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## Book Reviews

Elizabeth A. DeWolfe  
*University of New England*

R.C. Richardson  
*King Alfred's University College*

Roger B. Ray

Pauleena MacDougall  
*University of Maine*

Shelli Lott  
*University of Maine*

*See next page for additional authors*

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## Book Reviews

### Authors

Elizabeth A. DeWolfe, R.C. Richardson, Roger B. Ray, Pauleena MacDougall, Shelli Lott, Kimberly R. Sebold, Brian Murray, Lance Parades, and Elizabeth Hedler

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*The Massachusetts Historical Society: A Bicentennial History, 1791–1991.* By LOUIS LEONARD TUCKER. (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1996. Pp. 623 + xvii. Appendices, Index. Cloth. \$49.95).

While researching his history of New Hampshire, Jeremy Belknap envisioned the need for a repository for documents related to the history of America. A Congregational minister and passionate historian, Belknap gathered like-minded friends who believed in the value of primary sources for historical research. On January 24, 1791, the group elected officers and agreed upon a constitution. The newly-formed society would collect and communicate “the Antiquities of America.” Belknap expected the selective, limited membership to support the institution with time and energy, and with generous contributions of money and donations from their personal Americana collections. With the election of its first president, Berwick native James Sullivan, the Massachusetts Historical Society was born.

Louis Leonard Tucker’s absorbing narrative portrays the struggles to establish the society, find a permanent home, gather a dedicated membership, and achieve financial stability. Over the past two hundred years, the society moved several times, from an attic space in Faneuil Hall, to the stately Tontine Crescent, to Tremont Street, to its present location on Boylston Street. In fact, a death in Maine helped pave the way for the construction of the society’s current home. In 1869 the wife of clergyman George Ellis, summering in Mount Desert, unexpectedly died just two months after the death of their only child. Consumed with grief, Ellis purchased a home near the society, then on Tremont Street, and dedicated his life to historical research. Ellis became the society’s president in 1885, a post he held until his death. His generous bequest to the society provided funds that afforded the opportunity for the construction of the Boylston Street edifice.

This is very much a story of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant men, and Tucker makes no attempt to sugar-coat the tale. He engagingly presents the various personalities that led the society from an exclusive gentlemen’s social club to an accessible research facility. Personality conflicts, political maneuvering, and a simmering scandal or two weave through the history. With a balanced presentation, Tucker notes both the strengths and the weaknesses of the fascinating individuals who were

united by an interest in history, yet divided in their vision for the society.

In the twentieth-century transition to a professionally staffed research facility, women held several staff positions long before female scholars became accepted as resident members. Frances Manwaring Caulkins (1795–1869), a Connecticut historian, was elected as a corresponding member in 1849. Yet Caulkins never attended a meeting or visited the society and women would wait 117 years for another membership. In 1966, the society named Ola Elizabeth Winslow, a Sheepscot resident, Pulitzer Prize winner, and literature professor at Wellesley College, as one of two female corresponding members. The following year, the society elected the first female resident member, Esther Forbes.

The society has served as a repository for Americana, acted as a watchdog for Boston landmarks, stimulated the public's interest in history, and helped arbitrate disputes. In October of 1828, for example, the society gave federal commissioners three maps, an atlas, and Jedidiah Morse's *American Geography* to assist in the resolution of a border dispute between Maine and New Brunswick. Unfortunately for the society, their willingness to share resources led to a loss for their collection. The society regained the maps, but the commissioners never returned the atlas or Morse's work.

Tucker's text draws on the rich archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Appendix I provides a list of resident, corresponding, and honorary members that include twenty-three Maine residents, among them James Phinney Baxter, Joshua Chamberlain, and David Sewall (a member from 1791). The Massachusetts Historical Society was the first historical society in the United States, the first to collect Americana systematically, and the first to disseminate historic documents through publication. Tucker's story reveals the politics and personalities behind a grand institution. His story also illustrates just how fortunate contemporary historians are to benefit from the collections. At several points in its two-hundred-year history the society faltered on the brink of financial collapse. Yet at each precipitous moment, through the persistence, savvy, and the good fortune of the directors, presidents, and staff, the society not only survived but thrived as men of good intentions made history while they protected history.

ELIZABETH A. DE WOLFE  
*University of New England*  
*Westbrook College Campus*

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*Interpreting Early America: Historical Essays.* By JACK P. GREENE. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966. Pp. xiv + 528. Cloth. \$75.)

Retrospective collections of essays by one author offer both benefits and drawbacks. The supreme advantage, self evidently, is that they conveniently bring together within two covers material originally published over an extended period in separate journals and books, not all of which may be readily available. Furthermore, they provide an opportunity for author and readers to take stock of the writer's output and to detect new directions, changes of emphasis, reorientations in approach and methodology, and the emergence of new conclusions. The potential disadvantage is that collected essays may expose repetitions, contradictions, and staging posts ultimately made redundant by later work undertaken either by the author or by others.

Jack Greene's book certainly has these strengths and some of these limitations. Bringing together the scattered results of a lifetime's work by a significant historian, it contains a total of twenty-three essays (all but one previously in print) originally published between 1962 and 1995. Predominantly they are substantial critical essays and review articles, the longest of them fifty-four pages, in which the writer engages with other scholars in the light of his own research. They are clustered under three main headings: Changing Historical Perspectives, Colonial British America, and the American Revolution, which throw light on many aspects of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Atlantic world and on non-whites no less than on the English colonists themselves. The distinctive features of the New England colonies are underlined, features which made them increasingly untypical of other colonies. The southern colonies and the Caribbean settlements are brought meaningfully into the discussion. Politics, economic development, social life, ideas, and culture all receive due attention.

The primary emphasis of the book, as the subtitle makes clear, is historiographical. Each of the clusters of essays, chronologically arranged, contains work deriving from two or three decades of scholarly activity, enabling the perceptive reader to trace the evolution of the historiography and Greene's relationship to it. But since some of the essays contain summaries of Greene's earlier work also reprinted here, the effect is occasionally repetitious. Moreover, it must be said that not all of these essays are equally historiographical in nature. Some lack the extended reflections provided elsewhere in the book on the changing impulses, strategies, and methodologies involved in refashioning the past, are more

utilitarian, descriptive and low-key, and might be more accurately described as bibliographical in nature. "Few historians of my generation became writers of historiographical and critical essays by design. Graduate training in history emphasized subject mastery, and one achieved mastery by learning what had happened in the times and places studied, not by considering very deeply, much less lingering over, conflicting interpretations of what had happened." One of his own influential mentors, it seems, was a "gruff iconoclast" who "delighted in unsettling students and colleagues alike" (p. ix). Greene, no mere iconoclast, takes his place among those who have contributed to the heightening self-consciousness about the craft of history since the 1950s. The essays reprinted here are all pinned down precisely to the circumstances surrounding their original production and are models of clarity, logic, perception, sound judgment, and stylish and effective writing. They will repay a close and careful reading.

R. C. RICHARDSON  
*King Alfred's University College*  
*Winchester, England*

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*Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris.* By BUNNY McBRIDE. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. Pp. 384. Cloth. \$24.95.)

This was intended as a brief summary of the contents of this biography, but the book itself is so well-written and the contribution made by Molly Spotted Elk to cross-cultural relations so powerful, I became emotionally involved and had to put the book aside for a while until my New England background calling for factual statements without adjectives could restrain, to a degree, my enthusiasm.

Molly was born in November 1903 on Indian Island in Old Town, the Penobscot community of about 400 people living at or near the poverty level. The oldest of eight children, she and the others were taught to be industrious. Her father, like other men on the island, found work when available as a day laborer on the mainland. He played an instrument in the Indian band, and encouraged his children to learn and to love music. Molly's father was one of the first Penobscot Indians to attend Dartmouth College under the Indian Scholarship Fund. Thus he

encouraged his children to secure as much education as possible. Her mother did housework for white people, baked bread which Molly sold door to door, and braided sweet-grass baskets. Using the pooled earnings of the eight children, the mother saw that the family was fed and clothed.

Molly exchanged housework for piano lessons and at age nine scrubbed floors for dancing lessons. After graduating from junior high school, she found employment with traveling vaudeville shows. By staying in cheap rooming houses, she was able to send money home. She adapted her native Indian dances to the music of the day and gained recognition for her dancing. In 1929, the United States government paid to send her dance group and band to Paris for an extravaganza celebration. There she met John Archambaud, whom she later married.

Fortunately for her biographer, Molly kept a diary. During the Depression years, as the diary reveals, employment for Molly and John was intermittent. They separated, he traveling in search of work in France and Molly returning to Indian Island, where she gave birth to her daughter, Jean. In 1938 she returned to France and married John. The couple spent what money they had trying to escape war-torn France. John died in Vichy in 1941, and Molly, penniless, returned to Indian Island, her travel expenses paid by the United States government under a repatriation program. She died in February 1977.

Her life as an individual ended in sadness, but her contribution to cross-cultural relations lived on. During the years of hard work and success, she had, through her dancing, brought a stronger awareness of Indian culture to the white world and, for her own people, a greater sense of dignity.

The Foreword was written by Eunice Nelson-Bauman, a younger sister of Molly, and the Postscript, by Molly's daughter, Jean Archambaud Moore. Both are worthy of attention; their help to the biographer, Bunny McBride, must have been considerable, for in reading the book, I felt I lived in Molly's world.

ROGER B. RAY  
*Cape Elizabeth*

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*Molly Spotted Elk: Another Appreciation*

There are two very good reasons to read this book. First, this is a biography of a member of the Penobscot Indian tribe, and biographies of Native Americans are rare. Second, this book is very well researched and tells a wonderful tale about Molly, her family, and her community. Molly, along with two of her sisters, worked most of her life in the entertainment business. She was a talented and versatile woman, performing, for example, Irish folk dances on St. Patrick's Day and a Spanish number for a high school spring exhibition, in addition to her Indian dances. She also wrote short stories and poems using pen names to get herself published. The author describes Molly as "hungry," and so she was, often taking jobs to support herself, to save for college, or to send money home to her mother. Her mother, Philomene Nelson, seems to have been the strongest influence in Molly's life. She raised a large family and taught them the value of hard work and education. She sent her daughters out to clean homes and to do other work to supplement the family income, providing them with a love of learning and a respect for family ties. Her legacy is the success of several of her children; Molly, Apid, and Darcy were all performers, while the youngest, Eunice, followed an academic career, earning a master's degree and receiving an honorary doctorate.

Molly's story is fascinating, but the book's narrative digresses a bit too often. While this provides interesting historical background, it sometimes takes the reader's focus away from the main character. Still, the author intrigues us with wonderful excerpts from Molly's diaries—I kept hoping for more of Molly's own words—and with the words of a number of people whom the author interviewed. As I read, I often wondered what it meant to Molly to perform as a Plains Indian, or how she felt about using mythological names like Neeburban. Some of these questions can never be answered, but her struggles to succeed in a world that viewed Indians as inferior to whites are poignantly portrayed.

PAULEENA MACDOUGALL  
*Maine Folklife Center*  
*University of Maine*

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*The Artist's Mount Desert: American Painters on the Maine Coast.* By JOHN WILMERDING. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994. Pp. 195. Paper. \$24.95.)

Early in the nineteenth century, American artists and writers began turning to this country's wilderness for inspiration. The grandeur and beauty of the landscape also provided a needed source of national identity for the New Republic that was distinct from the Old World. Henry David Thoreau's philosophical celebrations of nature were a literary manifestation of this newfound interest in the physical attributes of North America. Artists left visual evidence of this trend as well. By the 1830s, painters began traveling into the still-wild portions of the Northeast in search of dramatic scenery, and some, inevitably, discovered the beauty of Maine's Mount Desert Island—its balance of water and rock, its magnificent quality of light at the northeastern edge of the continent, and its picturesque harbors and inland lakes.

In 1836 Thomas Doughty, one of the founders of American landscape painting, finished *Desert Rock Lighthouse, Maine*, the first major work of the Mount Desert area. The painting depicts the crashing surf, rocky outcroppings, and expansive sky that would become standard features in paintings of Mount Desert Island. Doughty would be followed by other talented artists and literary figures, such as John Greenleaf Whittier, John James Audubon, and Thomas Eakins. By the end of the Civil War, better transportation was available and hotels were being built in Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, and eventually Northeast Harbor, which led to an influx of visitors, interest in yachting and cruising, and the building of vacation cottages in the 1870s and 1880s. Among these postwar visitors were artists who were "looking far and thinking big," pursuing new vistas to capture on canvas that would represent, through nature, America's possibilities, her strengths, and her virtues.

*The Artist's Mount Desert* opens with a brief introduction and history of the Maine Coast, including a basic geological description and information about early explorers, most notably Samuel de Champlain, who gave the island its name. The rest of the book is generally devoted to descriptions of the paintings created by those artists who visited the Maine Coast. It also contains some brief accounts of the artists' experiences in the state, although more of these personal touches would have been a welcome complement to the discussions of artwork. Wilmerding examines the artists' motivations, techniques, and styles, and relates their Maine forays to the overall context of their careers. He thoughtfully in-

cludes many of their preliminary sketches, in addition to a generous assortment of color prints of the beautiful finished paintings. The central personalities in the book make up three groups: the Romantic pioneers of the 1830s and 1840s, namely Thomas Doughty, Alvan Fisher, and Thomas Cole; Fitz Hugh Lane and Frederic Edwin Church of the 1850s and 1860s, who worked extensively at Mount Desert; and later artists, such as William Stanley Haseltine, Sanford Gifford, and Childe Hassam.

John Wilmerding's book about artists and the Maine Coast should be of interest to anyone who loves Maine, American art, or nature—or would like to learn more about this important facet of Maine history. The artists who visited Mount Desert Island left a variety of unique interpretations of the landscape—even the same subjects were treated in a wide assortment of styles, from the romantic realism of the Hudson River painters to the more abstract approaches of the twentieth century artists. Maine's remarkable landscape has captured the artistic imagination for the last two centuries, and will most likely retain its power to inspire for years to come.

SHELLI LOTT  
*University of Maine*

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*Politics of Conscience: A Biography of Margaret Chase Smith.* By PATRICIA WARD WALLACE. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Press, 1995. Pp. xv + 245. Notes, Bibliography, Index. Cloth. \$24.95.)

Patricia Ward Wallace's *Politics of Conscience* discusses the political career and personal life of Margaret Chase Smith. A skillful politician, Smith never missed a vote or roll call during her three decades in office. Moreover, she prided herself in her ability to rise above gender constrictions, insisting that her colleagues acknowledge her as a United States senator first and as a woman second. Ironically, Smith did not use her position to champion women's issues. "Never a feminist, Smith did not practice sisterhood or work for significant women's legislation of the 1960s and 1970s. Instead she worked for Maine and the nation as a cold warrior and became an unrepentant proponent of the military-industrial complex and of nuclear power" (p. ix-x). Wallace uses this theme as the focus of her biography.

Wallace begins with the arrival of Smith's forebears in Maine and the marriage of Smith's parents. She details Smith's relationship with her husband, Clyde Smith, and explains how his deathbed wish for Smith to take his place in Congress led to her political career. Wallace highlights all of the senator's political accomplishments, from her support for military bases in Maine, to her well-known "Declaration of Conscience" speech against Senator Joseph McCarthy, to her work as a cold warrior. The biography also traces Smith's five Senate campaigns, as well as her campaign against slander and innuendo in politics. Moreover, Wallace profiles Smith's relationships with people who shaped both her life and her political career: her mother, Carrie Chase, Clyde Smith, William Lewis, and May Craig.

Wallace's presentation is lively, but she raises some questionable points about Smith's life—ironic, given Smith's lifelong crusade against slander. While Wallace's primary sources include manuscripts and congressional reports, much of her material comes from oral interviews, which she does not thoroughly document by other means. This leads to such assertions as Smith had an abortion or had a lesbian relationship.

Wallace also questions the success of Smith's political career. "For thirty-two years Smith railed against the party structure and transcended the Republican party in Maine and in Congress . . . but for what profit? Her hopes for a presidential or vice-presidential nomination were stillborn, no legislation bears her name, and despite her seniority she never chaired a committee." Wallace reasons that Smith was a significant historical figure only because she was female. "Had she been male, her life, including the Declaration of Conscience, would be indistinguishable from that of hundreds of other congressmen" (p. 199). Perhaps, if Wallace had placed Smith within the historical context of women's traditional roles from the 1940s through the 1970s, she would have arrived at a different conclusion. Smith exerted an important moral influence in Congress and on women across the nation—achievements not always apparent in direct legislative results. Robert Griffith, in *The Politics of Fear*, claims that the "Declaration of Conscience" was the "most spirited Republican dissent" made within the Senate during the McCarthy era. Perhaps Wallace would have gained a broader perspective if she had examined some of the recent doctoral dissertations focused on the topic.

Wallace draws conclusions about Smith's attitude toward her gender. Wallace claims that "she became antifeminist while, like many other professional antifeminists, doing everything that feminists want all women to have the opportunity to do" (p. 200). Smith never requested special

treatment because of her gender, but she continually reminded her male colleagues that she was a lady. "Disarmed, colleagues were surprised when Smith revealed her iron fist in the white glove" (p. 200). Such analysis seems at odds with the general thesis of the book.

While Wallace's methodology raises questions, this biography does trace the life of an important politician, not only of Maine, but also of the United States. Students of Maine history and American politics will find it a valuable starting point for further research.

KIMBERLY R. SEBOLD  
*University of Maine  
at Presque Isle*

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*Maine, A Peopled Landscape: Salt Documentary Photography, 1978 to 1995.* Edited by HUGH T. FRENCH, with essays by C. Stewart Doty, James C. Curtis, and R. Todd Hoffman. (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1995. Pp. vii + 160. \$22.95.)

"This is the Maine not of the tourist but of the native," states the back cover of *Maine, A Peopled Landscape*. Therefore, one must be aware that this book is not a collection of "picturesque" Maine photographs, complete with "fluffy clouds and mountains reflected in lakes" (p. 134). Rather, this is an amazing series of over one hundred documentary photographs, each committed to revealing the people of Maine in a way that is often left out of colorful calendars and postcards. Included in this book are essays by historians C. Stewart Doty and James C. Curtis and photographer R. Todd Hoffman. These essays provide a historical and philosophical background to the wealth of pictures taken by the Salt Center for Documentary Field Studies. The center spent over seventeen years compiling these photographs of Maine, and the essays give the book a sense of purpose and design. Moreover, they speak to what this book is trying to accomplish: showing Maine citizens and their surroundings from a "truthful" and honest perspective.

The book is divided into four categories: the coast, inland, work, and community. The pictures are usually accompanied by a paragraph, serving as an explanation of the photograph. Captions often quote from the subjects themselves, giving the book an authentic flavor. One can gaze

into Charlie Torrey's chiseled face, weathered from over forty years of blueberry raking in Gouldsboro, then discover his philosophy: "I don't work it too hard. I was born '41 and I went down on the blueberry barmens with Leslie Randall in 1942. I try to make the same amount a day as I can when I'm clammin'." That is authenticity, that is Maine.

The essays speak intellectually to the book's goals, and illuminate the predecessors to *Maine, A Peopled Landscape*. C. Stewart Doty addresses the historical tradition of documentary photography in Maine, seeking to "place the Salt Center within that tradition" (p. 134). In his essay, one finds such nineteenth-century photographers as Chansonetta Stanley Emmons and Emma D. Sewall, capturing rural life in Maine from the position of "interested outsiders." As women, these local Maine photographers assumed an "outsider's" perspective on commonplace rural activities, deeming them extraordinary and worthy of documentation. Doty traces the lineage of documentary photography up to the 1960s and 1970s, highlighting the work of John McKee and Lynn Franklin. In this particular work he finds an immediate connection to the Salt Center. McKee grappled with the problems of strip commercialism, litter, and junkyards, while Franklin made an attempt to show the fascinating story of "an ordinary man or woman's life" (p. 142). In this era the Salt Center for Documentary Field Studies was born.

Photographer R. Todd Hoffman's essay delves into the issue of why Salt's photographs are "truthful depictions of people, places, and things in Maine" (p. 156). He feels time is the primary reason: so many other documentary studies are constricted by deadlines, while the Salt Center allows the artist to spend weeks in the field gathering interviews and building relationships with subjects. Photographs in this book are sensitive to the "complete anatomy" of the subject—the soul of Maine.

*Maine, A Peopled Landscape* is a telling photographic documentary about Maine's people and their interaction with the landscape, be it farmland or downtown streets. The photographs and text tell marvelous stories, bringing to life a portrait of Maine's ordinary citizens.

BRIAN MURRAY  
*University of Maine*

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*Always Rachel: The Letters of Rachel Carson and Dorothy Freeman, 1952–1964.* Edited by MARTHA FREEMAN. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. Pp. 544. Cloth. \$35.)

Americans associate the name Rachel Carson with the battle against large chemical companies and government-sanctioned use of DDT in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Carson's writing became a voice for people's rights as citizens and a voice on behalf of the environment. While her life as a scientist and author is well known, the personal life of Carson has remained more of a mystery. *Always Rachel*, edited by Martha Freeman, Dorothy Freeman's granddaughter, provides a look into the personal life of Rachel Carson and her twelve-year friendship with Dorothy Freeman. The book contains letters written by both women throughout the course of their friendship, and allows the reader to view the women's mutual love of nature and love for one another. Additionally, it brings the reader painfully close to Carson as she struggles with cancer until her death in 1964.

In 1952, Carson and Freeman began a correspondence when Freeman learned that Carson would be her summer neighbor on Southport Island, Maine. The correspondence began on an extremely formal note. Later, even as the women agreed to forgo formalities, they continued to write in cautious tones. Quickly, however, an emotional bond grew between them, which they openly acknowledged and continually expressed in their letters. Freeman became Carson's confidant, a pillar of support as Carson pursued her controversial work.

Even as Carson was confronted with cancer, her letters remained positive for the most part, and she did not let it affect her love for Freeman or her love of the ocean and all its wonders. In "a little apple," which was a private note between the women, Carson wrote of her cancer and the time she might have left. Aware that the letter took on a somber tone, Carson emphasized Freeman's importance to her. "As an antidote, I live again all the fun and laughter and sweetness of the Hundred Hours, and dream of the things we can yet do together." Each reassured the other that they would share more time in the future, doing what they loved the most: exploring the coast that first brought them together.

The letters contained in the book are revealing, but Martha Freeman could have done more to help the reader fully understand the information they contain. In certain cases, Martha provides notes in the margins that help identify people or places. Although these offer factual information, the book lacks analysis. Martha explains that she did not want to

burden the reader with detail, yet her observations and opinions might have helped the reader gain insight into the letters, especially because of the close relationship she shared with her grandmother. Moreover, readers should be aware that not all of the letters are included in this volume.

*Always, Rachel* will appeal to readers on many levels. Scientists and environmentalists will appreciate Carson's intense love of and respect for her natural surroundings. At times, she describes her perception of science, and how changes taking place in various fields relate to humankind. For the historian, the letters serve as an invaluable source for understanding a female scientist and her struggles in a male-dominated profession. Rachel Carson and Dorothy Freeman shared twelve years together—years filled with excitement, anticipation, and to some extent, adventure. *Always, Rachel* tells the story of these women at their best, dealing with the joys and sorrows of life.

LANCE PARADIS  
*University of Maine*

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*Sarah Orne Jewett: Her World and Her Work.* By PAULA BLANCHARD. Radcliffe Biography Series. (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1994.)

Most authors begin by adopting a conscious perspective on their subject. Paula Blanchard is no exception. Blanchard argues that Jewett's world and work were interrelated to the point of being inseparable, and she discusses this with reference to Jewett's literary creations. Blanchard is primarily concerned with Jewett's complex relationships with other women and with her connection to the town of Berwick, Maine.

The book begins with a brief history of Berwick, and the Jewett family, rather than with Sarah Orne Jewett's birth. This is indicative of Blanchard's concern with the world that shaped Jewett. Jewett wrote about places and people she knew, and her literary vision of a community of women was primarily shaped by her extended family structure, which consisted of many single women and widows.

Annie Fields and Jewett's Boston network of female friends are another central theme in the biography. Blanchard makes Jewett's "Boston marriage" to Annie Fields a central theme of the book and argues that

Jewett's "deepest affections were always centered on women." Yet she argues that Jewett was not a lesbian "in the strictest sense of the term" (p. 54). Blanchard suggests that Jewett was an asexual woman whose closest friendships—romantic but not sexual—happened to be with other women. This conclusion is based on Jewett's letters to women friends. Blanchard does not address the possibility that Jewett was expressing sexual feelings in the more acceptable romantic discourse of the late nineteenth century; rather she views Jewett as devoid of sexual feelings—for either men or women.

Blanchard's biography is an impressively researched account of the life of one of Maine's primary literary figures. She sets Jewett's fiction in Maine context, and argues that it was profoundly related to place. Blanchard's work is truly a "literary biography," in that it is based not only on typical biographical sources but also on an informed analysis of Jewett's fiction. Blanchard is familiar with the recent scholarship on Jewett that attempts to rescue this author from the condescending obscurity to which she was relegated. In keeping with this focus, Blanchard's biography is a serious, sympathetic portrait of one of Maine's great women writers, and the family and friendship networks which made up her world.

ELIZABETH HEDLER  
*University of Maine*

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