

humdrum fashion of the introductory text, treating one author and work after the other with awesome regularity (a format imposed, one suspects, by the publisher), Donovan's book makes a contribution to feminist scholarship by giving new authenticity to the truism, posited years ago by Jay Martin, that in local color writing lies the origin of American literary realism. Donovan's thesis is that in addition to forming a "coherent, feminine literary tradition," the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rose Terry Cooke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman reflect an actual shift in women's consciousness, from a "woman-identified" vision in which women are ascendant, to a male-dominated world, so that by the 1880s female dependence on male approbation replaced the strength of the women's culture evidenced in earlier women's fiction. The book should be useful to undergraduates and of interest to scholars; the style is authoritative and clear.

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THE MARRIAGE OF EMILY DICKINSON. By William H. Shurr. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. 1983. \$22.00.

Shurr argues that if one reads those poems which Emily Dickinson bound into homemade fascicles in the order which R. W. Franklin established in 1981, they express a sort of narrative of a consummated affair with her married clergyman-counselor friend Charles Wadworth, to whom, Shurr is quite sure, the fascicles were meant to be sent. There are match-ups of extra-literary evidence to heighten the credibility of the case—mutual friends, for example, who acted as go-betweens to "launder" letters which Emily wanted to go to an unnamed friend in Philadelphia. If Shurr is right, are we all relieved? Is this the happiest literary-biographical news of the century? "Yeah, Emily. Way to go!"? Or is it none of our business, a lavish expenditure of critical energy on a matter on which the lady clearly wanted some privacy, and on which it is impossible to be quite certain? Take your choice. A bigger shock for me was Shurr's argument that by and large Emily Dickinson's critics have missed the strong eroticism of many of her poems. Seems to me my teachers and friends who value her work always knew about that. My good students have always seen it. Erotic force gives much of Dickinson its poetic kick.

SGL

THE UNDISCOVERED CONTINENT: Emily Dickinson and the Space of the Mind. By Suzanne Juhasz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1983. \$17.50.

Juhasz argues that Dickinson's gradual withdrawal from society was a psychologically healthy strategy for dealing with her particular situation; that is, Dickinson's mind afforded her a more private, expansive and universal world to explore than could be offered by either of the traditional domestic/feminine or public/masculine realms of action. The bulk of Juhasz's study examines how Dickinson's verse reflects this orientation towards the mind as a place: the use of the vocabularies of architecture, geography and space travel; the reliance upon analogy, parallelism and aphorism; and Dickinson's attempts to "measure" intense mental experiences (pain and delight), as well as to fathom the ultimate goal of such experiences (*viz.*, eternity). Although Juhasz's study seems limited by her reliance upon only a handful of Dickinson scholars, her thesis seems valid, and her analyses of individual poems are often provocative.

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THE AMERICAN NOVEL AND THE WAY WE LIVE NOW. By John W. Aldridge. New York: Oxford University Press. 1983. \$16.95.

Aldridge's book is a disappointment. After a promising first chapter tracing the evolution of the American novel, it quickly dissolves into a series of book reviews (DeLillo's *Players*, Styron's *Sophie's Choice*) or general surveys of a writer's career (Kosinski, Baldwin), interspersed with brief, rather cynical appraisals of contemporary American life. Offering regrettably few insights and no documentation, the book seems oddly fragmented, impressionistic and subjective.

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