

NOTES ON CURRENT BOOKS

way of looking at Shakespeare, but as a return to a dynamic of aesthetic pleasure that has been neglected in many recent works of Renaissance criticism.

Virginia \$22.50

Literary Studies in Action, by Alan Durant and Nigel Fabb.

An experiment in programmed career-counseling, this handbook of short essays, practical exercises, and preference tests is designed to help students decide if Eng. Lit. and Lit. Crit. are just their dish of tea. Whether or not it actually attains its goal, this INTERFACE volume can help demystify theoretical frameworks that inform and animate the undergraduate teaching of foreign as well as English literature. It may even help the perplexed student to decide which if any of today's competing dogmatisms really promote, rather than disrupt, intelligent analysis and dialogue about texts and contexts.

Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 15.95

The Esthetics of Junk Fiction, by Thomas J. Roberts.

Roberts's study is typical of recent (meta)criticism, whose framework and method are more interesting than their subject or conclusions. Focusing on book-scapes (high literary, best-selling, junk) and types of reader (serious, plain, "paperback"), he discusses a panoply of paradigmatic works, favored forms, representative writers and their rewards, reader motivations and expectations, and preferred ways of sharing literary experience. If Roberts' textual analyses are predictably thin and fragmentary, his treatment of reading as an experience—both individual and general—is among the best we have.

Georgia, \$30

The Concept of Modernism, by Astradur Eysteinnsson.

In this brave and admirable study of modernism, Eysteinnsson does a fine job of reviewing and analyzing the critical litera-

ture that has sought to define the concept. Eysteinnsson's exploration of modernism considers the reverberations and relations of modernism to other paradigms such as realism, literary history, postmodernism, and the avant-garde. The work, which also reveals a strong awareness of how modernism was and is understood outside the Anglo-American realm, is indispensable not only to modernist but also to those interested in the ways modernism relates to other critical models. Cornell \$29.95

Juan Goytisolo: The Case for Chaos, by Abigail Lee Six.

Goytisolo, one of Spain's leading contemporary novelists, has waged a long campaign against modern myths and traditional order. His "vindication of chaos" is analyzed by Lee Six from the perspective of theme, metaphor, and style in the major novels (predominantly the Mendiola trilogy, *Makbara* and *Juan sin tierra*). Goytisolo identifies with social outcasts and forcefully rejects (through corrosive parody) the "order" imposed on the individual by Western society, Eastern communism, Spanish Catholicism, and the like. The discussion centers upon his rejection of the order = good/chaos = evil dichotomy and his successful attempts to "set the (Spanish) language in motion." Lee Six's interpretation is fresh, stimulating, and persuasive.

Yale \$25

Beautiful Sublime: The Making of Paradise Lost, 1701-1734, by Leslie E. Moore.

Moore tries to unravel enough of the reception history of *Paradise Lost* to reconstruct a genealogy of sublimity. The book offers insights on the theme but lacks the necessary breadth or power to justify its scope. Any one of the chapters offers enough questions for a separate volume, and the effect is less of a study than of cogitations.

Stanford \$27.50