

and mostly sunny disposition, a far cry from the dour determinism projected in his novels. Similarly, some readers will be unprepared for the complexity of his thought, which is much more nuanced than widely credited even by his admirers. In addition, the broadly accepted belief that he was programmatically anti-Semitic may undergo some revision. The interviews are sprinkled with laudatory comments about Jewish sensibilities and appreciation of the arts, though his attitude toward Jews did harden after his financial setback in the wake of the Wall Street collapse of 1929. Readers who think successful writers need a settled environment in which to produce will be disabused by the number of times Dreiser moved from apartments to studios to houses and back again, a function of his incessant restlessness.

Finally, some readers will be surprised to discover just how highly regarded Dreiser had become by the

1940s, after the tremendous popular and critical response to *An American Tragedy*. Nearly all of his interviewers proceeded from the assumption that he was the premier modern American novelist, an assessment that, though seldom broached today, is nonetheless still arguable. And the key to his importance is signaled by a 1907 interview in which he designated the subject matter that would continually absorb him, “the stretching out of the fingers to grasp.” All of Dreiser’s best writing explores the ways in which desire, most often followed by disillusionment, directs our lives.

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The Ohio Hopewell Episode Paradigm Lost and Paradigm Gained

By A. Martin Byers

(Akron, Ohio: University of Akron Press, 2004. Pp. xvi, 674. Maps, illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$59.95.)

The term Hopewell, in its most inclusive sense, refers to a series of regional prehistoric cultures that were situated in the mid-continent of North America and that existed for a few hundred years on either side of

year zero of the Common Era. These people were hunters, gatherers, fishers, and horticulturalists who had domesticated several indigenous plant species including sunflower, squash, goosefoot, sumpweed, and, perhaps,

other starchy and oily annual seed crops. The threads that tied them together into a major tradition were the construction of large earthworks and the fluorescence of a great artistic tradition executed in stone, metal, and pottery. Today, the most visible remains of these regional traditions are found in southern Ohio, in the valleys of the Scioto, Muskingum, and Little and Great Miami Rivers. The earthworks include large conical and loaf-shaped mounds that covered a variety of buildings, human remains (both within and outside of prepared tombs), and groups of cremations and caches of artifacts. There are also large geometric earthworks, some of which exceeded five meters high and enclosed up to sixty-five hectares. The manner by which these earthworks were constructed—the limited choice of geometric forms and construction techniques—provides the empirical starting point for the book's argument.

Byers begins with an unstated premise that can be attributed to the late nineteenth-century French sociologist Emile Durkheim: ritual practice makes and remakes society and individuals. Byers goes on to claim explicitly that Ohio Hopewell represented the land they occupied as a sacred commons, and that they organized themselves and their rituals to minimize their impact on and to renew the "Sacred Earth" (p. 9). The construction of the earthworks was central to such renewal. Byers postulates an age-graded (younger and older) communal cult that tran-

scended local residential units, in which shamans provided esoteric ritual know-how and through which competition was transcended for communal ends.

Throughout the book, Byers provides a cultural and representational argument for the development and operation of Ohio Hopewell society; he refers to his method as a "hermeneutic spiral" (p. 106). In fact, he presents a series of possible models and argues that if individually and collectively they are wrong, then his conclusion, which is left standing, must be correct. He presents earlier explanations for the form and substance of Ohio Hopewell culture and society—ecological determinism, social models based on settlement location and burial attributes, and political explanations—and finds them all wanting, either in part or in whole. Hence his "Inclusive Territorial/Custodial Domain Paradigm" (p. 9) and his Autonomous Cult Model (p. 577) must be correct. Unfortunately, such induction by elimination suffers a philosophical flaw—the presumption of its own conclusion—and does not constitute proof for the author's arguments.

In the end, after slogging through dense prose, numerous acronyms, and too many capitalized noun phrases, the reader is left with a residua of interesting insights about Ohio Hopewell that are not anchored in empirical archaeological evidence. The recent *Gathering Hopewell: Society, Ritual, and Ritual Interaction*, edit-

ed by Christopher Carr and Troy Case (2005), is a far better investment of time and money for those readers seeking the state of the art in Hopewell studies.

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Ohio's First Peoples

By James H. O'Donnell, III

(Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004. Pp. ix, 176. Maps, illustrations, notes, works cited, index. Clothbound, \$36.95; paperbound, \$17.95.)

Understanding what happened in Ohio in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century seems crucial to understanding the expansion of the American frontier and the development of the nation. Understanding what happened in Ohio is also crucial to understanding American Indian history and the dispossession of Native peoples across the continent. It is important, therefore, that the editors of the state's bicentennial series have included a book on Ohio's Indian peoples, one written by an historian with long-standing expertise on the period when the contest over Indian lands was at its height.

Ohio's First Peoples opens with a short chapter on the ancient woodland cultures and the apparent depopulation of the region in the seventeenth century. But the narrative hits its stride when Delawares, Shawnees, Wyandots, and other Indian groups reassembled in Ohio by the mid-eighteenth century, just as European competition for control of the region was coming to a head. In a

clear and concise style, O'Donnell traces the military and diplomatic struggles for the Ohio Valley in the French and Indian War, Pontiac's Revolt, Lord Dunmore's War, and the Revolution. He then traces the development of a northwestern Indian confederacy that repulsed two American armies before going down to defeat at Fallen Timbers and ceding most of Ohio at the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. With most of Ohio's native peoples displaced to Indiana, another movement of united Indian resistance arose in the first decade of the nineteenth century, led by Tenskwatawa, known as the Shawnee Prophet, and his brother Tecumseh. But by the 1840s, defeated in battle and dispossessed by treaties, most Indian people were gone from Ohio.

This is a well-worn story that has been related by many authors, but it remains so central to the history of Ohio and the nation that it merits telling many times. O'Donnell does not offer new interpretations, but his short book provides an accessible history, spiced with plenty of detail and