

writers of the eighteenth century, for instance, Nicholas von Maltzahn ignores George F. Sensabaugh's seminal study of the same subject in *That Grand Whig Milton*. Jackie DiSalvo's pioneering article on Puritans and Indians in *Paradise Lost* (in Ronald G. Shafer, *Ringing the Bell Backward*), and William C. Spengemann's chapter on the American character of Milton's epic in *A New World of Words* are nowhere mentioned. And only Sauer seems to be aware of Robert Fallon's important book, *Divided Empire*, which appeared in print in 1995.

The volume has been quite carefully edited, and I noticed only three typographical errors — *studio* for *studii* (9), “centurian” for “centurion” (182), and the italicization of “Milton’s” (14). One essay, however, contained a number of stylistic or grammatical solecisms — “whose difference . . . are” (220), “to the same position of the woman of Timna” (225), “though having successfully resisted” (227), and “who posed as much a threat to Israel as . . .” (228).

J. MARTIN EVANS

~

Leigh Dale. *The English Men: Professing Literature in Australia*. Rushcutters Bay, NSW: Halstead Press/Association for the Study of Australian Literature, 1997. Pp. 242. AU \$25.00.

The English Men: Professing Literature in Australia is an exemplary work of cultural history. It offers a compelling study of the ways in which the introduction and teaching of English literature in Australian universities promoted imperial values and British loyalties, to the detriment of local culture. Leigh Dale begins with a discussion of classical studies at Oxford and Cambridge in the nineteenth-century, demonstrating their pedagogical importance to the founding of the discipline of English in Australia. This occurred when the first chair of Modern Languages in Australia was created at Sydney University in 1887; 1911 saw the first chair of English Literature, at Melbourne University. Dale's study differentiates this early period from that between the wars, the latter marked by an attempt to consolidate and naturalize the overt imperialism of the former. These two periods are compared to the 1950s and 1960s, during which Leavisism became the dominant influence on English departments in Australia. This postwar period also saw Australian literature taught more widely in the curricula of such departments, even though its study was often regarded as a slightly disreputable activity.

Dale organizes this broad history around the careers of the men — most of whom came from England — who first professed English in Australia, hence her title. Her method is justified by the observation that the professor was a more dominant figure in the period up to the 1960s, and by her central finding that the institutional history of English is also a personal history. She contends that the training and taste

of certain individuals were translated into institutional and cultural authority, in the context of an emergent discipline whose underlying mission was to promote and maintain Englishness in the former colony by teaching the "proper" ways of responding to certain canonical texts. To this end, her theoretical framework draws on John Guillory's discussion of cultural capital, Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony and, most important, Pierre Bourdieu's work on the enculturation of individuals by and within institutions. Dale has undertaken a demanding task in this study, and her assiduous research is evident in the work's detail and comprehensiveness, which are deftly integrated with its theoretical concerns. It wears its erudition lightly, and is commendable for its clarity and for the verve with which it is written.

In her opening chapter, Dale notes that the rise of English occurred at the end of the nineteenth century when classical studies also held sway. She argues that the Hellenist revival valorized loyalty to civil society and empire, ideals which were seen as particularly appropriate in the education of young men who would go on to careers in the colonial outposts of the Civil Service. The classical curriculum also produced a generation that would go on to become the first teachers of English in Australia. In Australia, these classical ideals converged with Arnoldian concepts of culture in a pedagogy that attempted to establish and maintain connections between the imperial centre and the colony. Dale argues that the model of study that resulted was founded upon racial, cultural, and sexual hierarchies that reproduced themselves in subsequent generations of students and teachers.

After the First World War, English flourished, but in Australia its profile was characterized by language studies, and its development shaped by professors who were not, by and large, attuned to the debates occurring in England in the 1920s and 1930s. Under the English Men, the curriculum was heavy on Old and Middle English, and privileged Shakespeare and the Elizabethan period above all else. Dale contends that the acceptance of "the primacy of the English renaissance" produced a "mental 'map' of culture . . . in which Australia could only ever be on the edges" (67). Stratford-on-Avon was not the only significant landmark on this map; Oxford was idealized as the site of almost transcendental intellectual authority and, up until the 1970s, the majority of senior positions in Australian English departments were held by those with at least one degree from Oxford. In this context, it is not surprising to find that before the Second World War the fight to introduce Australian literature went on outside the academy, and with only very limited success.

The intellectual and professional backgrounds of the first English professors meant that the practices and debates associated with Leavisism and the New Criticism did not appear in Australia until the 1950s and 1960s. In Dale's view, this time lag meant that the cultural

specificity of Leavisism, specifically its nationalism, was overlooked, and its universalism subsequently reinforced. By connecting “true” Australian culture with the idealized version of English literature and culture built into this set of values, critics could also overlook the violence of Australian history, particularly its convict origins and the treatment of aboriginal people. Additionally, because “the English nationalism that energized the discipline in its early years had been overwritten with a (hi)story of universal values, nationalist arguments for the study of Australian literature were easily discredited, as self-evidently partisan, political, and theoretically unsophisticated.”

In this light, the final chapter describes and analyzes the institution-ization of Australian literature after the 1950s. The prevailing view of Australian literature as of only local relevance was a logical outcome of the imperial ideology and Leavisite ideals that informed English departments in Australia. Debate about the introduction of the local literature tended to be framed as a contest between nationalist discourse and anglophile universalism, and great Australian writing was seen as that which transcended its locale. While English studies in Australia have changed such that contemporary academics in the discipline would probably position themselves as oppositional, rather than as carriers of tradition, Dale argues that the 1950s vision of Australian literature remains current in many areas of public literary culture.

With this in mind, Dale concludes with a trenchant criticism of the terms in which debate about the teaching, funding, and media profile of literature is conducted in contemporary Australia. She condemns the fear of cultural diversity and the suspicion of academic expertise currently expressed in the media, and ends with a resounding call for the study of literature, media, and culture to be deployed in the interests of the discipline itself.

CATHERINE PRATT

~

Thomas Cartelli. *Repositioning Shakespeare: National Formations, Postcolonial Appropriations*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Pp. xi, 233. \$26.99.

When Thomas Cartelli's essay entitled “Prospero in Africa” was published in 1986, it was highly influential in giving a new direction to Shakespeare studies. While Anglo-American critics generally recognized that Shakespeare's *The Tempest* had as its sources New World travel writings, few had examined African and Caribbean appropriations which showed the play's “capacity to make significant interventions in the formation of colonialist discourse and in the development of colonialist practices” (99). Reprinted in this volume in a revised version, the essay's methodology informs the book's project as a whole, whereby Cartelli shows how Shakespeare is appropriated “outside the