

television commercial for Pepsi-Cola that features Madonna. The essay's meticulous research and cultural-materialist cynicism provide a refreshing rejoinder to the celebratory excesses that the Madonna industry has inspired within recent academic discourse.

Musicologists, literary critics, anthropologists, and historians of many theoretical persuasions will welcome all three of these books as innovative and, for the most part, rigorous additions to the already massive critical bibliography on the history of the body and the nature of performance. ■

*The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity.* Edited by Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb. London: Thames & Hudson, 1995.

*The Narrow Bridge: Jewish Views on Multiculturalism.* Edited by Marla Brettschneider. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

*People of the Book: Thirty Scholars Reflect on Their Jewish Identity.* Edited by Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky and Shelley Fisher Fishkin. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

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To our mothers, Cynthia Garb and the late Elka Heller, to whom we each owe not only our Jewishness but our differing conceptions of its meaning.  
— Nochlin and Garb, *The Jew in the Text*

This book is in honor of my grandmother, Evelyn Reinstein, who emigrated to the United States in 1921 from Russia and is dedicated to the Legacies of the New Jewish Agenda North American Jewish Students Appeal.  
— Brettschneider, *The Narrow Bridge*

This book is dedicated to our grandparents, Z"l [of blessed memory]  
Lily and Max Dorsky  
Anna and Morris Taubman  
Sadie and Samuel Fisher  
Yetta and Charles Breger  
and to our contributors' grandparents: Progenitors all.  
— Rubin-Dorsky and Fishkin, *People of the Book*

**A** frame is a structure that gives both shape and support to an argument. In the case of an anthology, it gives weight and structure to the volume as a whole. As a verb, *to frame* is to build or assemble pieces of a construct; it is also to arrange these pieces for a purpose. I begin with the

dedications of the three anthologies under review because they usefully characterize the volumes and distinguish them from one another. Although personal family inheritances are crucial in each dedication, the content of these inheritances is quite different. Addressing issues of Jews in the academy, Jews writing and teaching about a whole range of issues, Jews and Jewishness as a topic of contemporary inquiry, and Jewish engagement in the work of multiculturalism, the books present contemporary Jewishness — and Jewish cultural studies — as a contested site.

At the end of the twentieth century, issues of Jewish cultural, ethnic, racial, and/or religious difference press against the promises of inclusion offered by liberal pluralism (especially in the United States). Each of the collections asks a series of important questions: On what basis are individuals and groups of Jews marked as other? What happens when they are able to pass within dominant culture as the same? What is lost and what is gained in the ability to pass?

Although issues of Jewish difference have been an ambivalent part of feminist theorizing since at least the early 1980s, they have only recently received critical attention from scholars outside of women's studies and Jewish studies programs.<sup>1</sup> All of the volumes offer powerful evidence for the urgency of this kind of inquiry and take their place within a growing body of work in Jewish cultural studies.<sup>2</sup> This new scholarship, unlike its enlightenment-based predecessor, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, critiques Jewish studies' reliance on enlightenment values and presuppositions. By focusing on multiple sites of Jewish difference, this new scholarship rejects any simple relegation of Jewish difference to the so-called private domain of religion.

<sup>1</sup> Such early feminist works on Jewishness include Evelyn T. Beck, ed., *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology* (Boston: Beacon, 1982); Elly Bulkin, Minnie Bruce Pratt, and Barbara Smith, *Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism* (Brooklyn: Long Haul, 1984); Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz and Irena Klepfisz, eds., *Tribe of Dina: A Jewish Women's Anthology* (Boston: Beacon, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Jonathan Boyarin, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); Laurence Silberstein and Robert Cohn, eds., *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity* (New York: NYU Press, 1994); Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997); Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin, eds., *Jews and Other Differences: The New Jewish Cultural Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Laura Levitt, *Jews and Feminism: The Ambivalent Search for Home* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Ann Pellegrini, *Performance Anxiety: Staging Psychoanalysis, Staging Race* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Miriam Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies: Rabbis, Gender and History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997); Miriam Peskowitz and Laura Levitt, eds., *Judaism Since Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

In *The Jew in the Text* Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb claim Jewishness as a cultural and not necessarily religious inheritance passed on, as their dedication indicates, through their mothers. The collection offers two distinct introductions in keeping with its recognition that there are various versions and visions of Jewishness. Nochlin's "Starting with the Self: Jewish Identity and Its Representations" and Garb's "Modernity, Identity, Textuality" are both powerful essays about Jewishness and modernity. Nochlin addresses the complicated currency of modern images of Jews and compares the ambivalent nineteenth-century receptions of such images in works by the French Jewish artist Alphonse Lévy and the German artist Ludwig Knaus. She explains that although the images may look similar to a present-day viewer, Lévy's offer a lovely, nostalgic view of rural Jewish life, while Knaus's are anti-Semitic caricatures. Garb's essay offers a more pointed account of the ambivalent reception of representations of Jews in modern Western culture, focusing on the exhibition, reproduction, and circulation of a specific oriental image of a Jew by a now-forgotten French painter. Garb asks what this image tells us about a broader set of assumptions about Jews, Frenchness, and commerce (29). These essays are typical of the interdisciplinarity of the volume, which includes essays by distinguished scholars across the humanities, including Bryan Cheyette, Kathleen Adler, Carol Ockman, Romy Golan, James Young, Susan Rubin Suleiman, Julia Kristeva, and Sander L. Gilman.

Unlike the other two volumes under review, *The Narrow Bridge* focuses primarily on Jewish engagements in multicultural work within and outside of the academy. Its editor, Marla Brettschneider, was trained as a political scientist, and her collection introduces readers not only to academics engaged in multicultural work but also to social workers, rabbis, public school teachers, community organizers, and socially conscious investors. The volume honors the experience of immigrant Jews becoming American citizens as well as the ongoing leftist political work of organizations like the New Jewish Agenda, which she thanks in her dedication, to make this country a more inviting place for all of its citizens.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the fact that Brettschneider literally frames her collection with a foreword by Cornel West and a concluding reprint of an essay by Michael Walzer, the volume as a whole makes it clear that discussions of Jews and multiculturalism did not begin in the early 1990s among Black and Jewish men with high cultural capital. Instead, she explains in her acknowledg-

<sup>3</sup> The New Jewish Agenda was one of the earliest organizations to raise questions about Israeli politics as well as one of the first Jewish political organizations to engage in feminist and gay and lesbian politics in the 1980s.

ments, "In large part this anthology was made possible by the earlier collections of Jewish feminists that set in motion the contemporary Jewish exploration of our multiple identities" (xvi). Brettschneider's emphasis on this legacy of feminist scholarship and activism, especially among lesbian Jewish feminists both within and outside of the New Jewish Agenda, stands at the heart of her text. Accordingly, the most powerful essays are those by Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, Evelyn Beck, and Martha Ackelsberg, some of the most important lesbian feminist voices in these ongoing discussions.

In many ways *People of the Book* addresses many of the critical issues raised by *The Jew in the Text* but with a somewhat different approach. Here the personal stakes are high, as all of the essays are first-person narratives by established scholars and writers. This, in and of itself, makes the volume compelling.

For many of these writers, including editors Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, reflecting on their own Jewish identities is a new and frightening experience. Some of them address their Jewishness in relation to particular texts; others offer intimate accounts of the role of Jewishness in their lives. For still others, Jewishness has been an ongoing engagement. Among the latter are Riv Ellen Prell, Miriyam Glaser, Susan Klingenstein, Alicia Ostriker, Lawrence Thomas, and Ruth Behar. For all of them, Jewishness is messy and complicated. Thomas, for instance, addresses the complexity of his Black Jewishness while Klingenstein confronts a broken German-Jewish legacy in America. These are especially poignant accounts.

Before concluding, I want to raise a few questions about this volume's dedication. Why do these editors use "Z"l," a Hebrew acronym meaning "of blessed memory," in the opening of their dedication? And what does it mean to refer to the grandparents of their contributors as "progenitors all" at its conclusion? Although no doubt well intended, both gestures belie a desire for a more simple and unified Jewish position, a longing echoed in the traditional epigraphs that open each section of the book. The editors seem to want to ground their volume in a shared familial Jewish piety. However, framing their volume in this way obscures certain differences and mutes the accounts of contributors who do not share the religious vision of Jewishness that these gestures suggest. Nonetheless, what these volumes, as a group, do best is to challenge the assumption that there is a single unified Jewish position. In its own way, then, each contributes to Jewish cultural studies. ■