

Laura Wright, Jane Poyner, and Elleke Boehmer, editors. *Approaches to Teaching Coetzee's Disgrace and Other Works*. MLA, 2014. *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*. Pp. 227. US\$24.

Alexandra Schultheis Moore and Elisabeth Swanson Goldberg, editors. *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies*. MLA, 2015. *Options for Teaching*. Pp. 362. US\$29.

Laura Wright, Jane Poyner, and Elleke Boehmer's *Approaches to Teaching Coetzee's Disgrace and Other Works* includes contributions that were selected based on a global questionnaire sent to university teachers; twenty-seven responded and twelve are included in the collection. As Poyner indicates in the volume's first section, "Materials," the bulk of the contributors are from South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States (3). Readers are not privy to how and where the questionnaire was distributed, for how long a period it was available, or the questions it posed, and some of us may be left wondering why a volume published under the banner of the Modern Language Association's "Approaches to Teaching World Literature" series did not try harder to extend its reach.

However, the two-part collection—"Materials," in which Poyner provides both novice and seasoned teachers of J. M. Coetzee's writing plenty to work with, and "Approaches," which discusses teaching methods—is replete with rigorous, thought-provoking pedagogical strategies rehearsed in a range of institutional and classroom settings. From secondary schools to public and private universities, from large survey classes to graduate seminars, in courses on literature, theory, existentialism, resistance, philosophy, general education, and first-year composition, inspiring educators and their students wrestle with the complexities and nuances of Coetzee's writing.

The essays that bracket the collection introduce and reinforce the themes throughout. Rita Barnard's "Why Not to Teach Coetzee" smartly explicates the numerous teacher/teaching vignettes imbued with eros in Coetzee's work and encourages readers to consider "an erotics of pedagogy" when encountering his texts (40). The concluding piece, Patrick Hayes' "Coetzee and Close Reading," asserts students' pleasures in the aesthetic experiences of reading while expertly marshalling many of Coetzee's texts to reveal how they reflect contemporary literary debates and gesture beyond stalemates. Between the two are captivating essays from teachers in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Warwick, Amherst, Waverly, Petersburg, Cullowhee,

Singapore, Stockholm, and Jerusalem that astutely demonstrate the emergent, residual, and/or dominant knowledges that readers' encounters with *Disgrace* elicit. Of particular interest to those approaching South Africa from afar are David Atwell's essay describing the experience of teaching Coetzee at the University of the Western Cape in the 1980s and the curricular choices made at the University of Witswatersrand in tandem with the nation's transition in the 2000s; Carrol Clarkson's piece on the University of Cape Town students' responses to *Disgrace* and its film adaptation, both partly set on campus; and Gerald Gaylard's reading of the novel as an impediment to closure in the "new" South Africa. Stephen Clingman outlines the novel's reception history and how his defense of and deeply felt approach to *Disgrace* make their way into his Massachusetts seminar class, while Kay Heath reveals her preparations for and treatments of the novel in an African postcolonialism class at a historically black university in West Virginia.

The volume covers Coetzee's other works from *Dusklands* through to his "Australian-period" writing, as Boehmer categorizes it (117). Michael Bell uses these works to introduce students to and engage them with arguments about the value of imaginative literatures; Martina Ghosh-Schellhorn to expand students' "horizon[s] of expectation" as readers; Boehmer to consider what approaching Coetzee as a transnational writer offers; Wright to inform students in America about America; Wendy Woodward to reveal the uncomfortable lessons proffered by Elizabeth Costello; Robert Spencer to think through the politics and ethics of representations; Emily S. Davis to facilitate understandings of deconstruction; and Shannon Payne to analyse Coetzee's texts' intricate rhetorical situations.

Numerous contributors underscore the intertextual wealth of Coetzee's work and offer stimulating curricular combinations. Keith Leslie Johnson reads the Magistrate and Michael K alongside Antonio Hardt and Michael Negri's *Empire* to help students interpret both characters through a biopolitical lens. Patricia Merivale pairs *Life & Times of Michael K* with Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" and Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* to accentuate K's particular brand of resistance. Andrew van der Vlies locates references to Nadine Gordimer's texts—*The Late Bourgeois World*, *The Conservationist*, and *July's People*, specifically—in *Age of Iron* to establish points of contrast between Gordimer's narrators' voices and Coetzee's Mrs. Curren. To help students understand *Disgrace's* Lurie as acting in bad faith, Erik Grayson refers them to Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*; to reveal Coetzee's worldliness, Johan Geerstma draws on Edward Said's "Representations of the Intellectual."

Pieter Vermeulen establishes connections between Romanticism and empire in *Disgrace* by taking his students through passages in William Wordsworth's "The Prelude" and Lord Byron's "Lara." And, in a brilliant effort to lay bare the operations of the white South African cultural imaginary, Louise Bethlehem begins her classes on *Disgrace* with an introduction to Luís de Camões' Portuguese epic *Os Lusíadas* and follows with André Brink's comic take on its central apparition, Adamastor, in his novella *Cape of Storms: The First Life of Adamastor*.

Throughout this collection, then, are scholarly teachers attuned to the pedagogical powers and challenges of Coetzee's writing. Readers both new to and familiar with Coetzee's work will benefit from listening to the intelligent voices in this volume and learning how each manages the multiple, often problematic, and always compelling issues that undergird the author's oeuvre.

The labour-intensive, detailed, and important curatorial work of editing reveals itself in *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies*, and Alexandra Schultheis Moore and Elisabeth Swanson Goldberg are to be heralded for their considerable efforts. Theirs is a productive collaboration as they contribute a lucid introduction to the text, mini-introductions to four of the volume's five parts, as well as a substantial piece on cross-cultural approaches to human rights ("Human Rights Cultures and Traditions: Beyond the Post-/Colonial West"). In concert with Belinda Walzer, Moore also co-authors the outstanding "Resources" section, which provides readers with a chronology of the core human rights instruments (institutions, laws, scholarly writings, philosophical treatises) and an additional eleven pages of annotated print and web readings. While its contributors, with the exception of two Canadian scholars, are based in the US, the text grapples with issues that extend well beyond the hemispheric, demonstrating—at times even demanding—the breakdown of traditional disciplinary/teacherly/scholarly boundaries, with the richest of results.

The collection successfully argues that literary and cultural studies play a distinctive role in contributing to students' understandings of the discourse and politics of human rights, with the oft-maligned "close reading" being the most fruitful approach to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), plays, *testimonio*, poems, novels, films, and theoretical writing. Through such textual encounters, students are introduced to the historical context of the UDHR, as Sarah Winter writes; opened up to mindful ways in which to ethically engage the other, as Crystal Parikh and Nicholas Matlin outline; cautioned against cultural imperialism and re-Orientalising, as Elizabeth S. Anker and Manav Ratti argue; directed to violations of African Americans' human rights in the present, as Ira Dworkin contends; encouraged

to attend to the difficult sounds of voices that are hard to hear, not typically heard, or collectively expressed as a result of torture, first world narrative dominance, and female genital mutilation, as Karen Elizabeth Bishop, Heather Hewett, Sophia A. McClennen, and Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez assert; made aware of bodies not typically recognised or granted rights, as Megan Sweeney and Neville Hoad submit; and taught how the “interpretive ambiguities” (133) arrived at through rhetorical analysis can lead to ethical inquiry, as Eve Wiederhold proposes.

Efforts to spark “ethical attentiveness” (199) and nurture a nuanced “response-ability” (201) in students’ close reading encounters with post-conflict poetry and novels are carefully outlined in Brenda Carr Vellino and Susan Spearey’s contributions. Still other essayists, concerned with moving conscientious subjects into action, inspire readers with their specific pedagogical strategies: Walzer’s students not only view Kerry Kennedy’s video, “Speak Truth to Power,” but stage a performance of it; Marike Janzen has students write about their experiences at a not-for-profit to build on their sensitivities to narrative; and Erik Juergensmeyer and Bridget Irish reveal the initiatives taken at Fort Lewis College—the development of a human rights education along with a common reading component—to demonstrate their campus’ commitment to recognising human rights abuses. Lisa Eck and Ben Alberti, from the disciplines of English and anthropology, respectively, collaborate to create a human rights course that critiques notions of a “bounded individual and bounded culture” (273), while Ryan Omizo and Wendy S. Hesford describe the results of a course (and analyse one of its visualisation assignments) whose aim is to challenge voyeuristic, normalising viewing practices.

While it is important to be cautioned about the limits of our pedagogical interventions—and illuminating, as Kimberly A. Nance argues, to understand why some students resort to defensive strategies in the face of them—it is nevertheless heartening that such caution does not limit the passionate commitment evident in these dedicated educators. Their careful, critical work prompts readers not to resort to cynicism. As Greg Mullins and Alexander Hartwiger affirm in their essays in *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies*, the stirrings of change for even the most hardened of us often emerge from our unsettling negotiations with difficult knowledge.

Kelly Hewson