
Abstracts

Carl Freedman and Christopher Kendrick, Forms of Labor in Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest* 209

Hammett's 1929 novel *Red Harvest* ranks as one of the first and one of the greatest examples of hard-boiled detective fiction, a category that broke sharply with the older, ratiocinative variety. Our reading of the novel (which is in part a reading of the genre of detective fiction itself) focuses on productive work and finds that the novel's narrative structure is based on several distinguishable forms of labor, each autonomous and yet complexly interrelated with the others. Our primary stress is on the linguistic or dialogic work of Hammett's protagonist, the Continental Op, who is in many ways a paradigmatic private detective. We conclude by considering not only the generic composition of the novel but also its political character as an unusually powerful and complex response to capitalist reification. (CF, CK)

Neil Nehring, Revolt into Style: Graham Greene Meets the Sex Pistols 222

Some relatively obscure citations of Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock* that appear in a 1978 work by older bohemian cohorts of the Sex Pistols, the most prominent punk-rock band, help considerably in dissolving the conventional hierarchy of literature and mass culture. A decade earlier, these elders had learned the theory of textual appropriation espoused by the Situationist International, and their subversion of elitist evaluative standards has much in common with the original theorists of the avant-garde—especially Bakhtin and Benjamin—and, more recently, with the field of cultural studies, specifically British subcultural sociology. Thus out of one minor moment a longer, continuous avant-garde tradition can be reconstructed, consisting of artists and critics, including Greene himself, who have sought to challenge the formation of common sense in both “high culture” and the mass media. These anarchists share in particular a materialist orientation toward literary and mass texts—as well as toward the social outcomes that the affective qualities of those texts enable in everyday life, ultimately the most crucial arena of avant-garde activity. (NN)

Joseph Tabbi, Mailer's Psychology of Machines 238

The Alpha Bravo Universe is reported to be the title of a massive fiction that Norman Mailer has in hand, a three-part novel of which *Ancient Evenings* is the first part. The title has its origin, however, in a chapter cut from the final draft of a 1970 book, *Of a Fire on the Moon*. The discarded chapter, I argue, not only sheds light on the composition of the moon book but also clarifies the dualistic psychology that surfaced first in Mailer's 1957 essay “The White Negro” and that underlies all his subsequent writing. *Fire* represents his ambitious attempt to pare down his own stylized romantic personality and come to terms with contemporary technology. In the drafts and published text, we can follow his efforts to present American society in its totality and can distinguish between possibilities available to the romantic ego and those that no longer seem to be. (JT)

Peter Schwenger, Circling Ground Zero 251

Nuclear holocaust is often mapped as a circle around a point designated zero. Zero itself, historically a paradoxical sign, recapitulates in its form the circle around an absent center. The paradoxes of this (non)center inform Derrida's pivotal essay “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences.” And all these paradoxes bear on Russell Hoban's novel *Riddley Walker*, which takes place two thousand years after a catastrophic nuclear war. Set in the circle of towns surrounding what was once Canterbury, it evokes a center that is nothing less than “the ideal of us.” Hoban uses continual reinterpretations and shifting tangents to generate a narrative circle in motion, both counterpart of and counter to the circling Power Ring that produced the nuclear zero. (PS)

Gregory W. Bredbeck, Milton's Ganymede: Negotiations of Homoerotic Tradition in *Paradise Regained* 262

The presentation of the banquet temptation in *Paradise Regained* unfolds a complex system of allusions that allows us, first, to ascertain the place of male sexual difference in Milton's canon and, second, to reassess how we interpret Milton's genders and their relation to the sexual epistemology of the later Renaissance. The sylvan setting invokes a tradition of increasing specification of homoeroticism in Renaissance receptions of classical pastoral, and the presence of Ganymede and Hylas recalls vernacular idioms of sodomy and sexual transgression. These associations place male sexual difference within the Miltonic canon in a way that has seldom been recognized, but a further survey of exegetical manipulations of homoeroticism demonstrates that Milton's use of this motif serves the larger project of rewriting "common glosses." (GWB)

Sarah Gilead, Magic Abjured: Closure in Children's Fantasy Fiction 277

Focusing on several classic works of children's literature in English (such as *The Wizard of Oz*, the *Alice* books, and *Peter Pan*), this study examines the self-reflexive and metaliterary thrust of the genre's characteristic fantasy-framing device, the return-to-reality ending, and suggests a tripartite taxonomy of closural effects: therapeutic-socializing, fantasy-rejecting, and tragic. The familiarity of the return serves to screen conflicting adult agendas in literature for children. The traditional role of the adult as regulator of transitional states (i.e., of childhood itself) consorts oddly with the Romantic reversal of the adult-child hierarchy and with post-Romantic anxiety regarding both traditional and Romantic models of the relation between adult and child. While the return works to restore the conventional orders of significance temporarily neutralized by the fantasy plot, it also tends to ironize such conventions, including the convention of narrative closure. (SG)

Shuli Barzilai, Borders of Language: Kristeva's Critique of Lacan 294

Throughout her theoretical writings, Julia Kristeva calls into question the privileged position of the symbolic order in Jacques Lacan's teaching and clinical practice. In particular, she argues that the Lacanian "algorithm" S/s inadequately accounts for nondiscursive pathological and creative phenomena, for experiential dimensions that elude the language function. She would shift psychoanalysis away from its fascination with language and toward operations that are "*pre-meaning* and *pre-sign* (or *trans-meaning*, *trans-sign*)." As a part of this larger project, Kristeva's essay "Within the Microcosm of 'The Talking Cure'" presents a concentrated critique of the linguistic interpretation of the unconscious. Her essay focuses on the analytic encounter with "borderline" patients. However, Kristeva's characterization of the limitations of Lacanian theory in relation to borderline discourse has wide-ranging implications for other forms of communication as well. (SB)
