

## Reviews

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HILARY E. WYSS, *English Letters and Indian Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools, 1750-1830* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2012), 264 pp.

In recent years there has been a noteworthy increase in studies of Native America.<sup>1</sup> Like Drew Lopenzina's *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking up the Pen in the Colonial Period*, and Birgit Brander Rasmussen's *Queequeg's Coffin: Indigenous Literacies and the Making of Early American Literature*, which were both published in the same year as Hilary Wyss's study, *English Letters and Indian Literacies* provides a rich contribution to the complex field of literacy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Based on a vast corpus of published and unpublished texts, including memoirs, tracts, and personal letters, Wyss's analysis substantially re-reads the relationship between agency and literacy in the context of missionary cultures of education and reveals that the Native-authored texts emerging from this environment can be understood "as fields of conflict and contestation rather than the result of the imposition of something foreign, something European on an indigenous population unfamiliar with its value" (6). Using Laurel Ulrich's metaphor of weaving alternative structures of identity (represented by dark and light threads) into a larger fabric, Wyss highlights the spaces of overlap, in which "a third color" becomes visible (5). In the same way, Native Americans not only used the literacy skills imposed on them by the colonizers to reproduce or critique the ideological systems (of political, social, and religious order) in which that literacy education was embedded, but many of their documents also reveal highly complex sites of encounter, alliance, community, and resistance within a "shared culture" (210)—beyond any simple dichotomies of 'colonizer' and 'colonized.'

"The presence of Native American voices in the literatures of settler-colonial America,"

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Maureen Konkle's *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2004), Lisa Brooks' *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (2008), and Kathryn Gray's own *John Eliot and the Praying Indians of Massachusetts Bay* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2013).

Kathryn Gray writes,<sup>2</sup> "can be difficult to detect and, at times, difficult to decipher" (307). Wyss takes on this challenge through extensive archival work and excellent in-depth analyses, in which she carefully reads texts (both by leading authorities of charity schools, such as Eleazar Wheelock, and by their students, including the well-known Mohegan educator Samson Occom as much as the much lesser known Cherokee convert David Brown) in detail, often between the lines and against the grain. In order to structure an argument that transcends the geographical, historical, and cultural boundaries of New England, Wyss distinguishes between what she terms "Readerly and Writerly Indians": whereas the "Readerly Indian" denotes the "missionary desire for a docile, passive Indian figure" who simply used literacy as "a skill set that did not require self-expression," the figure of the "Writerly Indian" uses literacy for his or her own purposes and thus "emerges as not only a speaker and actor fluent in the cultures and conventions of colonial society but also one fully committed to Native community as an ongoing political and cultural concern" (6). In performances of "rhetorical sovereignty" (a concept Wyss borrows from Scott Lyons), these traces of "writerly" engagements with English literacy yield remarkable examples of political resistance and cultural diplomacy, often creating new spaces of agency that go far beyond the non-Native missionaries' intent. Yet, as Wyss's readings demonstrate, these two types are not always easily distinguishable, and even though the extant texts yield only fragmentary impressions of life at missionary boarding schools, they often allow for alternative understandings of both the historical record and its underlying concepts of literacy.

The book is organized into six chapters, aptly beginning with a conceptual and historical introduction that provides a survey of missionary education practices in New England. From the earliest seventeenth-century attempts (by John Eliot and Daniel Gookin) at institutionalizing a Christian education via John Sergeant's Indian boarding school at Stockbridge in the 1740s and Eleazar Wheelock's Indian Charity School in the 1750s and 1760s, to the Brainerd School in Tennessee

<sup>2</sup> *The Routledge Companion to Native American Literature*, ed. Deborah Madsen (New York: Routledge, 2016).

and the Cornwall Foreign Mission School in Connecticut in the nineteenth century, Wyss contextualizes these missionary ventures within larger educational practices and institutions, emphasizing the gendered logistics of instruction in New England towns in general, their conflation of religious education and literacy, and the erratic schooling in rural communities in the eighteenth century. Growing from this general matrix of educational practices, and firmly situated within “a more general expansion of educational opportunity throughout the eighteenth century” (17), missionary boarding schools for Native Americans did not materialize in a vacuum, and accordingly cannot be read in isolated contexts. However well-intended these experiments with assimilation may have been (and in spite of their occasional scandals of corruption), the diversity of outcomes already becomes apparent in this brief historical survey, which also mentions the Native-founded communities of Brothertown and New Stockbridge that served as responses to their failed predecessors.

In addition to this helpful historical roadmap, the introduction also points to alternative literacy systems in Indigenous communities, such as weaving, beading, tattooing, and painting, in order to establish a more inclusive framework for the “intersecting worlds of Native orality, writing, and print” (22). The book’s central part then investigates different boarding schools, highlighting specific experiences and their impact. Chapter one revolves around “narratives and counter-narratives” at Stockbridge and Moor’s Charity School, offering insight into the educational narratives of influential figures such as John Sergeant and Jonathan Edwards, and highlighting the conflict between Eleazar Wheelock and his student Samson Occom. Chapter two focuses on Joseph Johnson, a Mohegan student at Moor’s Charity School, who became a schoolteacher among the Oneidas in upstate New York and whose writing—as “one of the most extraordinary” textual archives of the eighteenth century (105)—reveals a deeply conflicted relationship between Johnson and Wheelock. In chapter three, Wyss turns to the missionary efforts of the Brainerd School in Tennessee, which was founded in 1817. Examining Cherokee students’ memoirs (such as the well-known 1825 *Memoir of Catharine Brown*) and letters, Wyss recovers from the archives remarkable narratives that not only undermine the missionary desire for passive, ‘readerly’ figures but

that also demonstrate “emphatically female” stances of rhetorical sovereignty (146) and even explicitly “articulate a commitment to Cherokee nationalisms” (147). While the Brainerd School was operated by New England missionaries who were sent to Cherokee territory, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) also relied on sending Cherokee students to New England. At the Cornwall Foreign Mission School in Connecticut, for example, Wyss finds “a different literacy history of the Cherokee people [...], one that is founded on people profoundly committed to Christianity as a means of developing political sovereignty” (189). Next to memoirs by Catharine Brown and John Arch, the rhetoric of David Brown (Catharine Brown’s brother) stands out as a remarkable example of “literacy as a Cherokee-centered practice” (189), as he eloquently challenges assumptions of white superiority while strategically promoting Cherokee nationalism: “clearly,” Wyss concludes her close reading of his texts, “what he has in mind is the ongoing political existence of the Cherokee Nation rather than the integration of individual Cherokees into the polity that is the United States of America” (177). The study’s conclusion then elaborates on the polysemy of the word “letters” (as referring to the letters of the alphabet as well as epistolary letters) in order to underline the variety of different literacies—including Sequoyah’s Cherokee syllabary as a strategic and very successful technology that “brushes aside the presumption of English superiority and establishes a structure of Cherokee difference” (198-99). Beyond mere skills of reading and writing, literacy also includes the production of letters which record, create, and strengthen networks among families and communities, and which effectively blend public and private spaces. “The pleasure,” she concludes, “that missionary audiences gained from their understandings of the art and artifacts of Native literacy were not always perfectly aligned with the motives or strategies Native peoples used to further their own ends. Yet there was enough overlap to make such systems work for everyone” (209-10).

Aside from occasional redundancies (through repetitions, in individual chapters, of backgrounds already laid out in the introduction), this book is a well-written and highly astute contribution to the growing field of Early Native American Studies. Wyss’s diligent recovery of sources and her careful readings

of the complex situations surrounding Native students offer an insightful revision of previous concepts of Native literacy and education, and render this study a welcome addition to

the fields of Indigenous Studies, American history, and American literary history.

Birgit Däwes (Flensburg)

MANUEL MENRATH, *Mission Sitting Bull: Die Geschichte der katholischen Sioux* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2016), 372 pp.

In the course of approaching American history with the methods of New Western History, a rich body of studies has emerged that reveals the vastness of Native American experiences in a new distinctiveness. In his new book, Menrath takes a close look at the Catholic proselytization of the Sioux during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Menrath approaches the topic with the methods of New Western History, that is, to regard (established) historical sources with a new critical distance and to re-evaluate them. It also means to incorporate sources that may have been neglected, and to consider multiple perspectives in order to reach a balanced, richer, and more complete depiction of past events. He considers a global-historical interconnectedness of the nineteenth century and pursues a transnational-comparative approach. Thus, Menrath shows that the secularization movement in Europe prompted the Catholic abbot Martin Marty (1834-1896), whose Catholic biography Menrath traces in his book, and hundreds of Benedictines and Catholic nuns (mostly from Switzerland and the German Reich) to immigrate to the U.S. and create a "Catholic frontier" (Menrath 77). Menrath demonstrates that Marty's endeavors were substantial in the establishment and strengthening of the Catholic Church (62) in the United States, especially among the Sioux. Today, Marty is still widely known as the "apostle of the Sioux" (9). Thus, the culture wars that were taking place in Europe had a direct impact on Native American lives.

A novelty in Menrath's study is a new historical source: an unfinished 300-page biography about Martin Marty, written by Albert Kleber, that Menrath discovered during his research, and which forms an important pillar of information for his critical portrait of the abbot (14, 270). Menrath's aim is to move away from a hagiographic reception of Marty and focus instead on religious and cultural interactions between the Sioux and the Catholics. In so doing, Menrath considers Marty's socio-political environment (Marty's ultramontane socialization, chapter three) and is quite successful in offering an unadorned re-evaluation of the man and his motivations. In his re-assessment, Menrath traces the intricate strategies pursued by the Catholic Church

in the United States to assimilate the Sioux. Marty specifically targeted Indian children in his efforts to convert America's "heathens" because he realized that breaking their ties to their heathen parents would best ensure their salvation. Menrath concludes that Marty's work was a definitive ethnocide, something over which researchers differ (Ross Enochs, Karl Markus Kreis 15). In Menrath's focus on human interaction and his aim to provide a balanced analysis, Menrath includes various Native American perspectives throughout the book, a historical context ("Kriege in den Great Plains" 38, "Friedenspolitik" 43) and a comparative analysis of Sioux spirituality and worldview (the universal energy *Wakan Tanka* that pervades all) and the Catholic monotheistic Maker (37). The result is a very well researched book that provides a tightly interwoven study that offers intriguing details of individual experiences.

Menrath should have elaborated on one point. The ideology of the assimilation programs during the late nineteenth century wanted complete annihilation of everything Indian. The goal was to transform Native Americans into a homogeneous population of Christian farmers. Menrath concludes that Marty's Catholic mission failed in this regard; meaning that conglomerations of Sioux spirituality and Christian denominations emerged, rather than a new, exclusively Catholic indigenous population. On the other hand, Menrath mentions that most of the 60,000 Lakota living on reservations today are Catholic due to Marty's endeavors (62). The author should have given a clarifying explanation of how these somewhat contrary arguments correlate.

As suggested by the title of the book *Mission Sitting Bull*, Menrath draws upon Sitting Bull as a specific example of Marty's 'failure,' delineating the chief's dealings with the Christian missionizing efforts. For Marty, the conversion of the wildest bunch of the Sioux (as Sitting Bull and his followers were seen in the U.S.) was the ultimate goal. Among many others, Marty wanted to succeed in convincing Sitting Bull and his followers, who then lived in exile in Canada, to surrender and return to the reservation in the United States to become Christian farmers there. The two men were of about the same age when they met for the first time in 1878. An encounter with Sitting Bull was then considered a dangerous undertaking because of Sitting Bull's reputation as the most hostile of the Sioux. Marty was aware of

that and was ready to martyr himself for the cause (221). Sitting Bull, however, realized that the Episcopalians also wanted to convert him, as missionaries from two denominations courted him. This proved lucrative to Sitting Bull and assured him a certain amount of sovereignty that he was unwilling to give up (240). After Sitting Bull's death, Marty claimed that his conversion efforts had been successful. He said that the chief had asked him to build a church and a school and that he agreed to become a Christian (243). However, some of Sitting Bull's children went to Mary Collins's Congregationalist school. Menrath calls this "posthumous proselytization" (249) and considers Marty's appropriation of Sitting Bull an attempt to rehabilitate his reputation, for he had already on several occasions proclaimed to have successfully converted Sitting Bull.

The study of nineteenth-century Sioux Catholicism is closely linked to on-reservation boarding schools because Christian assimilation efforts were concentrated there. Off-reservation boarding schools have been thoroughly analyzed since the 1990s,<sup>1</sup> however, in-depth studies of on-reservation schools have only rarely been conducted.<sup>2</sup> Menrath

refers to this research gap and incorporates an analysis of several schools that were established by Marty (*Fort Yates Indian Industrial School* at Standing Rock, *St. Francis Mission* at Rosebud, *Holy Rosary Mission* at Pine Ridge). Menrath focuses on the enlistment of Sioux children, on everyday life at school, including disease and death, chastisement, and individual reactions and resistance to school rules (178, 181-202). Especially the latter is among the most interesting and valuable to the research within New Western History; for Menrath shows how Indian children dealt with the new foreign life forced upon them. Many ran away again and did so repeatedly. Others simply did not follow specific rules, and in some cases the Catholic personnel gave in to such disobedience and compromised (for example, at *St. Francis Mission* Indian children would always take off the uncomfortable shoes they had to wear and ran around in their socks; for a while they were scolded until the nuns eventually allowed the children to wear moccasins again, 198). Besides such openly disobedient behavior, Menrath also shows that many Indian children revolted passively against the missionaries' demands to embrace Catholicism exclusively (178-79, 199, 248).

Merely at a glance, Menrath includes a transnational comparison to Canada's Indian Residential Schools and Australia's and New Zealand's Native Schools and notes that it is exactly those comparative, transnational studies of Indian boarding schools of the nineteenth-century settler societies that are still missing in contemporary research.<sup>3</sup> Menrath argues, that this needs to be taken one step further: Because the nineteenth century in Germany and Switzerland can be considered the century of correctional institutions—"Anstaltsjahrhundert" (213)—and, because a considerable number of German-speaking missionaries emigrated to the U.S., bringing with them, for example, their ideologies concerning re-education in correctional institutions. Menrath suggests here the importance of a global-historical examination as part of post-colonial studies (214).

*Missionen in South Dakota 1884-1932* (2007) by Karl Markus Kreis.

<sup>3</sup> One study should be mentioned: Margaret D. Jacobs: *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (2009).

<sup>1</sup> Coleman's *American Indian Children at School* (1993) and Adams' *Education for Extinction* (1995) should be mentioned here. Many in-depth studies followed. Recently, several important studies emerged that offer case studies of specific institutions putting focus on Native American voices: Jacqueline Fear-Segal's *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (2009) and Carlisle *Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, memories and Reclamations* (2016), Trafzer's *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (2010) and Archuleta's, Child's, Lomawaima's *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences, 1879-2000* (2000).

<sup>2</sup> Except for Tanya L. Rathbun's *Hail Mary: The Catholic Experience at St. Boniface Indian School* (2006), Clyde Ellis: "To Change them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920," and James T. Carroll's *Americanization or Indoctrination: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools, 1874-1926* (1997). A valuable German research contribution to this field is *Schulen und Kirchen für die Sioux-Indianer: Deutsche Dokumente aus den katholischen*

One interesting example in this respect is Menrath's transnational perspective of Marty's endeavors with the Sioux in regard to Marty's character (Chapter 4, 80). In 1860, Marty was sent to the U.S. where he was to lead the recently founded priory St. Meinrad in Indiana, which became a monastery under Pope Pius IX. In 1876, Marty was called by the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions to work in the Dakota Territory where he remained for 20 years until his death in 1896. He became a traveling missionary among the Sioux and made it his utmost goal to save as many souls as possible. Menrath assesses this to be a "biographic caesura" (63) because Marty practically went against the majority of his fellow monks and bishops, who discredited him for traveling as a missionary. However, among the Catholic population, Marty was praised and held a good reputation (68). Menrath explains that Marty saw his calling in being a traveling missionary among the "heathens" much like early medieval Benedictine monks. In this respect, Menrath's study is also a valuable contribution to German-speaking American Studies and Swiss American post-colonial research that sets important impetus for further research.<sup>4</sup>

In his aim to present an unbiased and unadorned analysis of the history of Sioux Catholicism, Menrath should be praised for discussing the issue of clergy sexual abuse, a topic which has long been held concealed. While recently the topic has received wide press attention and has been studied by researchers

(e.g. Claire M. Renzetti *Clergy Sexual Abuse*, 2013), the same cannot be said for cases of Native American abuse in Catholic institutions. Menrath pleads for a comprehensive study of sexual abuse in Catholic on-reservation boarding schools, especially because of the numerous charges for sexual assault, rape, and sodomy (210) that have been brought against the Catholic dioceses of Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Pine Ridge, Rosebud, and Blue Cloud Abbey (the three latter founded by Martin Marty) lately. Menrath gives shocking proof that sexual abuse of Indian children happened at several Catholic Indian boarding schools and shows that it not only took place, but was mostly done with impunity (211). As a reaction to those accusations, a statutory limitation was enacted that made it impossible for victims older than 40 years to sue an institution, like the Catholic Church (210), thus clearly protecting the alleged perpetrators (211) while making the issue cumbersome for Native American victims. Thus, for Native American victims, the only possibility left is to sue a specific person, a fact that makes the procedure very difficult since many perpetrators are no longer alive (210).

Menrath argues that an independent expert commission, which would systematically investigate Indian boarding schools in their full dimension, is urgently needed in the United States. Unfortunately, the government still shuns its responsibility (209).

Dr. Nadja Martin-Catherin (Wiesbaden)

<sup>4</sup> One such study should be mentioned here: Tina Kühr: *On a Civilizing Mission. Die imperiale Zivilisierungspropaganda in den USA und im Deutschen Kaiserreich, 1889-1914* (2006).



SHAMOON ZAMIR, *The Gift of the Face: Portraiture and Time in Edward S. Curtis's The North American Indian* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2014), 334 pp.

By the time the first volume of Edward S. Curtis's work on *The North American Indian* was published in 1907, the scholarly discourse on whether photography was a science implemented to support accurate documentation (as, for example, in the field of ethnography) or an art as part of the movement of pictorialism was in full swing. More than twenty years later, Curtis had taken more than 40,000 photographic images of members of over 80 tribes. By 1930, twenty portfolios, thousands of pages of text, and more than 2200 so-called photogravures, of which about 1000 are portraits of human faces, had been published in the twenty volumes of this monumental project. By opening the first volume with the image of "The Vanishing Race—Navaho," Curtis certainly established a theme that runs through his entire work and that has led many critics to rightfully assert that Curtis's project was driven by the intention to preserve a record of Native people frozen in the past. In that vein, and leaving no doubts about his inspiration, Curtis wrote in the introduction to his first volume: "The information that is to be gathered [...] respecting the mode of life of one of the great races of mankind, must be collected at once or the opportunity will be lost." Today, *The North American Indian* and its photographic record have come to be read as a lament on a "vanishing race" that neglects both the indigenous peoples' engagement with modernity and the colonial history of violence that has been part of the U.S.'s Manifest Destiny since the beginning of white settlement.

Against this background, Shamoan Zamir's insightful study *The Gift of the Face: Portraiture and Time in Edward S. Curtis's The North American Indian* approaches Curtis's work from a new angle. In his own words, his "study focuses on what is exceptional rather than typical" in Curtis's oeuvre (3). Zamir does not only take us back to the old controversy of photography being located between science and art, but also offers a fresh perspective on *The North American Indian* by stimulating a different reading of some well-selected photographs from the collection. By focusing on the portraits, a genre that constitutes a comparatively large part of the collection, he also urges us as scholars and students of the his-

tory of the representation of American Indians to revise the prevailing view on Curtis's work, which Zamir labels "cultural salvage," by opening up a different way of understanding. Focusing on the agency of Curtis's Native American models/sitters/posers (he uses these terms interchangeably) as part of a process of cross-cultural exchange, instead of conceptualizing them as passive extras and as partaking agents in the act of image-making, *The Gift of the Face* inspires its readers to inquire deeply into the motivation of the Native sitters to actively participate in and collaborate with Curtis and his team.

In his intellectually demanding study, Zamir does not argue in any way against the prevailing view that these often iconic images taken by Edward Curtis are staged. Quite to the contrary, he argues that they are very well-elaborated, staged performances, in which, however, the Native American models knowingly engage as "coauthors of the visual meanings of *The North American Indian*" (3). *The Gift of the Face* offers a close reading in the best sense of a thoroughly contextualized cultural studies approach against the backdrop of the deep cultural crisis that Native Americans were experiencing at the turn of the century, a crisis embodied by the realization that the ultimate end of pre-reservation times has led to a loss of lands, a loss of people, and a loss of parts of the culture. The study argues that the tribes were fully aware of this disastrous outcome, drawing attention to the Native American posers' preoccupation with time in Curtis's photographs, from "faces register[ing] a violence long endured but also an affirmation of their own historicity and subjectivity beyond their defeats" (8) to "faces that occupy time and are occupied by time" (66). To be sure, historicity and subjectivity (in the sense of subjecthood) are usually not considered to have been granted to the Native American people depicted in *The North American Indian*. Thus, the Native Americans posing in these images have to be understood in terms of "what it means to be a witness to such a breakdown, and what it means to survive it, creatively and with a sense of 'radical hope'" (9). The Native American participants' use of Curtis's photography as a performative space in which they reclaim their history by presenting themselves mostly, but not exclusively, in traditional outfits, is considered as a "protest against history" (71). This objection is only possible in this fashion because there is com-

mon ground between Curtis and his sitters: “it is because Curtis’s visual work is sensitive to this protest as it manifests itself in the self-presentation of his sitters that it achieves the art of portraiture” (72).

The focus on the face that provides the title to this study is more clearly explained as follows: “We can only fully grasp what is at stake in the gift of the face, in the ethics of Curtis’s image, when we have grasped the workings within the image of a history that threatens to negate the human encounter pictured in the image” (54). In this context, the author reevaluates the potential of Curtis’s photographic art as a contribution to “honor the Native American effort to live through the dislocations of culture and time” (9). In doing so, he argues that the display and performance of tradition on the part of Native people was a conscious decision to participate in a project representing cultural survival after all. However, in contrast to Curtis, Zamir perceives of tradition—along with Arnold Krupat—not as being in opposition to modernism, but as “names for different sorts of emphases and possibilities” (21). This close reading requires an approach to Curtis’s work as “photo-text,” which involves as much a thorough decoding of the images with regard to the motivation, perception, and worldview of the Native Americans portrayed alongside the texts that accompany them as well as, in some cases, a decoding of the images *against* these very texts. In any way, the study encourages us to focus much more intensively than has been done so far on the interaction between image or image group (or image sequence) and text. Most importantly, Zamir insists on analyzing these photographs in detail, including paying meticulous attention to the expressions, body language, and postures of the Native American models as well as the way their clothes are made and to measure these aspects within the framework of their contemporary cultural, historical, psychological, and economic situation. Indeed, as we know from the genres of portrait painting and photography in general, it makes absolute sense to follow Zamir’s argument that a full comprehension of the cultural and historical value of *The North American Indian* is only possible, if we conceptualize the indigenous sitters as collaborators and coauthors—that is, if we (also) value Curtis’s magnum opus “as a work of Native American autobiography and visual self-representation” (10).

In his convincing attempt at showing that he *does not* consider Curtis’s work as ethnographic illustrations of cultural salvage, as is commonly done, but rather as “the product of a particular visual and textual practice” (17) or as “argument-making pictures” (36, 235), Zamir relies on a very small number of very carefully conducted, in-depth case studies. Nowhere does this phenomenon become more apparent than in chapter four, “Against History’s Monopoly of Time,” the longest and most complex case study of the book, which I will use as a representative example for Zamir’s overall approach. Conducting a close reading of the famous photograph “In a Piegan Lodge,” in which Curtis prominently erased a metal clock to (allegedly) cover the dynamic nature of Native American adaptation to modernity and thus to simultaneously (seemingly) deny modern Native American history and agency, this chapter revisits the most important and best-known manipulation of all of Curtis’s photographic work. In more general terms, the intentionality and agency of the two Piegan Indians to participate in the making of the image, that is their “willingness to be there before Curtis’s camera, their willingness to set out the display and to make themselves available as actors within Curtis’s photographic *tableau vivant*” (63), already undermine notions of salvage ethnography. But beyond this obvious observation, Zamir’s analysis is driven by three main concerns: first, to compare the published version with the original, unpublished negatives; second, not to reduce the reading of the photograph to the removal of the clock alone; third, to interpret the image alongside other photographs of Piegan individuals from the same volume in order to avoid an isolated or decontextualized interpretation.

“In a Piegan Lodge” was published in volume 6 (*The Piegan, the Cheyenne, the Arapaho*, 1911) of *The North American Indian* together with a very similar photograph, “Lodge Interior—Piegan.” In both photographs, which were taken only a few minutes apart, the clock was erased by Curtis. Zamir’s interpretation of the two images together with the original negatives reveals that the clock is working and thus being used, that it is still in its box, the retention of which can be interpreted as suggesting “that the possession and display of the clock can be read as a declaration of status,” and that the way it is displayed by its owner “as a special object among other special ob-

jects”—such as a pipe, a medicine bundle, and articles for accoutering the horse—thus hint at a “talismanic quality” (59). Even if, or rather because, the pipe and the medicine bundle are potentially ceremonial objects, and because the clock is actually used, Zamir concludes that the two Piegan Indians “appear to signal the ability to inhabit simultaneously culturally different temporalities.” Thus, the “lodge exists within or, better, contains within itself, at least two distinct regimes of time, the time of a non-Native modernity and the time of Piegan culture” (60). In other words, read together, these photographs propose that “we see the coexistence of Native and non-Native times not as a parallel juxtaposition but as a dynamic relation”—or what Zamir calls “a hybrid temporality” (62). Certainly, we, as scholars, “need to try and see the image that Little Plume and Yellow Kidney [the two men depicted in “In a Piegan Lodge”] attempted to compose before Curtis’s camera, not the image we register at first sight” (64). But, the author additionally claims that this hybrid temporality can be found in modulated form in the published version itself, if we are willing to redirect our attention from the removed clock and towards the industrially manufactured shirt of Yellow Kidney instead. Zamir further suggests including other photographs on the Piegan Indians into our assessment, such as those that portray a neatly constructed log cabin next to a tepee, sitters wearing other commercially produced clothes or a safety pin for the mere purpose of decoration, and people carrying industrially manufactured blankets, in order to acknowledge that the Piegans, the largest Blackfoot-speaking group, seem to have practiced “an active manipulation and appropriation of modernity—a creative transformation and not a resigned or forced accommodation” at the turn of the century (77). It is fascinating to follow this line of argumentation chapter by chapter in order to realize that what could be taken as the motto of the chapter on the Piegan Indians, namely “that the removal of the clock cannot be read in isolation” (82), does metaphorically serve as the methodological guiding principle for the whole book.

As *The Gift of the Face* advocates, it is very obvious that Edward Curtis himself, who is well known for his pedantic mode of operation, must have very consciously decided to keep these traces of modernity in his portrayals of Native Americans. Zamir adapts—or,

rather, sort of reverses—the Brechtian term “alienation effect” (88) to name Curtis’s method. In this light, safety pins, industrially produced shirts, and manufactured blankets can be considered as strategic devices creating alienation effects that estrange us from our very own conceptions of the Other, respectively the ‘alien.’ These conceptions are based on “a variety of stereotypes and attitudes that cluster around the notion of the primitive and that tame the challenge of difference by familiarizing the Other within our own categories” (89). Hence, and this is certainly the core of this radically new reading of Curtis’s *The North American Indian*, as part of the mentioned alienation effect, “the fleeting signs of modernity” with which the Native American posers are displayed “make the viewer aware that what he or she sees are not Native cultures as they ‘are,’ but recreations of forms in which they existed until recently.” According to Zamir, Curtis has thus mastered the challenge to make his viewers recognize that the men and women they see in their full tribal regalia (with small but visible adaptations to modernity) belong to the same time, the same modernity, are part of the same contemporaneity as they are. It is the shirt, the safety pin, and the clock that make viewers “face the historicity of Native American subjecthood by presenting this subjecthood, in its visual performance, as an apparent contradiction.” It simply contradicts—or is in conflict with—the white mainstream audience’s prevailing conception of ‘Indians.’ This reading not only challenges the assessment of Curtis’s work as salvage ethnography as it was conducted in many a prominent study on the topic, it also drastically challenges the old assessment of Curtis’s photographic work as an ethnographic record. To be clear, in Zamir’s view it remains a record, after all—but now it is a testament of the collaboration between the photographer and his Native American sitters and, equally, “a record of the effort and act of this re-creation [of the past within the present] as a dimension of the histories of the men and women who are the subjects of Curtis’s pictures, a record not of the play but of the effort of performing the play” (91).

It has to be noted that *The Gift of the Face: Portraiture and Time in Edward S. Curtis’s The North American Indian*, by so strongly emphasizing the collaborative aspects, at times seems to be deemphasizing the degree to which Curtis’s work simultaneously con-

tributed to perpetuate widely-held ideas of the Vanishing Indian. However, given that this component of Manifest Destiny in *The North American Indian* is all too well known, the revisionist take on Curtis's oeuvre, as is offered here, is immensely important, convincing, insightful, refreshing, and innovative at the same time. The depths and sensitivity with which the author handles the topic is truly intriguing. Although conforming to all the conventions of an academic monograph, this elaborative approach pursued by the author is very much supported by the study being written, as Zamir asserts, "in the spirit of an extended reflective essay" (17), which initially needs some acclimatization by the reader. Once we start to accept this mode of writing, the study inspires us to recognize—maybe for the first time full-scale—the partnership between the (white) photographer and the (Native) posers that is an unequivocal ingredient in the making of any portrait, but more so of portraits of

members of so-called 'Other cultures,' even though this partnership might exist within drastically asymmetrical power relations. The book makes a very valuable contribution to the most recent scholarship suggesting that we need to think in more complex ways about the active participation of Native Americans in the process of taking their photographs—and it shows us exactly how to apply this strategy. It is a fascinating reevaluation of the ways (post-)modern scholarship has been reading Edward S. Curtis's *The North American Indian*, a turning point for all of us who firmly believe in the assessment that images do not hold one single fixed meaning. And it is certainly a must for scholars and students in the fields of Visual Cultural Studies, Native American Studies, Anthropology, American History, Art History, and American Studies more generally.

Karsten Fitz (Passau)

SCOTT RICHARD LYONS, ed., *The World, the Text, and the Indian: Global Dimensions of Native American Literature* (Albany: State U of New York P, 2017), 330 pp.

The collection of critical essays *The World, the Text, and the Indian* edited by Scott Richard Lyons is a noteworthy contribution to the fields of Native Studies, transnationalist American studies and postcolonialism. The title evokes Edward Said's 1983 essay "The World, the Text, and the Critic," and suggests that Said's "call [...] to historicism" (Lyons 15) in literary criticism is programmatic for the collection and serves as a point of departure toward new critical horizons: the replacement of 'critic' with 'Indian' in the title indicates a shift in the center toward Indigenous perspectives. The main goal of the collection is to present, as three-dimensionally as possible, an Indigenous-centered critical gaze at the world as well as an Indigenous awareness of the world's different nations looking back, from the immediate beginnings of contemporary globalization in the middle of the nineteenth century to the present moment. As all contributors show in their own way, this Indigenous transnational perspective is reflected in artistic output, from early travel writing to photography, contemporary novels and poetry, and even legal documents. Lyons states in his introduction "Globalizing the Word" that "Native American literature has always been [...] a global enterprise. It deals with the world, not simply the tribe or nation" (13). What makes Lyons's collection so interesting is that it not only broadens the scope of transnationalist studies and re-defines its center(s), but that it also offers an academically sophisticated retrospective on the past three decades of Native American literary criticism in light of the challenges of a global scene of American and postcolonial studies. *The World, the Text, and the Indian* will undoubtedly become an important resource for both students and scholars in the fields.

The chapters of the collection came out of the symposium *Globalizing the Word: Transnationalism and the Making of Native American Literature* at the University of Michigan in May 2013 and can be understood as critical explorations of what transnationalism means and has meant for Native American studies. As Lyons already clarifies in his introduction, globalization creates difference and transnationalism is a movement to overcome it, which

requires constant shifts between perceived centers and margins. This movement is mirrored in the over-arching methodological framework outlined in the introduction: underlying *The World, the Text, and the Indian* is an awareness of "the dialectics of global indigeneity in the twenty-first century" (7). With contributions from such illustrious scholars and artists as Gerald Vizenor, Arnold Krupat, and Chadwick Allen, Lyons's book performs a synthesis—as a starting point for new discussion—of critical positions within Native studies that have been considered antithetical and mutually exclusive, namely nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Despite series editor Jace Weaver's curious offhand remark in his foreword that nationalism has clearly "won" (xiii) the decades-long struggle in Native American studies, the sum of academically sophisticated contributions in Lyons's book demonstrates that looking for a victor or loser of the debate warps the real issue, namely that the challenge of the discipline has always been to overcome colonialism, not each other.

The editor's attempt to produce a critically balanced volume featuring contributions from specialists in a variety of sub-disciplines of Native studies can only be called a success. The collection includes two chapters on critical theory and contemporary Native literature (Arnold Krupat, Chadwick Allen), one on Natives and early colonial literary production (Matt Cohen), two on modernist Natives and their literary representation/representation in literature (Gerald Vizenor, Lyons), one on Natives in early modernist photography (Kate Flint), two on transnationalism in contemporary Native American literature (Phillip H. Round, Eric Cheyfitz), and one on the global dimensions of anti-colonial law (Elvira Pulitano). Lyons's introduction and Shari Huhndorf's afterword round off the discussions: Lyons does so by clearly and concisely stating the objectives and outlining the critical framework for the collection, and Huhndorf by adding a discussion of the role of gender and highlighting that "the subject of sexual violence" (292) will constitute a particular challenge to Native studies in the future, and that scholars in the field will benefit from a transnational perspective. The volume opens with "Empire Treasons: White Earth and the Great War," a long chapter by scholar and novelist Gerald Vizenor who, true to his dictum to put Natives back in history, walks readers through the first decades of the twentieth century by

presenting historic moments through the Native historical perspective he develops in his novel *Blue Ravens*. To have Vizenor's piece spearhead the essay collection can be understood as what Krupat, in his own chapter, calls a "strategic" (66) decision comparable to Weaver, Womack and Warrior opening their *American Indian Literary Nationalism* with a reprint of Simon Ortiz' famous 1981 essay on "National Indian Literature" (Krupat 66). It is a statement on both Vizenor's influential oeuvre and on the direction of Native American literary criticism as the editor understands it. Vizenor's work has always highlighted the impact of global events on Native people, and vice versa. Lyons's suggestion to read Vizenor's chapter as a "companion text" (14) to his historical fiction indicates that Vizenor's recent work, particularly his trilogy of historical novels on Natives in the First and Second World War—*Blue Ravens* (2014), *Native Tributes* (2018), and a third sequel forthcoming in 2019—set the tone for the transnational perspective in Native studies that Lyons envisions in his collection.

Vizenor's opening chapter also constitutes an interesting contrast to Weaver's foreword and illustrates the book's program of exploring the "dialectics" (Lyons 7) at the heart of Native American studies: Vizenor has been considered the most notable proponent of a position Krupat has termed 'Native cosmopolitanism' and his perspective is juxtaposed with—indeed, *supported by*—Weaver, a self-declared nationalist, when the latter states in his foreword that "transnationalism is a capacious enough umbrella to shade both nationalists and cosmopolitans alike" (xii). Highlighting the difference and celebrating the conversation between these mutually complementing critical positions is the object of Arnold Krupat's chapter "Native American Literary Criticism in Global Context," in which he outlines the critical discourse surrounding his own terminology in Native American literary criticism throughout the past decades. Krupat's piece is an insightful retrospective in which he also evaluates statements and interpretations made by other scholars, and he offers his opinions playfully, which only enhances the critical sophistication of his essay. Certainly, while Vizenor puts Native people back in historical accounts, Krupat puts Native people back in global American studies by outlining how they helped shape the field.

Krupat's chapter is followed by three chapters on Native literary archives in the context of globalism. In "'Between Friends and Enemies': Moving Books and Locating Native Critique in Early Colonial America," Matt Cohen gives insight into early Indigenous book history, questioning the idea of books being considered unequivocally 'good' and centers of liberation and border-crossing. His article is an interesting read especially for literary critics who tend to ignore—or at least, be ignorant of—publication histories and the fact that books are a "performance" rather than a "technology" (111): as Cohen argues, they "take on their meanings through events and acts" (111). In the subsequent chapter entitled "'The Search Engine': Traversing the Local and the Global in the Native Archive," Phillip H. Round also considers Native American literature as a "praxis" (he derives the term from Robert Warrior). He explores historical examples for the characters' identity quest in Sherman Alexie's 2004 short story "The Search Engine," and thus demonstrates that Native American literature not only expresses awareness of transnational movements, but that Natives have always participated in the latter. Lyons, in his own article entitled "Migrations to Modernity: The Many Voices of George Copway's *Running Sketches of Men and Places, in England, France, Germany, Belgium, and Scotland*," represents modern Natives as "global [travelers]" (147) who "thrive in a modern world" (147). Lyons is suspicious of contemporary academic stereotypes of Native environmentalism and tribal purity. His article positions controversial Ojibwe author George Copway as a Native progressive and historical example of the fact that Native identities and lives have always included transnational dimensions. The 1860 (ca.) photograph of Copway in a headdress and clutching a book that is reprinted in Lyons's article is also on the cover of *The World, the Text, and the Indian*. As Lyons describes in the caption, the photograph is "[a] visual example of a nineteenth-century Ojibwe cosmopolitanism" (149). As cover artwork, the photograph can be understood as a visualization of the book's program to capture the global and transnational condition of Natives and their—to borrow Lyons' concluding statement on Copway—"audacious ability to [...] refashion his native identity without fear of impurity, and to open himself to new voices in a dialogical spirit" (175).

In “Emerging from the Background: Photographic Conventions, Stereotypes, and the Ordinarity of the Indian,” Kate Flint traces the transnational gaze at photographic representations of Natives in the nineteenth and early twentieth century with particular focus on the objects’ “surround,” a term she borrows from James Elkins. Eric Cheyfitz argues that a working-class solidarity and anti-colonial resistance are not antithetical in his chapter “Reading Global Indigenous Resistance in Simon Ortiz’s *Fight Back*.” Using the example of Ortiz’s poetry Cheyfitz shows how “a working-class historical consciousness” can be “generated through the Indigenous experience of kinship” (234), but often becomes disrupted by colonial racism, which, Cheyfitz hints, makes an uprising against the dominant colonial order less likely. In “Productive Tensions: Transnational, Trans-/Indigenous,” Chadwick Allen juxtaposes the transnational with his term *trans-Indigenous* and does an exemplary reading of LeAnne Howe’s autobiographical story “I Fuck Up in Japan” (2013). To Allen, the categories are not antithetical or mutually exclusive, but an awareness of both makes a more informed, critical perspective possible. In the final article of the collection, Elvira Pulitano turns to the 2006 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and evaluates legal discourses on human rights in light of cosmopolitanism. Pulitano applauds the declaration, but she also warns readers from maintaining too simplistic a view of human rights. In her insightful article, she demonstrates the importance of inquiring into the underlying concepts of the human in Western legal discourses noting that even cosmopolitanism must be decolonized to include Indigenous people and other ethnicities.

As this short overview over the nine high-quality chapters shows, *The World, the Text, and the Indian* is a valuable contribution to transnationalism precisely because it complicates the term and offers a balanced selection of different positions within the field of Native American studies, some positively inclined or embracing the concept, others wary of potentially assimilationist undertones. However, all authors seem to agree on certain positions: first of all, that academic conversation *is* necessary and must be attempted, regardless of differing, or even antithetical political positions. Second, that Indigenous people have always been active agents of globalism. Third, that they have always been cosmopolitan in that they have

been aware of living in a world full of other people, nations, and tribes. And lastly, that transnationalism as both a term and a movement, while important, does not quite suffice as a conceptual framework for Native American studies—indeed, that the very idea of an overarching concept defeats the purpose of diversifying Native studies to represent, as Elvira Pulitano puts it in her article, “a world in which many worlds would coexist” (she is quoting Walter Mignolo here, 262). In her afterword, Shari Huhndorf—after offering her own insightful analysis of transnationalism—captures the different positions best when she concludes that “[t]ransnationalism thus constitutes a necessary, though inherently contradictory, critical framework in Native studies” (287).

However, the most striking aspect of Lyons’s collection consists, in my opinion, in its attempt to understand colonialism not as a historically unique occurrence, but as a “structure” (as Patrick Wolfe famously put it in “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native”) that is inseparably linked with the history of globalization. To ignore this link is to dismiss an important angle at decolonization as Lyons suggests in his introduction: “there is no real possibility of a separate textual or critical sphere divorced from global forces (cultural, economic, political), no possibility of a practice purely disassociated from global networks of production, circulation, and consumption” (1). Considering the multifaceted view of Native literary production(s) that Lyons’s collection presents, it is surprising, however, to note the absence of contemporary Native literatures explicitly dedicated to Indigenous futures. While *Indigenous Futurism* is, admittedly, a new term—too new probably to make it into the 2013 conference that furnished the material for Lyons’s book—it would certainly have been interesting to have seen speculative Indigenous literatures made sense of in the critical framework of globalism and transnationalism, especially since several authors, particularly Pulitano, Huhndorf and Lyons himself express explicit hopes for the futures of Native people and a firm belief in the future-potential of Native stories. Noting the absence of discussions of such young Native-Futurists as Stephen Graham Jones, Elizabeth LaPensée, Blake Hausman, Daniel Heath Justice (his critical writing is mentioned), Rebecca Roanhorse, Wendy Red Star, Andy Everson, and Joseph Erb is not so much a point of criticism as a call for more

publications in the tracks of Lyons's book that should aspire to its academic rigor and balanced selection of themes, while looking further ahead into the future of Native American literature(s), visual arts, and new media. Nevertheless, while an academic has notoriously

little time to read new publications in their entirety, Lyons's collection of critical essays is one of those few that are worthwhile reading from the first page to the last.

Kristina Baudemann (Flensburg)



HUBERT ZAPF, ed., *Handbook of Ecocriticism and Cultural Ecology* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 715 pp.

Gathering together many of the most inspiring international ecocritics all in one volume, Zapf's *Handbook of Ecocriticism and Cultural Ecology* amps up the volume for environmental humanities; indeed, this is easily one of the very best ecocritical collections to appear in the past ten years. Readers gain not only a general overview of ecocritical theories and practices relating to literary and cultural traditions all over the world, but also encounter significant and often new theoretical possibilities including biosemiotics, animal studies, material ecocriticism, eco-cosmopolitanism, the ecologies of literary communication, and genre and media ecologies. Particularly noteworthy are the opening section on recent ecocritical theories, which could stand alone as a scintillating guide to the entire field, and the third section including essays on area studies from around the world—with the two Italian scholars Serenella Iovino and Elena Past brilliantly presenting how land and sea and textuality in “Mediterranean Ecocriticism” shape our world and our thinking in ways meaningful across our blue planet. And the essays on Latin American, Global South, African, and Chinese traditions as well as the outstanding contributions on French eco- and geo-approaches by Rachel Bouvet and Stephanie Posthumus, were some of the most intriguing and significant works on ecocriticism that this reader has encountered. As we navigate the global problems of climate change, large-scale pollution (planetary scale), mass species extinction, etc., looking to voices from across our world becomes ever more important and these essays, especially Elmar Schmidt's discussion of “authentic” native identities in Latin America, Swarnalatha Rangarajan's chapter on “New Forest Texts from Fractured Indian Forests,” and Ogaga Ikuyade's discussion of ecocultures and the African Literary Tradition,” are must reads.

To highlight just one of many absolute delights in the volume—delightful in its ground-shaking insistence on re-thinking every aspect of our contemporary culture—I mention Kate Soper's essay in which she provides a provocative and inspiring analysis of the “politics of prosperity” by arguing that seeking the “good life” of environmental health should not rely solely on repression of desire in opposition to

consumption. Instead, she argues, ecological thinking must rethink notions of “progress and development” (164) and “represent the forms of sensual enhancement and complex fulfillments that people might be able to enjoy were they to opt for an alternative economic order” (165). Through readings of Shakespeare and Michel Houellebecq, she pushes us towards a needed cultural revolution “in our thinking about consumption” (171).

Overall, the volume's structure relates to Zapf's ground-breaking idea of cultural ecology, or how literature plays a connective role in culture that links our ideas and texts to our material realities as well as other potential ways of being. Thus “ecology” understood culturally relates to the ecocritical quest for environmental study of textual ideas but also to a more fundamental role of how language, texts, and especially literature function in cultures as the activating site of interconnectivity. The volume brilliantly embodies this theory. There are five main sections: Part I, “Ecocritical Theories of Culture and Literature” includes contributions from the major biosemioticians, Wendy Wheeler and Kate Rigby, as well as from Louise Westling on Merleau-Ponty; Hanjo Beressem on “Ecology and Immanence,” Hannes Bergthaller on systems theory, Gernot Böhme on aesthetics and nature; and Hubert Zapf's crucial chapter in which he delineates his theory of the cultural ecology of literature underlying the book.

Part II, “Issues and Directions of Contemporary Ecocriticism,” provides an ideal wish-list of major thinkers and ecocritical practices substantial enough to be a volume all unto itself. This astonishing array includes Kate Soper's essay, Catrin Gersdorf on political ecology and American literature; Mita Banerjee on green Postcolonial studies; Christa Grewe-Volpp's marvelous essay on ecofeminism and the toxic body, Nancy Easterlin on place studies, the always masterful Axel Goodbody on animal studies and Kafka, Serpil Oppermann's essential ideas on material ecocriticism, and Greg Garrard's brilliant assessment of Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* as climate-change fiction that assesses more broadly the question of climate skepticism as part of the inevitable anthropocentrism that is “a definite bias of human nature” (310). Yet Garrard, with unexpected and enchanting optimism, also notes that, literary fiction, despite the “encultured expectations of plot and character” that “are inherently anthropomorphic,”

“exhibits a distinctive orientation towards ‘alterity’ or otherness, which ensures it is always exposing its readers to what they cannot easily or comfortably think” (310).

Part III, “Between the Local and the Global: Cultural Diversity versus Eco-Cosmopolitanism,” highlighted above, opens the spectrum to a much broader array of international voices than most other volumes published in English. Also noteworthy is the first essay in the section written by one of the founders of ecocriticism, Scott Slovic, on narrative scholarship. In Part IV, “Ecologies of Literary Communication,” Zapf presents major environmental scholars interested in green pedagogy, narrative and af-

fect theories, place studies, trauma literature, memory studies, and translations. Finally, Part V moves into “Genre and Media Ecologies” and includes essays on Panoramas in theater, Ecomusicology, and environmental art. In short, this volume is essential reading for anyone interested in ecocriticism and the environmental humanities, both students and experts alike. It is a transformative volume that fulfills Soper’s credo of expanding our knowledge and seeking change in our practices, and thereby also achieving not restriction and renunciation but rather ecological pleasure.

Heather I. Sullivan (San Antonio)

ALEXA WEIK VON MOSSNER, *Affective Ecologies: Empathy, Emotion, and Environmental Narrative* (Ohio State UP, 2017), 271 pp.

One oft-repeated tale from the American Civil War era has it that Abraham Lincoln greeted Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as “the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war.” Much more recently—and more in line with Alexa Weik von Mossner's project here—the U.S. anti-captivity documentary *Blackfish* (dir. Gabriela Cowperthwaite, 2013) has been widely credited with the decline of marine mammal amusement park SeaWorld, which saw an 84 percent drop in revenue in 2015.<sup>1</sup>

These examples speak to a long-held hope of artists and scholars alike: that literature and film can change hearts and minds. But *how*, exactly, do they do that? And how do we *know* that they do it? In her impressive new book, *Affective Ecologies: Empathy, Emotion, and Environmental Narrative*, Weik von Mossner tackles these questions with a specific focus on environmental issues. She draws from the findings of cognitive science and cognitive cultural studies, combining them with narrative theory and other humanities approaches to develop a framework that she dubs a “cognitive ecocritical approach to narrative emotion” (4). For example, she explains how audiences “ma[p] the sensations, emotions, and movements of a character onto their own brains, thereby understanding, and literally *feeling*, their interaction with the character's environment, its pleasures, and its pains” (25), and theorizes how such processes can lead to pro-environmental reasoning and behavior in the “real world.” Here, we see that the U.S. focus of Weik von Mossner's archive is important: enduring a dismal record of environmental protection under the current presidential administration, Americans also “live on a landmass that is more severely affected by climate change than many other regions in the world, [but] seem to have particular difficulties in registering the urgency of the issue” (139).

*Affective Ecologies* is divided into three sections, with two chapters each. Part I “explores the sensory and affective experiences cued by the American environments ... in literature and film” (13), including the nine-

teenth-century nature writing of John Muir and Jan de Bont's 1996 disaster film *Twister*. Part II focuses on strategic empathy, looking at narratives of environmental injustice and animal exploitation ranging from Helena Maria Viramontes's 1995 novel *Under the Feet of Jesus* to Louis Psihoyos' 2009 documentary film *The Cove*. The third and final part investigates audiences' experiences of speculative environments, such as T. C. Boyle's 2000 satirical dystopian novel *A Friend of the Earth* and the glorious utopia of James Cameron's 2009 blockbuster *Avatar*. Interestingly enough, the latter film allegorizes the very topic of Weik von Mossner's book, insofar as its protagonist undergoes an embodied simulation of a particular environment, sparking politicized empathy for its indigenous inhabitants. Weik von Mossner closes the book with a gesture toward potential future paths for cognitive ecocriticism: first, the application of this approach to forms beyond literature and film, such as video games, graphic novels, and music; and, second, the need for further empirical research on environmental narratives.

As these descriptions indicate, Weik von Mossner's archive is diverse and generous, drawing little distinction between canonical texts and mainstream spectacles, or between fictional and nonfictional works. And for good reason: all have potential environmental relevance. Indeed, perhaps the most surprising finding Weik von Mossner reports is that “[t] here is no qualitative difference between fiction and nonfiction when it comes to processes of narrative transportation and readers' affective engagement with the storyworld that is evoked by a literary text” (14). Even so, she is careful to stress that the potential impact of a given book or movie is always contingent, or dependent, on multiple factors, ranging from the audience member's disposition to the physical context in which they encounter a work. For example, drawing on the work of Dan Flory, Weik von Mossner concludes that *The Cove's* exposé of dolphin slaughter in Taiji, Japan may not resonate with viewers who have “inhibited their empathy as a result of cultural belief systems or [who] try to avoid seeing the gruesome representation of animal suffering by looking away or engaging in other ways of imaginative resistance” (119). Moreover, not just any environmental narrative will do, as renowned climatologist James Hansen's (admittedly rudimentary) stab at science fiction makes clear; after briefly analyzing this

<sup>1</sup> See: <http://time.com/3987998/seaworlds-profits-drop-84-after-blackfish-documentary/>.

stab, Weik von Mossner wryly reminds us that narratives must “engage readers’ imaginations and emotions” and “invit[e] readers to simulate in their minds the characters’ actions and emotions or the worlds they behold through the use of vivid sensory and motor imagery” (144).

From my view, Weik von Mossner’s book is important on at least three fronts. First, it offers a fresh approach to the question of whether the empathy generated by narratives has significant political implications—a question that stretches back to Stowe’s 1852 novel, if not earlier, and to which Weik von Mossner answers in the affirmative. Second, *Affective Ecologies* builds on an important tradition of interdisciplinary work that takes the humanities seriously from a scientific perspective and vice versa, as seen, for example, in the rise of the medical humanities and narrative medicine in the past few decades. Storytelling, Weik von Mossner reminds us, has unique capacities for affecting audiences that other vehicles of information, such as scientific data, cannot match. Third, her work participates in the recent “affective turn” within the environmental humanities—as seen, for example, in Heather Houser’s 2014 monograph *Ecosickness in Contemporary U.S. Fiction: Environment and Affect* (Columbia University Press) and Kyle Bladow and Jennifer Ladino’s forthcoming edited collection *Affective Ecocriticism* (University of Nebraska Press). Weik von Mossner insists that this turn include cognitive approaches. Her book thus constitutes an exemplary model of interdisciplinary work, as well as a useful primer for readers new to cognitive research. Admittedly, some may be daunted by the proliferation of specialized terms—from “conditional realism” to “consciousness-enactment”—but Weik von Mossner’s clear organization and writing style keep the reader from being overwhelmed.

*Affective Ecologies* will spark spirited debate among some readers. For one thing, Weik von Mossner tells us that the lack of engagement with cognitive research on the part of ecocritics and other environmental humanists is “remarkable not only because these fields have always been more open to scientific approaches than many other [frameworks in] the humanities, but also because scholars working

in these fields are often so intent on changing human-nature relationships for the better” (7). But humanists also know that scientific research can be deeply biased and flawed (and yet always better-respected and -funded, I am moved to grumble). Indeed, the sciences as a whole are currently struggling with a so-called “replication crisis” that has resulted from multiple factors, including the push to publish statistically significant research. Moreover, scientific findings are often contradictory or preliminary, meaning that our understandings of various phenomena can change radically over time—as anyone who has witnessed, say, the egg’s trajectory from cholesterol-laden killing machine to component of a balanced diet can attest. In this, of course, the humanities are no different; just like that of scientists, our work is speculative and ever-shifting. Environmental humanists’ reluctance to engage with scientific research is thus perhaps not so surprising.

Weik von Mossner’s argument is ultimately utilitarian—and, we might say, utopian. For example, when considering the difficulties of rendering nonhuman perspectives through art, she claims that “[p]erhaps [these limitations] do not have to be overcome ... The question should rather be whether anthropomorphic inhabitations of animal minds can have any positive influences on how we look at real-world animals” (129). Put more broadly, and plainly: “we are in dire need of alternatives and visions of better ways of being on planet earth” (134), and Weik von Mossner wants to know how literature and film can, in engaging our emotions, prompt us to develop those ways. This raises a final set of questions: What are the larger implications for art and art-making from this perspective? More pointedly, if we could in fact determine exactly how novels or films or music can foment environmental action, would that give rise to an instrumentalist, or even propagandist, approach to art? Or would it simply enable artists to fulfill their hopes of changing hearts and minds? As a seminal step in the interdisciplinary subfield of cognitive ecocriticism, *Affective Ecologies* will no doubt inspire further work poised to take on these questions.

Nicole Seymour (Fullerton)

AMITAV GHOSH, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 2016), 176 pp.

STEPHEN SIPERSTEIN, SHANE HALL, and STEPHANIE LEMENAGER, eds., *Teaching Climate Change in the Humanities* (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), 294 pp.

Despite its grave threat, climate change continues to be treated as a myth by a number of people. Yet there are also those who understand the serious nature of the issue. Many scientists, scholars, activists, and volunteers take action to minimize the danger of climate change. The work on understanding and preventing the deadly ramifications of climate change is hard and demands the involvement of people with various backgrounds. Among them are scholars from the environmental humanities who doubtlessly help understand the complex concept of climate change, elucidate the role of cultural representations of the issue, as well as spread ecological awareness. Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* and Stephen Siperstein, Shane Hall, and Stephanie LeMenager's (ed.) *Teaching Climate Change in the Humanities* demonstrate the importance of acknowledging the role of the humanities and numerous authors and scholars who produce and examine the cultural artifacts that explicitly or implicitly deal with climate change.

One might wonder what the cultural representations of climate change and their interpretations tell us about this intricate issue. Many people remain skeptical about the ability of environmental humanities scholars to contribute anything that is worth attention to the study of climate change. Even more doubt the power of fiction to deal with such a serious issue. Amitav Ghosh laments:

When the subject of climate change occurs in these publications [literary journals and book reviews], it is almost always in relation to nonfiction; novels and short stories are very rarely to be glimpsed within this horizon. Indeed, it could even be said that fiction that deals with climate change is almost by definition not of the kind that is taken seriously by serious literary journals: the mere mention of the subject is often enough to relegate a novel or a short story to the genre of science fiction. It is as though in the literary imagination climate change were somehow

akin to extraterrestrials or interplanetary travel. (7)

In raising this question, Ghosh attempts to understand what makes the audiences perceive the fictional literary texts that to various degrees deal with climate change so skeptically. He explains the existing skepticism with the apt term “[i]mprobability” (17; italics in original), inevitably foregrounding another important problem related to the cultural imaginings of climate change, namely the inability of the audiences to understand the seriousness of the portrayals of climate change. In making this argument, Ghosh obviously does not try to undermine the importance of cultural representations of climate change. Rather, he makes his readers ponder over the following question: *Why is humanity unable to understand and imagine the danger of climate change?* The other term that Ghosh uses to characterize climate change and its representations is “*uncanny*” (30; italics in original), which, along with the term “improbability,” reinforces the bewilderment that characterizes the reactions of audiences worldwide to climate change and its manifestations. Only briefly referring to or providing more detailed analyses of various literary texts, from Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* to Paul Kingsnorth's *The Wake* to his own novels, including *The Hungry Tide* and *The Glass Palace*, and beyond, Ghosh meticulously examines the power of fiction to represent climate change and the failure of the readers to take these representations seriously.

He ultimately turns to history and politics and argues that, just like literature, they fail to construct the issue of climate change as *imaginable*, thus only intensifying the collective confusion with regard to climate change and never truly aiding in understanding the issue. Ghosh's conclusion draws our attention to the importance of the problem and the role of every human being, every discipline, every country in helping solve the problem of climate change and give hope for a better life for future generations: “When future generations look back upon the Great Derangement they will certainly blame the leaders and politicians of this time for their failure to address the climate crisis. But they may well hold artists and writers to be equally culpable—for the imagining of possibilities is not, after all, the job of politicians and bureaucrats” (135). Ghosh insists that only when we realize both

our individual and collective responsibility for the preservation of life on the Earth, will we be able to effectively deal with the ramifications of the ecological decline that we are already witnessing today.

The problem of climate change can be solved only when we unite our intellectual forces. While the humanities, or rather the environmental humanities that focus explicitly on the questions of ecology and the environment and their place in history, cultural studies, and other disciplines, are considered by some as the disciplines that are incapable of contributing to the study of climate change, this view is evidently wrong. Environmental humanities scholars not only strive to understand the concept of climate change, trace the history of the issue, and interpret its representations; many of them also make an invaluable contribution to the study of climate change—they teach climate change, thus spreading ecological awareness among the representatives of younger generations, sharing the knowledge about climate change that we currently have with the youth, making sure that climate change is perceived as a dangerous and complex issue that demands immediate actions. *Teaching Climate Change in the Humanities* vividly illustrates the role of teaching and learning when it comes to climate change.

Climate change is, indeed, the issue that is now taught by a number of scholars and instructors in various disciplines, including the humanities: “Increasingly across the humanities, climate change has moved to the forefront of the agenda. This movement has been formalized under the label Environmental Humanities, which covers and contains a wide range of innovative approaches within history and literary and cultural studies concerned with re-centering the environment within the humanities” (Riede et al. 126). Teaching climate change from the perspective of the environmental humanities, “an emergent disciplinary formation at the interface between the humanities, social sciences and environmental practice” (Kearnes 38), is a difficult yet rewarding task to perform. Siperstein, Hall, and LeMenager’s edited collection foregrounds these two factors in the process of teaching climate change in the humanities.

It is true that “[i]n the humanities classroom, it is not uncommon for those of us who teach ideologically-motivated topics (e.g. race, class, gender, environment) to struggle to reach those students who feel we are over-

reaching when we conduct close readings of texts that do not overtly represent such topics” (Rust 224). The humanities include the academic disciplines that focus on various important issues; yet these issues are studied through non-empirical methods. These approaches thus frequently do not allow the teacher to give a specific, single-valued answer/solution to a certain question/problem. In turn, students might feel that what they are studying does not have any value, which is obviously not true.

While climate change, just like all other issues taught and studied in the humanities, is a serious and, indeed, complex problem, environmental humanists do not focus on the scientific (whether chemical, geological, or any other) nature of climate change, but instead pay much attention to the cultural, literary, cinematic, historical, political, and other productions and interpretations of climate change, striving to understand *them* and their value. Therefore, teaching climate change from the perspective of the environmental humanities might turn into a very difficult task, particularly when the intended audience does not major in the humanities. Such was the experience of one of the contributors to the volume, Greg Garrard:

I envisaged the course as incorporating reflection of the place of science in contemporary culture, as well as justifying the humanities to those who will not continue to study them. I also talked a lot about narrative technique and the fictionality of fiction—its complex, ambiguous relationship to the non-fictional world we think we inhabit. Despite my efforts, many essays treated the fictions as unmediated sources of information about such extratextual realities as the relationship of gender and climate change. (123)

Yet, as the essays in the edited collection demonstrate, teachers find ways to deal with such problems, meticulously searching for materials and carefully selecting texts that would help their students from a wide range of study programs understand the humanities’ approach to the issue of climate change and appreciate the value of cultural, historical, and other perspectives on this complex issue.

The edited collection accentuates the importance of educating younger generations and explaining what climate change is and how humanity can reduce its drastic ramifications. Just like Ghosh’s book, it insists on the role that

we all play, both individually and collectively, in addressing the issue. The unity of various spheres is key here: “The great transition that must occur in the next few decades, weaning humanity off fossil fuels and establishing low-to-zero carbon economies, requires an unprecedented coordination of science, politics, international relations, culture, technology, the arts, religious stewardship, and education” (Engell 24). It is not only crucial to try to predict and minimize the consequences of climate change now but also to educate younger generations to make sure that the hard and long-term work on solving the ecological crisis will continue in the future. Nicholas Lawrence comments on the complicated conditions that younger people find themselves in today: “Our students, who face historic levels of personal debt while tracking the new-normal turbulence of extreme weather and endemic joblessness as a matter of course, grasp the implications of this relation far better than their administrators” (62). The cooperation with younger generations, care for the future of humanity and all the living on our planet, and active work on solving the current ecological problems can minimize the deadly ramifications of climate change.

Tackling the issue of climate change from the perspective of the humanities is important. Both *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* and *Teaching Climate Change in the Humanities* attempt to reveal the complexity of climate change as a cultural issue as well as the advantages and disadvantages of dealing with climate change from the perspective of the environmental humanities. Both books point out a dangerous and terrifying tendency: on the one hand, the representations of climate change are scarce, random, and often not persuasive, on the other hand, audiences tend to disregard such images, considering them just fictional. This inability to clearly think of and imagine climate change and its ramifications makes it harder to teach climate change using a non-empirical approach. The two books, thus, foreground the problems that surround the study of climate change in the humanities; but they also actively engage humanists to solve these problems now in order to be able to move further in the research of such an intricate issue as climate change.

Tatiana Prorokova (Vienna)

RICHARD J. SCHNEIDER, *Civilizing Thoreau: Human Ecology and the Emerging Social Sciences in the Major Works* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2016), 212 pp.

Thanks largely to the magnificent work of Robert Richardson (*Henry Thoreau: A Life of the Mind*, 1986) and Robert Sattelmeyer (*Thoreau's Reading*, 1988), Thoreauvians have for some time been aware of the enormous extent of Thoreau's reading. A "chain reader" (Richardson), Thoreau immersed himself about as much in books as he did in nature, with his interests ranging from natural history, philosophy, literary classics, travel and exploration, to local history, geography, ethnography, and the Indians.

The area most fully explored so far is Thoreau's familiarity with the natural sciences of his day. As Laura Walls, William Rossi, Benjamin Berger, and others have shown, Thoreau developed his stance (or rather, stances) toward nature and his characteristic brand of nature writing not only on the basis of his own observations—vast and meticulous as these were—but also in response to an impressive array of scientists ranging from old-style natural historians such as Gilbert White to more recent and contemporary authorities including Georges Cuvier, Louis Agassiz, Asa Gray, Robert Hunt, Charles Darwin, and most importantly, Alexander von Humboldt.

Richard Schneider's *Civilizing America* is all the more welcome as it draws attention to an area whose impact has not been fully appreciated (despite several essays by Schneider himself published earlier and now integrated into a comprehensive study): Thoreau's reading in the social sciences. We need to be aware of these sources not so much for their own sake or because they took up quite a bit of Thoreau's time, but because they are, in fact, intimately related to his nature studies. Right from the start Schneider establishes the close link between the social sciences and the study of nature, both with an eye to the sciences in general and Thoreau in particular. Contrary to popular assumption, such key concepts of biology as species dispersion or dissemination, evolution, succession, and survivorship were first introduced by social scientists and only later adapted to the study of nature. Right around the time when he was engaged in his final revisions of *Walden*, Thoreau immersed himself in such studies as Louis Agassiz's essays on "The Diversity of Origin of the

Human Races" (1850), Charles Pickering's *The Races of Man* (1851), and Arnold Guyot's *The Earth and Man* (1851)—books that propose and develop sweeping hypotheses about the history of the earth, the origins and evolution of humankind, the spread of races across the globe, and the processes of civilization as these were affected by climate and geography.

The link taken for granted by these writers between the realms of nature and society anticipates the notion of "human ecology" introduced by Robert Ezra Park in 1936 and amply documented in Donald Worster's masterful survey, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (1977). From the perspective of Guyot, Pickering, and others, the degree to which Thoreau conflates ecology and economics, nature and civilization, appears less as a matter of rhetorical paradox than as part and parcel of a considered argument. While not identical, the two form an almost seamless whole, and it is perfectly legitimate to interpret one in terms of the other.

Some of the consequences may not appeal to most Thoreauvians. His fascination with the Indians notwithstanding, Thoreau accepts their doom as inevitable in keeping with the notion of natural "succession," the displacement of plant and animal communities that goes on all the time. In the same vein, he assigns to African Americans and the Irish the role of 'pioneers' that, much like pioneer plants, prepare the way for the advance of a superior species. We may balk at these ideas, but the evidence that Schneider presents is overwhelming, not only from *Walden*, but actually from the early essays and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* all the way to *Cape Cod* and the late manuscripts (thus incidentally providing an element of continuity that qualifies the widely held view of a major shift or even break in Thoreau's intellectual development).

Among the wealth of insights that Schneider offers, some of the most exciting fall under the heading of "Self-Culture and Ecological Survivorship." While subscribing to Guyot's teleological view of history, Thoreau strongly dissents from the linkage, crucial in Guyot's scheme, between progress, increasing wealth, and intellectual development. At the same time, both agree in emphasizing the role of heroic individuals in advancing the progress of civilization. Thoreau's admiration for a masculine ideal of virtue has long been noted, but reading such pieces as "Sir Walter Raleigh,"



“Civil Disobedience,” and “A Plea for Captain John Brown” not from the perspective of Carlyle or Emerson but in light of the notion of the ecological struggle for life adds an exciting facet to the debate.

The most challenging and potentially controversial chapter is Schneider’s analysis of “Walking” and the ideology of Manifest Destiny. True, whole paragraphs of Thoreau’s essay do sound like a paraphrase of Guyot’s progressivist myth of history in terms of the westward advance of civilization across the globe. Nevertheless, to my mind, the paean to the West provides merely a kind of prologue to the central message of the essay, the remarks on wildness. (The rhetoric of the text indicates as much: “what I have been preparing to say”.) And wildness is only tangentially tied to geography; a principle of creativity and exploration, it is, ultimately, a metaphysical concept. Ever the Transcendentalist, Thoreau here—as well as in the “Conclusion” of *Walden* or the ending of *Cape Cod*—envisions a new world beyond America, a world that like the “true places” in *Moby-Dick* is “not down on any map” (ch. 12). The closest Thoreau can come

to a new world is by imaginatively joining John Polis in *The Maine Woods* (“The Allegash and East Branch”) on his trip home, a journey that will take the Indian to “Places where he might live and die and never hear of the United States, which make such a noise in the world,—never hear of America, so called from the name of a European gentleman.”

Schneider is the author of a monograph (*Henry David Thoreau*, 1987) and two teacher’s guides (*Approaches to Teaching Thoreau’s Walden and Other Works*, 1996; *A Teacher’s Guide to Walden*, 1997) as well as the editor of an essay collection on environmentalism (*Thoreau’s Sense of Place: Essays in American Environmental Writing*, 2000). His new book once again shows him to be one of our foremost authorities on Thoreau. Thanks to *Civilizing America*, the “Thoreau problem” (Rebecca Solnit)—the split between the nature lover and ecologist on the one hand and the social critic and activist on the other—may not disappear altogether, but it seems a lot less intractable.

Dieter Schulz (Heidelberg)

CHRISTIAN KLOECKNER, SIMONE KNEWITZ, and SABINE SIELKE, eds. *Knowledge Landscapes North America* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2016), 305 pp.

The recent endeavors of the Trump administration to instigate reforms regarding political, educational, and ecological programs (to put it very mildly), as well as its attempts to recalibrate what knowledge is and how knowledge is produced and circulated, signal the urgency in American Studies to analyze and interpret the dynamics of knowledge construction and circulation in the twenty-first century. The timely volume *Knowledge Landscapes North America* aims at examining these processes “from institutional, structural, and conceptual angles,” and likewise stresses how knowledge comes to “matter for individual agents and within collectives” (16). The edited volume comprises fourteen essays and one interview with Rivka Galchen and Joseph O’Neill, originating from the 62<sup>nd</sup> annual conference of the German Association of American Studies in Bonn, 2015. By examining institutions and the social patterns they produce and circulate, the bodies they exclude, and the doctrines they postulate, the volume highlights the economics of knowledge and hence exemplifies a shift towards a meta-contextualization in and of American Studies. The volume suggests that knowledge is increasingly seen as an economic resource (and in some contributions possibly a commodity), marked and scarred by related processes of globalization, neoliberalism, and capitalism. This “economic impact of knowledge—and thus, implicitly, its economic dependency—has been of central importance in scholarship for a long time” (8) and can be taken to gain new momentum in the twenty-first century vis-à-vis de-funded educational programs, public institutions, and academic scholarship (i. e., Trump’s proposition of the eliminating of the arts and humanities endowment). The first half of 2017 alone has seen a sudden re-shaping and re-configuration of the stratification of knowledge(s) (i. e., post-truth rhetoric) and the malleability of truth (i. e., alternative facts). Knowledge, its production and circulation, as well as its economization and hegemonic potential, will remain a contested field of inquiry in the humanities in the following decades. It will be indicative of shifting geo-political dynamics to come—and of knowledge that will be either canonized or further marginalized.

The scope of objects of inquiry of this collection showcases the conceptualization of knowledge as a *spatial* concept—described by the editors Christian Kloeckner, Simone Knewitz and Sabine Sielke as knowledge environments. These environments afford a foregrounding of the interactions of “local conditions and specific agents” that are always already embodied as well as site- and time-specific (9). By mapping knowledge as contested, dynamic, shifting environments, the editors place emphasis on spatial formations and transformations of fields like the academy, the literary market and pop-culture, political institutions as well as production companies or public institutions like libraries. Knowledge, hence, is a concept of both spatial and time-specific dimensions, but also unfolds as an elusive and malleable category of academic and political inquiry that can be traded and capitalized upon on the global market.

The volume is elegantly structured into four dynamic fields of investigation that acknowledge these shifts and critically examine the reciprocity of political, cultural and social actors and spheres. The first of these fields focuses on both the emergence of knowledge institutions and their increasing intertwining with the economic sector. By investigating (public) spaces such as the university and the library, scholarship is able to trace the “increasing dependence of knowledge [...] on economic utility and cash value” throughout the history of knowledge production and circulation in the United States (11). What the first three essays demonstrate is the constant re-calibration of institutions in political, economic, cultural, and even personal force fields, and thus achieve nuanced investigations into the (public) educational system ranging from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. Chris Newfields’s essay helps contextualize the debate over the historical shift from knowledge society to knowledge economy, for he outlines the challenges and opportunities at stake in the humanities. By choosing the focal point of a spatial/architectural analysis, Alexander Starre’s essay on emergence of Carnegie libraries as epistemic spaces helps constitute a shift towards a “potential to decenter the position of the literary in knowledge-oriented humanities research” in order to “reveal wider networks of discursive practices that transcend the domain of literature and art” (80). If and when we put such epistemic spaces “at the center of an inquiry into historical modes of

knowing, we multiply the range of discourses and artifacts that need to be accounted for” (*ibid.*). Particularly since the digital revolution has done away with many *physical* spaces of knowledge production and circulation and replaced the college book store with online retailers, the campus café with a coffee chain, or the library with illegally downloaded PDFs, we need to pay closer attention to institutions such as the library, the campus, and the classroom as chronotopes in the twenty-first century. Such a chronotopic reading of knowledge gives further indication of the structural exclusion and discrimination against women, queer people, people with disabilities, and people of color in these environments; these inquiries beg for socio-geographical attention towards campus politics and the policing of the student body.

This line of inquiry of the “landscape-grooming” and streamlining of knowledge and its institutions, ranging from access via exorbitant enrollment fees to structural racism and exclusion, helps acknowledge issues of access to and privilege through knowledge environments. These questions reverberate in the next section of the volume on pedagogies, which turns to four historical objects that range from early-life learning to campus life. The essays offer complex and often surprising readings of tactics of pedagogies and the proliferation of tacit knowledge over the course of different lived environments (i. e., the parlor, the school, the campus). Mahshid Mayar explains how dissecting maps and puzzles of the nineteenth century shaped the (self)-conceptualization of the nation through toys and childhood as a bourgeois “institution”; a quaint pastime turns into a geo-political exercise and a stage for possible imperial indoctrination, because dissection maps could “empower” regions, nations, even continents, as the essential building blocks of the world in the child’s spatial imagination” (105). These combinations of cartography and knowledge were “as much about zooming in and essentializing borders according to U.S. geopolitical priorities as they were about zooming out, essentializing the pieces and, ultimately, idealizing the whole” (116). Mayar draws attention to the socio-cultural dimension of these pastimes, for they were mostly coded as upper-class activities (101). In a similar vein to Mayar’s article, the question of access, privilege, and elitism is at the centerfold of Sophie Spieler’s essay about Owen Johnson’s novel

*Stover at Yale* (1912). She highlights the habitus of the Ivy League student body and the genre of campus novel, and her article spotlights urgent questions on the self-fashioning of a higher educational institution that resonate within today’s knowledge environments. A recent interactive article in the *New York Times*<sup>1</sup> visualizes how higher education enrollment data has changed within the last 30 years—these data may be indicative of Spieler’s questions towards access and privilege. When contrasted with Heinz Ickstadt’s article on the sleeper hit *Stoner*, Spieler’s essay treats *Stover at Yale* as an intervention, reading it as a story “about distinction, about hierarchies, about competition; college here is not primarily concerned with the production or dissemination of knowledge, but instead serves as a space to foster the actualization and accumulation of social capital” and the distribution of power on campus (121). Yet her reading of *Stover at Yale* offers a critical intervention on elitism as a structuring principle and on the necessity to rethink its dominance (136). This begs the question of both the economization as well as the politicization of the student body and/on the campus, as well as of the shifting socio-geographical tendencies of access to knowledge—global and digital influences notwithstanding.

“What does literature know?” asks Antje Kley—and inaugurates the third section of the volume that investigates how fields produce competing and contested forms of knowledge—crudely put, what counts as knowledge. The essays turn to cultural ecology and new materialism, border concepts, natural sciences, and the news and places them in conversation with core interests of American Studies. Kley’s essay illuminates the intertwining of social sciences and literature and affords a ‘view from somewhere,’ meaning how the social perspective on sciences must be understood as an enriching crosspollination, and not a competing perspective of fields foreign from another (see also, if approached from a different angle, Newfield’s essay in the volume). Kley argues that “knowledge in the humanities [...] always implies an explicit entanglement between the

<sup>1</sup> Ashkenas, Jeremy, Haeyoun Park and Adam Pearce. “Even With Affirmative Action, Blacks and Hispanics Are More Underrepresented at Top Colleges Than 35 Years Ago.” *The New York Times*. The New York Times, August 24, 2017. Web. September 18, 2017.

socially embedded subject and the object of knowledge production” and socially situated knowledge (153). She thus underlines the culturally and historically particularized individual and collective scenarios (156). Fiction, Kley argues, “selects, accentuates, combines, and inflects partial bodies of knowledge from particular, historically changing discourses and areas of expertise, and it renders them relevant within particular frames of reference” (156). Explorations of social perspective and communication through the particular are signature strengths of literary knowledge production, but this also calls attention to “the formative role of the person who gains knowledge as well as of the protocols used in the processes of knowledge production” (159)—Kley’s observation ties to how competing concepts of knowledge are individualized processes, embedded within daily routines, like news consumption. Particularly in today’s post-truth era, the news offers an arena of the emotional, subjective, dispersed construction of information, facts, and opinions. In his contribution, Frank Kelleter understands the news as a crucial sphere of modern knowledge, for it is not “about something in the world, but also always about itself” (211). Altered frameworks and the shifts of the development of media technologies and practices help outlining “the practical indication and self-referential expression of modernity. Our own contemporary assumption that knowledge is dependent on innovation has (one of) its roots here” (213). The essay gives an outlook on the self-performance of contemporary news institutions and how these very institutions come to rethink themselves. Kelleter draws a parallel to a meta-medial turn of contemporary agents, such as fiction and film, indicating a careful re-assessment and self-understanding of media.

The last section turns to questions regarding forgotten and marginalized knowledge and the bodies in these very environments, paying attention to tacit, embodied, and gendered knowledge and cultural memory. The essays pay closer attention to individual agents and dynamics within collectives. They illuminate the aforementioned questions of access and privilege from another angle, for they acknowledge how environments produce

and negotiate epistemic injustices for marginalized groups and minorities. As Christa Buschendorf’s essay exemplifies, a reading of knowledge landscapes in relation to slavery in the novel *The Known World* helps question “why systems of domination, particularly those based on fundamental injustice as in the case of slavery, exhibit such remarkable stability and duration” (17). Jeanne Cortiel’s essay employs the movie franchise *Resident Evil* as a vehicle to illustrate and recognize epistemic injustice within knowledge structures and the relationship between scientific knowledge and gendered bodies; she probes in what way the series is capable to “destabilize ways of knowing space factually or even knowing space at all” (251). These relationships exemplify the affects the “individual in her capacity as knower, either by doubting the credibility of what she says [...] or by limiting her ability to interpret her social experience” has within the gameplay (249). The series, Cortiel argues, “lays bare the links between gender, self-ownership, and disavowed ways of knowing space and self” (265f). Turning towards the question of how knowledge matters for the individual—alone as well as embedded within collectivities—underlines how the “forces of tacitness in structures of racial, ethnic, and gendered dominations” are expressed and negotiated in cultural productions such as the *Resident Evil* franchise (257).

It hence remains imperative to highlight how economic and political forces at play in the twenty-first century come to landscape forgotten, contested, shifted, and tilting vistas of knowledge today. Yet it also comes to show how quickly common beliefs can be dismantled and superseded by “new knowledge” and paradigm shifts. It is safe to say that in 2015, neither the attendants, contributors nor organizers of the annual GAAS conference could have anticipated the extent and form that debates surrounding knowledge would take in the wake of the 2016 Presidential election. The publication of this volume occurs at a crucial moment of political momentum and may inspire and arm the discipline in the presently changing landscape of American knowledge.

Rieke Jordan (Frankfurt)

NADJA GERNALZICK and GABRIELE PISARZ-RAMIREZ, eds. *Transmediality and Transculturality* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2013), 444 pp.

As Nadja Gernalzick and Gabriele Pisarz-Ramirez, the editors of the essay volume *Transmediality and Transculturality*, note in their preface, the notion of “transculturation” traces back to the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortíz’s 1940 study *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*. At present, they suggest, it “has joined an entire cluster of ‘trans-’ terms—transmedial, transnational, translocal, transareal, transdifferent, transversal—that signal an increased critical engagement of social sciences and cultural studies with traditional social, spatial, national, or cultural boundaries” (xvii). Out of this cluster, it is “transmediality,” understood as the “transfer and processuality in medial exchanges that resist closure” (xii), that serves as the volume’s second focalizing concept. The overall aim of the book is to provide “a joint consideration of the two terms, contributing to the discussion in a field constituted by the relations between the more or less established terms interculturality, intertextuality, and intermediality; multiculturalism and multi-mediality; cross-culturality and cross-media; hyperculturality, hypertexts, and hypermedia; as well as also metamediality and remediation” (xi). Against this proliferation of terms and concepts and against the “at times inflationary use [of] the [trans-] prefix,” the editors position the “case studies” (xviii) they have assembled for this substantial collection to “demonstrate[], profile[], and test[]” (xi) the conceptual and (inter-)disciplinary histories as well as the explanatory potentials of transculturality and transmediality.

The collection consists of twenty-one essays (and a generous number of black-and-white as well as color illustrations) that are framed by the editors’ preface, which offers a useful and illuminating comparative conceptual history of the two guiding concepts, and a “postface” by Birgit Mersmann, which revisits some of the issues raised across the volume and rethinks them from the perspective of translation studies. Hailing from a broad range of disciplines (American Studies, British Studies, German Studies, Romance Literatures and Languages, Inter-American Studies, Media Studies, Comparative Literature), the contributors approach transmediation and transculturation from a variety of angles and frequently subscribe to dif-

ferent definitions and understandings of these terms. This polyphony is simultaneously the volume’s greatest asset and its greatest weakness. On the one hand, it foregrounds the theoretical and conceptual richness of these terms and their productive applicability in case studies ranging from literature, theater, and film, to non-fiction writing, painting, and (digital) performance art. On the other hand, they make the reading experience a *tour de force* through sometimes uneven territory and prevent the volume from serving as an introductory text to transmediality and transculturality as key theoretical concepts of our current moment. Even though the editors plausibly structure the essays into three sections that move from investigations of transmediality (I) to reconsiderations of Ortíz’s notion of transculturality (II), to an interest in current applications of transculturality and transmediality (III), one is occasionally left with the feeling of reading two books at once: one about Ortíz’s legacy in the field of Inter-American Studies, and another one about mostly current configurations of the transmedial and the transcultural across different media. This criticism notwithstanding, the editors must be commended for assembling a number of insightful and occasionally brilliant essays that, *en tout*, manage to challenge received disciplinary perspectives.

The preface provides a useful introduction to the discursive and disciplinary history of the two titular terms and places these terms into a comparative framework by considering their applications in Latin American, Anglo-American, and German contexts. Noting the relative neglect of Ortíz’s work outside of Latin America, Gernalzick and Pisarz-Ramirez make a compelling case about its much-needed reconsideration, and they point to the productive possibilities of connecting it with notions of transmediality. They base their understanding of transmediality on Urs Meyer, Roberto Simanowski, and Christoph Zeller’s definition of the term as “the simultaneous presence of the media involved” and adopt their focus on “the participating media *in the process of transition*” (qtd. and trans. Gernalzick and Pisarz-Ramirez xii). What may be missing, however, is an extended explanation of the specific interconnection of transmediality and transculturality as critical concepts beyond the intriguing, but relatively general, suggestion that “transmediality and transculturality have been launched into debates about cultural and medial sectionalisms when

competing terms such as inter- or multiculturalism and inter- or multimediality entrenched virulent distinctions for the organization of privilege and hierarchy” (xi).

The essays in part one (Transmediality) focus largely on literary instantiations of transmediality, with the exception of Christopher Zeller’s investigation of the German performance artist Wolf Vostell’s Fluxus-inspired happenings of the 1960s and their status as “transmedial representation[s]” rather than immediate experiences of a life-like presence (23). Other essays in this part engage the theoretical and practical differentiation between inter- and transmediality (Meyer on contemporary German literature, Eilittä on media conceptions in German romanticism, Lipinski on a stage adaptation of Goethe’s *Wahlverwandtschaften*, Seiler on Danielewski’s *House of Leaves*) and the manifold ways of reading literary works such as Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* (Capulet) or Nina Simone’s autobiography *I Put a Spell on You* (Gutenberger) through the lenses of inter- and transmedial theory. Julia Straub’s piece on the transmedial mythicity of Dante’s Beatrice in the literature and the arts of Victorian Britain offers a particularly insightful analysis of the literary figure’s “cultural afterlife” (102): “the vagrancy of myths in the context of transmediality, their equal representability in different medial forms,” and their ability to indicate “larger cultural concerns [...] independent of generic or medial boundaries” (102, 103).

The essays in part two (“Transculturality: Pursuing the Legacy of Fernando Ortíz”) revolve around Ortíz’s original conceptualization of transculturality, its discursive legacy, and its significance as a tool for literary and cultural analysis. Markus Heide’s assessment, through an Ortízian lens, of the Cuban poet and political activist José Martí as a critically marginalized precursor of recent cultural theory is especially impressive. Heide proposes that “Martí’s work, on the one hand, illustrates the visionary, romantic, and utopian aspects of pan-American unity, and, on the other hand, addresses and anticipates contradictions, conflicts, and power asymmetries within the Western hemisphere that until today characterize the political, cultural, and literary life of the Americas, as well as relations between American nation states” (142). For this analysis, Ortíz’s concept of transculturation offers a fruitful starting point, as it does for the consideration of border-crossing

and often ambiguous personal, cultural, and literary connections examined in the other essays on Cuban/Cuban-American literature (Stauder on Carpentier’s novel *El siglo de las luces*, Künstler on Firmat’s autobiography *Next Year in Cuba*, Gremels on the poetry of William Navarrete, Köder on homophobia in revolutionary Cuba) and music (Valdés on Cuban hip hop) in this part. Perhaps because of its thematic unity, this part is the most cohesive of the volume, even though one wonders why the two essays in Spanish (Gremels, Valdéz) were not translated into English in order to ensure greater accessibility for a broader readership.

The essays in part three (“Transculturality and Transmediality in Current Application”) are more clearly centered on recent and relatively recent transcultural and transmedial phenomena, including digital avant-garde installations (Simanowski), literary fiction (Schinko on Lethem’s *The Fortress of Solitude* and *You Don’t Love Me Yet*) and transfiction (Banita on Eggers’s *What Is the What*), visual media (de Toro on Frida Kahlo, Brandt on “giant movies” and the “culture of corporeality” of the 1950s, Weymann on films, paintings, and novels of Peter Weiss), and cultural theory (Wägenbauer on performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña and postcolonial theoretician Homi K. Bhabha). They provide snapshots of generally well-chosen transmedial and transcultural phenomena rather than a systematic mapping of the field at large, but in many cases—such as Schinko’s pop culture-sensitive reading of Lethem or Banita’s profound inquiry into the moral and ethical problems of Egger’s transfictional approach to the humanitarian crisis and war in Sudan—the close readings are more than mere case studies and forcefully illustrate the potential of transmediality and transculturality as critical terms and theoretical concepts.

The book closes with Birgit Mersmann’s essay “Global Routes,” which connects transmediation and transculturation with theories and practices of translation studies. Expanding the notion of translation “to include all different kinds of cultural transference, among these the transfer of ideas, of artistic forms including visual arts and music, of material objects, and of modern media” (407), Mersmann unfolds a mediological approach to “cultural translation” that complements many of the key ideas voiced throughout the volume and culminates in a consideration of what she

calls “iconic transculturality,” i.e. the ways in which cultural translation “becomes manifest in concrete image phenomena” (416).

As noted above, the diversity, polyphony, and multi-perspectivity of Gernalzick and Pisarz-Ramirez’s volume can be taxing at times, requiring a reader who is willing to follow each of the contributors’ conceptual self-positioning and their sometimes idiosyncratic choice of subject matter. But there is also something rewarding about a book that resists what seems to be a current trend towards streamlining academic publications into pre-

dictable formats and forcing diversity into conventional forms of argumentation. While I assume that many readers will cherry-pick chapters from this book depending on their own research interests, I would suggest that it is very much worthwhile to read the book cover to cover, if only to recognize that one’s own theoretical and conceptual preferences are just that—preferences that should always be taken with a grain of salt and must stand the test against the preferences of others.

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