

assent, a version of particular relevance for the reading of non-Americans' romances with America.

While Fluck's view is typical of an American studies centrally geared to the critical reading of things seen as meaningful texts, typical one might say of an American studies grounded in literary criticism, Michaels reintroduces sociology and history. He reminds us that the concept of class sits uneasily alongside race and gender as its partners in the mantra of an American studies seen as cultural studies. Unlike race and gender, he argues, class is inherently hierarchical. He urges Americanists to return to the study of social and economic inequality and the research agenda that it sets. His plea ties in with a chapter by two historians about the tenuous relationship between present-day American studies and history as academic fields. As a political scientist I would like to make a similar plea for a reanimated study of power, neglected by Americanists since the days of C. W. Mills and Christopher Lasch, a plea, in other words, for a return to an older Weberian triad of class, status and power.

In summary, this is a timely volume. It offers critical introspection in language that with a few exceptions is accessible to outsiders. It is not, however, as the title seems to promise, a book that speaks in the voice of a European American studies community. The non-German contributors are American, and the references in the various texts do not evoke a world of conversation and exchange among European colleagues. It is my sense that there is actually more of that than appears from this volume.

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Ulla Haselstein, Andrew Gross and Maryann Snyder-Körber (eds.), *The Pathos of Authenticity: American Passions of the Real* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2010, £42.00). Pp. 294. ISBN 978 3 8253 5706 1.

*The Pathos of Authenticity* is the product of a 2007 conference held at the JFK Institute in Berlin, and its primary focus is on how questions of "authenticity" in American culture have been reconfigured in the wake of 9/11, although some essays, such as Andrew S. Gross's piece on John Berryman's *Dream Songs*, do look back to an earlier period. Indeed, the editors do a good job in their introduction of putting the genealogy of authenticity into a broader American intellectual context, from ee cummings's modernist understanding of it as a "rebellion against authority" (9), through Lionel Trilling's differentiation between the romantic self-authentication of an inner self and an earlier form of sincerity that involves "congruence between avowal and actual feeling" (11), to the renewed communal nostalgia for emblems of memorialization in the age of homeland security. There are excellent contributions here from conference keynote speaker Bill Brown (of the University of Chicago) on "Commodity Nationalism and the Lost Object," and from Erika Doss (University of Notre Dame) on ways in which the question of authenticity is inextricably interwoven with questions of national security. The other contributions are mostly from German-based scholars, and they are nearly all critically well informed and

professionally delivered. Sabine Broeck's essay that indicts Anthony Giardina's 2006 novel *White Guys* as part of "a powerful cultural strategy to bemoan what is perceived as the loss of or attack on white cultural capital and material security" (152) is particularly thought-provoking, as is Ruth Mayer's piece on Richard Powers's *The Time of Our Singing* and Jonathan Lethem's *The Fortress of Solitude*.

The obvious problem endemic to all collections of conference proceedings is heterogeneity, and this potential pitfall is necessarily heightened here in relation to such an amorphous term as "authenticity," where the reader literally has no idea of what might come next. There are contributions on Susan Sontag, Bret Easton Ellis, "holocaust comedies in the 1990s," the ghost dance theme in contemporary Native American writing, the "turn to religion" among neo-pragmatist philosophers, and so on. If anything holds these various contributions together, it is an interest in ethics and a reaction against the version of postmodernism as superficial pastiche influentially outlined by Fredric Jameson at the beginning of the 1990s. The ways in which ideas of authenticity have been associated, consistently with a "theory of sublimation" (28), with the genre of autobiography is another interesting strand woven throughout this volume. However, the format of the book has clearly been determined more by the familiar European institutional investment in collaborative scholarship than by any underlying thematic coherence within the subject itself. Although the book usefully covers a broad range of topics, it does so in a largely random manner, with the only underlying epistemological hook being an essentialist nostalgia for identifying some hypothetical "spirit" of what the editors warily term "U.S.-American culture" (29). In this sense, the spectre of trauma and loss so frequently evoked here as a response to 9/11 might be understood in more reflexive terms as a response on the part of the JFK to the loss of that old interdisciplinary coherence once associated with the subject of American studies, for whose systematic erasure these contributors collectively mourn.

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Alexander Murdoch, *Scotland and America, c.1600–c.1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, £19.99). Pp. x + 201. ISBN 978 0 230 51649 6.

That there was a potential area of study concerning Scotland's relationship with America was signalled in the first half of the twentieth century by individual scholarly essays and lectures on such topics as "Ossian in America," "Robert Burns and the American Revolution," "Thomas Campbell and America," "Early Scotch Contributions to the United States," and perhaps John H. Finley's 1940 book *The Coming of the Scot*. But the launching pad for our contemporary engagement with the field was a special issue of the *William and Mary College Quarterly* in April 1954, containing a series of essays on the Scottish American theme by such scholars as John Clive and Bernard Bailyn, Jacob M. Price, and George Shepperson. In the following decades further work appeared, including my own Princeton Ph.D., published in 1975 as *Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750–1835* (second edition 2008), but it was in the period of the bicentennial celebrations of the