

through the satire of the woman nurse. She emphasizes that when men such as Walt Whitman wrote about men caring for men, care was made more noble. Hunter argues that the ideal of perfect nurse or mother, who is caring, noninvasive, and responsive, should be shared with men.

Barbara Melosh invites us to search for revelations in twentieth-century short stories. She points out the sexual inversion that occurs between nurse and patient—powerful nurse and helpless patient. Nurses see the deeper truths of common human experience, but they are repeatedly cast as lovers or mothers. The relevance of gender to the nurse-patient relationship is manifested in Melosh's analysis. Ending this section, Joanne Trautmann Banks analyzes three nurse characters in Patrick White's novel, *The Eye of the Storm* (1974). Each nurse displays one mythological type: one who gives birth, one who makes love, one who buries.

In the issues and images section, Darlene Clark Hine explores the black nurses' contributions to the health needs of the black community. Black nurses were thought inferior to white nurses; discriminatory practices were abundant. Separate black nursing schools were established; graduates worked harder for lower wages, and black public health nurses cared only for black patients. The persistence and resilience of black nursing leaders garnered more respect and less discrimination. Janet Muff explores socialization and sexism in nursing. Her succinct, almost telegraphic account is captivating. Muff thinks that nurses undervalue self and overvalue others. She invites nurses to embrace women's issues as their issues. Last, Anne Hudson Jones analyzes a film about Florence Nightingale, *The White Angel* (1936). She portrays the film as a morality play between nurses and doctors, in which history is distorted and different people are condensed into one character. The themes of nurses as mother, lover, and nun are projected. The real Nightingale is not accurately portrayed.

The book stirs interest. Hudson and her contributors have provided us with a thematic analysis of the sources and implications of nurses, and women's, roles.

Zane Robinson Wolf
La Salle University

About Time: Exploring the Gay Past. By Martin Bauml Duberman. (New York: Gay Presses of New York. 1986. xvi + 377 pp. Paper, \$10.95.)

When Martin Bauml Duberman published *Black Mountain* (1972), the book was controversial. He had abandoned the role of the dispassionate, depersonalized historian and had made himself a character in the book. While causing some historians to blanch, that approach inspired others of us to incorporate ourselves into our writing. Now, Duberman has moved even further down the same path, as he focuses on his reactions to documents depicting the history of American homosexuality. The personalized approach is appropriate, since Duberman has been a prominent gay activist.

Part 1 of this book contains documents that Duberman has unearthed in various archives. Most of the sources with specific references to homosexual behavior were written after 1900. For the 1930s, for example, we learn about lesbians in the depression, sexual relationships between men and boys in the Civilian Conservation Corps camps, and gay activist attack on the psychological "sickness" theory. Duberman does not pretend to completeness, since the new field of gay history is only beginning to discover source materials. Together with important documentary collections by Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History* (1976) and *Gay/Lesbian Almanac* (1983), this volume makes a significant contribution to the first stage of historical analysis.

While Afro-American and Hispanic sources are missing, Duberman is to be complimented for his attention to American Indian homosexuality. He includes fascinating letters from a World War II United States Army officer, who detailed his gay life while stationed in postwar Europe, Japan, and Egypt, and from a gay correspondent of Alfred Kinsey who lived in southern Europe and North Africa. Duberman emphasizes cross-cultural data as a means of placing American homophobia in its proper abnormal context.

Part 2 is mainly review essays that Duberman wrote between 1972 and 1982. His insights are important, but the essays are sometimes outdated by new scholarship, which Duberman

briefly acknowledges in updated notes but not in his texts.

Part 3 consists of selections from Duberman's private diary from the 1950s, which reveal why he has made such sharp attacks on psychiatrists. In the 1950s, while in almost constant therapy, he accepted the advice of the experts that his same-sex desires constituted a mental illness. Probably no other document exists that more powerfully illustrates the self-hatred felt by homosexuals of the 1950s. When gay militants challenged the psychiatric establishment in the 1960s and 1970s, prompting the doctors to reevaluate their assumptions and test the effects of their "treatment," their earlier studies proved methodologically flawed and useful for nothing except making people feel guilt or failure.

Duberman's diary is an important primary source document, of a sort that does not usually appear in print while the writer is alive. In exposing his innermost thoughts, Duberman adds to our understanding of minority self-hatred in conformist postwar America. His 1950s mindsets, contrasted with his later pioneering gay liberation efforts in both politics and academics, make his personal transformations all the more interesting.

Walter L. Williams
University of Southern California

Twentieth-Century Culture: Modernism to Deconstruction. By Norman F. Cantor. (New York: Lang, 1988. xx + 452 pp. \$39.95.)

Norman F. Cantor's *Twentieth-Century Culture* is an attempt to provide students and lay readers with a clear, jargon-free introduction to the history of Western culture in this century. This admirable endeavor might be pursued by writing a concise guide to major currents in modern culture; by compiling an encyclopedia of thinkers, artists, and works; or by employing a methodology that reflects modern modes of expression. Cantor accomplishes none of these objectives, although he comes closest to the first. His discussions of the high modernist achievements in literature, social science, and physics at the start of this century are excellent brief summaries of an extraordinarily dense and complex moment in modern culture. Cantor also

distills some of the major elements of psychoanalytical and structuralist thought into short, readable sections that ably serve the audience he has in mind. His overarching arguments, that modernism as an anti-historicist culture is incompatible with Victorian doctrines (including socialism) and that modernism largely gave way to neo-Victorian humanism during the depression and World War II, are not altogether original, but they serve to give modernist culture a certain historical frame. If these pieces of his book were excerpted and published as a hundred-page introduction to cultural modernism, Cantor would have made a real contribution to the teaching of recent cultural history.

Unfortunately, there is more and less to this book than a road map to the twentieth century. The book is weakest on the visual arts, despite its fine reproductions of art works and a guide to films published as an appendix. But the real problem is the book's excesses, not its omissions. Too often, Cantor lapses into apparently pointless digressions, personalistic attacks, and polemics. These editorial problems are compounded by disorganization, spelling and grammatical errors, and errors of fact. After three chapters on Victorianism, modernism, and psychoanalysis, the book devotes two bloated chapters to the political Left and Right; they are full of exaggerated claims about the "hegemonic" role of the Left in modern American universities and the media and innuendoes about the alleged careerism of those (mostly leftist) intellectuals whose work Cantor does not agree with. Similarly, a chapter on postmodernism brings the book to a confusing close with a call for a new alliance of conservative academics and corporations devoted to "public caring, social solidarity, and national interest." It is unclear whether Cantor has in mind the neo-conservative defense of high modernism associated with *The New Criterion* or what he calls a "peaceful rightist variant" of fascism (whatever that might be), which he believes still "fascinates because it is the one cultural avenue of the twentieth century that has not been pursued to the point of relative tedium."

Such rambling, overheated polemics are certain to disorient the reader seeking a reliable introduction to modern Western culture. It is