

pursuing man against a landscape of barren desert. At this "point of no return" Auschwitz and its bestialities become a prefiguration of a universal Hiroshima.

In conclusion, Sicher submits that "If the Jewish experience during the Second World War taught universal lessons, then universal themes have, in a sense, become Jewish themes . . ." Also, the reappraisal of Jewishness has enabled that step beyond marginality, so that the Jewish view of things, not least the Jewish use of biblical themes, is gradually accepted . . . The Jewish voice claims as much place in British culture as Roman Catholicism of Graham Greene . . . as the Scots dialect of MacDiarmid, and as the reggae beat in music" (pp. 166-67).

Julia Prewitt Brown

*A READER'S GUIDE TO THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL: AN INFORMAL INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD THAT SHAPED THE NOVELS OF AUSTEN, DICKENS, THACKERAY, HARDY, ELIOT, AND BRONTË*

New York: MacMillan, 1985. Pp. 137. \$15.95

Reviewed by A. Leslie Harris

If one keeps in mind the inherent restrictions of the subtitle of Julia Prewitt Brown's slim but useful book, her study fills a genuine gap in literary studies. She has organized many aspects of nineteenth-century England into those categories about which a reasonably literate but culturally and historically inexperienced audience (i.e., an American undergraduate) might be expected to know only superficial details. Even the novelists cited are those often found on a college syllabus. If, then, Gaskell, Meredith, or even Gissing is missing from such a survey, protest at such an omission is muted.

Similarly, the informality invoked in the subtitle assuages any objections that such a broad range of social and political issues necessitates individual treatment that, though incisive, is brief. Professor Brown covers topics from class and titles, the Church of England and evangelicism, education and the professions, marriage, reform and the prisons, to censorship, serial publication, and illustrations. In explaining the groundwork necessary to understand the milieu in which, and of which, the selected authors wrote, she shows how much and how fast the cultural and physical landscape was changing during the last century.

Such sweeping changes are especially clear in one of Brown's strongest chapters, depicting the extent and influence of the evangelical movement in England. She focuses not only on the changing morality developed by upper- or middle-class Evangelicals or working-class Dissenters but also on the changing social conscience. Her statement that the Victorian ability to be at once socially liberal and morally conservative stems largely from evangelicism explains many of the "contradictions and difficulties" of this "dual emphasis" (p. 52) felt by such characters as David Copperfield and Dorothea Brooke.

If Professor Brown's strengths are her ability to pull together convincingly broad social movements (such as evangelicism or the recurrent reform impulses) and to explain terminology unfamiliar to a casual reader (even such distinctions as those between a rector and a vicar), her weaknesses are also imposed by the inclusiveness of her treatment. The chapter on education, for example, clearly explains the prestige of the Oxford-Cambridge system and its challenge by the red-brick universities, but scants the intellectual power attributed to the holder of a classical education. Its lack was often felt to be the greatest dividing mark between male and female writers. If a nineteenth-century woman was to write at all, which she did in increasing numbers in the course of the century, she was expected to write novels, as much because she lacked the grounding in classics for weighty treatises as because domestic sentiments and romantic adventures were suitable topics for women writers and readers. Since three of the exemplar novelists are women, closer attention to the woman's role in the novel-writing process seems sensible.

On balance, however, such quibbles are minor. Three things move Brown's book beyond the run-of-the-mill handbooks cluttering the shelves of any college bookstore. The first is her constant attempt to recreate the values of the Victorian world in terms of current buying power. "Value" is an intentional pun, since Brown works out a formula letting her discuss Darcy's 50,000 pounds a year in terms of contemporary Rockefellerian status. She buttresses her monetary speculations by considering the entire range of expenditures needed to live at the various class levels. She argues persuasively that while the British class system was not overtly based on wealth, lack of cash made one's move up impossible. Her arguments about the fluidity money gave this class system help readers understand the precarious world of Dickens's lower-middle class and of Austen's aspiring gentry. Her explanation of the claustrophobic financial interconnections of Church, state, and education with the upper classes is also useful.

The second praiseworthy feature of *A Reader's Guide* is its use of the novels themselves. Every social or historical point is grounded firmly in such illustrations as Becky Sharp's assertion that she could be a good woman on a mere 5000 pounds a year (roughly equivalent to one million dollars). By showing how easily a reader can misconstrue the novels by misinterpreting the value system on which they were predicated, Brown provides a cautionary note concerning historical criticism. A reader caught up in certain new schools of criticism will simply miss much of Austen's irony, Dickens's outrage, or Thackeray's sardonic social commentary. In a way, this companion is a good plea for the merit of ongoing historical criticism.

The last point in Brown's favor is a telling one. She writes with economy, clarity, and genuine grace. If her marshalling and compressing of social and historical evidence in terms of particular novelists is impressive, so is the ease with which she bridges the gap between the twentieth and the nineteenth centuries through example, explanation, and wit. Never redundant, never condescending, but consistently as entertaining as erudite, Professor Brown has made a valuable contribution to the reference collection of a student of the nineteenth-century English novel.

## Peter Griffin

### *ALONG WITH YOUTH: HEMINGWAY, THE EARLY YEARS*

Foreword by Jack Hemingway

New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. 258 pp. \$17.95

Reviewed by Raymond Nelson

Griffin provides a detailed record on Ernest Hemingway's life until his twenty-third birthday on July 21, 1923. He begins by sketching the Hemingway and Hall families for two generations as a way of describing the family setting in which Ernest grew up. The account includes the familiar materials: Oak Park family life and school, family tensions, summers in Northern Michigan, first job at the *Kansas City Star*, ambulance service in Italy, the wounding and recovery, the affair with nurse Agnes Kurowsky, homecoming of the soldier, jobs in Toronto and Chicago, and marriage to Hadley Richardson. But a great deal has been added to the story.

Jack Hemingway, son to Ernest and Hadley, made all of Hadley's letters to Ernest available to Griffin, the first public use of most of these materials. Griffin also made good use of the materials in the Hemingway Room of the Kennedy Center, including five previously unpublished stories from those early years. He prints these stories, understandably unpublished in Hemingway's lifetime.

A great deal has been added to accounts of Ernest's friendships after graduation from high school, most particularly information about James Gamble, Hemingway's commanding officer at the Italian front, a key person in getting medical care for Hemingway at the front, and one who remained in touch with him for years.