

devotes cogent academic criticism to a non-academic, unconventional, rambunctious and visionary author.

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LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA FROM 1946 TO 1974. By Ruth K. MacDonald. Troy, New York: Whitston Publishing Company. 1982. \$15.00.

Ruth MacDonald's useful book analyzes literature, which, broadly defined, has been written expressly for children (as opposed to books read by children but written for adults). Her survey extends from the appearance of *Milk for Babies*, the first book for children in the American colonies, to the publication of the Chesterfield Letters. The introduction supplies a brief history of Puritan attitudes toward child rearing followed by analytical chapters on religious works, school books, advice literature, fables and fairy tales, nursery rhymes and the Arabian nights. Since by the 1730s in England book sellers replaced writers as the dominant creative force in children's literature, a concluding chapter traces their influence on the works they spawned. Professors of children's literature will find this book helpful for the historical perspective it gives as well as for its analysis of the motives behind the strident didacticism prevalent in so much of this literature; others will find the book additionally useful for its factual information on the genre, and as a source of supplementary facts and ideas to enhance the study of more traditionally defined literature.

MAS

ISAAC ASIMOV. By Jean Fiedler and Jim Mele. New York: Frederick Ungar. 1982. \$10.95; paper: \$5.95.

Since my book about Asimov's science fiction (*Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) was published just a couple of months after Fiedler and Mele's book, I am in a unique, though possibly invidious, position. In brief summary, however, let me say that their book is limited in length (only 112 large-type pages of text) and in scope, and although their intentions and organization are good, and in some ways reflect my own decisions, their execution leaves an imperfect (and sometimes misleading) image of Asimov's science fiction.

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NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE CRITICISM. Volume 2. Edited by Laurie Lanzen Harris. Detroit: Gale Research Company. 1982. \$60.00.

These volumes excerpt criticism on European and American works of the previous century. Author entries begin with brief introductions, somewhat uneven in scope; then come chunks of criticism and annotated bibliographies. For Hawthorne, as an example, we get reactions by Longfellow (1837), Charles Fenno Hoffman (1838), Poe (1842 and 1847), James Russell Lowell (1848 and 1860), George Ripley (1850), Melville (1850), Hawthorne himself (from prefaces), George Eliot (1879), Bliss Perry (1904), Paul Elmer More (1905), Yvor Winters (1937), F. O. Matthiessen (1941) and others. The excerpts seem to have been chosen, by and large, for their generality: the more like nineteenth-century criticism portions of more recent studies are, the more likely they are to be selected. The results are more satisfactory for authors one does not know well than for those one does. Still, I found the collection absorbing and fascinating, though, it will, alas, misguide generations of students into platitudes.

SGL

## environment

COMMON LANDSCAPE OF AMERICA, 1580-1845. By John R. Stilgoe. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1982. \$29.95.