

creates a transhistorical dialogue in which both scholars and writers grapple with the same problem of pleasure literary narrative.

Of these three chapters, the Spenser and Milton readings are the strongest and most revealing. McEleney's conclusion that the Legend of Courtesy's repeated plot open-endedness sets up "the entire poem's subject as *always already having been* the ambivalence of romance" (121) is entirely convincing, and his deconstructive, metacritical readings of Milton—focusing on what he calls *relèveation* (attempts at sublation, elevation and revelation that belie their own futility)—both playfully and seriously reveal the dark and putrid flipside to teleological and redemptive interpretations of the poem. The irony here is that McEleney's own uncovering of Miltonic ambiguity is a rich revelation itself, even as he attempts to keep pleasure and profit oscillating in contingent, unresolved dialogue.

Much as I loved the analysis of Nashe, I wished it had been more historically grounded in the early modern cultural practices of invention and absurdity that McEleney alludes to in his (nonetheless) excellent reading of the text as an open-ended questioning of utility coming the end of pleasure. Nashe's mechanical banqueting house could be linked to the destructive practices of early modern banquets and void feasts that Patricia Fumerton has examined, as well as to Hero's hydraulic boots in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (1598), which Wendy Hyman has discussed. A queer reading of foreignness in Nashe could go further by attending to the ways early modern literary culture embraced foreign pleasures as alternatives to (classical, Puritan) didacticism.

In the book's elegant coda McEleney ponders the limitations of drawing any sort of "profitable" conclusion from a study that aims to open up the space between pleasure and profit. The point is to pry open this space so that others can then explore it in more depth. But McEleney has one more delightful revelation: one way that we can approach the possibility of "pleasure unreconciled to virtue" (168) as a source of delight rather than horror in our own work is to blur the boundaries between literature and criticism itself. McEleney's book is refreshing, delightful, and earnestly concerned with the values we assign to literature and to scholarship. Just as his book cleverly and successfully upends and interrogates the binary opposition between pleasure and profit, so too, his hopeful conclusion dissects the binary between literature and criticism itself. If only we *could* all write and interpret with as much pleasure, art, and insight as McEleney does.

Miriam Jacobson
The University of Georgia
jacobson@uga.edu

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The British government established its New South Wales colony in 1788, five years after recognizing the independence of the United States of America. As James Belich writes in *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo World, 1783–1939* (2009), at that time, "two Anglo metropolises," the British Isles and the United States, lay on either side of the Atlantic Ocean. In the century between the Napoleonic wars and World War I, the effects of lower trade barriers and reduced transport costs combined to transform the world economy. As the volume of world trade increased, and new regions were opened up to white settlement to supply food and raw materials, Britain and the eastern United States became emigrant societies. New technologies that improved communications and military firepower gave Europeans increasing power to enter markets in Asia and Africa where

trading activity had traditionally been restricted. Since 1757, the Qing government had allowed Western traders to access only Canton (Guangzhou); after the Opium Wars (1839–42), Britain forced open five Chinese ports, where British law protected traders, and established a colony at Hong Kong. By the end of the 1830s, the wool industry was thriving in Australia, and from new colonial capitals, pastoral activity spread over the grasslands of what are now Victoria, South Australia, and southern Queensland. As Benjamin Mountford observes in this excellent book, Sydney and Canton had a common purpose, as beachheads for British commercial activity in large, distant continents.

The theme of *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia* is the evolving position of Australia as a point of interaction between two empires in the first century after white settlement. The relationship between Britain and China was a complex one. The Australian colonies served as imperial bases that supplied raw materials for British industry, and outlets for British migration and investment; Britain's commercial links to China encouraged the search for Australian products to sell to Chinese consumers, to help offset a large trade deficit. As in California in 1848, the Australian gold rushes in 1851 prompted a wave of Chinese immigration, which brought issues of race to the fore. For the white population, the mobility of the Chinese, their numbers, and the perceived threat they posed to competition in labor markets hardened racial attitudes. While British foreign policy in East Asia was built on free access to foreign ports, colonial governments regulated migration from British ports in China. In 1888, the arrival in Melbourne of the SS *Afghan* from Hong Kong, with 268 Chinese passengers, revealed a conflict between Australia's identity as a British society, and its position as part of Britain's identity as a commercial and imperial power in the Asia-Pacific region. Subsequent legislation in the Australian colonies closed the door to Chinese immigration, thus overriding British imperial and foreign considerations. By 1899, the Australian and New Zealand colonies restricted immigration through use of an education test; the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 was the first piece of legislation considered by Australian federal parliament.

In considering this broad and important topic, Mountford moves skillfully across a range of sources. Using company archives, he provides a strong and detailed account of early Sydney-based trade and merchant activity with China, adding depth to existing knowledge of the Canton trade and the subsequent development of Treaty Ports. Then follows an excellent account of the transforming effect of the gold rushes, in particular the thriving trade in passengers from along the Chinese coast to Hong Kong, then to San Francisco and Melbourne. In subsequent chapters, Mountford draws largely on official records, correspondence, and private papers to track the changing links between three continents. In doing so, he provides perspective and context to support a rich narrative. Mountford is fair and generous to other scholars, and provides useful references, helped by the publisher's decision to use footnotes rather than endnotes. Generally, the book reads very well, although at times Mountford lapses into excessively long paragraphs, even when it is clear where a paragraph break is needed.

This is an ambitious and effective book that adds to the growing body of literature on the history of the Pacific. Mountford's vision and depth enriches and extends Geoffrey Blainey's classic *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australian History* (1966). It may also be read with profit alongside the comparable work of another rising scholar, Kornel S. Chang, whose recent book *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (2012) considers the effects of American and European imperialism in Asia on the capitalist development of the American West.

Lionel Frost
 Monash University
Lionel.Frost@monash.edu