

1958

## Book Reviews

University of New Mexico Press

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

---

### Recommended Citation

University of New Mexico Press. "Book Reviews." *New Mexico Quarterly* 28, 1 (1958). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol28/iss1/15>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [disc@unm.edu](mailto:disc@unm.edu).

# Book Reviews

*THE HARD BLUE SKY*, by Shirley Ann Grau. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1958. 476 pp. \$5.00.

It is no wonder that more and more writers resent their publishers. Look at the ads, and the publishers' brochures. Is the publisher talking about the book, as novel, pointing up its strong points, the things it does that might make it worth adding to one's reading list? No. The focus is so wholly on the author that the book is reduced to a faint buzzing in the background. Here is a fine photographic study of the writer eating peanuts at a circus. Here is the witty account of her lives and her personal affairs, what she likes and doesn't like, where she lives, and how many books there are on her shelves. It is the same kind of blurb—and what a good word that is, blurb—that is written about a beauty queen.

The reviewers, extending other aspects of the publisher's blurb, tell us "what the book is about" (like a two-minute briefing on *Lear*), whether it is a hell-for-leather western, a psychological narrative of incest among the Samoans, a love story, a good book but dull, or a poor

book but with promise. It is as much, I suppose, as can reasonably be asked from a writer of reviews turning pages to meet deadlines, and hemmed in to a column space that allows him, often if not usually, a scant 500 words in which to appraise the intricacies of a 300-page novel involved with the lives of a dozen or more people, often over a substantial period of time, against the background of a particular moment and aspect of the larger world.

The publisher, being much more free in what he may say, how long he may take, and how he may do it, is the more culpable for abusing the larger advantage. Pressures of competition are a realistic inducement to him, but they scarcely release him from responsibility. Both his over-inflation of the writer as a personality—what a boon Françoise Sagan was in her private life, and how difficult the personality of Grace Metalious, for advertising purposes!—and his pandering of the book as a merchantable commodity, distract us from whatever this book intends, and how successfully the author has reached that intention. Gradually, these patterns dull even the capacity for that perception, until, needing larger and larger jolts to stir us, we become pervious only to the gross, responsive only to the monstrous.

How unfair this is to good books, to a book like *Hard Blue Sky*! How unfair, really, too, to the author. How the careful thinking, the hard labor,

the expenditure of the self over those many long months of a book's making are by this reduced to triviality, made a kind of passing, offhand thing, like a week-end's cleverness.

A well-made novel is a matter of form, of design—and very difficult design and form at that. It is not accident that the folk of *Hard Blue Sky*, for instance, are island folk, framed by the sea and the low sky, their lives touched accidentally and sparingly by people not of the island. It is an isolation that provides focus and adds to depth perception; we can see better what is held for us in its own special frame. It is art, too, that the storm that gathers itself as these pages turn is not given to us at the end; it is the tension and fire of the internal storm-stresses against this impending background that are important, not the background itself. These tensions the author is perceptive enough not to drown out with the dramatic over-sweep of the literal storm. So too with the interlacing of lives. Here accident and art must seem to concur, if there is to be design, as in Annie's gravitation to the outsider, Inky, rather than to the island boy Perique and his sullen dedication. These relationships are intimate, personal, yes, but they take on substance too in proportion as they become more than that, as they move out from what they have been toward what they may become. By this relating of inner world to outer world, and of that outer to a further,

as in Annie's final leaving of the island, the structure of the book extends itself into structures of meaning.

Form, design, is perhaps not the essence of art, but art without form is nothing, is merely protean. Indeed, it is unimaginable. In view of this, again, the indifference of publishers and reviewers alike to the primary constituents of art is a grave threat to the future of the novel.

The fine awareness of the interplay among characters all of whom in a good novel must be inter-relating figures seen each in full dimension—this seems more and more a recessive gene in the publisher's consciousness, seems less and less a matter of interest to the jaded reviewers. Indeed, I wonder lately how many reviewers have much notion of what a novel is, or is for.



*Hard Blue Sky* is conscious of its legitimacy as a novel in the same way that Elizabeth Bowen's *Death of the Heart*, or to leap-frog titles, Carson McCullers' magnificent *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, is conscious of its legitimacy in the field. It embodies and makes use of the large fund of technical resources and

awareness of form that are aspects of all fine art at its highest reaches. This is, of course, a learned and recognized thing—not the sweepings of inspiration or the loose outpour of “a talent.” It represents a longer coming-to, a larger and much more sustained effort toward the deliberate, planned mastery of a craft than most who “want to write” are willing ever even to attempt. The unfolding of Annie and of Annie’s world, and the simultaneous making-known to the reader the lives and worlds of the figures among whom Annie grows and moves—Julius, and Adele and Claudie; Annie’s father, and of course Inky—how can we know except by mastery of a complex craft where and how to place the bits of this mosaic so the light will fall just right, so the whole will come to life through the intricate relating of all its parts to each other?—so that event and person will fall together with just the right, chiming note? It is this sort of thing that measures quality in a novel. And it is this sort of thing that we have grown indifferent to, in reading and in reviewing.

Both the best and the worst of *Hard Blue Sky* come from Miss Grau’s own achieved awareness, not from any overlay of training or any of the “influences” that are the thin gruel of many professional critics. The best, I think, is the quality of her awareness. It has to do, a lot of it, with her recognition as writer that

these figures in this landscape in these attitudes add up to something, become a total meaning that is pertinent to lives all unlike these. Annie, edging her way in the nightwind along the perilous convent roof ledge, figures with superb poetic artistry the recognition of what happens to all of us who go out past our depth; like Annie; like Henry. Sometimes, like Annie, we make it out and back. Other times the going is like Henry’s going. It is so slightly done, so deftly and unpretentiously written in, that assay of Annie’s, we might not notice the configuration of the night journey. But it is here, and it is this kind of fine management that is the most promising aspect of Miss Grau’s art of the novel. This awareness, this management, wind on through the tenuousness of these lives; the flexible durability of Julius, the perishable quality both of Inky and of the slim white yacht that is what there is of home for Inky; the tenacious reach for life, and the meanings given life by its insecurity—these too are parts of that admirable complexity of awareness that Miss Grau has brought to her book.

Miss Grau is one of the new writing generation who come from the college classroom: a trained writer. In an earlier time, when news writing was a more lettered profession, the newspaper office begot most major writers. Now they generate from college campuses—specifically, from creative writing classes scattered on

campuses up and down the landscape from Stanford at Palo Alto to Colorado at Boulder to Iowa at Ames to Tulane at New Orleans.

How much good can the potential writer take from this kind of training? Is *Hard Blue Sky* a better novel than it would have been if Miss Grau had used those classroom-and-conference hours for a more self-directed routine?



Essentially, of course, a book is the writer's book; not any mentor's. I think, though, that training did some good things both for *Hard Blue Sky* and more directly for *The Black Prince*, the volume of stories that preceded *Hard Blue Sky*. No matter what route he follows, a writer has to be developed; he doesn't simply hatch. Even the characteristic doctoral dissertation, after its antecedent years of report writing and with all its critical supervision, is still work-in-progress, is heavy, turgid, uncertain in phrasing and construction. The annual volume of Stanford stories, from the writing classes there,

has always the same anonymous quality, from story to story, the stamp of other reading, the jarring ineptnesses and inappropriatenesses that are the inevitable hallmark of the amateur in any sphere. So too, the Michigan Hopwood winners distinguish their occasional success by that general mediocrity which is simply a matter of not being finished yet—of being, after all, still amateur. It is in this interval, in this period of a writer's growing, that training can tighten the slack areas, point the pitfalls before they damage too badly; show possibilities that may transmute gropings into techniques.

*Hard Blue Sky* marks the point of emergence from this larval stage. Mainly that defines itself by one's leaving behind the indulgences that lure the writer toward the rocks: the infusion of one's self; the fondness for persons and for special convictions; the urge to plead causes; and that most virulent and subtle poison, the writer's love for language in its own right—not the most fatal but surely the largest temptation away from that ascetic mode to which the true writer must dedicate and perpetually rededicate himself. The awareness of these is an early aspect of the writer's training. The attainment of release from them is his mark of attained literary majority. That is not quite the whole of it—sheer love for language and for people, for instance, is part, too—but it is quite enough to keep the Chosen

always few indeed in relation to those who fall along the way.

— *Hard Blue Sky* is a first novel. It is good enough to go back to, to keep and keep in mind. That is an infrequent phenomenon in the outpour of novels. Miss Grau's next may be not so good, or may be better. I hope it will be less removed, less alien; will give us a more closely felt, nearer world. Most, though, I hope Miss Grau will go on to give us that even dozen novels. It is not the first novel, or the second, that measures the novelist. For the writer who is able to retain his perspective in the face of what reviewers and publishers do to writing, what one manages to do today is important as it suggests what one may attain to later; one's book is important not just in itself, but in its position as part of a structure that has, in the writer's vision, design; that is part of an organic, growing wholeness. Without a sense of that, the writer had better take himself to his psychiatrist.

—JOHN DILLON HUSBAND

Shirley Anne Grau's first professionally published piece of work, "*The Sound of Silver*," appeared in the Summer, 1953, *NMQ*, through the recommendations of John Dillon Husband, associate professor of literature at Tulane. "*The Sound of Silver*" became the title story of Miss Grau's collection, "*The Black Prince*."

**SHIRLEY GRAU'S HATS AND NO BREAKFAST: NOTES ON A SPANISH JOURNEY**, by Honor Tracy. New York: Random House, 1958. 207 pp. \$3.50.

In the summer of 1955 Miss Tracy made a trip through western Spain, going from Malaga and Algeciras in the south, through such places as Cadiz, Jerez de la Frontera, Seville, Jerez de los Caballeros, Merida, Salamanca, and Vigo, to La Coruña and Mondoñedo on the north. Miss Tracy did not want the Cook's tour, the tourist's package. Like so many others in this post-sophistication age, she wanted to leave the beaten path and go where tourists are not expected and can therefore catch the natives off guard. Her desires were realized, and hence the tart astringent quality of the book, hence the book's after-effects: vague but insistent discontent, subconscious nostalgia.

Miss Tracy dedicated her book "*To Don Juan*," whatever that signifies. But it seems she was not comfortable on Spanish soil with Spanish people, even allowing for all the squalor, ultra-poverty, and antiquity of outlook she encountered. For example, she speaks of "this land of irremediable anarchy, of total administrative confusion, of lost files and dead letters and disregarded law." As for the Spaniards, she has so many bad things to say about them that her few "kind" remarks

appear as grudging, conscience-compelled concessions: "How pleasant a thing this Spanish enthusiasm is! . . . No one here is neutral, balanced, objective, fair or 'responsible.'" "To say that Spaniards are lacking in consideration for others is not enough: they do not really believe that others exist; and yet there is a pure, intense quality about their egoism that makes it admirable and attractive."

Yet whatever her heart-held feelings about Iberia, Miss Tracy dutifully transports us into this fascinating post-Moorish world of ancient settlements, wayside inns, merciless bullfights, lavish religious ceremonies, and insular, petrified customs. Part of her success as a cicerone lies in her mischievous, disarming humor: "For the kind of meal one undergoes in wayside Spanish inns [a half-pint of wine] is the essential minimum and to be regarded partly as disinfectant, partly as anaesthetic." "The Hotel Sierpes was nonchalant and friendly in the good Spanish way. Its clock struck twelve when it meant to say one, and often would allow several hours to pass without striking at all. A placard hung on the wall giving notice of mealtimes and bearing no relation to fact whatever."

And so the innocent reader, missing the hint here, the intimation there, is likely to finish Miss Tracy's book and hand it to a friend to read, before the luminous truth suddenly dawns on him . . . the author—and

she not even aware, probably—has rewritten, after 350 years, *Don Quixote*, has told anew the too-true story of the Spanish madman who thought life bigger, fuller of color and hope, richer for him in "glory and renown," than it cared or dared to be.

Now, the true crux of all this is that Miss Tracy has cast herself in a remarkable role. She does not play *Don Quixote*, or *Sancho Panza*, or fair *Dulcinea*, or *Rozinante* even. It is passing strange, but she is really the CRUEL PRAGMATIC WORLD, and her Spaniards are *Don Quixote*. *Don Quixote* staying at home, of course, but still grandiosely conceiving inns as castles, windmills as giants, himself as the perfect embodiment of the chivalric ideal.

Cervantes' point was that *Don Quixote* and his world were linked by circumstance but pried apart by the knight's peculiar world-view. And Miss Tracy's oddly similar point? "I had said how much I would like to find out what Spaniards felt, if anything, about the hideous inconveniences of their country; whether they were ever irked by the taps that didn't work, the chains that didn't pull, the lights that wouldn't go on, and the impossibility of ever getting anywhere without changing at *Bobadilla*, or whether they soared above these trifles."

Obviously, it is precisely the CRUEL PRAGMATIC WORLD that must move along the great Open Road. *Don*

Quixote by his very nature must stay put, or else become a different kind of person. And what Spaniard—the reader asks, after accompanying Miss Tracy on her itinerary—is in any position to be a New Man in a very old country such as Spain? Not even, apparently, the most quixotic individual. Here, for example, is a young man the author met, a laboratory worker in a rural sausage factory: “He was a true Spanish intellectual with the fine ironic humour of that kind, the indecision, the yearning for ‘abroad,’ and the high ambitions for his own country which go together with a sense of their futility.” Thus, since the world was not kind to Don Quixote, we need hardly expect Miss Tracy to be nice to the Spaniards, even though the world and she are thereby unmasked as discourteous, even rude.

But even this does not cover all of Miss Tracy’s story. Not only do we have a travel diary and an inverted Don Quixote tale, but there is something else, far more significant and challenging: a frank indictment of Franco and his police-state regime, which apparently has taken over everything, including religion, and effectively keeps the Spanish people chained and energy-drained. “I read the reports of re-housing, communal centers, cheap holidays, insurances and similar ingredients of social contentment; but I saw the country around me wear the same bitter, dejected face that I had known for

twenty years.” On the bureaucratic office walls hung the “trinity” of the Falangist Movement: a crucifix flanked by Franco and the Fascist bully, José Antonio, suggesting, inevitably, Jesus and the two thieves.

It is this aspect of Miss Tracy’s account of the land of silk hats and no breakfast that should be specially noted by UN commissions on health, welfare, and civil rights. But it is the whole book—and what sugar-coated penicillin it is!—that makes us at once Don Quixote, Sancho, Cervantes, cruel world, physical, patient, waiter at the table of Better Days: for Spain even.

—SAMUEL I. BELLMAN

*Mr. Bellman is on the English faculty of California State College in San Luis Obispo.*





**THE NEGRO QUESTION, A Selection of Writings on Civil Rights in the South**, by George W. Cable. Editor: Arlin Turner. Garden City: Doubleday, 1958. 308 pp. \$3.95.

George W. Cable wrote and spoke on racial discrimination in 1885 like no one has done in 1958. Of the gradualist school of thought he said, "they pray everybody not to hurry. They have a most enormous capacity for pausing and considering—they propose to wait the slow growth of civilization as if it were the growth of rocks."

A Southerner with the courage to engage in open debate, Cable cut down with his pen the arguments of some of the South's most influential persons. But more than that, he propounded his arguments for extension of full civil rights to Negroes before many university graduating students. At the height of his writing career he was a popular commencement speaker and as such he urged various graduating classes of southern universities to abolish the system of white supremacy. If Cable were alive today, he would probably not be able to speak in some parts of the South as he did in 1885. But the present condition in the South demonstrates the very thing Cable warned would happen if the "go slow" idea was adopted on the problem of civil rights. The problem becomes more difficult as a result of the policy known as gradualism.

Cable was born and raised in Louisiana. His parents owned slaves. He fought with the Confederates and was wounded in the field of battle. His revolt against the white supremacy system came after the end of the Civil War when he discovered the Southern leaders were more interested in the preservation of slavery than in the right of secession. Cable had fought for what he thought was a right and the Southern people had been inspired to fight for it. But at the end of the war, the Dixie newspapers suddenly came out with some new propaganda. The end of the war, said the newspapers, also brought an end forever to the right of secession. Cable saw this new tactic as a cover up and a diversionary move to protect slave-holding. He revolted at the ease with which the Southern leaders justified their new position even though they had just sacrificed 300,000 young men for the right to secede. From then on, Cable began to study the race question and very rapidly became the leading advocate of the abolition of white supremacy and race discrimination.

The incidents related by Cable in the 1870's are very similar to some of the situations of today. Cable came out in the open against segregation in the schools as a result of an incident at the Central Boys' High School in New Orleans. The white boy students revolted against the hiring of a mulatto teacher. The newspapers and the population cheered

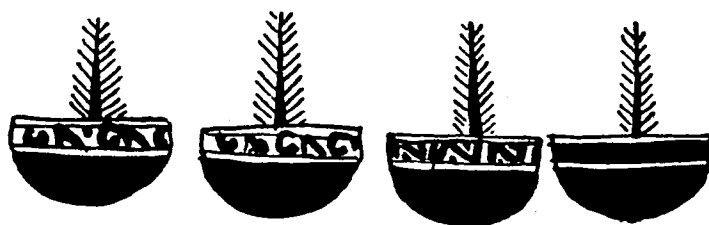
the boys on. The boys became more bold and evicted the female colored students from the grammar and high schools of New Orleans. Again the mobs and the newspapers applauded the young boys.

In 1875, Cable's letters of protest to the newspapers were rejected at first, but later they were printed, together with the editors' assurance to the readers that the author was actually a Southern white man, but obviously wrong in his views. The author's views on segregation in the schools were attributed to his blood. His mother was born in Indiana of New England parents.

In all the essays in *The Negro Question* the author clears away the entangling debris rapidly and grapples with the root and branch of the problem. There is never any doubt about his stand on the issues of civil rights. He states his position clearly and then goes out to do battle with pen and word. In all his debates and essays on civil rights the basic idea was that the system of white supremacy was holding back the educational and intellectual progress of the Southern people as well as the Negro. His crusade was leveled at

the Southern people, and at no time did he appeal first to the Northern friendly element for support of his ideas. He held tenaciously to the idea that the "silent people" of the South would rise against the wrongs perpetrated upon the Negro. He spent much of his time writing to many of his influential friends who had the same ideas of fair play and extension of full civil rights to the Negro. But when the chips were down, the support of these "silent people" suddenly faded away, and Cable was left alone to ward off the abuse heaped upon him by the zealots and the press.

Cable's appeal for full civil rights to the Negro was answered by a few white Southern leaders in newspaper editorials and magazine essays. It was in this type of debating and writing that Cable wanted to draw out the best minds of the South. He wanted them to think through the problem of civil rights and determine for themselves the cancerous effects of discrimination and segregation on the entire people of the South. He was convinced the people of the South were wise and intelligent enough to reason through the prob-



lem and accept a logical solution. A few leaders made attempts to answer Cable's ideas, but most opponents resorted to the name-calling and fear ("Do you want your daughter to marry a Negro?") tactics. Other answers included the use of alleged statements by Negroes who claimed Cable was stirring up trouble and attempting to secure full civil rights against the wishes of the colored people.

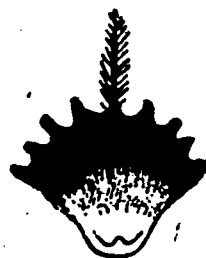
The idea that material progress would gradually eliminate the race problem was advanced after the Civil War. Since then, and even today, we read many reports from all parts of the nation that this type of progress will cure the running sore of discrimination and segregation. Cable disagreed with the theory and in one of his essays wrote, "I had unconsciously taken up the popular error that material gains and thrift produce a general advance in civil and political thought." Over sixty years later his idea is proven correct, for if the two factors could be drawn today on a chart, material progress would show an increase, but civil and political thought would not.

Cable predicted the Little Rock, Arkansas, school situation and all the others in the South. He told the people that advocates of gradualism merely meant a postponement of the problem and not a step in the right direction. He warned the people of the South that if positive action were not taken to extend full civil rights

to the Negro, the day might come when Federal intervention would be necessary. Finally, he said, "sad will it be for our children if we leave it for their inheritance."

—VICENTE T. XIMENES

Mr. Ximenes is a Research Associate with the Bureau of Business Research at the University of New Mexico.



*COLOR OF DARKNESS*, by James Purdy. New York: New Directions, 1957. 175 pp. \$3.50.

Possessor of a bizarre imagination and a deft hand at dialogue, which is always frank and sometimes slightly humorous, the American writer James Purdy offers a reading experience which is not only entertaining and perturbing, but truly different. Although unknown to the public a year ago, he deserves recognition as one of the foremost practitioners of what is perhaps the most flourishing medium of twentieth century literature, the short story. With *Color of Darkness*, a collection of eleven stories and a novella, Purdy demonstrates that it is also perhaps the most expressive, for he offers relentlessly

a question which has probably occurred more often than once to many intelligent twentieth century Americans, the question Mamie puts so clearly to Maud in the story titled "A Good Woman," "What do we get out of life anyway?"

What makes Purdy's insight even more disturbing, however, is the fact that mediocrity does not exist without its consequences. In *Color of Darkness* its victims invariably delight in some form of cruelty, inflicting it and indulging in it, mentally and physically. A father kicked in the groin by his young son writhes on the floor in "exquisite pain," a mother tortures her invalid child until he literally spews out the heart of his grief from his mouth in "thick, black strings," and a paraplegic war veteran kills a cat by throwing it against a tree while his wife feels an unexplained desire to hit him across the face when his suffering is greatest. *Darkness* has a color, a color revealed in strange and often grotesque ways.

—JOE M. FERGUSON, JR.

Joe Ferguson is a graduate student in English at the University of New Mexico, and has published poetry in a number of the little magazines.



**JUAN ANTONIO BALTHASAR, PADRE VISITADOR TO THE SONORA FRONTIER, 1744-1745.**

Two original reports. By Peter Masten Dunne. Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society, 1957. 132 pp. \$10.00.

Mission reports, especially for frontier areas, are often enlightening documents, and Father Balthasar's observations on the precarious Sonora frontier will be of interest to students of the Southwest. In 1744 he was sent to make an official visitation of the Jesuit establishments in Lower California and Sonora. He left a detailed account of the California missions, but no trace of a similar document for Sonora has yet been found. Father Dunne's posthumous work contains translations of two hitherto unpublished letters by the Father Visitor. The first discusses the rather unsatisfactory progress of missionary work among the Seris and Pimas and the problem of converting pagan tribes in adjacent regions, including the Moqui (Hopi), assigned to the Jesuits by a royal decree of 1741. The second is an attack on Governor Agustín Vildósola's administration of Sonora. There is a useful introduction outlining the historical background. It should be noted, however, that neither Father Balthasar nor his editors make it clear that the Franciscans not only had never abandoned their prior claim to Moqui, but, from the time of the Re-

conquest of New Mexico, made repeated efforts to bring the Hopi Indians back into the fold. And, in the 1740's, when the Jesuits (for the most part unenthusiastically) were seeking to comply with the royal order to them, there were four Franciscan expeditions to Moqui. It was never possible to reestablish the missions there, but the Franciscans did bring back a number of converts, most of whom were probably apostate refugees from the Río Grande pueblos at the time of the Great Revolt and after. The volume, handsomely designed and printed by Lawton Kennedy, San Francisco, includes facsimiles of contemporary maps by Fathers Balthasar and Keller.

—ELEANOR B. ADAMS

*Eleanor Adams is the author of Bishop Tamarón's Visitation of New Mexico, 1760, and several important works on Mexican and Central American colonial history.*



**NOVELS INTO FILMS**, by George Bluestone. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1957. 237 pp. \$5.00.

In his detailed analysis of novels which have been metamorphosed into films, George Bluestone reiterates a principle, older than Shakespeare, as universal as fallout: the artist's right to create freely. We do not question Shakespeare's right to refashion for his own esthetic purposes Plutarch's biographies or the old Lear plays. Similarly, if we pursue Dr. Bluestone's thesis in *Novels Into Films*, the filmist must be granted the right to adapt the novel for his own artistic ends, to bring about those mutations essential to his craft.

This is a scholarly work offered here, and Dr. Bluestone's study is intensive and provocative. He is at his best in the chapters offering concrete analyses of six specimen films: *The Informer*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Ox-Bow Incident* and *Madame Bovary*. For the first time, we have an extended attempt to enunciate the esthetic principles distinguishing "the novel as a conceptual and discursive form, the film as a perceptual and presentational form." Unlike its predecessors which have concentrated almost exclusively upon the European cinema, this book examines the American film as "both an artistic and a social instrument."

The writer's concern with artistic rights, however, considerably dims his attendant problem, that of esthetic and social obligations. The 1949 film version of *Madame Bovary*, for example, is condemned because the filmist, failing to rethink Flaubert's novel in plastic form, offered as a substitute the artificial framework of the Hollywood Production Code, an "artificiality . . . which fails to distinguish between obscenity and honesty" in perpetuating its myths. But the tyranny of Hollywood myth-making is certainly no more an evil than the anarchy of the individual artist who freely follows his own limited demands to produce an inferior production. We may uphold Shakespeare's right to revise the old Lear plays for his own purposes, but we also condemn the seventeenth-century playwright, Nahum Tate, who altered Shakespeare's ending to provide a happier and more "moral" conclusion. Clearly, the artist's freedom must be prescribed and limited to prevent either tyranny or anarchy. If the rules are not to come from without, then certainly they must come from within. If society and its institutions are not to prescribe artistic principles, then the artist and the critic must be prepared to do this.

When Theodore Dreiser tried to restrain Paramount from releasing its 1931 movie version of his novel, *An American Tragedy*, he insisted that "by not creating the inevitability of circumstance influencing Clyde, a

not evil-hearted boy, they had reduced the psychology of my book so as to make it a cheap murder story." The Supreme Court of New York decided against the novelist, however, and acknowledged that "the great majority of the people composing the audience before which the picture will be presented, will be more interested that justice prevail over wrongdoing than that the inevitability of Clyde's end clearly appear." Dr. Bluestone cites this decision as a commendable step toward granting "the artistic and commercial license to alter literary texts" and toward providing "legal sanction" where only esthetic sanction had previously existed. But if we accept this "license," then we cannot deny audience appeal as a valid esthetic determinant. And if this is true for the film based upon Dreiser's novel, then it ought to be true for the film based upon Flaubert's. This is obviously not the case for Dr. Bluestone, however. But if the Hollywood Code or audience appeal or money or the novelist's intent is not to be the limiting and determining factor for craftsmanship, what is?—truth? honesty? reality? How, precisely, are a film's social obligations related to its esthetic rights?

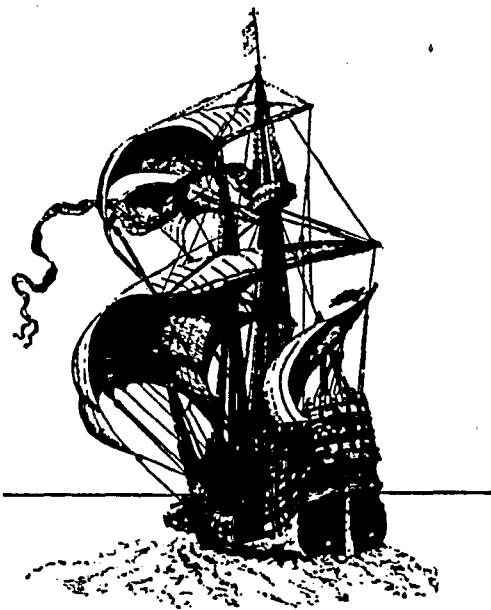
The problems with which Dr. Bluestone wrestles here are formidable. They plague the filmist now, as they have been plaguing the artist for centuries. Though Dr. Bluestone may not solve his problems with any

degree of definitiveness, he certainly establishes the right and need of the filmist to share these problems with the twentieth-century poet, the musician, the playwright, and the novelist.

—M. A. GOLDBERG

Milton Goldberg, who teaches English at Antioch, is the author of a forthcoming study of Tobias Smollett, to be published by UNM Press with the assistance of a Ford Foundation grant.

HORIZON, Vol. I, No. 1, a bi-monthly magazine, edited by Joseph J. Thorndyke, Jr. New York: Heritage Publishing Co., Sept. 1958, clothbound, 152 pp., 54 color plates, 135 black and white. \$3.95 per copy, \$18 per year.



Choosing as its symbol the caravel of the realms of gold, *Horizon* is a magazine of general culture—"The whole realm of mankind's creative talents, past and present." Its announced emphasis is on Western culture, as seen from its "new citadel in North America." But the magazine admits no limits to its horizon—where "one may observe those jagged interruptions of the landscape that are the works of man."

*Horizon* has some of the slickness and sleekness that characterize its parent, *American Heritage*, but it is more open-spaced and open-minded, the layout is clean and singing, the typography good, the color excellent, the black and whites superb.

The point of view is conservative, but not too conservative, and the writing has been chosen with an eye toward permanent literature. Its twenty articles range widely. Each is addressed to a different reader, and yet to all readers curious about man and his world.

Wilfred Royce, British mountaineer-poet-novelist, says in the opening article that men seek adventure because of many lures: hardship by which one proves one's self, contrast with one's normal environment, danger, physical pleasure, companionship and solitude, escape, the realization of dreams, conquest, dedication to science, and the lure of mystery. C. V. Wedgwood explores "The Golden Age of the Dutch Republic," and twenty pictures help us

see it. Six photographers suggest the theme of Genesis, including a magnificent study of an alligator's eye, a sunset exploding like an H-bomb, the delicate wonder of a wild strawberry, the primordial power of elephants. Michelangelo's hands of God and Adam illustrate lines reproduced from the first edition of *Paradise Lost*. Igor Stravinsky's reminiscences touch upon D'Annunzio ("a small man, brisk and natty, very perfumed, and very bald"), Proust ("came directly from his bed. . . . a pale man"), and jazz ("did influence me. . . . I don't follow it, but I respect it").

Various American phenomena are explored: Aspen, Colorado, and its Institute for Humanistic Studies; man's use and misuse of the earth under population pressures, by Julian Huxley; the Beat Generation's "Cult of the Unthink"; the new art form of Broadway's musical comedy; the Utopian architecture of Edward D. Stone.

Aside from an art dividend with every article, several essays relate specifically to an art theme: Ephesus of yesterday and today; a glance at three approaches to American painting, via Willem de Kooning, Jack Levine, and Andrew Wyeth; some biographic notes on Simonetta Vespucci, "the perfect beauty" who modelled for Botticelli and Piero di Cosimo; and provocative thoughts on the statues of Dijon and the world's "borrowed" art treasures.

By no means the least interesting

are delightfully illustrated pieces on early balloons and wheeled vehicles.

"Alas for charm and stately travel," writes Oliver Jensen, who feels that "every means of transportation looks a little sleasier every year." Taking a backward glance at the forward look, he declares that "In the end speed will become so great, of course, that travel will be instantaneous, and those who believed that the trip itself was as important as getting there will have nothing to mourn."

*Bon voyage, Horizon!*

—ROLAND DICKEY

*THE SORROWS OF PRIAPUS*, by Edward Dahlberg, with drawings by Ben Shahn. New York: New Directions, 1957. 119 pp. \$6.50.

Manners are custom insofar as they represent continually and generally reaffirmed notions of value. We shoot to kill. We think to act effectively. The world is nine-tenths to be found in the way one moves through it, be that with resistance, longing, good nature, or whatever other possibilities of attitude exist.

For a writer this problem of "manners" converts, partly, to that of "style"—of which Stendahl said, it is the man. In America there are no very actually customary writers such as the English have. From Melville on, those men who have managed a formal distinction have done so with great labor, and *Moby Dick* sweats



a composite language of completely singular kind. It would seem that the American writer has constantly to re-find, and, equally, to redefine wherein lies the value of the words he uses. Awkwardly, and persistently, this is what they seem to me to have done: Whitman, James—utterly unlike otherwise—and in our own time, Pound, Williams, Crane, Faulkner et al. To the European our “stylists” at times seem outrageously self-conscious; they do not at all write in a way that anyone might have. But I think that is, again, a reaffirming of this question of “manners” which has nagged at our dress, our food, our attitudes, ever since we first came to this country. The only way is the one way, and that way is to be found by each man only, one by one. Perhaps we arrive at custom without any manners at all.

From the character of writing in his first book, a novel published in the late twenties, *Bottom Dogs*, to that now shown in *The Sorrows of Priapus*, Edward Dahlberg has come by no means unwittingly. *Bottom Dogs* is a flat, harsh work of realism; and for the last word, read the attitudes subsequent to Dreiser, the affective photographing of life sans relieving characteristics of sympathy. Why then this manner?

Our annals are weak, and we know not our rivers; we cannot understand today which is Father Ra, the Egyptian sun, until we gather up yesterday, who is Osiris. These rivers are immense legends and would cure

us of many ills, did we know them, for all nature is our corpus, and once we relinquish a part of the earth, we lose, in some way, the use of our hands, feet, loins, and spirit.

This is not a realism of any kind familiar to critics, though I would argue its concerns are ultimately just so oriented. For those familiar with *Bottom Dogs*, the language has certainly a new character of reference and tone. Yet the strong monosyllabic structure holds. Sentences stay closely based, running to compounds in passages of argument and explanation; but even there they end with even, flat statement, unmistakable contentual emphases.

*The Sorrows of Priapus* argues two main images: 1) a natural world, dominant in animal and plant, as corrective to that “understood,” intellectually “purposed,” defiant of natural authorities; and 2) a source-world, of New World histories, and custom, origin, whereby to secure continuance and understanding of a more primal sort. The last sentence in the book is: “Be primordial or decay.” Which injunction—both to continually begin, and to begin with what you began with—can give some sense of the manner in point of content. The beginning note reads:

This is fable and not natural history. The polestar of the writer is a legendary book, using geography, the beasts in the earth and in the sea, and voyages, as the source of maxims, mirth and an American myth . . .

The natural world is the "plural" world of the Greeks, and those around and before them. It is devoid of humanistic hierarchies; the trees are there as much as the man is, no matter he can chop them down. The second, the source-world, is that of the Maya, Aztec, geographers, the forms of land, and the rivers which mark them. In Dahlberg's use it breeds overtones, insistencies, of great strength:

Memory is our day of water tutored by want. La Salle sought virgin Tartars, descendants of Prometheus. He returned to Frontenac, but he had not found the Alpha of the river . . .

But what does that first sentence mean? It means that we remember what we have, because we do not have it. It means that fate does not necessarily argue accomplishments.

Water is death, but man must seek it. All our seeming wakings are the debris of evening waters; most dreams come from mean shallows, and are the digestive rot of secure bottoms; prophecies rise up from the marine depths ancient as the Flood. We are cartographers, unheeding the singing mag-gots, or bereft of the Angel.

Is it to gain an authority, the manners of authority, that Dahlberg has developed such a "style"? I argue that its purpose is as follows: to demand attention from men, for the content, the things with which it is concerned. The book is, a compounded book, formed of many things; "many narratives have been employed . . ." The book is a leg-

endary imagining—as *image* is derived from *imitāri*, to imitate, from some form lost "back there," in the same world; and derives its form from tales, and writings, of men who were there, and provide for us the image of a "new world" which has filtered down to us.

Finally, pedantically, manners comes from *manus*, hand, and custom, at least possibly, in part, from *suescere*: to have it for one's own. At least that can stand as an American reading, of the work Edward Dahlberg has done.

—ROBERT CREELEY

Poems by Robert Creeley appear in the third volume of the "Texas Quarterly" and in Vol. 2, No. 5, of "Evergreen Review." Mr. Creeley, who lives in Albuquerque, is editor of the "Black Mountain Review."

**RICHARD WETHERILL: ANASAZI**, by Frank McNitt. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1957. 363 pp., 18 photographs, 4 drawings, 5 maps. \$10.00.

This book, written by a journalist, is a boon to archaeologists. For, although it contains the necessary biographical information, it is not written in any standard biographical form. It is, rather, the story of a pioneer archaeologist in one of North America's most exciting archaeological fields. With a wealth of detail, Mr. McNitt gives us the

story of an inspired amateur inaugurating an archaeological era.

At one end of this story are the Wetherill brothers growing up as cowboys in a country where every bend in the trail was capable of producing an unexplored canyon or mesa. At the other end we have Mesa Verde National Park, Chaco Canyon National Monument, the Basket Makers of Grand Gulch, the great cliff pueblo which is Kiet Siel, and the whole corpus of prehistoric archaeology known to scholar, tourist, and general reader as the San Juan or Anasazi division of the Pueblo civilization.

The scholars and sour-doughs of Southwestern archaeology have long known that the most vigorous, most observing, and most scientific of the five brothers was Richard. Few others have known this, however. There is a good reason for the general lack of appreciation of Richard and his work. Few of the people who

now apply themselves so actively to the affairs of the Southwest, past and present, were around those parts in 1910. The population was still sparse and almost unanimously unconcerned with prehistory, history, or any other such effete pursuits. It was on June twenty-second of that year that Richard Wetherill died in a Navajo ambush half-a-mile downstream from his beloved Pueblo Bonito.

Since then, the writers and travelers and collectors and artists who have trekked the Southwest in ever-increasing numbers have encountered other Wetherills, all good men and true. One of them, Milton of the next generation, is still carrying on the family tradition as a staff member at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff. So the Wetherills have become famous, yet Richard has remained a hazy and, to some, even a disreputable figure in the background—prehistoric, like his Basket Makers.

This book is Richard's story. We needed it badly; it completes one of the important sagas of the West; and it is well told.

The tale begins appropriately, after a brief preamble, with the discovery of Cliff Palace on Mesa Verde. This might well have been enough for any man, but the Southwest was generous in those days. Eastern scientists have become accustomed long since to the deflation which comes after an arduous climb



FRANK McNITT

to a cave high in the cliffs, where they are sure no white man has ever been before, only to find the name RICHARD WETHERILL emblazoned on the back wall.

Expeditions and discoveries follow on at a rapid pace after Cliff Palace. The news of Wetherill finds and Wetherill prowess spread far and wide. The standard procedure for explorers and scientists from New York and such places, and even from Europe, was to locate a Wetherill, commission him to get together an outfit, and start out for the unknown. Until his tragic death, the brother most in demand was Richard.

Although the book is in the "non-fiction" class, this reviewer feels that in part it should receive "fiction" treatment. The yarn is too good to spoil and the reader is entitled to his own share of discovery. Mixed in with the archaeology are accounts of the events of a frontier life among characters often far from gentle which gave rise to the rumors that Richard was not all he should have been. The questions of cattle rustling, homesteading irregularities, lawsuits and the incidents leading to the fatal ambush are all discussed and much evidence presented. One has the feeling that the hero is made a bit too heroic, but the picture stands clear of a man upright beyond many of his neighbors. The major items in Four-Corners' gossip which have blackened Richard in the saloons, country stores, and trading

posts are revealed as canards based upon misunderstandings or misrepresentations of his motives and actions.

A book dealing so largely with archaeological matters written by a man who is in no sense an archaeologist could be expected to contain errors and this one is no exception. It is, however, very definitely not presented as a scholarly monograph, and the occasional misstatements of scientific "fact" can well be ignored even by the specialists who, after all, are the only ones likely to spot them. One could wish that a university press, with such an important and distinguished manuscript in its hands, might have had it more thoroughly vetted. But the inaccuracies are few in this long text and professionals could probably be found who would argue over some of them.

At the end of the book is a six page bibliography, a good index, six interesting and valuable appendices, a list of burials found in Chaco Canyon from 1895 to 1956 with details of age, sex, position, and location, and an annotated ground plan of Pueblo Bonito.

This book belongs in the libraries of all persons interested in the Southwestern past, prehistoric and historic. It provides a rare combination of good reference material and fascinating reading.

—J. O. BREW

Dr. Brew is director of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University.