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ants, who seems to find his subject likable but not admirable, has produced a book better than Reynolds deserves.

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Allen Tate: Orphan of the South. By Thomas A. Underwood. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000. viii, 447 pp. \$35.00, ISBN 0-691-06950-6.)

Thomas A. Underwood's long-awaited biography of the poet and critic Allen Tate (1899–1979) focuses on Tate's obsessions with regional identity, personal alienation, and cultural dispossession. Born in Winchester, Kentucky, Tate spent his youth moving among various cities in the upper South and lower Midwest. His formidable mother, Eleanor Custis Varnell Tate, intended to escape Tate's father—a hard-drinking, unreliable, and often volatile man; in the process, she nearly suffocated young Allen with her overbearing attentions. She even accompanied him to college, moving with him to Nashville, Tennessee, as he matriculated at Vanderbilt University. Tate eventually asserted his personal independence; his emotional independence was more difficult to achieve.

At Vanderbilt, Tate fell in with a lively intellectual circle. Together they published the *Fugitive* (1922–1925), a well-respected poetry magazine, and *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* (1930), a blast at industrial capitalism. Much of this activity, Underwood argues, was shaped by Tate's childhood. Tate felt himself, Underwood believes, an "orphan," emotionally disconnected from the parents whom he resented and, consequently, from his personal and regional heritage. "Fleeing from his parents while idealizing his ancestors," Underwood argues, Tate "attempted, first through politics and then through art, to replace his spiritual loneliness with ideological assuredness." Thus Underwood finds the root of Tate's art of exile and loss, exemplified by "Ode to the Confederate Dead" (1927), a bleak commentary on modern solipsism and alienation, and by *The Fathers* (1938), a novel that serves both as the capstone of Underwood's study and as evidence of Tate's final rec-

onciliation with his own and his region's past, in his childhood trauma.

Underwood's excellent and enlightening biography is exhaustively researched and scrupulously documented. His suggestion that the ardent southernism of Tate's mother and his first wife, the novelist Caroline Gordon, adds a complicating dimension to Tate's own displays of southern bravado is persuasive. Yet it is not clear why Tate's understandable resentment of his parents would lead him to feel an "orphan of the South." Underwood shows more clearly than ever why Tate's ambivalence about his family blocked his ambitions to write a filiopiestic parable of the South. (In the 1930s, Tate agonized over a never-completed project that was to blend his own family's history with that of the South.) It is, however, becoming less clear that Tate was especially tortured by southernness per se. It was his family, not the South, that he labeled "terrible."

Moreover, in his eagerness to show that Tate's preoccupation with southern materials was rooted in a need to master his sense of alienation from the South, Underwood slights other issues, for example, Tate's unusually combative personality. Underwood is noticeably more successful in sketching in the literary background of Tate's life than in explaining his intellectual development. And there is little here on the other people in Tate's life, most notably Caroline. They appear as props in Tate's own search for spiritual redemption. For that matter, Tate's religious life (he later became a noted convert to Roman Catholicism) is left largely unexamined. Nonetheless, Underwood's expertly crafted biography is authoritative. His analysis of Tate's vexing inner life deepens, even if it does not resolve, longstanding debates about Tate's complex role in southern cultural history.

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Cop Knowledge: Police Power and Cultural Narrative in Twentieth-Century America. By Christopher P. Wilson. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. xii, 281 pp. Cloth, \$42.00, ISBN 0-226-90132-7. Paper, \$16.00, ISBN 0-226-90133-5.)

In *Cop Knowledge*, Christopher P. Wilson takes on the job of linking cultural theory to the history of policing in the twentieth-century United States. A professor of English and American studies, Wilson has reached across academic disciplines to understand how postindustrial Americans have understood the role of police in society, how police articulate professionalism and ethics, and how stories about policing create a cultural apparatus that shapes judicial outcomes. These stories, which constitute “cop knowledge,” circulate among the cultural producers, subjects, and audiences Wilson examines: policy makers, beat cops, journalists and other mass culture producers, and social scientists. Stories police tell about themselves, he argues, “play off of and feed back from media formations, becom[ing] not separate from the everyday routines of police work, but actually encoded in them.”

Following newer scholarship on crime that links cultural production to political knowledge, Wilson explores most closely the genres that make the greatest claims to truth: social science, journalism, police procedural fiction, and true crime nonfiction. Police stories express, he argues, a residual populism in which a white, ethnic, working-class hero is both the engine of reform and the victim of reformers. After an excellent introduction that surveys the different academic approaches that have been authoritative in explaining police power, individual chapters skip to suggestive moments of police reform in which new genres emerge to tell the story: Stephen Crane’s public defense of a woman accused of prostitution; the emergence of the police procedural as a literary and film genre; the former cop Joseph Wambaugh’s fiction; late-twentieth-century “true crime” journalism; and the role of newspaper coverage of gang violence in creating an authoritative “community voice” that lends legitimacy to what might otherwise be arbitrary choices about guilt and innocence.

This book is ambitious; two themes should spark new research among many historians and dismay among others wedded to more traditional intellectual models. One is that political history does not exist outside of the cultural apparatuses that frame knowledge for any given period. Wilson entertains great skepticism about two major sources of evi-

dence—participatory research and crime statistics—arguing, correctly in my view, that journalists and academics need to remember that “faulty assumptions about ‘real’ crime or policing can arise while unknowingly invoking the knowledge constituted by the police themselves.” Asserting that the twentieth century began and ended with the same idea—community authority embodied by the beat cop—he also makes a persuasive argument that similar stories recur in different disguises. In other words, the history of police reform would not represent change over time as historians have understood that concept, and all so-called reforms should be understood as similar attempts by the state to reinforce old class and race hierarchies with increasingly less visible technologies. In addition to being a pleasure to read, *Cop Knowledge* is suggestive; Wilson has opened up important new possibilities for studying both policemen and criminals.

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Hard-Boiled: Working-Class Readers and Pulp Magazines. By Erin A. Smith. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000. xiv, 215 pp. Cloth, \$64.50, ISBN 1-56639-768-5. Paper, \$19.95, ISBN 1-56639-769-3.)

Erin A. Smith has produced an informative account of how hard-boiled detective fiction both reflected and compensated for the gender, class, and racial anxieties of its white, male, and working-class readership in the period between the wars. Examining little-known contributors to pulp magazines such as *Black Mask* as well as canonical writers in the genre such as Erle Stanley Gardner, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler and deploying a theoretical apparatus drawn from Michel de Certeau, Judith Butler, Pierre Bourdieu, and David Roediger, Smith makes various inferences about that readership.

Not only did detective pulp fiction present heroes marked by physical prowess, fluid movement between classes, and control over their conditions of work; the accompanying advertisements offered commodities—from clothing to vocabulary lessons to courses in