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Hawthorne

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2 Hawthorne

Brenda Wineapple

Of this year's Hawthorne harvest, particularly noteworthy is Thomas Mitchell's elegantly written *Hawthorne's Fuller Mystery*, a deft excavation of the long-neglected, long-suppressed relationship between Nathaniel Hawthorne and Margaret Fuller. Mitchell's particular strength is an imaginative use of historical scholarship that refreshes our reading of both of these figures. Fine essays by Anna Brickhouse on "Rappaccini's Daughter" and Robert K. Martin on *The House of the Seven Gables* deal with the ways in which racism and paranoia continue to ruffle the presumably smooth surface that Hawthorne attempts to press into cultural service—a subject that has infused much of Hawthorne scholarship in the recent past, especially scholarship of the New Historicist cast. Yet from a much more traditional vantage point, a number of articles on *The Blithedale Romance*, as well as Bryan Homer's *An American Liaison*, continue to fix Hawthorne in specific temporal and geographical coordinates.

i Editions, Biography, and Bibliography

Prodigious research is the hallmark of Bryan Homer's *An American Liaison: Leamington Spa and the Hawthornes, 1855–1864* (Fairleigh Dickinson), a chronicle of the Hawthorne family's sojourn in Leamington Spa that itemizes hotels and parks, lodgings and decor, costs, expenditures, excursions, and favorite haunts, all in profuse detail. The author also records what the Hawthornes might have done as well as what they did not do; for example, he comments at length on the second Grand Horticultural Exhibition at Kenilworth Castle, an event the Hawthornes did not attend; if they had, says Homer, "they may have been moved to attend the Laying of the Foundation Stone of the New Chancel of

Whitnash Church, where they had been on 23 June.” Although such speculation can offer insights into the Hawthornes’ tastes and predilections, too often Homer becomes the victim of his own meticulous research, which deserves a more intelligible narrative.

Unfortunately, the book is a labor of love that suffers from its strengths. Homer is familiar with the primary sources (although he occasionally mistakes Elizabeth Hawthorne for Elizabeth Peabody) as well as the particularities of Hawthorne biography. He is also impressively knowledgeable about English topography, history, and manners, and he carefully distinguishes between present-day Leamington and the Leamington experienced by the Hawthornes. But overall his narrative is enslaved by minutiae. With lengthy quotations from family letters, journal entries, and daybooks, the volume presents an inadvertent hodgepodge of primary sources that, as in the case of the prolonged excerpts from Ada Shepard’s letters and her journal, devolves into an undifferentiated mass of chattering voices. Yet, *An American Liaison* does offer brief and often useful commentary between these long passages, providing the necessary temporal context for them. Thus, when read as a guidebook to the Hawthornes’ adventures in England, *An American Liaison* takes a place as a serviceable, commendable, and painstaking contribution to Hawthorne studies.

Hawthorne biographical studies are the subject of Bettina M. Carbonell’s “Literary Biography and Theory: Alone with Hawthorne,” pp. 93–115 in *Biography and Source Studies* 3, ed. Frederick R. Karl (AMS Press, 1997). Carbonell provides a tidy overview of several theoretical definitions of biography before examining three 20th-century biographies of Hawthorne (by Randall Stewart, Mark Van Doren, and Edwin Haviland Miller) to show how the “intrusions and manipulations of the biographer” deal with those years in which Hawthorne is “something of an absent presence.” In so doing, Carbonell argues, “we have an unusual opportunity to survey the event of telling as it takes place in the narrative field.” By depending overmuch on the prolix terms of narratological theory (derived from Gérard Genette’s *Narrative Discourse*), Carbonell obfuscates her own discussion of the aesthetics of biography. Still, her analysis of the methodological choices involved in handling the 12 years in Hawthorne’s life (1825–37) about which little is known leads her to conclude that “an almost defensive concern for Hawthorne’s well-being” pervades these three biographies. At the end of her essay, when she suggests that another biographer might interrogate these early years from

the vantage point of Hawthorne's reading, she actually ignores many of the theoretical issues of biography, narrative, and dramatic action that she raises in her essay's fine opening paragraphs. From a different point of view, my own "The Biographical Imperative; or, Hawthorne Family Values," pp. 1–14 in *Biography and Source Studies* 3, discusses matters of biographical and editorial probity, especially as they were not practiced, for complex reasons, by the Hawthorne family after Hawthorne's death.

Kimberly Free Muirhead comprehensively annotates the Hawthorne scholarship published between the summer of 1997 and the summer of 1998 in "Current Hawthorne Bibliography" (*NHR* 24, ii: 20–43); she includes entries for some items published before 1996 as well as a listing of bibliographies, adaptations, reprints, essays, and dissertations. For the first time, the bibliography contains a listing of current multimedia publications.

ii Books

In *Hawthorne's Fuller Mystery* (Mass.) Thomas Mitchell imaginatively and perceptively speculates (despite the scant historical record) about the relationship between Hawthorne and Margaret Fuller, heretofore surprisingly neglected. Mitchell argues that Hawthorne's fascination with Fuller shaped the fictions in which he tried to solve this "riddle of her life"—indeed, more than shaped them, for she was "to an important extent the origin of their very conception, the problem at their heart." Mitchell first asks why Fuller and Hawthorne's relationship has been overlooked, and he finds his answer in Julian Hawthorne's 1884 biography, where the younger Hawthorne appropriated this relationship to his own ends, marginalizing Fuller's importance and effectively initiating the long process of her decanonization, if you will. (The chapter elaborates Mitchell's earlier article, "Julian Hawthorne and the 'Scandal' of Margaret Fuller," discussed fully by Leland Person in *AmLS* 1996, pp. 26–27). Mitchell then turns his attention to the Fuller/Hawthorne friendship, arguing that here Hawthorne encounters a woman who resists the kind of Pygmalion-like power he exercised over his fiancée, Sophia Peabody, transforming Peabody into the ideal "Dove" who would become his dutiful, submissive wife. "Not only did Fuller come to represent for Hawthorne the embodiment of feminine resistance to the type of personal and cultural male magnetism that Hawthorne employed to reorder and master Sophia's character, but she also came to represent

both the seductively attractive and intimidatingly repellent poles of the magnetic force that such a woman could have on others.”

However, this does not mean that Hawthorne or Fuller rejected one another. On the contrary, Mitchell carefully adduces that Fuller’s “increasing feminism” drove no wedge between them; instead, after the publication of “The Great Lawsuit” (later expanded into *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*), the friendship deepened. According to Mitchell, when Fuller became somewhat disenchanted with Emerson, she turned toward Hawthorne, and Hawthorne responded. Interpreting Fuller’s 1844 journal, Mitchell surmises that “Hawthorne and Fuller had been discussing the failure of Emerson to form truly intimate relations with his wife as well as his friends. The passage further suggests that Fuller and Hawthorne had discussed their own friendship and perhaps the Hawthorne marriage as being founded on ‘real’ rather than ‘seeming’ relations and had used Emerson as their foil.”

If such speculation strikes some readers as strained, Mitchell nonetheless provides ample and reliable reason to consider Fuller as the model for Beatrice Rappaccini and Hawthorne as an Aubépine responding, more or less, to the challenge that Fuller threw down to him in her review of his *Twice-Told Tales*: “paint with blood-warm colors.” Moreover, Mitchell’s energetic reading of “Rappaccini’s Daughter” also renders Hawthorne into a Giovanni-like figure who nonetheless, unlike Giovanni, “recognized the poison of his own thwarted nature, his own fancies about the prohibited body of Fuller, the body which, if touched, would have proved poisonous to his relationship with Fuller but also, of course, to his relationship with Sophia.” Then, arguing that Hawthorne, in effect, rewrites “Rappaccini’s Daughter” as *The Scarlet Letter*, Mitchell notes that Hawthorne embodies Fuller as “the Hester who inspires Hawthorne’s sympathetic admiration and respect as well as his fears and guilt.” Casting his net wide—for example, linking Fuller to Hester via “Endicott and the Red Cross,” which Fuller had singled out as one of Hawthorne’s most powerful stories—Mitchell continues to argue forcefully for Fuller’s sway over Hawthorne’s imagination, which reaches an apotheosis in *The Blithedale Romance*. Here, though Hawthorne reincarnates his spiritually idealized Dove as the Veiled Lady, he also condemns both his marital life and his literary career. “He too had stifled down his innermost consciousness in turning away from the darker implications of his attraction to Beatrice and Hester that enabled his writing . . . [imagining] himself as capable of enjoying contentment in a Holgrave

turned conservative, settling for the reassurance and the sunshine of a Phoebe's love in the country, and, as something of a reward, discovering financial security in the process." Mitchell then ingeniously interprets Blithedale as a "counter-allegory of Holgrave and Phoebe." His argument, however, is somewhat weaker when he reconfigures Margaret Fuller as Miriam in *The Marble Faun*.

The irony of *Hawthorne's Fuller Mystery* is that its subject is Hawthorne, not Fuller. As a consequence, Fuller's "riddle"—not just for Hawthorne, but for the reader—remains unsolved. Despite Mitchell's nuanced intentions and his elegant readings, Margaret Fuller continues to appear as some enigmatic Other or female cipher. However, insofar as this book offers fresh, bold readings of Hawthorne's writing and Fuller's impact on it, it is intelligent, satisfying, and eminently well-reasoned—as well as long overdue.

In *Liquid Fire: Transcendental Mysticism in the Romances of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Peter Lang) Harvey L. Gable Jr. sets himself a different task. Calling his interpretative method an intentionalist argument, Gable declares that we have not yet adequately understood the impact of Transcendentalism and of mesmerism on Hawthorne's work and the extent to which Hawthorne, because of them, changed the direction of this fiction. Proceeding from the assumption that Hawthorne's romances metaphorically reflect the spiritual world, Gable argues that Hawthorne "cannibalized" Transcendentalism to suit his own needs—specifically to develop a language commensurate with his "vision of the unity of being, the idea that constituted reality is an interlocking web of tapestry of forces of which the self is a part, and from which it derives meaning." Using the Transcendental formulations of Horace Bushnell to represent the kind of Transcendentalism that Hawthorne encountered and then linking these with theories of animal magnetism and mesmerism in Hawthorne's vocabulary, Gable contends that the implications of these movements profoundly altered the direction of Hawthorne's career: "Hawthorne, looking back on his tales and sketches, found them painfully quaint. What relevance could they have in a world effectively dismantled by scientific and philosophical change?"

To respond to his own question, Gable astutely interprets the early "Sketches from Memory" as Hawthorne's inquiry into the traditional paradigm of the short story. Confronting its limitations, Hawthorne turned to a "pictorial model of the self" in order to avoid a morbid and selfish preoccupation with the workings of his own mind; the result, says

Gable, shifted Hawthorne's attention away from allegory and toward romance. Recapitulating much of Hawthorne criticism to this point, Gable then contends that Hawthorne's burgeoning definition of the romance derives from the language of electromagnetism in which "the mind of the author, which is a living truth, would serve to structure the details of a story, as a magnetic field structures magnetized filings." Although such language seems redolent more of Gable than of Hawthorne, Gable insists that Hawthorne resolved "his (Transcendentalist) preoccupation with the 'vital principle' or magnetic fluid in a practical model of the self from which conclusions about behavior could be drawn."

According to Gable, the self is the structural principle underlying Hawthorne's work from *The Scarlet Letter* to his last projected romances. Portrayed as "a ball of fluid, perhaps best thought of as electromagnetic ether trapped inside a perforated crust or globe," this self "reaches out to the world by sending threads of its conscious fluid outward." Moreover, notes Gable, "if the self is not able to make these periodic links to the outside truth, a destructive cycle begins in which the self reconfigures itself according to distorted data (i.e., imagined or 'reflected' reality), which further contorts its mental crust." The destiny of the Pyncheon family is a case in point. Or, as Gable writes of *The Marble Faun*, "the greatest danger is becoming lost in the catacombs of mind, unable to return to the peace of the sacred core, or to penetrate the crust to reach the real world outside." For Gable, all of Hawthorne's romances take up this question, and in just these terms.

Aware of the reductive nature of his model, Gable preempts imagined criticism of his own method by taking issue with recent Hawthorne criticism and, in particular, with what he calls the "new politicization of literature," which does little more than "retread the old insights about Hawthorne's ambiguity with new critical rubber." Deploping what he calls ideologically motivated criticism, Gable is confident that he has taken "the high road." By abjuring "critical or political fashions," he says he can more judiciously offer close readings of Hawthorne's work from an informed historical context while at the same time situating "Hawthorne's ideas in the broad context of a human mythos." To Gable, the notion of "human mythos" is evidently not ideological, a position hardly credible today. Yet Gable's embattled defense of his own method and the aggrieved tone with which he castigates certain trends in Hawthorne scholarship may be instructively read as an allegory of today's profes-

sional disputes. In some ways, this section is the most interesting, if disheartening, part of Gable's book. Although he locates his own work alongside that of Evan Carton, Richard Brodhead, and Jonathan Auerbach, Gable offers an exegesis of Hawthorne's novels that is unfortunately driven by a procrustean metaphor. This is unfortunate, for Gable is adept at close textual readings, especially in his chapter on *The Blithedale Romance*, where he interestingly argues that each of Hawthorne's new romances, even the unfinished ones, further elaborates his conception of narrative structure.

iii General Essays

In "Reinventing the Puritans: George Bancroft, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the Birth of Endicott's Ghost," a chapter in *American Declarations*, Harold K. Bush Jr. analyzes "Endicott and the Red Cross" and "The May-Pole of Merry Mount" to show how Hawthorne "reclaimed and sometimes explicitly challenged" George Bancroft's more romantic account of the Puritan legacy in his multivolume *History of the United States*. Setting his discussion of Hawthorne's stories in the context of a more general (and Emersonian) thesis—that American literature and culture derive from a history of protest that vacillates "between two 'parties,' conservative and radical in essence"—Bush faithfully follows the work of Bercovitch, Colacurcio, and Newberry, interpreting Hawthorne's stories as homage to the mixed and bifurcated blessings of Puritanism, or what Bush calls elements vital to "America's ongoing process of cultural dialogue."

Terry J. Martin's *Rhetorical Deception in the Short Fiction of Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville* (Mellen) is a formal discussion of the limited point of view in three representative works, "Young Goodman Brown," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and "Benito Cereno." Treating "Young Goodman Brown" as a "parable about the failure of allegory as a cognitive system of understanding," Martin offers the standard close reading of a familiar tale in which the reader is invited to collude with Brown's sadly reductive interpretation of experience.

More imaginative and historically informed are the fine chapters referring to Hawthorne in Michael Newbury's *Figuring Authorship in Antebellum America* (Stanford, 1997). Although some of this material has been previously published (see, for example *AmLS* 1995, pp. 16 and 26, and *AmLS* 1997, p. 56), Newbury's more extended argument about the

“unstable, fluid, half-formed” rhetoric of antebellum authorship and the authorial “position relative to other labors during a period of industrial capitalist expansion” deserves serious consideration. Newbury intelligently parses Hawthorne’s famous diatribe against the “damned mob of scribbling women” to suggest that Hawthorne connects these female authors with mass producers of hackwork. According to Newbury, Hawthorne prefers to consider himself a craft laborer who may cross “from the realm of the artisanal into the realm of the artistic.” Demonstrating with critical interpretative skill that antebellum authors held “several cultural identities simultaneously,” Newbury’s analysis itself crosses gender, racial, and class boundaries to juxtapose, for instance, Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* with Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and to link authorial celebrity with a conception of the author as enslaved. Stimulating and clever, the argument is also convincing. Newbury is an insightful, engaged critic who moves beyond superficial pieties about antebellum authorship, separate spheres, and author identity. At the end of his book he analyzes “The Artist of the Beautiful” as Hawthorne’s avoidance of the copyright controversies, part of Newbury’s larger sense of Hawthorne’s “simultaneous pursuit and refusal of commercial success as the measure of artistic success.”

From a different perspective, that of the deployment of the daguerreotype and the portrait in antebellum fiction, Susan S. Williams also concerns herself with the anxiety of antebellum authorship in *Confounding Images*, a book that reprints several earlier essays dealing with Hawthorne, especially *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Marble Faun*. Notable is Williams’s far-reaching familiarity with the periodical literature of the time and her discussion of two models of authorship that developed in this period: “one that focuses on the artist as Romantic prophet, and another that values reception over production, displacing authorial agency onto the work of art itself in order to create an illusion of intimacy with the reading public.” As one might suppose, both models intersect in Hawthorne.

iv Essays on the Novels

a. *The Scarlet Letter* In “Hawthorne and the Handmaid: An Examination of the Law’s Use as a Tool of Oppression” (*Wisconsin Women’s Law Journal* 13: 45–73) Shira Pavis Minton uses both *The Scarlet Letter* and

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* "to question the moral rightness of the laws that perpetuate unequal treatment based on gender." To Minton, *The Scarlet Letter* provides a historical inquiry into laws inhibiting female sexuality and female infidelity. But as a proponent of the "law and literature movement," which analyzes literature in order to criticize law, Minton directs her study more toward legal scholars than literary ones, offering a paraphrase of Hawthorne's novel that sets it, notwithstanding, within an important discussion of abortion and reproductive rights. Mara L. Dukar's "The Hybrid Terrain of Literary Imagination: Maryse Condé's *Black Witch of Salem*, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Hester Prynne*, and Aimé Césaire's *Heroic Poetic Voice*," pp. 141–54 in *Race-ing Representation*, reprints an earlier article (see *AmLS* 1995, p. 30) that also sets Hawthorne's novel within the larger context it helped to create, arguing that Condé's *Tituba*, in *I Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, is "the effaced and unacknowledged presence that conditions the construction of the canonized texts that it interrogates."

b. *The House of the Seven Gables* Michael Jay Noble's "Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (*Expl* 56: 72–74) adds yet another voice to the ever-expanding chorus of scholarship relating the daguerreotype to Hawthorne's conception of the romantic imagination. Robert K. Martin's discerning "Haunted by Jim Crow: Gothic Fictions by Hawthorne and Faulkner," pp. 129–42 in *American Gothic*, nimbly presents *The House of the Seven Gables* as concealing "conflicts of race and gender that are expressed through gothic elements." (In this, Martin persuasively echoes Teresa Goddu's *Gothic America*, which examines *The Blithedale Romance*; see *AmLS* 1997, p. 40.) Firmly planting the haunted house (a mainstay of Gothic fiction) in Salem, Hawthorne's novel shifts attention away from matters of family guilt and expiation to national guilt, "staging," writes Martin, "a conflict between two white families in the absence of the now dispersed and dispossessed Indians." With nuanced readings of scenes such as the opening of Hepzibah's shop or that of the street musician and his monkey, Martin locates the slave economy and "specter of slave revolt" in a text that, he astutely notes, "experiences these issues differently from its author." Like Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*, which rewrites and complicates Hawthorne's novel, *The House of the Seven Gables* deploys "the gothic as a national repressed, a series of crimes that are not incidental to but rather constitutive of the nation."

Although not the main focus of the essay, *The House of the Seven Ga-*

bles also contributes significantly to Wyn Kelley's essay, "Pierre's Domestic Ambiguities," pp. 91–113) in *The Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*. Kelley adroitly reads Hawthorne's novel as locating "both masculine and feminine spheres on the same site" en route to claiming that its success inspired Melville to consider writing his own brand of domestic novel in *Pierre*. But where Hawthorne's novel at its end reasserts the claims of the patriarchal home, Melville's *Pierre* "eventually works to shatter middle-class norms of marriage and home."

c. *The Blithedale Romance* In "The Paradise of Aesthetics: Sylvester Judd's *Margaret* and Antebellum American Literature" (*NEQ* 71: 449–72) Gavin Jones observes that Judd's neglected 1845 novel, described by Hawthorne as a quintessentially American book, bears comparison with Melville's *Pierre* and Hawthorne's own *Blithedale Romance*. Charging that *Blithedale* effectively protests Judd's vision of a utopian community, Jones nicely demonstrates that Hawthorne converts the problems of utopia presumably resolved in Judd's novel into a problem of literary structure. Literary structure is also the topic of Brian M. Britt's "The Veil of Allegory in Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (*L&T* 10 [1996]: 44–57). With reference to Walter Benjamin and Paul de Man, Britt claims that Hawthorne's novel is "about allegory" and its necessary failure. Defining allegory as "melancholy gesture toward recovery rendered impossible by the state of post-lapsarian language," Britt endeavors to show how Coverdale, of necessity, fails to uncover his own motivations.

In general agreement, though from a different point of view, is Kelly Flynn's well-focused essay about Hawthorne's troubled relation to the landscape in "Nathaniel Hawthorne Had a Farm: Artists, Laborers, and Landscapes in *The Blithedale Romance*," pp. 145–54 in *Reading the Earth*. According to Flynn, the founders of Brook Farm, despite their stated aim, incompletely reconciled the division between manual and mental labor. However, Hawthorne, as idealizing novelist, could devise "a fictional account of an author laboring both physically and intellectually in a natural setting." Thus, Hawthorne in *The Blithedale Romance* can appropriate the natural world and his physical connection to it through manual labor by asserting his "authorial gaze over that labor."

Less concerned with narrative strategies but equally concerned with antebellum utopian movements is Craig White's "A Utopia of 'Spheres and Sympathies': Science and Society in *The Blithedale Romance* and at Brook Farm" (*Utopian Studies* 9: 78–102). White situates Hawthorne's

novel amid the scientific and social transformations inaugurated in part by the “American Observatory Movement.” According to White, the movement coincided with significant cultural change, “as the Jeffersonian, agrarian economy of early America gave way to a state mirroring the modern sky: manifest destiny’s ‘star of empire’ on the expanding frontier, and ‘cities of lights’ taking the form of the new galaxies then being discovered.” Mediating between nostalgia for an agrarian past and fear of an “alien urban cosmos of the future,” *Blithedale* invokes a rhetoric of popular and utopian science, one that registers the novel’s uneasiness around revolutions in science, technology, demographics, and gender relations. Of particular interest to White is the way in which this rhetoric manifests the novel’s preoccupation with “the alternative sexualities of popular science,” even though it ultimately rejects anything but “an acceptably competitive form” of sexuality for women and men, submitting to the demands of a modern industrial culture. In her summary overview of the novel, Ellen Thornton in “Hawthorne’s *The Blithedale Romance* (Expl 56: 188–90) alludes to a somewhat androgynous Priscilla whose increasing strength may prevent her capitulation to the status quo.

d. *The Marble Faun* Patrick Marietta in “Symbols of Transformation in Hawthorne’s *The Marble Faun*” (*JEP* 19: 132–40) despairs of Freudian readings of Hawthorne’s novel and postulates in their stead an interpretation that derives from Carl Jung’s archetypes of transformation, which are to be found in such symbols as caves and towers. According to Marietta, these archetypes more fully illumine Donatello’s metamorphosis into a “higher spiritual man.” That Donatello, for instance, encounters the model in the catacombs suggests, not too surprisingly, “a descent into the innermost regions of the mind.” In turn, the descent inspires Donatello’s search for “his own shadow qualities,” which will invariably effect his transformation from frivolous individual to “the greater psyche which Jung designates as the self.” However, Alba Amoia in “Hawthorne’s Rome: Then and Now” (*NHR* 24, i: 1–34) relinquishes psychic caverns for a thorough and engaging map of the city that Hawthorne converted into resonant images for *The Marble Faun*. Exploring the various halls in the Capitoline Museum, Amoia works closely with Hawthorne’s novel as well as *The Italian Notebooks* to provide a richly inclusive tour of the art, history, and locale that inspired or vexed Hawthorne during his stay in Rome. Scrupulously, Amoia details the

nuanced history of the Via dei Portoghesi and the legendary Torre delle Scimmie before inviting the reader to range over several of Hawthorne's favorite sites.

In "Reading Cities: Devotional Seeing in the Nineteenth Century" (*AmLH* 9 [1997]: 653–75) Stephen Rachman compares *The Marble Faun* with Poe's "The Man of the Crowd," Melville's *Redburn*, and Howells's *Indian Summer* to consider how we see a city less in terms of maps and guidebooks than as "repositories of literary and cultural recognition," or a sort of Jamesian "cloud of associations." In the case of *The Marble Faun*, Rachman cogently argues that Hawthorne "opens his romance" to the "logic of tourism" whereby tourists "heighten the compatibility between what they see and what they have subscribed to in their imaginations." More interested in the fate of the female artist than in that of the reader/tourist, Deborah Barker juxtaposes *The Marble Faun* with a novel by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps in "The Riddle of the Sphinx: Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *The Story of Avis*" (*LIT* 9: 31–64). Arguing that Phelps's novel is a feminist revision of *The Marble Faun*, Barker aptly distinguishes between Hawthorne's deployment of Hilda and his characterization of Miriam, two artists who reveal Hawthorne's vexed attitude toward women's autonomy. However, the more original aspect of this essay, as it relates to *The Marble Faun*, is the inclusion of the theological reading of Hawthorne's novel by Austin Phelps, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's father. Like contemporary readers of the novel, he determined that "both African Americans and women, like the interloping woman in Miriam's domestic paintings, have the ability to disrupt the domestic world by representing and pursuing their own desires." But unlike the contemporary reader, Austin Phelps fears that "both blacks and women are attempting to overthrow the 'natural' order of white male supremacy." Thus, in rewriting Hawthorne, Elizabeth Phelps also rewrites Oedipus; she pays a literary father ambivalent homage as she resists his, and her own father's, demeaning views of race and gender.

v Essays on the Tales and Sketches

Alfred H. Marks in "Hawthorne's Tales of His Native Land: An Outline" (*NHR* 24, ii: 1–4) casts a backward glance over colonial and provincial American history in his brief survey of the tales that deal with these topics. In "Hawthorne in the Americas: Frances Calderón de la Barca, Octavio Paz, and the Genealogy of 'Rappaccini's Daughter'" (*PMLA* 113:

227–42) Anna Brickhouse sets her sights further afield. Hawthorne’s “Rappaccini’s Daughter” may be steeped in a “genealogy of Western classics,” but Brickhouse is interested in its non-European sources—in particular, de la Barca’s *Life in Mexico* (1843), “a work mired in specifically American controversies over colonialism, race, and slavery.” Alleging that Hawthorne “appropriated” Calderón’s work, Brickhouse also contends that Hawthorne “took from *Life in Mexico* the racially coded account of human poisonousness and fabulated in ‘Rappaccini’s Daughter’ a narrative that embodies a much more covert aversion to racial mixture.” Thus, with the toxic Beatrice representing (botanical) miscegenation and Rappaccini’s garden representing Mexico, Hawthorne’s tale signals the increasing U.S. racial hostility toward Mexico, which of course erupts in the Mexican War. In the stronger and better-argued second half of her essay Brickhouse cogently demonstrates that Paz’s surreal play *La hija de Rappaccini* (1956) rewrites Hawthorne’s tale, artfully restoring to it the historical, geographical, and racial genealogy that Hawthorne had suppressed.

Suppression and race are germane to the argument in the first chapter of Barbara Johnson’s *The Feminist Difference* (Harvard). Juxtaposing Hawthorne’s “The Birth-Mark” with Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wall-paper” and Freud’s “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria,” Johnson reads all three as allegories of psychoanalysis, or as instances of the silencing—rather than the talking—cure wherein the “therapeutic is underwritten by a strong aesthetic investment.” Imprisoned by her husband’s idealization of her, Georgiana in Hawthorne’s “The Birth-Mark” fatally renounces that which marks her as “being born a woman as well as being of woman born.” Johnson demonstrates that the concept of passive femininity instrumental in the two stories and in Freud’s essay “is applicable to a certain class (and race) of women, even within the texts we have been reading.”

From another, much more physical point of view, Hawthorne’s affinity toward that which is suppressed informs Carl Ostrowski’s “The Minister’s ‘Grievous Affliction’: Diagnosing Hawthorne’s Parson Hooper” (*LE&M* 17: 197–211). Ostrowski maintains that Hooper’s veil neither represents Hawthorne’s vaunted ambiguity nor symbolizes complex theological truth. After summarizing the various interpretations of the story, Ostrowski proposes rather that Parson Hooper wears the veil simply to conceal the corporeal stigma of syphilis, which, Ostrowski adds, in no way contravenes Hawthorne’s use of cryptic symbols in other

contexts. Establishing that Hawthorne is consistently preoccupied with the bodily manifestation of moral infirmity, whether in "The Birth-Mark" or *The Scarlet Letter*, Ostrowski connects Hawthorne's preoccupation with physicality to the Puritan belief that venereal disease is a divine pox visited on the morally depraved. "This correlation," Ostrowski declares, "lends credence to the idea that Hawthorne would allude to syphilis in a tale such as 'The Minister's Black Veil' about a Great Awakening minister and his preoccupation with hidden sin." Thus, the ambiguity of the veil's meaning is a ruse deployed both by Hooper and Hawthorne to hide the marks of physical transgression. Ostrowski's reading includes a comparison of the unequal way in which Hawthorne's men, unlike women, can actually conceal, or try to conceal, sexual indiscretion and misconduct.

From a less corporeal viewpoint, Lawrence I. Berkove in "'Reasoning as we go': The Flawed Logic of Young Goodman Brown" (*NHR* 24, i: 46–52), locates Goodman Brown's misconduct or, more to the point, his moral paralysis in Brown's faulty logic. Hawthorne's own proficiency in logic can be traced, according to Berkove, to his course work in college and to his subsequent reading. Taking the dramatic moment in "Young Goodman Brown" when Brown cries out that he has lost his "Faith," Berkove analyzes Brown's "quasi-logical jumble of syllogisms" to suggest more broadly how "Hawthorne's training and skill in logic contributed to the subtlety and power of his artistry."

Finally, the focus of Richard Swope's "Approaching the Threshold(s) in Postmodern Detective Fiction: Hawthorne's 'Wakefield' and Other Missing Persons" (*Crit* 39: 207–27) moves beyond logic to metaphysics. Swope treats Hawthorne's tale as a neglected literary forebear in the development of the postmodern detective story, a genre concerned less with questions of epistemology (asking how to solve a problem through rational means) than with questions of ontology (asking what kind of world we inhabit). Although Edgar Allan Poe's detective stories certainly lay behind the development of the conventional detective genre, Hawthorne's story provokes "the ontological questions now central to postmodernism: what is the *nature* of this world? And what is the *nature* of my place, or lack of place in this world?" Moreover, because the end of Hawthorne's story restores Wakefield to society while raising the possibility of one's permanent estrangement, Swope concludes that the conventional detective has been "competing against" the anxieties repre-

sented by Wakefield, whose dislocation forecasts the postmodern displacements to be found in such writers as Paul Auster, Don DeLillo, John Fowles, and Peter Ackroyd.

vi Essays on the Children's Literature

John Dolis's playful "Hawthorne's Circe: Turning Water to (S)wine" (*NHR* 24, i: 36–45) contends that Hawthorne's "Circe's Palace" in *Tanglewood Tales* reenacts the primal narrative situation of "The Custom House" essay, whether in terms of its gastronomic imagery ("The Custom House" serves as hors d'oeuvre for *The Scarlet Letter*) or in terms of the sexual and domestic metaphor pervasive in Hawthorne's writing. Freely weaving a series of imaginative puns within the argot of contemporary criticism, Dolis finds in Hawthorne's story a series of so-called figures in the carpet: "Circe's wand, Hester's needle, Hawthorne's pen each re-marks the structure of desire." Such a discovery, Dolis mischievously adds, matters "not in the least to Wise Ulysses' crew—(k)nitwits all."

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