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Papago quoted above. The diversity of practices and reactions among various tribes, age groups, and individual families should not be underestimated.

As a rule, however, Weigle's connective commentary is dispassionate, perceptive, and reasonably cautious. The book as a whole is joyously tendentious and looks forward to "a deeper awareness of the powerful worlds created by gossip and legend, by women considering their own [lives] and the lives of those around them, by women telling each other, often privately, about the strange and not-so-strange... in their physical, interpersonal and intrapersonal lives" (p. 298). Although parts of Weigle's discussion have become slightly dated over the last decade, this work, with its lucid summary of still-vital controversies, its lavish detail and full bibliography, is still important to all students of the female in mythology.

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In the opening pages of *The Written Suburb*, John Dorst mentions a remark attributed to Lévi-Straus, that the contemporary, urban world is too fragmented, diverse and complex for ethnography. In contributing to the spatial turn in cultural analysis, all three books reviewed here rise to this challenge. Although they represent different political and scholarly perspectives, each grapples with the task of interpreting the inscriptions consumer culture has made on the landscape.

Dorst approaches this task as a distinctly “ethnographic dilemma”. *The Written Suburb* is a case study of landscape and tradition where folklore genres (verbal performance, material culture, festival, foodways, and so forth) have been given a new inflection by postmodernism. In less skilled hands, the book would be just a genre study, but Dorst’s personal writing style and theoretical reflection make the text reach beyond the ostensible subject of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Home to George Washington during the Brandywine Battle, three generations of Wyeths, and the quirky Charles Sanderson Museum, Dorst views this landscape as a postmodern Site, “an image, an idea, an ideological discourse, an assemblage of texts” (p. 3).

This work is arguably the freshest and most coherent since the ‘young turks’ of 20 years ago stormed folklore with their talk of performance, communication and context. Dorst has certainly imbued their perspectives, but he has also been reading Baudrillard and Jameson, and sports a new vocabulary that identifies commodity form, pastiche, hegemony and simulation. The spirit of this discourse is not alien to folklorists, yet it does destabilize some absolutes: authenticity, tradition, originality, the past, etc. Dorst wades into the thick of things by recognizing that ethnography is “superfluous” in a world constituted by its own descriptions, images and representations. Who needs ethnographers when the residents are accomplished “auto-ethnographers”?

The form of his book responds to the problematic status of ethnography. On one level *The Written Suburb* offers traditional fare: a description and history of the field site; theoretical discussion and literature review; data analysis (specifically the cultural performance of “Chadds Ford Days”, and a comparison of two museums); and a reflective conclusion. On another level, the text is a demonstration of ethnographic surrealism, or as Dorst calls it *post-ethnographic practice*. The writing is often recursive — the rhetorical equivalent of touring the Site on several occasions accumulating insights — and it has a deliberately fragmentary, occasionally *collaged* form. The reader is never at a loss, though, for Dorst is careful to flag his innovations and to account for them within the logic of his method.

Chadds Ford is “a regime of surfaces” (p. 104), a vertiginous array which reflect, quote, inscribe, re-inscribe and mirror each other. Whether a festival backdrop, a restored wall, a painting, or a museum window, all surfaces inform the simulation and commodification that is Chadds Ford. By diagnosing this quality of Chadds Ford, Dorst can critique and revise concepts such as heritage, tradition, restoration, folk art, and craft. The result is a description of landscape and its organization not as “natural and inevitable” (p. 129), but rather, as a tendentious space used to symbolize a particular heritage and tradition, a landscape like television that is “self-sustaining, self-referential, self-legitimizing” (p. 169).

Postmodernism has been attacked by feminists as one more male hegemonic discourse. The wholeheartedness with which Dorst takes up this discourse makes him vulnerable to such a critique. In presenting the history of the Site, Dorst transcribes the Historical Society's own version of how Chadds Ford Day began including a list is given of local people "who had the gumption to do something" (p. 82). Most are women. Yet Dorst decides that a narrative solicited from one of his informants (the majority of whom are men) is more "authoritative" (p. 83) than the official version. There is an acknowledgement later in the book that Chadds Ford celebrates a patriarchal artistic order despite the prominence of women in the activities of the historical society (p. 134). This observation is not sufficient enough for Dorst to reconsider the Site's auto-ethnographies as a feminization of this landscape.

The elision of gender is symptomatic of a more general attitude towards informants. Dorst rightly interrogates the received notion of ethnography's "subjects" as centered, stable, unified individuals. This does not make them more complex people, however. Informants are "things spoken rather than speaking" and Dorst concentrates on "'authorless' texts, that is to say, texts for which it is trivial to identify immediate producers" (p. 209). When the views of informants manage to break through the book's surface, their comments are quickly contained by the discursive logic of the post-ethnographic practice.

"Collecting" and "reading" are the two features of this practice which resolve the problematic status of ethnography. Collecting and arranging fragments illuminates the "artifice" (p. 207) of any cultural construction. Reading such a collection is a means to critique inscribed hegemony, to look "for the 'motivations' of the texts" (p. 206). Thankfully, post-ethnographic practice is also reflexive, and "will need to leave visible the signs of the labour by which it was produced, taking care not to hide its seams too completely" (p. 207).

At the edge of Dorst's Site is the capital accumulation and political power of the Dupont family. For the other two books considered here, this would be a much more significant influence on the landscape of Chadds Ford. Both Wilson and Zukin see political economy as the formal cause of landscape and direct their attention to its analysis.

Alexander Wilson's *The Culture of Nature* looks critically at how humans and nature are mutually constructed. He traces this relation by documenting North America's "*exemplary* places: places that reveal both the cohesions and disruptions of the past fifty years" (p. 15). Such "places" closely analysed include the Blue Ridge Parkway, countertraditions of environmental education, Walt Disney's legacy of nature movies, World's Fairs from '39 to '86, and the West Edmonton Mall.

Wilson demonstrates with each particular place that the "geographies" of technology, "agriculture, leisure, and even wilderness are all cultural spaces, inscriptions on the land that are derived from and in turn shape our changing ideas

about the Earth" (p. 257). Wilson keeps the reader moving through his places with a style that is informative, expansive, frequently subjective and engaged, and never detached. The text is richly illustrated with 50s advertisements, the author's photos, promotional images, and critically relevant work by high art photographers.

Wilson has an explicit agenda and could well have subtitled his book, "A Manifesto."

We must build landscapes that heal, connect and empower, that make intelligible our relations with each other and with the natural world: places that welcome and enclose, whose breaks and edges are never without meaning (p. 17).

Again and again, Wilson points to the counterhegemonic efforts of grassroots communities, indigenous knowledges, and local cultures which have been able to undo the fragmentations of industrial capitalism, and the passivity of consumerism. The objective of such efforts is to "politicize the land" (p. 70), to organize knowledge and people into oppositional communities rather than accede to official culture's view of nature "as an inert resource to be managed by paramilitary technology" (p. 190).

Wilson gives numerous examples of such mobilization, often with the objective of "restoring" the land: "the literal reconstruction of natural and historical landscapes" (p. 113), yet his focus is on a North American culture of nature, not indigenous knowledge of particular communities or regions. Perhaps the whole concept of community is in such a shambles it is impossible to research such knowledge, but the polemic does stake out an exciting territory for folklorists with the skills, methods, and perspectives to reclaim local knowledge and transform it into action. *The Culture of Nature* should be required reading for anyone researching material culture and the folklore of space.

In many ways, Sharon Zukin's *Landscapes of Power* is the most puzzling of these books. It is a series of corporate stories held together with a discussion of the symbolic landscape of consumerism. The book has a popular facade that appropriates literature, film, art, architecture, television, and food to enliven the discussion of industry and landscape. This may be a nascent postmodern genre of cultural critique where the inclusiveness of examples is designed to validate the main cases.

"Consumption" is the key term in Zukin's landscape. As in Dorst and Wilson, she sees landscape as a symbolic and cultural form: "*landscape* represents the architecture of social class, gender, and race relations imposed by powerful institutions" (p. 16). The landscape is where she can trace the shift of North America's economy from industrial production to a post-industrial service economy where "workers are important because they consume..." (p. 4).

The binary logic of this transformed landscape is visible in the tension between market and place. Five landscapes demonstrate this: two steel mills (Weirton Steel in Virginia and McLouth Steel in Detroit); the deep suburban landscape of corporate capitalism in Westchester, New York; the international landscape of gentrification and cuisine (Chicago, New York and the distribution of *nouvelle cuisine*); and finally, the quintessentially hyperreal "stage-set landscape" (p. 231) of Disney World.

Each case is rich with insider details and is complemented with frequent digressions and parallel examples to help generalize the diagnosis. Zukin imports two terms familiar to folklore to help structure her analysis: Victor Turner's use of the term "liminality", and "vernacular". In her landscapes, liminality is constructed "by opening public space to private consumption" (p. 51). It identifies the transformative impact of an economic restructuring that "socially reorganizes space and time, reformulates economic roles, and revalues cultures of production and consumption" (p. 29).

The use of "vernacular" is somewhat more troublesome. Zukin apparently means it in a more or less literal sense to identify the activities of particular individuals in their particular locales, for instance, "where peasants thrive, the cottages and fields that embody their collective and vernacular use of space" (p. 19). The difficulty is that the word is always modified in some way: informal vernacular, segmented vernacular, historic vernacular, and so forth. However the term is employed, there are only two options for the vernacular: destruction, or commodification by the market.

The inevitable direction of this tension between market and place points to the inherent puzzlement of this book. It is clear that the bad guys are those in power, those in the boardrooms, those who design the consumer landscape. These are the only people with names in the book, they are the only people whose actions are detailed and documented in any systematic way. Even though the book charts the progressive disintegration of vernacular power the vernacular is nameless, silent, and passive.

Zukin is without the reflexive, scholarly imperative that drives Dorst's work, and she lacks the engaged and transformative spirit of Wilson's. Although she can diagram the "circuits of cultural capital" that transform any particular vernacular form into a market commodity, Zukin oscillates between seeing the (failing) deindustrialized economy of the North America as the patient or the illness. On the final page, she appears to come to a complete standstill. Neither the working class, artists, nor local communities can be counted on "to save society" (p. 275). They are either too busy consuming, too busy producing, or too busy transforming the vernacular into capital to oppose its domination.

Each of these books is rich in source material, and for references alone they are worth reading. Their common focus on landscape is refracted through their particular concerns with ethnography, the environment, and the economy. By

locating their analysis within the space of postmodernity, they demonstrate a moral concern with the transformation of society (vernacular or otherwise) from a stage of authentic production to one of simulated consumption.

The spatial turn in cultural analysis forces a reconsideration of constructs central to folklore: community, tradition, craft, restoration, and so on. Books such as these also force the reconsideration of ethnographic practice, and most importantly point out the consequence of replacing engaged fieldwork with engaged textual analysis. Wilson provides a parting shot of those turning to the cultural research of landscape:

We tour the disparate surfaces of everyday life as a way of involving ourselves in them, as a way of reintegrating a fragmented world (p. 22).

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Diane E. GOLDSTEIN (ed.), *Talking Aids: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome* (Research and Policy Papers n° 12, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1991, p. 145, ISSN 0828-6868).

Talking AIDS is a collection of papers originally presented during an ISER-sponsored conference at Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1989. The conference explored the semiotic power of AIDS and its effects on daily life. The health needs of the people of Newfoundland provided the immediate context for conference dialogue; however, comments in the papers printed here reveal little regarding the conditions there. The concerns of this volume are more widely cast. These papers emphasize relationships between the content of AIDS-related messages and the power and authority which privilege and legitimize those messages. Hufford defends the decontextualized focus of such discussion by reminding us (p. 7) that "(i)n an emergency, there is a natural inclination to prefer action to thought" even though "our society's conventional emergency response mechanisms are generally unable to produce adaptive responses to modern kinds of problems". Serious thought must precede action, under these circumstances, especially when — as Crellin notes (p. 80), AIDS as well as AIDS research are