kingsbury’s discussion of these novels is particularly rich and thus her conclusion concerning them is convincing (though not necessarily surprising): the stories’ moral is that a girl might be as brave and courageous as a boy or man but she must in the end fulfill her domestic role in the family as a wife and mother. A protagonist of one of the “Somewhere” novels on which Kingsbury focuses is Helen Carey, whose courage marks her as (in the words of the novel) “half boy, half girl, and the better half of both,” but Helen is, at the end of her story, a heroine who “remains in the service of the family as traditional caretaker” (134). Kingsbury concludes her assessment of these novels by saying “the *Gemeinschaft* has served the state and preserved it as well as preserving itself” (137), which is another way of showing that these young heroines “serve the family on behalf of the state” (139).

Kingsbury is diligent and consistent in most of her investigations of the “war service” that her chosen propaganda pieces perform, but she does at times appear reductive in her assessments. One example comes in her description of schoolroom use of materials created by the Red Cross and the National Security League. She suggests that such school-day activities for children as “patriotic” essay-writing, play-performing, and fundraising (activities for which the above-named organizations provided teachers with instructions) seemed to cause the “abandon[ing of] intellectual activities altogether” (195). Kingsbury concludes this thought thus: “The war and wartime duties take every waking minute of a child’s life” (195). The evidence Kingsbury provides might encourage such a conclusion based on the simple preponderance of examples of books, posters, postcards, and school-destined publications that portray “patriotic” activities for young children, but nevertheless such a definitive claim risks leaving readers to question such absolutism, here and elsewhere in the text. Similarly, while Kingsbury is clear to outline the population on whom she focuses, the middle-class housewife and her children, one wonders about those outside of this group, such as non-traditional families, immigrant families, and those of the lowest (and highest) socio-economic echelons. Certainly a study such as Kingsbury’s cannot address this entire range, but comments concerning the representation of and/or complete exclusion of such people from propagandistic media might have indicated the more subtle nature of propaganda as a device of war, nationalism, and colonialism, a device that has “in mind” and thus reproduces certain archetypal kinds or images of national peoples.

Because *For Home and Country* considers such an array of propaganda tools, all of which seem to embrace/deploy stereotypes of the adversary while celebrating the righteousness of the American or British or French nuclear family, this text is an engaging one. When a reader of today encounters images such as those of postcards that use children to defame the evil enemy via adult-centric scatological humor or the various “trading” cards distributed by Black Cat cigarettes showing women performing patriotic jobs, the dangers and historical roles of such propaganda pieces resound. Kingsbury’s text is a useful one for scholars whose research focus concerns any one of the major visual or textual devices or communication genres about which she writes. While those who study music, or women’s fiction, or the product advertising of the nineteen-teens might feel that her treatment of these areas is incomplete, which it can’t help but be in a survey such as this, what these scholars can gain from her study is a better understanding, resulting from her clear critical apparatus, of the interplay between these tools as they mutually worked to motivate Allied women and children on the home front to perform a particular role that served the state in wartime. Kingsbury carefully reveals to readers *why* and *how* such textual, photographic, illustrative, and filmic images were brought into the service of war and of the state, but her particular focus is on the ways in which women and children populate such images. Kingsbury offers, thus, an analysis that strives to reinforce for scholars of early-twentieth-century popular culture, literature, and visual media the lengths to which “the state” will go to enlist “the family” and the moral inversions that are a consequence of such efforts. ✱

Silvia Lin. *Representing Atrocity in Taiwan: The 2/28 Incident and White Terror in Fiction and Film*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. 240p.

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The power of literature and the other creative arts on the global stage is that they can function as an antidote to state power in many different ways. The literature and film of contemporary Taiwan, for example, far exceeds in quality the quantity of its population or the lasting geo-political significance of its state. This has been said of other countries in the past, such as Ireland, generally speaking marginalized on the global playing field. Silvia Lin’s book on literature and film that represent the political repression of the Kuomintang-backed February 28th Incident of 1947, slaughtering an estimated 15 to 30 thousand and silencing a generation of intellectuals, and the resultant forty years of “White Terror” that accompanied the economic rise of Taiwan, brings to light some outstanding works that will

be of interest to anyone who enjoys great literature and film and anyone who values the *exposé* style of cultural production that emerged from suspect regimes in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and South Africa. Her book is subtle and nuanced, revealing the complexities, ambiguities, and unique qualities of a dozen or more literary and cinematic works from the late 1940s to the 1980s and 1990s. The work also is savvy and informed, engaging the theoretical contributions of such scholars as Dominick LaCapra, Pierre Janet, Mieke Bal, Ann Whitehead, Lydia Liu, Maurice Halbwach, Maureen Turim, Avrom Fleishman, Thomas Elsaesser, and others. In the course of her elucidation of how political repression is represented in the written and cinematic texts of Taiwan, Lin addresses a passel of critical themes including trauma, redemption, revenge, memory, gender, ethnicity, privacy, melodrama, victimhood, and realism. The result is a complicated and neglected topic managed economically and lucidly in a volume that will surely intervene in Chinese cultural studies but also will prove attractive to anyone concerned with the overarching issue of atrocity and the literary and cinematic representation of the “disappeared.”

Lin’s book is divided into two main parts, each of which comprises three chapters. In the first part, she primarily focuses on literature and in the second on film. There is some interconnectedness that goes beyond thematic continuity, as some of the literary works have been adapted to the screen. She prefaces her work with an introduction and ends with a prologue. In the beginning pages of the introduction, she amply illustrates how challenging the subject matter is, for to date there still is in Taiwan no satisfying reckoning of the White Terror period from 1947 to 1987, no consensus has materialized from the people, and no objective assessment of the past has been written, nor under the present circumstances could it. Indeed, a substantial component of Lin’s argument consists of showing how attitudes toward atrocity in Taiwan’s recent past are affected and inflected by the ethnic background of individuals and the particular historical conjuncture in which those attitudes are being articulated. Thus, a daring and pioneering work written in 1983, for example, might actually exhibit a far more muted representation of past atrocities than would a work of 1989 or 1996. One thing, however, is certain: the long period of forced silence of any public (and most private) discussion of 2/28 and its aftermath has left a lasting, indelible scar on the Taiwanese body politic.

The consequence of the 2/28 demonstrations, subsequent violent crackdown, and the martial law under which civilians lived for the better part of the ensuing four decades was not solely the liquidation of dissidents through detention and extrajudicial execution. An attendant consequence was that the entire historical

period transpired during a virtual vacuum of any utterance of the events. Lin has unearthed one interesting story from 1947—Ou Tansheng’s “Intoxication”—that addresses the topic; but the other works that mention, let alone depict, 2/28 were not written or published until the 1980s. This has led to the unique phenomenon of works that appear far after the fact, and the problematic nature of reconstructing the historical record is often foregrounded in them. The five works that Lin discusses in chapter one all feature ethnicity as a major theme, how it colors gender and marital relations, friendships, and attitudes toward the past. Ou Tansheng’s name is not well known in Taiwan, because his work was published once in the immediate aftermath of 2/28 and subsequently suppressed until it was reprinted four decades later. Of the four other authors covered in this chapter, all basically contemporaries of each other, Lin Wenyi and Lin Shenjing would be considered minor writers while Zhong Zhaozheng and Li Qiao count as two of the most influential and prominent Taiwanese authors of the past several decades. Sylvia Lin does an interesting job of teasing out some ironic similarities between Ou’s very early work and Lin Wenyi’s short story “Under the Snow” (1987). Both works personify the way that ethnic identity has contaminated relations between the sexes. They both paint dismal pictures of the way in which relationships of those from perceived unequal ethnic groups have hindered the ability of the individuals from developing positive and equal sexual relations. Zhong’s *Angry Tides* (1993), published six years after the lifting of martial law, is one of the most expansive treatments of the early period, as it spans the period from the end of World War II to the early days of the 2/28 massacre and crackdown. Zhong also spends copious space portraying such things as the failure of marriage and loss of a baby, as well as the way the crackdown drove some Taiwanese who were previously colonized by the Japanese (1895-1945) back into the arms of their colonizers. Lin Shenjing’s 1986 work, structured much like a detective novel, creates a parallel between three “sworn” brothers of the 1940s (à la Chinese martial arts culture) and three of their grandchildren’s generation of the early 1980s. The intertwined plot allows for an interesting contrast between the “heroic” atmosphere of early, more heady times, and the “decadent” times that material excess have begotten more recently. The story suggests that ethnic relations have improved but the overall socio-cultural milieu has deteriorated. Li Qiao’s now classic novella “Notes on Taimu Mountain” endeavors to “fill in” the repressed and now lost record of Taiwanese intellectual and victim of political disappearance Lü Heruo by establishing a fictional narrative of a character who resembles Lü, an Austronesian indigenous character who harbors him, and a nameless bounty hunter who provides a verbal defense for his pursuit. Lin argues that Li Qiao privileges the “victim” over the “hero” in his rendering of the White Terror period.

Lin's second chapter delineates the ways in which literary works textually confront collective "amnesia" to which the suppression of information about 2/28 and its aftermath have given rise. Her discussion of Lan Bozhou's "The Song of the Covered Wagon" from 1988 (later loosely adapted by Hou Hsiao-hsien into *Good Men, Good Women* and analyzed in chapter four) and Dong Nian's "Last Winter" (1979) indicate that authors themselves commingle realistic and documentary style with epistemological problems, enticing readers to think of their works in terms of realistic representation of the past but simultaneously undermining their efforts to ascertain that past. An intriguing technique of Dong's, for example, is that his work is chronological by month and date, thus giving the reader the impression of a systematically evolving record, but the years are confused and not organized along a linear structure. Further, both works exemplify the entangled web of private affairs and public events, suggesting in some cases that the intrusive public domain is unavoidable but at the same time employing depictions of people's personal lives as countervailing narratives that may be superior to the public record. In the concluding chapter of this portion of the book, Lin selects four stories that epitomize the female, the female body, and the female psyche as the site of political and national contestation. Her discussion of Chen Yingzhen's classic work "The Mountain Road," viewed as sacred scripture by many on the intellectual left in Taiwan, is a courageous attempt to offer a subtle critique of Chen's subjugation of the female heroine to the goals of Marxist economic and political critique. Victimhood in the aftermath of 2/28 almost by definition becomes a gendered construct, because it is the males who in most cases are killed in confrontations, arrested, and/or executed and the females who, removed from direct contact with the violence, live on as vestiges of their father's, husband's, or brother's martyrdom. Li Ang, one of Taiwan's most celebrated female authors, eviscerates this consistent theme in leftist literature by describing a woman who not only survives but goes on to seek office in the legislature, though not for the reasons one might assume. She seeks reunification with her estranged husband through participation in politics and thereby embodies a character that is not one-dimensionally political.

In the second half of the book, Lin sets out to ask how visual images represent atrocity differently from written ones. Employing the critical framework of Maureen Turim on memory, Lin suggests that, since flashbacks are apprehended by the audience in the film-present alongside current actions, they serve as a causal link between past events and the contemporary. Lin's extensive discussion of Hou's film mentioned above, which utilizes flashback, interspersed parallel narratives, and voice over, creates a fragmentary and artificial impression in the spectator that

further the untrustworthy status of the various accounts of the past rather than clarifying it, let alone glorifying it or its agents. Hou's film also elevates the notion that personal events have overtaken and pushed public issues to the side to an even higher level than the literary works of just a few years before. Lin also shows how the cinematic works (Hsu Hsiao-ming's *Heartbreak Island* is also an adaptation—of Dong Nian's much earlier story) differ greatly from their literary antecedents, both because they were produced at different historical points and because the media are different. Like Hou, Hsu's film displaces the political with the personal. Lin's contrast does not end with the distinctions she makes between the two media of literature and cinema. Chapter five contains an extended comparison of Hou's *A City of Sadness* (1989), the first feature length rendering of 2/28, and Lin Zhengsheng's (Lin Cheng-sheng) *March of Happiness* released ten years later. One of the most brilliant aspects of this chapter is that her analysis of *A City of Sadness* moves beyond my own 2004 article on the film to render several key examples of the impossibility of scenes being interpreted as part of the memory of the characters to whom the audience presumes they belong. Her close reading reveals some deep cognitive dissonances in the film that continue to raise questions not just about the violence and repugnance of 2/28 and its aftermath but about our continuing inability to come to terms with it. Lin's later film, on the other hand, is far more Manichean than Hou's, actually positing victims and villains in ways in which Hou's deep-seated ambivalence either is unable or refuses to do. *March of Happiness*, unlike Hou's work, is not set firmly in the past, but is cast in the "subjunctive mood," Lin argues, to provoke the audience into speculating upon what was possible, to propose that Taiwan could and should have been a better place than political circumstances allowed.

Lin's final chapter on Wan Ren's *Super Citizen Ko* also concerns the status of the past, tragedy, heroism, and, most important, redemption and atonement. But particularly worth noting is Lin's discussion of the intermingling in Wan's film of archival documentary footage both from the Japanese colonial period and from the heyday of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang days. He embeds these public visual images into the recollections of fictional characters and reduces the historical visual record to the level of fiction. Lin asks how we cope with the issue of culpability when even those imprisoned during the White Terror bear some responsibility for the persecution and deaths of others. We are left to wonder what memories can exist when personal stories have been suppressed and lost while public recollections have been amplified and replayed to the extent that they replace those now irretrievable traces. However, Lin draws on the work of Dominick LaCapra's use of mourning to show how loss can be recognized and

through the consumption of literature or film, like the process of the dream work, one can take partial leave of it and move on. Thus, Lin strives in the epilogue of her book to emphasize the positive, to look forward, concluding that a self-reflexive approach, which has become more common practice in recent years, allows Taiwanese to think more dispassionately about the past and more hopefully about the future. ✱

Audrey Goodman. *Lost Homelands: Ruin and Reconstruction in the 20th-Century Southwest*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010. 241p.

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At a time that regional studies are struggling vis-à-vis the ever-increasing focus on globalism in literary scholarship, Audrey Goodman has written a book that promises to reenergize Southwestern studies. In *Lost Homelands: Ruin and Reconstruction in the 20th-Century Southwest*, Goodman traces the ties that bind this U.S. region to larger social, political, and global shifts that have shaped the U.S. since the Great Depression and tallies the costs of these entanglements for the Southwest, but she also presents hope for the “reconstruction” of the region.

Analyzing texts and images side-by-side, the author discovers a set of common concerns about the fragmentation of the individual, the breakdown of community, the transformation and exploitation of the natural landscape, and the repression of alternative stories and histories of the Southwest. If the Great Depression marked the end of migrants’ hopes for “relatively stable homelands,” she writes, the 1940s and ’50s were at the beginning of the nation’s ever-more sophisticated scientific development, increased militarization efforts that found expression in numerous atomic tests, and the attendant contamination of Southwestern landscape itself (5). Meanwhile, the region has also provided the setting for progressively more complex cross-cultural and cross-border relationships that shape experiences of migration and exile. Even as she thus records the region’s disintegration, Goodman discovers in the fragments—“ruins”—of the Southwest-as-homeland a point of departure for recovery that may enable a new sense of belonging and community: “By making us mindful of the present and encouraging us to excavate the many layers of the past,” Goodman writes, “photographic and literary representations of Southwestern landscapes can engage us in the challenging process of living with ruins and constructing homelands in a culture that overtly values mobility, growth, and change” (10).

The book is structured thematically with each chapter focusing on a specific type of vernacular landscape: “The Road,” “The Village,” “The Bridge,” “The

Desert,” “The Border,” and “Magical Regions.” Examining the road as a symbol of mobility, of detachment from the local, and of an increasingly commercialized culture that at once defies community and creates its own group identity, the first chapter discusses photographs by Edward Weston, Dorothea Lange, and Russell Lee alongside John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, Nathanael West’s *The Day of the Locust*, and Preston Sturges’ film *Sullivan’s Travels*. The second chapter traces how individual writers—Cleofas Jaramillo, Frank Waters, and Denise Chávez—reconstruct a sense of community and juxtaposes these works with John Collier Jr.’s and Russell Lee’s Farm Security Administration photos. The chapter “The Bridge” examines the ruins of wartime atomic programs and Japanese internment camps and explores the ways in which narratives by Frank Waters and Gary Ohikiri and art by Meridel Rubenstein, Ellen Zweig, Steina and Woody Vasulka, and Joan Myers expose the traumatic history of a landscape that made the secrecy of atomic testing and the forced ethnic isolation of the internment camps possible. In her fourth chapter, “The Desert,” Goodman concentrates on Georgia O’Keeffe’s, Leslie Marmon Silko’s, and Terry Tempest Williams’ representations of trauma epitomized in “civilization’s ruins”—the land’s contamination and the effects of radiation on the body. In her last two chapters, Goodman turns to the border as a contested space and assesses its potential to morph into a home for a hybrid culture. Considering photographs by Peter Goin and Geoffrey James next to Cormac McCarthy’s, Alberto Ríos’s, and Arturo Islas’ fiction in chapter five, she measures, in chapter six, the ability of magical realism both to express the traditional and modern worlds and to open up the region to productive cultural exchanges.

Drawing on an impressively exhaustive and interdisciplinary range of criticism and theory (e.g., Gloria Anzaldúa, Clement Greenberg, Henri Lefebvre, Patricia Nelson Limerick, Gerald Nash, José David Saldívar, Richard Slotkin, Rebecca Solnit, Donald Worster), Goodman centers her argument on geographer John Brinkerhoff Jackson’s discussions of abandoned Southwestern landscapes. As she engages postmodern, spatial, and border studies theories to position the Southwest at the nexus of a changing and progressively globalized world, she participates in postwestern scholarship that emphasizes that Southwestern landscape has persistently been shaped and reshaped by the often brief settlements of a migratory culture and reconfigures the region. Like other postwestern critics, however, Goodman is experiencing a quandary, cautioning her readers, on the one hand, of the regional designation “Southwest” as “outdated, ‘ethnocentric, nationalistic, and misleading’” because of the Southwest’s ties to the modern, global world and, on the other, discerning a “vernacular” language in Southwestern landscapes that

declares hope for healing (13). It is in these vernacular landscapes of habitation—its roads, villages, deserts, and the national border—that she finds the often repressed stories of psychic trauma articulated. Thus, a sense of “homeland” can arise, the author argues, by “actively link[ing] the events of the past with an understanding of the present” (13).

Goodman’s book is attractive not only for its wide-ranging scholarship but also for its methodology and occasionally narrative approach that, revealing fascinating details and facts, are able to capture her readers’ interest. In each chapter, the author thus stages a dialogue between the works she analyzes: for example, Edward Weston’s photographs in *California and the West* (1940), portraying the ubiquity of ruins (depicting corpses, abandoned cars, burned forests) and an increasingly commercialized culture (“Hot Coffee,’ Mohave Desert”) in the West, are complemented by the book’s accompanying narrative written by his wife Charis Wilson. Goodman’s brief discussion of Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) in the same chapter further emphasizes the themes of mobility, commercialism, and community that are of concern to Weston. Intriguing, also, is Goodman’s discussion of lesser known texts and art alongside the famous to uncover the untold, or little told, stories about the Southwest—the ethnic narratives of Cleofas Jaramillo next to the writings of Frank Waters, and the photo essays on Japanese internment camps of Joan Myers (in collaboration with historian Gary Ohikiro) beside those of Dorothea Lange. Furthermore, in bringing into conversation several types of “texts,” Goodman seeks to provide differing perspectives on an issue. At the same time, the author stylistically draws her readers’ attention by preceding each chapter’s textual and visual discussions with brief background information on the chapter’s key ideas. Occasionally, she provides biographical accounts to illustrate an artist’s relation to a specific landscape, such as Georgia O’Keeffe’s spiritual connection to the Southwest, and to anchor the chapter’s argument in specific details.

Goodman’s original and insightful engagement of scholarship, of historical and cultural background, and of artistic and literary works is ambitious. The drawback of including such an extensive array of material, however, is that the author must selectively give attention to individual texts, which can limit the scope of her argument. For example, the three-paragraph discussion of Steinbeck contrasts with the five pages Goodman spends on Jaramillo. Further, it is debatable whether the inclusion of the short discussion of *Sullivan’s Travels* is ultimately useful, given that this is the only film discussed. Even so, it might be argued that Goodman chose to examine little known authors or texts more closely than the famed in the interest of exposing the untold stories of the region.

Making the argument that literature and art can be the source of a possible “reconstruction” of the Southwest, *Lost Homelands: Ruin and Reconstruction in the 20th-Century Southwest* is a remarkably well researched work that rethinks writers’ and artists’ ability to inspire hope and even to affect change. ✱

Stacey Peebles. *Welcome to the Suck: Narrating the American Soldier’s Experience in Iraq*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011. 192p.

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Stacey Peebles’ book on the literatures of the Persian Gulf War and Iraq War situates itself amid the growing body of scholarship on contemporary American war narratives. It is a timely subject, indeed, in both academic and geopolitical terms. In the fall of 2009, *PMLA* published a special issue on War, and chapter one of *Welcome to the Suck* first appeared as an article in that issue. Attention is being paid (to paraphrase Willy Loman’s faithful wife, Linda) to veterans who are writing about their wartime experiences in Iraq. The need for the academy and the American public at large to acknowledge these veterans and their writing constitutes the ethical imperative that drives Peebles’ work. Her sense of moral responsibility frames the book: “Luckily, many soldiers haven’t kept that hurt locker closed indefinitely, and open it to write or otherwise tell their stories.... These stories are thrilling, painful, lovely, horrific, and intimate. It benefits all of us if, when the locker opens and the voices begin, we listen” (22). The final words of the book’s conclusion strike a similar note; she states that war “matters, and soldiers’ stories tell us why and how. Then and now, we have to listen” (174). Peebles succeeds in advancing the work scholars have been doing over the last several years in listening to the stories that soldiers and marines have been telling—not only in the forms of prose and poetry but also in film—about their combat experiences.

Peebles’ thesis is broad, and this proves to be a rhetorical two-edged sword. She articulates her project as follows: “In this book, I examine a selection of contemporary war stories from the Persian Gulf War and the Iraq War.... I show how these newest stories have a new twist, even as they address familiar, even ancient subjects” (21). The breadth of her argument allows her the flexibility to consider multiple points of interest that fall under the umbrella of war narrative. Chapters vary considerably in subject matter, ranging from sexuality and violence to gender and performance to the cinematic representation of trauma. The drawback is the vagueness of asserting that new war writing features “a new twist”; it is also not entirely clear what the rhetorical pay-off is for proving that contemporary war

literature is both new and familiar. The argument surrenders a degree of focus and consistency from chapter to chapter in exchange for greater freedom of exploration. To her credit, Peebles points out that one element which makes contemporary war narratives new is the role of social media in the genesis and distribution of those narratives, a point she pursues in her analysis of Colby Buzzell's memoir *My War*. While the question regarding social media is not sustained evenly from chapter to chapter, Peebles is right to address it as a necessary new ingredient in our understanding of twenty-first-century war stories.

Chapter one examines the convergence of sex and violence in Anthony Swofford's memoir *Jarhead* and the performative construction of the self in Buzzell's *My War*. While Peebles' analysis of each text is insightful, the two sections of the chapter do not communicate with each other effectively, and as a result this segment of the book feels like two miniature chapters welded together. I must note that Peebles mistakenly refers to Anthony Swofford as a marine infantryman (1, 24), when he was in fact a scout-sniper, which is a specialized vocation in the Marine Corps. This is no insignificant distinction for Swofford, who explicitly differentiates between the elite class of snipers and the "common" grunts of the infantry.

The second chapter presents a unified analytical whole insofar as it explores the performance of masculinity in three memoirs: Joel Turnipseed's *Baghdad Express*, Nathaniel Fick's *One Bullet Away*, and Kayla Williams' *Love My Rifle More than You*. Peebles argues convincingly that performance is the common denominator among the different versions of male and female masculinity presented in these memoirs. While Turnipseed's masculine pose is self-conscious, ironic, and unstable, Fick's is self-conscious and "hard," and while Williams succeeds in performing the masculine value of toughness, her access to the male-dominant community of war-fighters is ultimately proscribed by her female biology. In chapter three, Peebles examines the radically different treatment of the Other in John Crawford's memoir *The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell* and Brian Turner's collection of poetry *Here, Bullet*. While her analysis of Turner's poems ends up being a bit choppy, her critique of Crawford's book is severe and convincing. (I have taught this memoir in a course on American war literature and film, and after reading Peebles' assessment, I cannot teach it the same way again.) In chapter four, Peebles turns her attention from literature to film. She explores the relationship between narrative, trauma, and military and cinematic technologies in the fiction film *In the Valley of Elah* and the documentary *Alive Day Memories*.

Faculty, students, and independent readers looking for an introduction to the study of contemporary American war narratives will find Peebles' book extremely informative. However, the breadth of her thesis renders the book less helpful to

scholars already established in this particular field, as the study aims more for width of coverage than depth and consistency of analysis. A modest section of endnotes and a sizeable bibliography accompany the text. As someone who has taught and written on several of the books and films Peebles covers in her book, I would readily include *Welcome to the Suck* in graduate and upper-level undergraduate courses on war narratives or the role of social media in the formation of contemporary American literature. Useful in a variety of pedagogical and research capacities, the book is sure to raise awareness of veterans and the stories they have to tell. ✱

Paul Jay. *Global Matters: The Transnational Turn and Literary Studies*.

Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2010. 232p.

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According to *Global Matters: The Transnational Turn and Literary Studies*, transnational and global studies had their beginning when the focus of literary studies shifted from a Eurocentric approach to enclose minorities and postcolonial literatures. For Paul Jay, globalization is not a recent phenomena but a theoretical development that had its start in the 1960s in political and social institutions as well as in universities. Moreover, for Jay globalization covers the issues of imperialism, colonization, and decolonization. Globalization is not solely an economic or cultural phenomenon. It does not put us either in danger of homogenization since uncontaminated cultures do not exist per se but all cultures are shaped by others. What exists is a connection between global and feminist studies and a continuous exchange between the center and the periphery that leads to new forms of agency. For Jay, global studies do not push towards fragmentation and incoherence but towards the building of new critical approaches that help to renew the discipline. Regarding the interrelation of Global and Postcolonial studies, Jay assesses that postcolonialism cannot be taken away by globalization and there is a responsibility to continue studying the histories of imperialism and colonialism.

The book is divided into two parts. The first one is devoted to the theoretical and methodological approaches of global studies while the second examines particular literary works. Chapter one addresses the introduction of globalization in the field of literary studies and the idea that, as Mathew Arnold put it, the best literature is one that transcends historical and national barriers. Edward Said and Masao Miyoshi's work come up with very pertinent problems such as the pressing need for a definition of globalization, the issues of multiculturalism and globalism and the impact of globalization on the study of particular national literatures.

In the second chapter, Jay states that, in order to define globalization, first we have to historicize it. Among the critics mentioned, Arjun Appadurai sees globalization as a contemporary phenomenon, rooted in the outburst of new technology, media and forms of communication. Meanwhile Roland Robertson talks about a global approach in which literary studies include diverse times and periods. In the third chapter, Jay links globalization, economics and politics with the relationship between poor and rich countries. Globalization and the development in transportations and communications have had an enormous impact on the economic progress of the world. Still, this chapter brings to the attention of the reader several problems such as deterritorialization, the disruption of national paradigms, and the increase of population which results in the dissolution of cultures.

In chapter four, Jay addresses the problem of borders. He does not reject the empirical national borders marked by countries as much as the fact that there are many commonalities among those nations that should be explored and brought to attention. In this regard it is important to point out his stance on hybridity and the hybridized. For him, hybridity is so much a component of nations that talking about purity is not only obsolete but completely false in regards to the creation of cultures and identities.

The second part of the book is centered on the use of these theoretical approaches to study particular literary works. He starts with Arundathi Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, and Moshim Hamid's *Moth Smoke*. Roy's book, which is defined as a work of postnational fiction, examines the contemporary conditions of a country that, after having been living under British rule, has to find its own identity, an experience described as claustrophobic and agonizing. Chandra's novel focuses more on the consequences of postcolonialism rather than on the effects of globalization. Then, characters tend to struggle between two identities, the British and their own (Indian). Instead of feeling oppressed by the exterior world they want to embrace it because of their fascination by it. Finally, Hamid's novel, written from what he calls a "post" postcolonial generation perspective, establishes the relationship between colonialism and globalization in a society in which the first has disappeared but where corruption and lack of resources are paving the way for the second. Chapter six analyzes Kiran Deais' *The Inheritance of Loss* whose main topic is nationalism, seen in two different locations: Manhattan and northwestern India. Manhattan is the place of poverty, discrimination and hard life, and meanwhile, the heavily corrupted Kalimpong is the place of disinheritance and loss making it impossible to preserve an uncorrupted self.

The last three chapters examine the topics of cultural politics, multiculturalism, and masculinity in Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness*, Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, and Junot Diaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. The first novel addresses the situation of women and their power to change. It establishes the differences between the local power and the forces of colonization but gives a view on how men and women respond to colonization. The second book, *White Teeth*, displays a criticism against political fundamentalism. It favors the idea that center and periphery are no longer a division between rich and poor but have evolved into a more flexible and interdependable relationship. Junot Diaz's novel links gender and political power not to reestablish the traditional society but to reverse dominant social figures to give victory to the unexpected characters, women, and minorities.

Paul Jay's book is meticulous and at the same time wide-ranging enough to attract a broad readership. His specific analysis of the theoretical approaches to globalization as well as his expertise in postcolonial studies and colonialism make his work a must-read in the fields of literary theory and political science. He is positively renewing the field of globalization. He devotes a large part of his work to novels set in South Asia at different times and with characters who are witnesses to unsettling events and uprising revolutions. Particularly interesting is the connection that Jay frequently makes between English departments and those of other national literatures. The relationship between different countries and the effect of globalization is shown in a positive light. The main idea extracted from the reading may be that social, economic, and cultural exchanges among peoples do not necessarily mean the loss of individuality. Since purity is a myth, hybridity may turn out to be the only way to overcome the negative feelings associated with globalization. ✱



