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Devoted to the Interests of Teachers of French

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ARTICLES

PEDAGOGY

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June Gill

**"What Students
Do and Do Not
Know about
Paris"**

There is intense interest in the profession in teaching culture, but little hard evidence on which to judge success. The author tested 138 college students' knowledge about a common culture topic, Paris, using quantitative measures for greater accuracy. While students of French scored better than the control group, their knowledge proved to be spotty and superficial, especially in the areas of history and geography; for example, students know major monuments like the Louvre, but can't locate Paris geographically. Detailed analysis of the survey and suggestions for a "Paris Lesson Plan" are included.

FILM

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**Edward
Ousselin**

**"From le Moko
to le Pew: P  p  s
Transmogrifi-
cations"**

Julien Duvivier's 1937 film, *P  p   le Moko*, was not only remade twice by Hollywood—into *Algiers* (1938) and *Casbah* (1946)—it also inspired the creation of a cartoon character, Pepe le Pew, which over time became better known than its satirical sources, and which incorporated all the well-known negative stereotypes of France and the French. In the successive remakes and adaptations, the processes of alterity, subordination, and feminization shifted from the Algerian to the French characters, contributing to an amalgamation of Frenchness with a form of exoticism or Orientalism within American popular culture.

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poète qui se fait mythographe (Guy Demerson), tandis que dans la poésie galante de Desportes ce mythe est édulcoré et rendu plus abstrait (François Rouget). L'œuvre de d'Aubigné a fait l'objet de deux communications. Stephen Murphy examine le genre de la *disperara* dans les *Stances*, tandis que Jean-Raymond Fanlo fait ressortir l'image complexe de Diane dans *Le Printemps*. Cette partie poétique se termine par la communication de Gisèle-Mathieu Castellani qui fait l'historique du mythe de Diane, dont elle constate l'édulcoration au dix-septième siècle.

Ailleurs qu'en poésie, Diane se retrouve chez les mythographes de la Renaissance qui proposent des lectures moralisatrices du mythe (Hervé Campagne), ainsi que dans les pédagogies humanistes qui en dégagent une morale civique (Pierre Maréchaux). Dans le domaine iconographique, Frédérique Villemur montre l'usage moralisateur de l'histoire de Callisto, Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier étudie la symbolique de la salle des Bains du château de Fontainebleau, où figuraient des fresques de l'épisode de Callisto, alias la duchesse d'Etampes, maîtresse de François 1^{er}, tandis que Judith Bernstock soutient que les peintures de Poussin où figurait Diane avaient pour objet de célébrer la monarchie française. Trois autres communications portent sur Diane de Poitiers: celle d'Henri Zerner, qui analyse l'iconographie de Diane de Poitiers, celle de Patricia Z. Thompson, qui revient sur la vie du personnage, trop peu connue encore, et celle d'Éliane Viennot qui cherche à comprendre pourquoi les grandes femmes d'État ont pris les attributs de divinités. Edith Karagiannis étudie la représentation de Diane sur les médailles à la Renaissance, et Martine Vasselin s'intéresse au mythe de Diane tel qu'il apparaît sur les gravures du seizième et du dix-septième siècles. Nathalie Dauvois compare l'image de Diane dans la *Diana* de Montemayor à celle qu'en donne l'*Astrée* d'Honoré d'Urfé, et Rosanne Gorris Camos examine le personnage de Diane dans les *Amadis de Gaule* de Jacques Gohory. Enfin, deux communications (Jacques Barbier et Alice Tacaille) examinent la présence de Diane dans le domaine musical.

Ce magnifique ouvrage comporte de nombreuses illustrations en couleurs et en blanc et noir qui servent de compléments aux analyses. Une contribution essentielle aux études sur la mythologie en général, et sur Diane en particulier. Un ouvrage qui devrait figurer dans toutes les bibliothèques de recherche.

Minot State University (ND)

Christian Fantoni

RISKIN, JESSICA. *Science in the Age of Sensibility: The Sentimental Empiricists of the French Enlightenment*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2002. ISBN 0-226-72078-0 (HC); ISBN 0-226-72079-9. \$25.00 (PB). Pp. xiii + 338.

The paradox present in both the title and the subtitle of this eloquent, eminent-ly readable book may surprise the uninitiated reader and even some historians and dix-huitiémistes, the audiences most likely to be interested in and benefit from reading this work. Its focus is on the second half of the eighteenth century and in this context, the French Age of Sensibility might trigger literary references to an author like Madame Riccoboni, whose novels were immensely popular with contemporary audiences as her emotionally charged style made them weep over the fates of betrayed or abused women and abandoned orphans. The purported connection between such a connotation and science appears doubtful. Yet, it is reconfirmed in the subtitle, leaving us to contemplate the alleged sentimental nature of Enlightenment empiricists and to ponder how they were associated

with the Age of Reason, an era for which the supremacy of the mind over the emotions is not usually contested.

Using numerous archival materials and primary sources (both textual and visual), Riskin demonstrates with this book that science and sensibility were indeed linked inextricably during the French Enlightenment, thus justifying her creation of the neologism "sentimental empiricists." Riskin's study of the intersections between science and sensibility complicates our perception of both, yet it simultaneously elaborates and elucidates their individual contexts. Analyzing the pervasive influence of sentiment on such diverse disciplines as the study of blindness, physics, and politics, Riskin underscores the significance of a sentimental empiricist historiography: the eighteenth-century rationalism attacked by sentimental empiricists continues to be perceived as the defining characteristic of its era. Although this may be the ultimate mark of their success, sentimental empiricists deserve and need to be restored to the prominent role they played in establishing this predominant view of the French Enlightenment, while erasing themselves in and from the process. Riskin has succeeded exceedingly well in this worthy endeavor.

The book consists of an introduction, eight chapters, and a conclusion. In chapter 2, Riskin sketches how the experimental study of blindness, rejecting solipsism in favor of sensitivity under the influence of sentimentalist empiricism, led to the creation of a public instruction program for blind children. The allusion to Benjamin Franklin's "Poor Richard's Almanack" in chapter 3 launches two chapters in which the American scientist and diplomat plays a crucial part: "Poor Richard's Leyden Jar" describes his sensiblist physics and its eventual triumph over Nollett's mechanical theory. Chapter 4 traces how the Physiocrats subsequently translated Franklin's teleological empiricism into economic policies.

Other chapters also contain section headings facilitating the reader's comprehension, but chapter 5 appears even more structured as it is ingeniously presented as a classical play including a prologue, five acts, and an epilogue. In the final act of this "play" about a scientist's legal right to install a lightning rod, Robespierre appears on the scene in his prerevolutionary career as a lawyer and, as the dramatic *deus ex machina*, wins the scientist's case by means of sentimental empiricism-inspired arguments. The chapter's epilogue follows both Robespierre's and sentimental empiricism's careers into the heart of Revolutionary politics. In chapter 6, Riskin uses the investigation of mesmerism by Louis XV's commissioners to expose a crisis in sensiblist science heralding the Revolution: the imagination, found to be a crucial element in mesmerism, weakened the power of the senses and could thus leave people receptive to fanaticism. Chapter 7 depicts the battles sentimental empiricists faced in the domain of Revolutionary language: that of a new chemical nomenclature and that of pedagogy.

An extensive bibliography listing archival materials as well as primary and secondary sources concludes the book, providing an extensive resource for anyone interested in the French Enlightenment in general and its newly uncovered kinder, gentler side in particular. In the index, page ranges where a subject is discussed at length are listed in bold print, conveniently directing the reader to more in-depth information on a certain topic.