

discussions of *My Life as a Man* and *The Professor of Desire* which he considers to be Roth's most important novels. These analyses also suffer from the need to satisfy the Twayne requirement for categorizing. Hence, terms like realism, fantasy, Southwestern humor, local color, melodrama, and oral tradition are mulled over endlessly and repeated attempts are made to find Roth a place in literary history. Parts of this latter enterprise are essential in that Roth makes quite overt references to the work of other writers, and Rodgers's discussion of his relationship to Kafka is particularly illuminating. However, references to the early fiction as Salingeresque and to *Letting Go* as Jamesian are based on influences and similarities that are far too general to be of much value.

What is ultimately sacrificed to the need to conform to the Twayne format is detailed analysis of the literary text. Not only does Rodgers tend to proceed almost entirely through generalizations but, when he does try to prove a point, he frequently does so by reference to the opinion of another critic rather than to the text of Roth's novels. Thus, as a way of demonstrating that *Letting Go* "stands as a coherent whole" (p. 58), Rodgers offers quotations from Alfred Kazin and Scott Donaldson's analyses of the novel. The fact that he was allowed, or perhaps even encouraged, to engage in a procedure that one rarely finds outside of an undergraduate's first stumbling attempts to be scholarly indicates Twayne's continuing contempt for the notion that the text is the sine qua non of literary criticism.

What we are left with after reading *Philip Roth* is a sense that Bernard Rodgers knows his subject, has a good knowledge of the influences that formed Roth as a writer, and an understanding of the shape of his oeuvre, but we are offered little insight into the unique achievement of the individual novels. Rodgers supplies us with some essential tools for solving the many puzzles in Roth's work, but rarely solves them for us. If he is ever to do so, he must write his own book and not Twayne's.

David Monaghan

ROGER SALE
Fairy Tales and After: From Snow White to E. B. White
Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978. Pp. 280.
\$11.00.

Professor Sale likes most children's literature, though he is a bit hard, to my mind, on Hans Christian Andersen. A man at war with himself, is Sale's verdict, though I can see what he means. He is also less than just to A. A. Milne, whom he accuses of "shallow snobbery." But these controversial remarks are a small price to pay for a sensitive and thorough analysis of what makes children's literature special and different. He avoids all the heavy-handed nonsense one usually gets in studies of this kind, because he is unashamedly enthusiastic about the genre for its own sake. It is after all an extensive body of literature, and possibly the oldest, as well as the most neglected so far as critics of fiction are concerned.

Sale brings all the sophistication of an adult schooled in literary studies to bear on this topic, but he is never clumsy or portentous. He devotes single chapters to the major figures in the field—Carroll, Potter, Grahame, Kipling, and L. Frank Baum, and discusses many others in the course of his introductory chapters on "Fairy Tales," "Written Tales," and "Animals." He is particularly astute and perceptive about the oral tradition which flourished, he points out, before childhood, as one of the ages of man, was invented. Then was a time of innocence, it seems. "After childhood was invented," Sale comments, "adults inevitably began thinking about what language, what stance or tone, what materials were appropriate for children" (p. 64), and so we get a knowingness, a diffuse sense of superiority, from which the narrators of the oral tradition were quite free. What a pity. Still, we all have to grow up, literature included. So was it so very unreasonable, I wonder, for Milne through *Winnie-the-Pooh* to guide his son toward an acceptance of the loss of childhood?

John Fletcher