Contemporary Literary Criticism

CLC 61

ISSN 0091-3421

Volume 61

Contemporary Literary Criticism

Excerpts from Criticism of the Works of Today's Novelists, Poets, Playwrights, Short Story Writers, Scriptwriters, and Other Creative Writers

Roger Matuz
EDITOR

Cathy Falk
Mary K. Gillis
Sean R. Pollock
David Segal
Bridget Travers
Robyn V. Young
ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Gale Research Inc. • DETROIT • NEW YORK • LONDON

STAFF

Roger Matuz, *Editor*

Cathy Falk, Mary K. Gillis, Sean R. Pollock, David Segal,
Bridget Travers, Robyn V. Young, *Associate Editors*

Susanne Skubik, *Assistant Editor*

Jeanne A. Gough, *Production & Permissions Manager*
Linda M. Pugliese, *Production Supervisor*
Suzanne Powers, Maureen A. Puhl, Linda M. Ross, Jennifer Van Sickle, *Editorial Associates*
Donna Craft, James G. Wittenbach, *Editorial Assistants*

Victoria B. Cariappa, *Research Manager*
H. Nelson Fields, Judy L. Gale, Maureen Richards, *Editorial Associates*
Jennifer Brostrom, Paula Cutcher, Alan Hedblad, Robin Lupa, *Editorial Assistants*

Sandra C. Davis, *Permissions Supervisor (Text)*
Josephine M. Keene, Kimberly F. Smilay, *Permissions Associates*
Maria L. Franklin, Michele Lonoconus, Camille P. Robinson,
Shalice Shah, Denise M. Singleton, Rebecca A. Stanko, *Permissions Assistants*

Patricia A. Seefelt, *Permissions Supervisor (Pictures)*
Margaret A. Chamberlain, *Permissions Associate*
Pamela A. Hayes, Lillian Quickley, *Permissions Assistants*

Mary Beth Trimper, *Production Manager*
Marilyn Jackman, *External Production Associate*

Art Chartow, *Art Director*
C. J. Jonik, *Keyliner*

Laura Bryant, *Production Supervisor*
Louise Gagné, *Internal Production Associate*

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 76-38938
ISBN 0-8103-4435-1
ISSN 0091-3421

Printed in the United States of America

Published simultaneously in the United Kingdom
by Gale Research International Limited
(An affiliated company of Gale Research Inc.)

Preface

Named "one of the twenty-five most distinguished reference titles published during the past twenty-five years" by *Reference Quarterly,* the *Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC)* series has provided readers with critical commentary and general information on more that 2,000 authors now living or who died after December 31, 1959. Previous to the publication of the first volume of *CLC* in 1973, there was no ongoing digest monitoring scholarly and popular sources of critical opinion and explication of modern literature. *CLC,* therefore, has fulfilled an essential need, particularly since the complexity and variety of contemporary literature makes the function of criticism especially important to today's reader.

Scope of the Series

CLC presents significant passages from published criticism of works by creative writers. Since many of the authors covered by *CLC* continually inspire critical commentary, writers are often represented in more than one volume. There is, of course, no duplication of reprinted criticism.

Authors are selected for inclusion for a variety of reasons, among them the publication or dramatic production of a critically acclaimed new work, the reception of a major literary award, revival of interest in past writings, or the dramatization of a literary work as a film or television screenplay. The present volume of *CLC* includes:

- Award-winning dramatists María Irene Fornés, an influential force in off-Broadway theater; Larry Gelbart, author of *City of Angels,* which garnered several Tony Awards in 1990; and George F. Walker, two-time recipient of the Canadian Governor General's Award.
- Stephen King, author of many popular works of horror, and Sue Townsend, who wrote the best-selling *Adrian Mole Diaries.*
- Anthony Burgess and Thomas Bernhard, widely regarded as major figures in contemporary literature.

Perhaps most importantly, works that frequently appear on the syllabuses of high school and college literature courses are represented by individual entries in *CLC.* Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises,* Jack Kerouac's *On the Road,* and Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* are examples of works of this stature represented in *CLC,* Volume 61. Attention is also given to several other groups of writers—authors of considerable public interest—about whose work criticism is often difficult to locate. These include mystery and science fiction writers, literary and social critics, foreign writers, and authors who represent particular ethnic groups within the United States.

Format of the Book

Altogether there are about 500 individual excerpts in each volume—with approximately seventeen excerpts per author—taken from hundreds of book review periodicals, general magazines, scholarly journals, monographs, and books. Entries include critical evaluations spanning from the beginning of an author's career to the most current commentary. Interviews, feature articles, and other published writings that offer insight into the author's works are also presented. Students, teachers, librarians, and researchers will find that the generous excerpts and supplementary material provided by *CLC* supply them with vital information needed to write a term paper, analyze a poem, or lead a book discussion group. In addition, complete bibliographical citations facilitate the location of the original source and provide all of the information necessary for a term paper footnote or bibliography.

A *CLC* author entry consists of the following elements:

- The **author heading** cites the form under which the author has most commonly published, followed by birth date, and death date when applicable. Uncertainty as to a birth or death date is indicated by a question mark.

- A **portrait** of the author is included when available.

- A brief **biographical and critical introduction** to the author and his or her work precedes the excerpted criticism. The first line of the introduction provides the author's full name, pseudonyms (if applicable), nationality, and a listing of genres in which the author has written. Since *CLC* is not intended to be a definitive biographical source, *cross-references* have been included to direct readers to these useful sources published by Gale Research: *Short Story Criticism* and *Children's Literature Review*, which provide excerpts of criticism on the works of short story writers and authors of books for young people, respectively; *Contemporary Authors,* which includes detailed biographical and bibliographical sketches of nearly 95,000 authors; *Something about the Author,* which contains heavily illustrated biographical sketches of writers and illustrators who create books for children and young adults; *Dictionary of Literary Biography,* which provides original evaluations and detailed biographies of authors important to literary history; and *Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series* and *Something about the Author Autobiography Series*, which offer autobiographical essays by prominent writers for adults and those of interest to young readers, respectively. Previous volumes of *CLC* in which the author has been featured are also listed in the introduction.

- The **excerpted criticism** represents various kinds of critical writing, ranging in form from the brief review to the scholarly exegesis. Essays are selected by the editors to reflect the spectrum of opinion about a specific work or about an author's literary career in general. The excerpts are presented chronologically, adding a useful perspective to the entry. All titles by the author featured in the entry are printed in boldface type, which enables the reader to easily identify the works being discussed. Publication information (such as publisher names and book prices) and parenthetical numerical references (such as footnotes or page and line references to specific editions of a work) have been deleted at the editor's discretion to provide smoother reading of the text.

- A complete **bibliographical citation** designed to help the user find the original essay or book follows each excerpt.

New Features

Beginning with Vol. 60, *CLC* has incorporated two new features designed to enhance the usability of the series:

- A list of **principal works**, arranged chronologically and, if applicable, divided into genre categories, notes the most important works by the author.

- A **further reading** section appears at the end of entries on authors who have generated a significant amount of criticism other than the pieces reprinted in *CLC*. In some cases, it includes references to material for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights.

Other Features

- A list of **Authors Forthcoming in *CLC*** previews the authors to be researched for future volumes.

- An **Acknowledgments** section lists the copyright holders who have granted permission to reprint material in this volume of *CLC*. It does not, however, list every book or periodical reprinted or consulted during the preparation of the volume.

- A **Cumulative Author Index** lists all the authors who have appeared in *CLC, Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism, Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800, Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism,* and *Short Story Criticism,* with cross-references to these Gale series: *Children's Literature Review, Contemporary Authors, Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series, Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series, Dictionary of Literary Biography, Something about the Author, Something about the Author Autobiography Series, Yesterday's Authors of Books for Children,* and *Authors & Artists for Young Adults.* Readers will welcome this cumulated author index as a useful tool for locating an author within the various series. The index, which lists birth and death dates when available, will be particularly valuable for those authors who are identified with a certain period but whose death date causes them to be placed in another, or for those authors whose careers span two periods. For example, Ernest Hemingway is found in *CLC,* yet a writer often associated with him, F. Scott Fitzgerald, is found in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism.*

- A **Cumulative Nationality Index** alphabetically lists all authors featured in *CLC* by nationality, followed by numbers corresponding to the volumes in which they appear.

- A **Title Index** alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the current volume of *CLC*. Listings are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, novellas, dramas, films, record albums, and poetry, short story, and essay collections are printed in italics, while all individual poems, short stories, essays, and songs are printed in roman type within quotation marks; when published separately (e.g., T.S. Eliot's poem *The Waste Land*), the title will also be printed in italics.

- In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale has also produced a **special paperbound edition** of the *CLC* title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers and will be published with the first volume of *CLC* issued in each calendar year. Additional copies of the index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index: it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is disposable upon receipt of the following year's cumulation.

A Note to the Reader

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume in the Literary Criticism Series may use the following general forms to footnote reprinted criticism. The first example pertains to material drawn from periodicals, the second to material reprinted from books:

[1]Anne Tyler, "Manic Monologue," *The New Republic* 200 (April 17, 1989), 44-6; excerpted and reprinted in *Contemporary Literary Criticism,* Vol. 58, ed. Roger Matuz (Detroit: Gale Research, 1990), p. 325.

[2]Patrick Reilly, *The Literature of Guilt: From 'Gulliver' to Golding* (University of Iowa Press, 1988); excerpted and reprinted in *Contemporary Literary Criticism,* Vol. 58, ed. Roger Matuz (Detroit: Gale Research, 1990), pp. 206-12.

Suggestions Are Welcome

The editors welcome the comments and suggestions of readers to expand the coverage and enhance the usefulness of the series. Please feel free to contact us by letter or by calling our toll-free number: 1-800-347-GALE.

Acknowledgments

The editors wish to thank the copyright holders of the excerpted criticism included in this volume, the permissions managers of many book and magazine publishing companies for assisting us in securing reprint rights, and Anthony Bogucki for assistance with copyright research. We are also grateful to the staffs of the Detroit Public Library, the Library of Congress, the University of Detroit Library, Wayne State University Purdy/Kresge Library Complex, and the University of Michigan Libraries for making their resources available to us. Following is a list of the copyright holders who have granted us permission to reprint material in this volume of *CLC*. Every effort has been made to trace copyright, but if omissions have been made, please let us know.

COPYRIGHTED EXCERPTS IN *CLC*, VOLUME 61, WERE REPRINTED FROM THE FOLLOWING PERIODICALS:

America, v. 156, October 18, 1986 for a review of "Celebration" by Doris Betts. © 1986. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***The American Book Review,*** v. 10, July-August, 1988. © 1988 by *The American Book Review*. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***The American Poetry Review,*** v. 12, November-December, 1983 for "Pictures from Borges" by Mary Kinzie. Copyright © 1983 by World Poetry, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***Analog Science Fiction/ Science Fact,*** v. CII, November, 1982 for "Worlds" by Tom Easton; v. CIV, March, 1984 for "Worlds Apart: A Novel of the Near Future" by Tom Easton; v. CIX, February, 1989 for "Tool of the Trade" by Tom Easton; v. CIX, June, 1989 for "Anadems" by Tom Easton; v. CX, January, 1990 for "Buying Time" by Tom Easton. © 1982, 1984, 1989, 1990 by Davis Publications, Inc. All reprinted by permission of the author.—***Another Chicago Magazine,*** n. 16, 1986 for "Not for Sale in the U.S.A." by John Matthias. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***The Antioch Review,*** v. XIX, Spring, 1959. Copyright © 1959 by the Antioch Review, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the Editors.—***Arizona Quarterly,*** v. 44, Summer, 1988 for "Love and Friendship/Man and Woman in 'The Sun Also Rises'" by Sibbie O'Sullivan. Copyright © 1988 by Arizona Board of Regents. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.—***The Atlantic Monthly,*** v. 212, December, 1963 for "Books and Men: New Poetry" by Peter Davison; v. 258, September, 1986 for "The Triumph of the Nerds" by Lloyd Rose. Copyright 1963, 1986 by The Atlantic Monthly Company, Boston, MA. Both reprinted by permission of the respective authors.—***Belles Lettres: A Review of Books by Women,*** v. 3, July-August, 1988. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Black American Literature Forum,*** v. 16, Spring, 1982 for "Listening and Living: Reading and Experience in 'Their Eyes Were Watching God'" by Maria Tai Wolff. Copyright © 1982 Indiana State University. Reprinted by permission of Indiana State University and the author./ v. 19, Winter, 1985. Copyright © 1985 Indiana State University. Reprinted by permission of Indiana State University.—***Black Review,*** n. 2, 1972 for "Eatonville's Zora Neale Hurston: A Profile" by Larry Neal. © 1972 by William Morrow and Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***Bomb Magazine,*** Fall, 1984. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Book Week—The Washington Post,*** June 4, 1967. © 1967, *The Washington Post*. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Book World—The Washington Post,*** June 13, 1982; May 13, 1984; August 24, 1986; September 7, 1986; November 9, 1986; June 14, 1987; November 29, 1987; November 20, 1988; March 5, 1989. © 1982, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989 *The Washington Post*. All reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Boston Review,*** v. XI, December, 1986 for a review of "Celebration" by Edith Milton. Copyright © 1986 by the Boston Critic, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***British Book News,*** August, 1984. © *British Book News,* 1984. Courtesy of *British Book News*.—***Bucknell Review,*** v. XXI, Fall, 1973. Copyright © by *Bucknell Review* 1973. Reprinted by permission of Associated University Presses.—***Canadian Drama/L'Art dramatique canadien,*** v. 11, 1985 for "Zastrozzi" by Bryan Johnson./ v. 11, 1985 for a review of "The Art of War" by Ray Conlogue; v. 11, 1985 for a review of "The Art of War" by Boyd Neil. Copyright © 1985 *Canadian Drama/L'Art dramatique canadien.* Both reprinted by permission of the respective authors.—***The Centennial Review,*** v. XXII, Winter, 1978 for "'An Image to Dance Around': Bret and Her Lovers in 'The Sun Also Rises'" by Sam S. Basket. © 1978 by *The Centennial Review*. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.—***Chicago Tribune,*** October 6, 1957. © copyrighted 1957, Chicago Tribune Company, renewed 1985.—***Chicago Tribune—Books,*** November 8, 1987 for "Lust for Life" by Constance Markey. © copyrighted 1987, Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***Critical Quarterly,*** v. 27, Spring, 1985. © Manchester University Press 1985. Reprinted by permission of Manchester University Press.—***Criticism,*** v. XXVI, Winter, 1984 for "Lovers' Discourse in 'The Sun Also Rises': A Cock and Bull Story" by Nina Schwartz. Copyright, 1984, Wayne State University Press. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.—***Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction,*** v. XXVIII, Winter, 1987. Copyright © 1987 Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Reprinted with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation, published by Heldref Publications, 4000 Albemarle Street, N. W., Washington DC 20016.—***The Commonweal,*** v. LXVI, September 13, 1957. Copyright © 1957, renewed 1985, Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Daily News,*** New York, October 13, 1989; December 12, 1989. © 1989 New York News Inc. Both reprinted with permission.—***Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters,*** v. 11, 1981. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Encounter,*** v. LX, April, 1983; v. LXIX, July-August, 1987; v. LXXX, April, 1988. © 1983, 1987, 1988 by

Group Publications, Inc. All reprinted by permission of *The Village Voice* and the respective authors.—***Voice of Youth Advocates,*** v. 9, December, 1986. Copyrighted 1986 by ***Voice of Youth Advocates.*** Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***The Wall Street Journal,*** December 18, 1989 for "Broadway Gets Bitchy" by Edwin Wilson. © Dow Jones & Company, Inc. 1989. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the author.—***West Coast Review of Books,*** v. 12, July-August, 1986. Copyright 1986 by Rapport Publishing Co., Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—***Women's Studies,*** v. 13, 1986 for "Phoeby's Hungry Listening" by Alice Reich. © Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, Inc., 1986. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.—***World Literature Written in English,*** v. 29, Spring, 1989 for " 'The Ultimate Oppression': Discourse Politics in Kate Grenville's Fiction" by Gerry Turcotte. © copyright 1989 *WLWE-World Literature Written in English.* Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.

COPYRIGHTED EXCERPTS IN *CLC,* VOLUME 61, WERE REPRINTED FROM THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

Baker, Carlos. From ***Hemingway: The Writer as Artist.*** Third edition. Princeton University Press, 1963. Copyright, © 1952, © 1956, 1963, by Carlos Baker. Reprinted with permission of Princeton University Press.—Bergonzi, Bernard. From ***The Early H. G. Wells: A Study of the Scientific Romances.*** Manchester University Press, 1961. Copyright © Bernard Bergonzi, 1961. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Brée, Germain. From "Michel Leiris: Mazemaker," in ***Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical.*** Edited by James Olney. Princeton University Press, 1980. Copyright © 1980 by Princeton University Press. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.—Calandra, Denis. From ***New German Dramatists.*** Grove Press, 1983. Copyright © 1983 by Denis Calandra. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Grove Press, Inc.—Collings, Michael R. From ***The Stephen King Phenomenon.*** Starmont House, Inc., 1987. Copyright © 1987 by Starmont House, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Curtis, Tony. From "Grafting the Sour to Sweetness: Anglo-Welsh Poetry in the Last Twenty-Five Years," in ***Wales, the Imagined Nation: Studies in Cultural and National Identity.*** Edited by Tony Curtis. Poetry Wales Press, 1986. © Poetry Wales Press, 1986. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Feied, Frederick. From ***No Pie in the Sky: The Hobo as American Cultural Hero in the Works of Jack London, John Dos Passos, and Jack Kerouac.*** The Citadel Press, 1964. Copyright © 1964 by Frederick Feied. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Fitzpatrick, Peter. ***After "The Doll": Australian Drama Since 1955.*** Edward Arnold (Australia) Pty. Ltd. © Peter Fitzpatrick 1979. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the author.—Fornes, Maria Irene, Kathleen Betsko, and Rachel Koenig. From an interview in ***Interviews with Contemporary Women Playwrights.*** By Kathleen Betsko and Rachel Koenig. Beech Tree Books, 1987. Copyright © 1987 by Kathleen Betsko and Rachel Koenig. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Beech Tree Books, a division of William Morrow and Company, Inc.—Garrett, George. From ***Understanding Mary Lee Settle.*** University of South Carolina Press, 1988. Copyright © University of South Carolina 1988. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Hook, Andrew. From "Art and Life in 'The Sun Also Rises'," in ***Ernest Hemingway: New Critical Essays.*** Edited by A. Robert Lee. London: Vision Press, 1983. © 1983 by Vision Press Ltd. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Magistrale, Tony. From ***Landscape of Fear: Stephen King's American Gothic.*** Bowling Green State University, 1988. Copyright © 1988 by Bowling Green State University Popular Press. Reprinted by permission of the authors.—Marranca, Bonnie. From ***American Playwrights.*** By Bonnie Marranca and Gautam Dasgupta. Drama Book Specialists (Publishers), 1981. Copyright © 1981 by Bonnie Marranca and Gautam Dasgupta. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Marranca, Bonnie. From "The Real Life of Maria Irene Fornes," in ***Theatrewritings.*** © PAS Publication, 1984. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Robinson, Christopher. From ***French Literature in the Twentieth Century.*** David & Charles (Publishers) Limited, 1980. © Christopher Robinson 1980. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the Peters, Fraser & Dunlop Group Ltd.—Rovit, Earl H. From "Ernest Hemingway: 'The Sun Also Rises'," in ***Landmarks of American Writing.*** Edited by Hennig Cohen. Basic Books, 1969. Copyright © Basic Books, Inc. 1969. Reprinted by permission of the author.—Stoekl, Allan. From ***Politics, Writing, Mutilation: The Cases of Bataille, Blanchot, Roussel, Leiris, and Ponge.*** University of Minnesota Press, 1985. Copyright © 1985 by the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Vance, Jane Gentry. From "Mary Lee Settle: 'Ambiguity of Steel'," in ***American Women Writing Fiction: Memory, Identity, Family, Space.*** Edited by Mickey Pearlman. University Press of Kentucky, 1989. Copyright © 1989 by The University Press of Kentucky. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.—Wilentz, Gay. From "Defeating the False God: Janie's Self-Determination in Zora Neale Hurston's 'Their Eyes Were Watching God'," in ***Faith of a (Woman) Writer.*** Contributions in Women's Studies, No. 86. Edited by Alice Kessler-Harris and William McBrien. Greenwood Press, 1988. Copyright © 1988 by Hoftsra University. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., Westport, CT.—Young, Philip. From ***Ernest Hemingway.*** Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1952. Copyright, 1952, renewed 1980 by Philip Young. Reprinted by permission of the author.

PHOTOGRAPHS APPEARING IN *CLC,* VOLUME 61, WERE RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

Photograph by Jon Jones. Courtesy of Viking Penguin: **p. 1;** Photograph by Andrej Reiser: **p. 7;** © Jerry Bauer: **pp. 33, 114, 151, 317, 340, 363;** Courtesy of Alex Buzo: **p. 50;** Photograph by Tim Richmond: **p. 85;** Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah: **pp. 125, 277;** Courtesy of Larry Gelbart: **p. 144;** © 1989 Gay Haldeman: **p. 168;** The Granger Collection, New York: **p. 188;** Courtesy of Clifford J. Hurston, Jr.: **p. 235;** Courtesy of Mary Lee Settle: **p. 368;** Photograph by Layle Silbert: **p. 389;** Photograph by Mark Gerson: **p. 406;** Courtesy of Great Northern Artists Management Inc.: **p. 422.**

Authors Forthcoming in *CLC*

To Be Included in Volume 62

Martin Amis (English novelist, critic, and short story writer)—Amis employs a flamboyant prose style in satirical novels that castigate hedonism in contemporary society. Criticism in this entry will focus on *Einstein's Monsters*, a short story collection, and *London Fields*, which is widely considered Amis's most ambitious novel.

John Berryman (American poet and critic)—A key figure in the group of American poets known as the "Middle Generation," Berryman expanded the boundaries of post-World War II poetry with his intense, confessional verse and his imaginative adaptations of various poetic forms and personae. The recent publication of Berryman's *Collected Poems* has revived interest in the work of this influential poet.

Anthony Burgess (English novelist, essayist, and critic)—Considered among the most important novelists in contemporary literature, Burgess is a prolific writer best known for his dystopian novel *A Clockwork Orange*. His work, which covers a vast range of topics, frequently explores the conflict between free will and determinism and the role of the artist in society.

Henry Dumas (American short story writer and poet)—Considered an author of extraordinary talent, Dumas did not achieve critical recognition until after his death in 1968. His posthumously published collections *Ark of Bones* and *Goodbye Sweetwater* emphasize the African heritage of black Americans as he chronicles their divergent experiences in the rural South and the industrial North.

Lorraine Hansberry (American dramatist)—The first African-American woman to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, Hansberry is best known for *A Raisin in the Sun*. This acclaimed play about a black working-class family's attempt to move into a white neighborhood will be the focus of her entry.

Tony Hillerman (American novelist)—Valued for their accurate and evocative depictions of Native American life on reservations of the Southwest, Hillerman's popular and critically respected mystery novels feature Navajo tribal policemen who employ both modern crime-fighting methods and ancient Navajo philosophy.

Margaret Laurence (Canadian novelist and short story writer)—One of Canada's most prominent contemporary writers, Laurence is respected for her "Manawaka" works, a series of four novels and a volume of short stories that examine Canadian social and historical issues through their evocation of small-town Manitoba life.

Cynthia Ozick (American short story writer and novelist)—Ozick is praised for her intricate, poetic fiction that incorporates magical elements within narratives concerning Jewish identity. This entry will focus on Ozick's recent works, *The Messiah of Stockholm* and *The Shawl*.

Sylvia Plath (American poet and novelist)—Considered one of the most powerful poets of the post-World War II era, Plath examined conflicts relating to her familial, marital, and career aspirations. This entry will concentrate on her autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar*, which portrays a young woman's struggles with despair and her attempts to assert a strong female identity.

Thomas Pynchon (American novelist and short story writer)—A preeminent author of postmodern works best known for his celebrated novel *Gravity's Rainbow*, Pynchon has attracted renewed critical interest with the publication of *Vineland*, his first novel in seventeen years.

Christy Brown (Irish autobiographer and poet)—Crippled from birth by cerebral palsy, Brown is recognized for his celebrated autobiography *My Left Foot*, which was adapted into an Academy Award-winning film. Brown also wrote several novels, including *Down All the Days* and *A Shadow on Summer*, as well as numerous volumes of poetry.

Albert Camus (Algerian-born French novelist and essayist)—Awarded the Nobel Prize in 1957, Camus is renowned for writings that defend the dignity and decency of the individual and assert that one can transcend absurdity through purposeful actions. This entry will focus on his novels.

Tess Gallagher (American poet and short story writer)—Gallagher won acclaim for her direct yet subtle approach to family relations and the passage of time in two recent publications, *Amplitude: New and Selected Poems* and *The Lover of Horses and Other Stories*.

Shelby Hearon (American novelist and short story writer)—Described as a "female Larry McMurtry," Hearon sets much of her fiction in Texas or surrounding locales and presents strong and colorful female protagonists.

Joseph Heller (American novelist)—Heller is a popular contemporary satirist whose provocative blend of farce and tragedy is most often applied to the absurd machinations of large bureaucracies. His entry will focus on his most famous work, *Catch-22*, an irreverent portrayal of American armed forces during World War II.

Elia Kazan—(Turkish-born American filmmaker and novelist)—An award-winning director of such films as *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *On the Waterfront*, and *A Face in the Crowd*, Kazan also drew attention for several novels he wrote following his film career.

Boris Pasternak (Russian poet and novelist)—Awarded the 1958 Nobel Prize in Literature, which he was forced to decline under political pressure, Pasternak is best known for his novel *Dr. Zhivago*, an account of the Russian Revolution, but is equally respected for his complex, mystical poetry.

Upton Sinclair (American journalist and novelist)—A leading figure in the Muckraking movement, a term denoting the aggressive style of exposé journalism that flourished in the United States during the early 1900s, Sinclair aroused international furor with his best-selling novel *The Jungle*. Exposing exploitative, unsanitary, and hazardous conditions in American meat-packing plants, *The Jungle* is considered an exemplary work of social protest literature.

Gloria Steinem (American nonfiction writer and editor)—Among the most well-known leaders of the contemporary feminist movement, Steinem cofounded *Ms.* magazine and wrote essays that influenced the personal and political lives of many women. Her best-known works include the essay collection *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* and her feminist biography of Marilyn Monroe.

Tom Stoppard (English dramatist)—A leading playwright in contemporary theater, Stoppard examines moral and philosophical themes within the context of comedy. Often described as "philosophical farces," his plays frequently draw upon Shakespeare's works to examine modern concerns, as in his his acclaimed work *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, which will be the focus of Stoppard's entry.

Contents

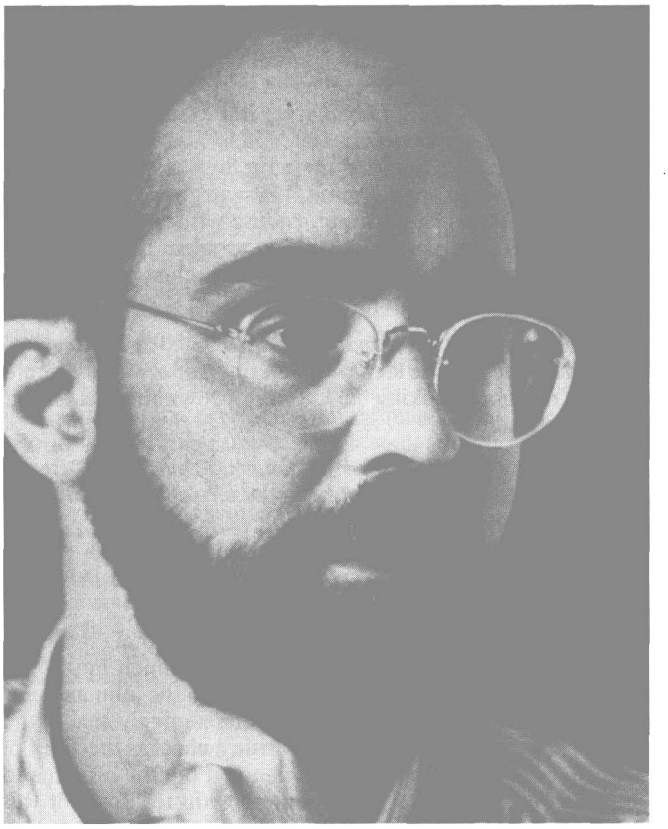
Nicholson Baker

1957-

American novelist and short story writer.

Baker has garnered critical acclaim for his unconventional first novel, *The Mezzanine.* Largely devoid of plot, action, and characterization, this work consists primarily of the labyrinthine thoughts of Howie, a detail-obsessed young businessman. The central event of the novel is Howie's escalator ride to the mezzanine level of his workplace after eating lunch and purchasing shoelaces. This uneventful premise inspires myriad flashbacks, digressions, footnotes, lists, charts, and ruminations by Howie on the minutiae of daily existence, and such ordinary objects as milk cartons, vending machines, ice cube trays, and paper towel dispensers are invested with an aura of wonder. Thus, Baker implies that seemingly trivial aspects of contemporary life possess great significance. Steven Moore commented: "[The narrator of *The Mezzanine*]—a Proust of the commonplace, a yuppie Tristram Shandy—links his own emotional history with recent technical advances by way of hundreds of analogies, metaphors, and fanciful comparisons that are so apt, so insightful, and often so amusing that I felt I was seeing the world I live in for the first time—as trite as that may sound."

Baker's second novel, *Room Temperature,* also focuses on the digressive musings of a man involved in a generally unremarkable activity—the feeding of his baby. As in *The Mezzanine,* Baker elaborates on this seemingly mundane plot to create numerous inventive similes and metaphors about the marvels of material objects and nature, often provoked by the protagonist's remembrance of events past and present.



PRINCIPAL WORKS

NOVELS

The Mezzanine 1988
Room Temperature 1990

BARBARA FISHER WILLIAMSON

[***The Mezzanine***] is the most daring and thrilling first novel since John Barth's 1955 *The Floating Opera,* which it somewhat resembles. It is innovative and original, words that usually translate into tedious to read, but it is never tedious. It is wonderfully readable, in fact gripping, with surprising bursts of recognition, humor, and wonder.

The entire action of the novel takes place during a 30-second ride on an escalator from the ground floor of an office building to its mezzanine, where the narrator works. During this ride, the narrator describes the events of his just-finished lunch hour along with numerous digressions. He has just purchased a new pair of shoelaces. His laces have both independently broken in the last two days, a coincidence that intrigues and irritates him and leads him into much speculation on the rubbing and wearing of surfaces as they come into contact with other surfaces. Most of his digressions are about the things of modern daily life: vending machines, plastic straws, aluminum popcorn poppers, staplers, paper towels. The descriptions of these things are more detailed, precise, and beautiful than a reader could imagine, verbal ballets of incredible delicacy. . . .

Many of these descriptions appear in tightly printed footnotes at the bottom of the page. Lists, including one on the relative frequency of thoughts during a year, interrupt the narrative. Thus, instead of a flowing chronology of events, a reader is confronted with an extraordinary and idiosyncratic train of thought. This novelistic tradition, which began with *Tristram Shandy,* is gracefully extended here.

In tiny droplets along the way, the narrator dispenses a few facts about himself. He is 23 years old on the day of the escalator ride, although he was born in 1957. He is tall, wears glasses always and ear plugs often. His name is Howie. He grew up in Rochester. His parents are divorced, and he has a girlfriend (a word he finds inadequate) he refers to only as L. Several of his co-workers seem to avoid him. His boss answers his one question with a cutting, sarcastic reply. He says he has no friends. Is he mad? Is his acute sensitivity to things and his complete neglect of people a form of madness? Have

corporate life, fast food, and convenience stores driven him nuts? Does the fragmentation of modern life lead to this?

While these questions occur to a reader, they don't press on him. Finally a reader doesn't care if Howie is mad or not, he's such wonderful, eccentric, unusual company, provides such a fresh new way of seeing and reflecting on the world.

Howie says of Boswell, Lecky and Gibbon, great footnote writers of the past. "They knew that the outer surface of truth is not smooth, welling and gathering from paragraph to shapely paragraph, but is encrusted with a rough protective bark of citations, quotation marks, italics, and foreign languages, a whole variorum crust of 'ibid.'s' and 'compare's and 'see's' that are the shield for the pure flow of argument as it lives for a moment in one mind." Howie gives the flow as it lives for a moment in his mind, ending with the exhilarating discovery that the shoelace-breaking problem has been tackled and perhaps solved by a Polish researcher, whose study he has found by chance.

And then abruptly the ride is over, the escalator has reached the mezzanine. Howie steps off, and the reader stands bereft, longing for more, looking back fondly "down the great silver glacier to the lobby."

Barbara Fisher Williamson, "Young Man Descending An Escalator," in Book World—The Washington Post, *November 13, 1988, p. 7.*

DAVID GATES

Here's the plot [of ***The Mezzanine***]: Howie, a young businessman, buys shoelaces at a CVS store on his lunch hour. The subplots? He chats with a secretary, goes to the john and eats a cookie. And thinks about things: the squiggly mark you make after "and 00/100" when writing checks, the lines of dust that never quite disappear when you ply the broom and dustpan. We ask art to hold the mirror up to life: isn't this how most of our days really go?

And just because this is a first novel, don't think it's fraught with romantic anguish over the dreariness of dailiness. Howie once reflects that he's "not nearly the magnitude of man I had hoped I might be," but that's just another thought, like his thought about whether or not he should put his hand on the handrail that the man just finished polishing. Nor is this a tragicomedy of tedium like Samuel Beckett's *Molloy*. . . . When Baker is funny (as in the men's room episode), he's more like Bruce Jay Friedman. Most of ***The Mezzanine,*** though, simply pays open-eyed, open-ended attention to "the often undocumented daily texture of our lives." It never switches on the rhetoric to bathe details in fake luminosity; it peddles no unifying vision. Some readers may have a problem with that: art, they'll say, must do more. More than show us our lives afresh? Maybe in Baker's next book. But most writers never get *this* far.

David Gates, "A Plot That's Completely Out to Lunch," in Newsweek, *Vol. CXIII, No. 1, January 2, 1989, p. 61.*

DREW JEWETT

Near the end of ***The Mezzanine,*** a young man called Howie sits in a public plaza outside an office building during his lunch hour. He has been eating a chocolate-chip cookies and drinking from a carton of milk. He has also been reading a Penguin Classics edition of Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations,* thrilled by the sentence, "Manifestly, no condition of life could be so well suited for the practice of philosophy as this in which chance finds you today!" Rising to enter the building and ride the escalator to his job on the mezzanine level, he carefully places the empty milk carton and cookie bag on an overflowing trash container. "A bee rose up from a sun-filled paper cup," he observes, "off to make slum honey from some diet root beer it had found inside."

The escalator ride that awaits Howie is the central narrative event in ***The Mezzanine,*** a first novel by Nicholson Baker. . . . The ride will depend on batteries of flashbacks and footnotes, as Howie ruminates on such matters as the likelihood of two shoelaces breaking within a day of each other, the evolution of stapler design, the advantages of paper versus plastic drinking straws, and the possibility that the dying off of brain cells is not such a bad thing. This landslide of trivial obsessions serves as Howie's diet root beer—the basis for a slum philosophy adaptable to his condition of life. That the bee has better chances is beside the point—Baker is much more concerned and impressed with the diligence of Howie's quest.

How it sits with the reader is another question. Baker's ornate flashback structure withholds the catalytic tableau I've outlined above until the very end of the novel. The escalator ride and its footnoted onslaught of petty analyses begin on the first page, and we're as likely to find ourselves mired in minutiae as our diligent hero is. (pp. 5-6)

Granted, Howie's obsessions take on certain themes that support his quest for a practical philosophy. One is the notion of the individual among an ordered many: paper towels in lavatory dispensers, Pez tablets in their plastic elevators, cardboard cups stacked in vending machines, and escalator steps that emerge temporarily from an unbroken plane. He also flirts with symbols of binding and connection: knots, from shoelaces to those on shirt-laundry packages, are favored subjects of discussion. But even when Howie comes closest to self-awareness, sensing his own mediocrity as "the sort of person who stood in a subway car and thought about buttering toast," he plunges immediately into luxurious reflections on the variables of slicing raisin toast and the fastest methods of opening paper bags.

Baker's fluid, occasionally beautiful prose is well suited to the stylistic choices he has made. His rhythms are impeccable, and his graceful swells of exuberance have a surprisingly pleasant impact in the navel-gazing world he has defined. But ***The Mezzanine's*** lack of development casts a self-consciously literary pall over the whole endeavor; for all his trouble, Baker only shadows the achievements of his stylistic predecessors. . . . Baker's footnotes only extend his narrator's mania, ceaselessly returning to what has already been established. It's a useful trick for defining character, but it long overstays its welcome. A well-crafted bore is still a bore.

The sense that Baker isn't playing fair, that he's only showing off, sets in early in ***The Mezzanine*** and drags on till the subtle, false moment of hope Baker throws Howie on the final page. Just as Howie works on a mezzanine—not a whole story up, a place not even serviced by elevators—his quest for meaning is suspended between childhood fixations and real progress. But Howie at least gets to ride an escalator; we have to climb Baker's maddening hills of beans. (p. 6)

Drew Jewett, in a review of "The Mezzanine," in VLS, *No. 71, January/February, 1989, pp. 5-6.*

ROBERT PLUNKET

I love novels with gimmicks. By that I mean novels that are told not through plain old narrative but rather through some enormously complicated technical stunt. The list of great ones is not long; *Tristram Shandy* comes to mind, and Nabokov's brilliant *Pale Fire,* a story told entirely in footnotes. I would even include Patrick Dennis's vastly underrated *Little Me.* Gimmick novels are often parodies, but this is not essential—just look at *Ulysses,* which I consider the ultimate gimmick novel.

The Mezzanine, a first novel by Nicholson Baker, a short story writer, is a definite contribution to this odd little genre: it has no story, no plot, no conflict. When somebody describes it to you it sounds stupid (which, by the way, is a characteristic of all good gimmick novels). Yet its 135 pages probably contain more insight into life as we live it than anything currently on the best-seller lists, with the possible exception of *The Frugal Gourmet Cooks American.* . . .

The Mezzanine is a very funny book about the human mind, in particular that part of the mind that processes the triviality of daily events that seem to have no importance but end up occupying so much of our existence. A few of the issues it deals with in depth (and I mean *depth;* he goes on for pages and pages, he even uses footnotes that go on for pages and pages). . . .

Gimmick novels are often narrated by an eccentric, and Howie certainly fills that bill. Though unremarkable on the surface—there is a girlfriend occasionally alluded to, plus an upper-middle-class set of parents—he leads such an intense inner life that he is compelled to make charts and equations concerning his thought processes. At one point he figures out what thoughts are childish thoughts and what are adult thoughts; at another he compiles a list of things he thinks about regularly and how many times a year he thinks about them. . . .

What makes Howie's ruminations so mesmerizing is the razor-sharp insight and droll humor with which Mr. Baker illuminates the unseen world. Take his description of the odd, tantalizing atmosphere of a discount drugstore, where they sell "important and secretive" products:

> Men and women eyed each other strangely here—unusual forces of attraction and furtiveness were at work. Things were for sale whose use demanded nudity and privacy. . . . You slip by a woman reading the fine print on a disposable vinegar douche kit. She feels you pass. *Frisson!*

Granted, you have to be in the right mood for this sort of thing (that's the reason they sell drinks at comedy clubs). And granted, ***The Mezzanine*** never transcends its gimmick to become more than a dazzling skit. But there is a first-rate comic mind at work here, so let's be thankful he's chosen to toil in the salt mines of fiction rather than making a fortune writing for David Letterman.

Robert Plunket, "Howie and the Human Mind," in The New York Times Book Review, *February 5, 1989, p. 9.*

STEVEN MOORE

This wonderful novel [***The Mezzanine***] begins at the bottom of the escalator a young man rides to the mezzanine level where he works, and ends at the top of the escalator a minute or so later. His circumstances at the time of that ride—returning from lunch with a bag containing new shoelaces, carrying a Penguin paperback of Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* . . .—provide the contents of the novel: what he had for lunch, why he needed new shoelaces, why he likes Penguin paperbacks, etc., all conveyed in reminiscences, digressions, footnotes (some as long as three pages), lists, and charts.

A mundane, even tedious subject for a novel? Not in this case, for Baker's delightful attempt to document "the often undocumented daily texture of our lives" also encompasses mini-histories of technical advances and human ingenuity in our time, from the workings of the escalator he rides to a celebration of perforation. At the end of a long footnote on "another fairly important development in the history of the straw," the narrator writes: "An unpretentious technical invention—the straw, the sugar packet, the pencil, the windshield wiper—has been ornamented by a mute folklore of behavioral inventions, unregistered, unpatented, adopted and fine-tuned without comment or thought." Giving voice to this mute folklore, the narrator—a Proust of the commonplace, a yuppie Tristram Shandy—links his own emotional history with recent technical advances by way of hundreds of analogies, metaphors, and fanciful comparisons that are so apt, so insightful, and often so amusing that I felt I was seeing the world I live in for the first time—as trite as that may sound. (pp. 249-50)

Steven Moore, in a review of "The Mezzanine," in The Review of Contemporary Fiction, *Vol. IX, No. 2, Summer, 1989, pp. 249-50.*

BRAD LEITHAUSER

Although Nicholson Baker's ***The Mezzanine*** might reasonably be described as a novel about a man who purchases a pair of shoelaces, the book's likable narrator, whose name is Howie, would probably protest that his story is far more action-packed than that. In the penultimate chapter Howie reflects on the range of activities he has presented to the reader:

> Chance found me that day having worked for a living all morning, broken a shoelace, chatted with Tina, urinated successfully in a corporate setting, washed my face, eaten half a bag of popcorn, bought a new set of shoelaces, eaten a hot dog and a cookie with some milk.

Needless to say, this is not a novel taut with suspense. Nor does it provide—prospective readers should early be advised—much in the way of plot development, disclosure of character, or emotional interplay.

What the book is, triumphantly, is a celebration. As it follows Howie through his notably—even spectacularly—uneventful lunch hour, ***The Mezzanine*** sings praises to seemingly humdrum minutiae, with especially keen-eyed attention given to the mechanical marvels of modern life. Baker is capable of lavishing hundreds, even thousands of words on a paper towel dispenser, a stapler, the perforations on a reply coupon, ice cube trays, drinking straws, milk containers, vending machines, a urinal, or an escalator handrail. Nearly all these

miniatures are dexterously and wittily delineated, and now and then, engineering a little miracle of blended exactitude and fancy, he manages to bring an everyday (and hence unnoticed) object into so pristine a focus that we see it as though for the first time. . . .

By electing to string the plot of this, his first novel, on something so tenuous as a shoelace—and a frayed shoelace at that—Baker boldly wagers everything on the proposition that his observational powers are in themselves sufficient to bind a novel securely. It's a sucker's bet—as Baker must have known. He has undertaken a job that is at once brutally taxing and easily dismissed; he is like the poet who commences a lengthy and elaborately formal piece of light verse, fully aware that if he once stumbles he will be spurned as clumsy and that even if he manages to pull off his feat, many will reject it as that contradiction in terms, a "mere tour de force."

Well, Baker does pull it off, and I know of no other first novel since Steven Millhauser's *Edwin Mullhouse* (1972) that offers so winning a mixture of charm, intelligence, and out-and-out weirdness. Millhauser's novel purported to be the biography of a great American writer who died at the age of eleven. It was at once a parody of academic hagiography, a mystery story, and a gruesome meditation on the parasitism of literary scholarship. What held it together—and what holds together ***The Mezzanine***—was a core of jubilation. Ostensibly an elegy, *Edwin Mullhouse* was actually a eulogy for the vividly pigmented joys of an American childhood. When Millhauser approached the subject of crayons, or playgrounds, or television cartoons, his prose thumped with life.

The kinship between the two novels deepens once one perceives that Howie's office, for all its sophisticated, high-tech trappings, is a sort of kindergarten. Howie is not so much working as playing at working. In a book that relishes detail of every sort, his duties are never defined. Howie himself cannot quite believe that he and his fellow workers . . . have entered the corridors of the "Big Kids." And if the world of contemporary fiction is overpopulated, at the moment, by young men who cannot quite accept that they have crossed the threshold into adulthood and its grown-up responsibilities, few of them can boast Howie's salvational gift for wonder. His is a wide-eyed amazement that doesn't blink; he sees far more than the adults around him ever will.

The Mezzanine asks to be read slowly, in brief, intense interludes. I had the bad luck to begin it (and almost to abandon it) on a transatlantic flight, where its quirky finenesses were steadily eroded by the grinding of the jet engine; this book is many things, but it is not a page-turner. And even under the best reading conditions, it occasionally seems designed to illustrate how fine is the line that separates admiration from vexation. Baker works hard to slow the reader down. The book comes thickly footnoted, and there are times when the little trickling rivulet of its narrative feels damned by the boulder-sized masses of type lodged beneath it. Baker is demanding in his vocabulary as well. ***The Mezzanine*** abounds with words of a sort for which—even if they are recognized—one would probably hesitate to venture a pronunciation during, say, an academic dinner: microscopy, vibratiuncles, cotyledonary, bungee, remorid. . . .

All the more impressive, then, is Baker's control over what he does. His baroque vocabulary rings true. He is a precisionist. And he succeeds in bringing the twin strains of his novel—the slender narrative, the outsize footnotes—to divergent but appropriate termini. His final footnote is an inspired collocation of improbabilities which concludes with a reference to an article in a technical journal (a *Polish* technical journal) concerning "abrasion resistance and knot slippage resistance of shoelaces." The narrative, by contrast, drifts off with a gentle, genial wave of the hand.

Having finessed his way through a remarkable debut, Nicholson Baker, who was born in 1957, ought to feel entitled to exult momentarily and not to fret overmuch about his next performance. His readers, however, will naturally speculate about what might follow so eccentric a première. Where will he go from here? . . .

The Mezzanine may well turn out to be the start for Baker of a splendidly unpeopled architecture. Or—perhaps more beguiling still—there's the possibility that in time he will manage to introduce into his microscopically tactile environment various forces that are not isolable under any magnifying lens—fears, confusions, allegiances, carnal desires, spiritual misgivings.

In an exuberant, extended footnote that serves as tribute to Frederick Mennen, the inventor of Jiffy Pop popcorn, Howie speaks of a newly exploded kernel as "potentiated cellulose." One is left to wonder what lively, outflung shapes Nicholson Baker will take as he potentiates.

Brad Leithauser, "Microscopy," in The New York Review of Books, *Vol. XXXVI, No. 13, August 17, 1989, p. 15.*

WALTER NASH

Nicholson Baker's ***The Mezzanine*** is a book about the mind electrically at odds with vacancy and repose; about the astonishing turbulence in the little grey cells of little grey people like you, and me, and Howie, who at lunchtime quits his office on the mezzanine floor and goes down the escalator to the street, to buy milk and cookies and a new pair of shoelaces. On the way we follow the movement of his mind through a conveyor-belt meditation, rigorous as a Zen discipline, zany as a Disneyland dance, on the everyday mechanics of things contemplated most minutely in particular. What things? Oh, just ordinary things, you know, things counter, original, spare, strange, spring-loaded, gear-driven, fully automated and packaged for your all-American convenience, that sort of thing. Howie's central preoccupation is with the working life of shoelaces and the rival hypotheses (there are two contenders) which may be adduced to explain not only how they come to break but also how one shoelace will snap within days of the other.

This is the argumentative mainstream, into which, however, flow frequent tributaries in the form of disquisitions on earplugs, date-stampers, staplers, shirt packagings, milk cartons, and men's rooms where you suffer the exquisite ignominy of keeping your water while all around you (especially the senior executives) are bountifully losing theirs. I should intone here a manifold and multi-conglomerate 'et cetera', because the foregoing list hardly begins to mention the things upon which the solitary Howie thinks, opines, and ungainsayably ratiocinates. He is falling-down-drunk with data, like a PhD student, and elaborates his observations with maniac footnotes which grow longer and longer, until they begin to outbalance the main text. . . .