

is said, "He belongs to fantasy rather than to science fiction" (p. 25), while fantasy is treated in most instances as a subgenre of science fiction. Such fuzziness leads to the anomolous inclusion of Lewis Carroll, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and Franz Kafka in the sphere of science fiction. However, the most notable criticism concerns an omission with serious practical consequences—this reference work is without a title index! Nevertheless, *Reclams Science Fiction Führer* succeeds admirably in providing an intelligent and informed introduction to and survey of science fiction past and present.

Manfred W. Heiderich

DAVID LEACH, ED.  
*Generative Literature and Generative Art: New Essays*  
Fredericton: York Press, 1983.  
Pp. 47. \$8.95.

A collection of essays that self-reflexively mirrors in its origins the generative process that each article explores, *Generative Literature and Generative Art*, edited by David Leach, grew out of a colloquium on the topic at Wright State University in 1979. The impetus for the colloquium was a studio art class in which Leach introduced generative theory and techniques, using as his point of departure Bruce Morrissette's "Post-Modern Generative Fiction: Novel and Film," published in 1975 (*Critical Inquiry*, 2, No. 2, 253-62). Following a preface and introductory essay by Leach on parallel methods of generation in literature and the visual arts, the book contains articles by Diane Kirkpatrick on generation in the visual arts; by Bruce Morrissette on the theory and practice of generative techniques and their implications; and by Karlis Racevskis on contemporary interpretations of the creative process. The final section is a "dialogue" by Alain Robbe-Grillet, translated by Racevskis, on the concerns about which Robbe-Grillet was writing and speaking at the time: the relationship between images and texts and the generative capabilities of both (for the artist, the writer, and the perceiver), the recuperation of contemporary stereotypes (often visually portrayed, in signs and pos-

ters) and the liberation that results from their ludic treatment in the text—with implications for the creative artist's role in society as well as for the generation of art works.

In Morrissette's 1975 article which underlies many of the essays in this book, he distinguishes between "situational generators" and "linguistic generators." The concepts behind the terms, as Morrissette points out, are closely related to those in the theory and practice of the French critic and novelist Jean Ricardou. Particularly in his *Pour une théorie du nouveau roman* (Seuil, 1971, pp. 92-93; see also pp. 119-23, 221-24), Ricardou outlines two methods by which a word can generate another word. Using the French terms, the *signifiant* is the aspect of the word as sign, the signifier; the *signifié* is the semantic referent, the thing to which the word refers, the signified. In the process of translation, for example, Ricardou points out, it is a given word's *signifié* which generates a *signifiant* in the new language. In the complementary process, first outlined by Raymond Roussel and used today by Ricardou and others, a given word's *signifiant* generates a new *signifiant* to which it is related by sound (rhyme, homonymy) or by appearance (a re-arrangement of the same letters); the tangible result is the *signifié* of the newly produced *signifiant*. Ricardou's first procedure, hinging as it does upon the given word's *signifié*, is referential, as is Morrissette's "situational generator." The second procedure, in which the given word's *signifié* plays no role in the production of the new word, is non-referential; Morrissette's "linguistic generator" is its equivalent.

In applying Morrissette's categories to contemporary visual arts, Diane Kirkpatrick transforms "linguistic" and "situational" to two methods of generation she discerns in her field: closed analytic structures and open "organic systems." For the former category (related to non-referential or "linguistic" generation)—the "closed analytic structure which becomes a generator as each of its possible internal relationships is explored and made visible" (p. 17)—she offers Josef Albers's nested squares exploring the ways juxtaposed colors affect one another as probably the best-known example, and also analyzes more recent work by Frank Stella, Sol LeWitt, Dorothea Rockburne, Jennifer Bartlett, and Doug Huebler. For her second or "open" category (comparable to referential or "situational" generation), she describes a system that "creates one work or idea and uses that to generate the next" (p. 17), or later "gen-

erative systems that continue to interact with some sector of the operating world as long as the piece survives" (p. 22), giving examples from the work of Doug Hollis, Jim Pallas, Dan Sandin, and Sonia Sheridan.

Kirkpatrick's concept of the closed versus the open work as a result of non-referential versus referential generation (which is not to be confused with the commonly accepted definition of open and closed works that is derived from the writings of Umberto Eco), useful as it is, is still something of a simplification of the relationship between the generative method and the resultant work. In both Ricardou's and Morrisette's descriptions of the generative process, it is the relationship between the given word and the one generated from it that is either referential or non-referential, not the resultant work. For Ricardou, one of the two words' *signifié* is retained in each of the two procedures: the *signifié* of the given word in the referential method of generation, and the *signifié* of the resultant word in the non-referential method.

The question of a relationship to an external reality in works generated by either method is more complex. It is one that Morrisette had already begun to explore in his 1975 article, in which he points out that (non-referential) linguistic generators may result in the "the production of situations and themes" (p. 258) that further the diegesis of the text. Thus non-referential generators can produce events (the minimal components of what once would have been called plot) that are on a level of referentiality equal to those produced by referential generators. In his essay in the present work, Morrisette moves further in this direction, suggesting that the distinction between "linguistic" and "situational" generators is at best theoretical, and that in practice, in any particular text, instead of a pure form, one tends to find "more or less referential or non-referential" processes of generation (p. 27).

Both Racevskis and Leach explore the related question of the connections between the artist, the generative process, and the external world. Racevskis sees the artist as "neither preceding nor exceeding his or her work," but rather "as a function that represents a nexus in a rhizomatous network of cultural artifacts" (p. 37). Leach emphasizes the possible external sources of generators—quotes, found objects, borrowings, reuse of previously generated texts, collaborations—and finds the "point of creation" in "some external location [which] produces

texts or images or systems which have some degree of independence from the author" (p. 11).

But probably the clearest answer to the question of the relationship between the referential level of the method of generation and the referential level of the resultant work comes in another context from Morrisette, who in his present essays draws upon his broad knowledge and his earlier works—including *Intertextual Assemblage in Robbe-Grillet: From Topology to the Golden Triangle* (Fredericton, N.B.: York Press, 1979)—to survey the range of generative methods in present use in written texts, to explore related forms of generation in traditional literature, and to show that similar methods of generation may have had different purposes and different results in the past than in the present. Particularly relevant to our question are his conclusions from his study of the technique known as "interior duplication" or *mise en abyme*, a topic on which he was writing as early as 1971, in "Un heritage d'Andre Gide: La Duplication interieure" (*Comparative Literature Studies*, 8, No. 2, 125-42), in which he incorporates Ricardou's findings on the same topic from *Problèmes du nouveau roman* (Seuil, 1967, pp. 171-90). In a passage from Morrisette's 1975 article (pp. 259-60) that Leach quotes in the present text (p. 8), Morrisette points out the changing significance of the interior duplication or *mise en abyme*, which in earlier periods intensified "the centrifugal forces leading from work to reader, from fiction to life," but which in contemporary generative theory and practice "leads in centripetal fashion back into the work, away from the referential 'outside.'" Whether the generative method is referential or non-referential, the resultant work tends to be far less referential than traditional works.

It is this more or less non-referential or self-referential state of certain twentieth-century art works that has posed problems for criticism, which can no longer assume that relating a work to external reality is a major part of its task, but which has not yet found a clearly satisfactory substitute for this portion of its earlier role. The importance of generative theory—in addition to what it can reveal about individual works—lies in its level of abstraction and its ability to offer at least a direction for further exploration. In recognizing non-referential generation of words as one source in the production of a text, generative theory affirms the possibility of close parallels in creative process and in structure among certain works of literature and of non-representa-

tional art and also of music, which has traditionally existed on a non-referential plane.

Faced with a new and iconoclastic work in any of the three art forms, we need to develop a response that seems to require four stages, each successively more difficult than the preceding one. The first, and the most commonly accomplished in each of the individual fields of art, is a description of the work that includes, at least in broad outline, its surface structure. The second stage, placing the work in relation to other art works that are diachronically or synchronically analogous, although it requires a wide-ranging knowledge of previous and present works in all the arts, can still be reached on the basis of currently available methods. But what I see as the necessary third and fourth stages, which answer the questions of *how* a work has come into existence, and *why*, are rarely even attempted and even more rarely successfully accomplished.

Generative theory offers one of the better available approaches to the question of how these works are created and may, with continued exploration, begin to provide some answers to the question of why such works—in all the arts—have come into being in the twentieth century. Although probably not the only method of investigating these questions, generative theory, because of its potential in the development of critical postures valid for all the arts, deserves further study and dissemination. *Generative Literature and Generative Art* contributes to the growth of an important field.

Emma Kafalenos

### J. M. COCKING

*Proust: Collected Essays on the  
Writer and His Art*

Cambridge: Cambridge  
University Press, 1982. Pp. xxii  
+ 307.

If the overworked word “distinguished” could be rested for a few years, one would still have to resurrect it to describe books of the quality of this one, which has true distinction of thought and mind, of feeling and sensibility, of style and expression. John Cocking, until his retirement Professor of French at King’s College London, had a

particular interest in a number of nineteenth and twentieth-century French writers, but none engaged him more than Proust. His inaugural lecture in 1953 was on English influences in Proust, and shortly afterwards he wrote a short and extremely concentrated “Introduction” to Proust, for the Cambridge Bowes and Bowes series (an introduction which made no concessions to the reader who was not already fairly familiar with at least *Du Côté de chez Swann*), and in the twenty years that followed, he gave a number of remarkable public lectures, and reviewed most of the significant studies on Proust as they were published. The volume under review simply reprints these texts, with minimal changes, omitting the inaugural lecture and some of the reviews, but giving the complete text of the “Introduction” and four major papers, together with an extended Preface in which Cocking reviews his own career as a Proust scholar. The Preface apart, none of these texts will be new to diligent Proustians, but their impact is greatly increased by their appearance in one cover, so well printed (I spotted only one misprint, page 158, though I did regret to see Cambridge University Press spelling analyse with a z). The editor of the Cambridge Studies in French, Malcolm Bowie, is to be commended for his initiative in commissioning this volume, despite the risks involved.

The risks are, of course, that there will be repetition, and that some of the ideas will seem dated. In the present instance, these risks are minimized partly by careful editing which discreetly updates statements that have to be qualified in the light of later knowledge (and these are surprisingly few, thanks to the sureness of Cocking’s insights), and largely because of the consistency of Cocking’s approach. His view of Proust is clearly stated in the “Introduction” and further explorations deepen and corroborate it with fresh and persuasive new evidence. The occasional repetitions serve to remind us of Cocking’s basic position, and they are welcome, not tedious.

Cocking’s essential point, following Curtius, is that Proust’s mature writing is a uniquely balanced combination of sensibility and intelligence, and his primary concern is to trace the different strands that make up this complex, and show how they gradually came together. Cocking develops this notion with rigor and understanding. His perspective is neither that of the pure source hunter, nor of the pure textual exegete, although he can take his place with