

practice and hospital organization within the history of the culture at large is the greatest strength of this fine treatment of nursing history. Helmstadter and Godden's scholarship, moreover, is comprehensive and meticulous, their archival research exhaustive, covering the collections of more than twenty hospitals and nursing institutions. Their revision of the history of nursing is in many ways still an affirmation of the overpowering presence of Nightingale, who dominates the two chapters on nursing in the Crimean War and whose influence over public and professional perceptions of nursing and nurses is apparent throughout. The book ends with a detailed analysis of why the Nightingale School was ultimately able "to emerge as the front runner in nursing reform" (193). Rather than a history of nursing before Nightingale, this is a history running parallel to Nightingale's story—a history that demonstrates that it was in fact the sisterhoods, not the Nightingale School, that developed an effective formal system of training and nursing education. That the sisterhoods "failed to establish their system as the model for the new nurse," Helmstadter and Godden argue, "was in large part because they were in advance of their time" (189). The sisterhoods nevertheless "left a significant legacy"—the development of professionalism in nursing and, most crucially, "the recognition of nursing as a specific body of knowledge" (188, 189).

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MARTIN HIPSKY. *Modernism and the Women's Popular Romance in Britain, 1885–1925*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011. Pp. 324. \$59.95 (cloth).  
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In his new book, Martin Hipsky makes an important contribution to recent scholarship, examining best-selling romances written by women authors such as Mary Ward, Marie Corelli, and a number of other lesser-known writers during the transition from late Victorian realism to the emergence of modernism. Hipsky argues, persuasively and insightfully, not only that the investment in psychology and emotion expressed by these narratives marks them as early examples of the soon-to-be ubiquitous popular romance novel but also that they "offer representations of interiority paralleling the more self-conscious forms of psychic intensity explored in the works of certain Anglophone modernists" (xv). Such an argument departs from traditional understandings of the literary canon, using the concept of "low" or "popular" modernism to explore the ways in which "high modernism and popular romance fiction may have actually served similar psychic functions for readers" (xx). Although such a speculative claim regarding the reading audience would benefit from a fuller historical grounding, Hipsky's implication that modernist and popular texts are fundamentally linked, more so than their authors would have perhaps acknowledged, is at once the logical conclusion of scholarly trends and a groundbreaking new perspective on the period.

In six chapters, Hipsky places the popular romance in the context of historical and literary developments in the late Victorian, Edwardian, and post-World War I periods and more broadly reads this genre through the lens of Pierre Bourdieu's "literary field," a perspective on cultural production, distribution, and reception that "constellate[s] the dominant works, authors, and genres of a given historical moment" (22). This perspective not only enables Hipsky to bridge, or perhaps to sidestep, the gap separating Victorian from modern, and nineteenth from twentieth century, but also facilitates a broad and deep analysis of the cultural moment in which the genre of the mass-market women's romance came into being. After a useful chapter tracing the history of the romance from medieval chivalric tales to the dominance of Mills and Boon, Harlequin, and their descendants in the twentieth century, Hipsky turns to a surprising figure: Mary Ward, author of the best-selling religious romance *Robert Elsmere* (1888) and the "realist-romance hybrid" (46) *Lady Rose's Daughter* (1903). Although

this chapter offers fine readings of the novels, its most interesting aspect is its analysis of Ward's manipulation of and influence on the publishing industry, institutionalizing what Hipsky terms the "large-scale production" (56) of the popular romance (read at this stage by men as well as women). The next chapter serves as striking contrast in its focus on the most scandalous and derided female writer of the period: Marie Corelli, author of *The Sorrows of Satan* (1895). If Ward was the "rearguard Victorian," Hipsky argues, Corelli "face[d] forward to the mass-marketing of the popular sublime" (65). Hipsky's readings effectively address the treatment of modernity, technology, and especially class in Corelli's fiction, and propose an argument developed more fully in subsequent chapters, that both Corelli (as exemplar of the popular women's romance) and the practitioners of high modernism take as their central focus the "romance of interiority" (112). In Hipsky's view, the distinction between "low" romance fiction and "high" modernism should be considered "a difference of degree" (219), paralleling Jane Eldridge Miller's formulation of the distinction between a "modernism of content, an antecedent stage to the more familiar, canonized modernism of form" (261, n. 1).

The second half of the book offers excellent readings of little-known texts and authors. Hipsky's discussion in chapters 4 and 5 ranges from the ideology of the romance form in relation to realism and emergent modernism in Emma Orczy's *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1905), Elinor Glyn's *Three Weeks* (1907), and Florence Barclay's *The Rosary* (1909) to an examination of the "imperial erotic romance" in Victoria Cross's *Anna Lombard* (1901), Ethel Dell's *The Way of an Eagle* (1912), and E. M. Hull's *The Sheik* (1919). The latter analysis is particularly compelling, since Hipsky reads the work of Dell and Hull as complex examples of "post-1857 imperialist apologetics" (178) against the more radical depiction of interracial marriage in Cross's novel. Cross, a British writer born and raised in India who first came to modern critical attention through the publication of her 1895 short story, "Theodora: A Fragment" (later included as a chapter of her 1904 novel, *Six Chapters of a Man's Life*), in Elaine Showalter's 1993 anthology of *fin-de-siècle* women's writing, *Daughters of Decadence*, consistently presented culturally subversive accounts of gender and race relations in fictional form. Hipsky is perhaps too generous in his estimation of Cross's "interrogation of social ideologies" (170) since the conclusion to *Anna Lombard* effectively excises the protagonist's Indian husband and child (the latter through Anna's act of infanticide), but clearly Cross's writing deserves the scholarly attention it has begun to receive in the work of Hipsky, Shoshana Milgram Knapp, and Melisa Brittain, among others.

In the concluding chapters, Hipsky engages in the most comparative and provocative readings, illuminating the parallels between, for example, Hull (the progenitor of the "desert romance") and canonical modernist writers such as James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield, Rebecca West, and Virginia Woolf. The surprising inclusion of such authors in a scholarly text focused on best-selling women's romances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries asks us to reconceive our understanding of modernist texts and their readers; indeed, it requires us to reconsider our perspectives on genre, value, and the literary canon. In this sense, Hipsky's book is a real achievement, and it will be of great value to scholars of Victorian literature, modernism, and popular culture.

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In this compelling volume, Larsen strives to reclaim the Bible as a central text among Victorians, arguing that it "provided an irreplaceable linguistic register not only for novelists and