

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.

Hemingway's relationship with Agnes Kurowsky is presented in considerably different terms from those of Carl Baker, Michael Reynolds, or Bernice Kurt. Griffin presents the pair as lovers, and makes a strong case that Ernest was emotionally shattered when Agnes rejected him for what appeared to her to be better marital opportunities. As a result, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms* does indeed rest in part on Hemingway's memories of Kurowsky. But Catherine is also a projection of Hadley, it becomes clear, as the courtship and marriage of Hadley and Ernest unfolds under Griffin's pen.

The book will not replace Carlos Baker's *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (1969), but it is no doubt a valuable addition. It does have a few slight flaws. In several places, transitions are awkward or nonexistent (pp. 6, 7, 11, 15, 21, 27, 89, 95), and on pp. 116-17 an error in dating does not square with the text. "On April 16 Ernest got a cheerful letter . . . Before he left the room that morning, Ernest began . . . a reply . . . the next day he took up the letter again." The letter as it continues, however, is dated April 27th.

Griffin provides a brief epilogue, although he plans to write two volumes yet, telling the rest of the story. He provides a useful commentary on his sources at the end of the volume as well as endnotes. The notes are not traditional in form, however, and are not easy to use.

The book reads a lot like a novel in that Griffin pays a lot of attention to detail, the kind of detail he may have picked up from chance remarks in the many letters he used, or perhaps from almanacs, or even perhaps from interviews: "It was a warm evening in New York, the sky clear, the moon almost full" (p. 62). "With his tall frame and narrow shoulders and his habit of looking away when he spoke . . ." (p. 81). "Agnes laughed, and said . . ." (p. 83). "On the springlike January afternoon, with a southwest breeze coming in over the harbor . . ." (p. 101). "Ernest smelled the lingering winter cold in the empty room, smoked a cigarette, thought about supper" (p. 121). "On June 15, 1919, Ernest picked up a letter . . . that made him blush and stammer" (p. 122). ". . . and the furtive, dim-witted son, Clyde" (p. 123). Or he may have invented scenes like those to enhance the humanness of the narrative. The style does raise questions about the accuracy of such details, which then makes this reader wonder about other interpretive matters and possible liberties taken elsewhere.

Ernest Hemingway and Hadley Richardson emerge as rather well developed figures, perhaps accurately, but both disappointing in moral behavior as judged by traditional norms. Hadley is almost as flattering and self-abasing before her man as Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms*. And Ernest is a rake and a drunkard. Son John Hemingway is quite aware of how "different" this biography is, and he seems to support the portrait as being quite accurate. Perhaps it is.

Ben Stoltzfus

ALAIN ROBBE-GRILLET: THE BODY OF THE TEXT

Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985.

Pp. 187

Reviewed by Emma Kafalenos

Not a traditional book on the corpus of a single author, *Alain Robbe-Grillet: The Body of the Text* is a collection of essays offering several approaches to a number of the French writer's texts and films. Seemingly adopting (and adapting) Robbe-Grillet's own technique of assembling a novel by selecting from among his own previously published material, Ben Stoltzfus, Professor of French at the University of California, Riverside, has assembled the seven chapters of the present text from articles appearing between 1980 and 1983 in eight journals (Chapter 1 combines several sources). If one can judge from a comparison between a single article, in the journal nearest to hand, and the corresponding chapter in this book, modifications seem largely limited to altering footnotes (for uniformity) and to adding transitions (a paragraph or two at the end of each article/chapter, as an introduction to the next one). Like Robbe-Grillet, whose *Topologie d'une cité fantôme* ends with a five-page "Coda" of previously unpublished material, Stoltzfus adds to his earlier material a new five-page "Conclusion" as a seven-page "Introduction."