precisely what is required for mastering what is required in the workplace. In this respect, Darrah tacitly inverts the perspective that initiated his fieldwork by implicitly suggesting that the workplace could benefit by being modeled more like a successful classroom. By doing so, Darrah provides a useful resource for countering a form of bottom-line thinking that is far too prevalent on college campuses in administrators' calls for serving students as clients and marketing education as a commercial investment.

Ursula Dronke, ed., trans., and commentary. **The Poetic Edda, vol. 2: Mythological Poems**. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. Pp. xiv + 443, illustrations, bibliography. $120.00 cloth (both volumes).

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This book is the long-awaited second volume of Ursula Dronke's projected four volume translation with commentary of the Old Icelandic *Poetic Edda*. It is certain to become a widely cited version of the poems, especially for those who are not specialists in Icelandic and Scandinavian languages and mythology. Although Dronke writes that the "purpose of this edition is literary: to open up for the common reader the delights of the complexities and felicities of the poems, and to show the poets' intellectual command to their themes, mythological, religious, and human" (vii), her work seems to be aimed primarily at the student of Scandinavian mythology and literature, and secondarily at the student of comparative mythology.

Dronke's translations are reasonably accurate, though they do not always follow the Icelandic closely. In some cases it is obvious that she is trying to make the translation more readable, sometimes trying too hard to match the English to the corresponding Icelandic, and sometimes weighting the translation to privilege her interpretation of a passage. Two stylistic problems also stand out: her translations are sometimes too wordy for Old Icelandic, where compression and understatement dominate the tone and style of the poetry, and she often translates proper names—though not consistently in any poem.

Dronke's commentary has some problems as well, especially the tendency to fully present only that evidence most favorable to her readings and the failure to draw from relevant folklore scholarship and primary materials. For instance, while her commentary on "Völuspá" discusses the possible Christian contexts and influences for the poem, it minimizes them in favor of the argument that "Völuspá" is a pagan poem.

The lack of evidence from folk tradition and folklore scholarship shows clearly in Dronke's commentary on "Völundarkvida". Though she does

mention that the "motif of taking away a transforming garment, of bird or beast, in order to restore human form is not uncommon in folk-tale" (286), Dronke otherwise seems oblivious to the relevance of Germanic and Celtic folk narrative, with the exception of Old English, to understanding Völundarkvida"—while making comparisons to Hindemuth's opera *Cardillac*, Lappish shamanism, and Sanskrit mythology. The result is an interpretation that makes some interesting comparative points but ultimately seems rather more a flight of fancy rather than a well-grounded scholarly study.

As should be clear from the foregoing, many of Dronke's interpretations of the poems rest on speculations. Meaning is teased from texts through comparison with other mythologies, etymologies of the names of the gods and other characters, and what little information can be gleaned from later Icelandic literature. But, given the lack of evidence for Norse mythology outside of the few manuscripts of the Eddic poems and the *Prose Edda*, this is predictable and of no significance as long as the reader realizes that much of her, or anyone else's, interpretation of Norse mythology must be speculative. Though I have focused on the flaws of Dronke's commentary here, it is a suggestive work that poses a number of interesting questions and directions for the study of Norse mythology.

Harold Scheub. **Story**. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998. Pp. xi + 351, notes, bibliography, index. $65.00 cloth, $27.95 paper.

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Stories of all sorts are a part of life of all cultures. The media varies from place to place, and yet certain characteristics remain the same, medium aside. Harold Scheub's work is found across the oral-written divide, although it need not be relegated there. *Story* is in many ways a formalistic analysis of the performance and essence of tales, traditional or otherwise. Furthermore, he localizes the individual and unique within the collective and cultural. Although these may seem to be self-evident truths at this point in scholarship, Scheub's contribution is to illuminate the particulars of relations.

Somewhat surprisingly for a book published so recently, well into the age of post-modernism, Scheub relies heavily on structuralist and formalist theory. He demonstrates their continued potential applicability, finding intertextual ties without resorting to intertextual jargon. The features that he identifies tend to fall into bipartite divisions, yet he does not make categorical statements of being