

David Hoogland Noon
University of Minnesota

¹ See, for example, Marouf A Hasian, Jr., *The Rhetoric of Eugenics in Anglo-American Thought* (Athens, Ga. 1996); Stephan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York 1994); Philip R. Reilly, *The Surgical Solution: A History of Involuntary Sterilization in the United States* (Baltimore 1991); Leila Zenderland, *Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of American Intelligence Testing* (New York 1998); Evelyn Fox Keller, "Nature, Nurture, and the Human Genome Project," in Daniel Kevles and Leroy Hood, eds., *The Code of Codes* (Cambridge, Ma. 1992); Ruth Hubbard and Elijah Wald, *Exploding the Gene Myth* (Boston 1993); Troy Duster, *Backdoor to Eugenics* (New York 1990); and Richard Lewontin, *Biology as Ideology: The Doctrine of DNA* (New York 1993).

² For compatible historical accounts of criminology, see Piers Beirne, *Inventing Criminology: Essays on the Rise of Homo Criminalis* (Albany 1993); Robert Nye, *Crime, Madness and Politics in Modern France: The Medical Concept of National Decline* (Princeton 1984); and Marie-Christine Leps, *Apprehending the Criminal: The Production of Deviance in Nineteenth-Century Discourse* (Durham 1992). On mental retardation, see James Trent, *Inventing the Feeble Mind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States* (Berkeley 1994).

³ See, for example, Nikolas Rose, *Inventing Our Selves: Psychology, Power, and Personhood* (New York 1996) and *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (New York 1990).

Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1998).

Both Grosrichard's work and its late 1970s companion, Edward Said's landmark *Orientalism* (1978) appeared within a year of each other, and both ostensibly share similar preoccupations: the dismantling and interrogation of Western "conceptions" of the Orient. Whilst *Orientalism* became internationally recognized, Grosrichard's *Structure de serail* (1979) "acquired only a limited – albeit enthusiastic – group of admirers"¹: this highly readable translation should justifiably extend its readership. Whilst Said's work examines the foundations of a modern Orientalist discourse, the way in which the West constructs and conceives of the (particularly Arab) Orient in a bewildering variety of ways in order to dominate it, Grosrichard focuses his critical gaze on the fictions that created a Western European political and sexual sense of the Ottoman Turkish empire at a time when it still represented a substantial threat. Recently, many critics have questioned the validity of an orientalist discourse in the early modern period, when the Ottoman Turks posed such a substantial threat to the rest of Europe that the Western dominance upon which such a constrictive discourse is based simply did not, and could not exist.² Furthermore, it has been suggested that rather than a mutual exclusivity, the powers of East and West

interacted in many carefully choreographed cultural exchanges.³ Grosrichard rather reductively relates how the Turk became a feared and “hated” enemy in Western Europe in the years prior to his study. However, it is the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with which *The Sultan’s Court* is concerned, “the Classical Occident” in which the Ottoman empire was visited more frequently, recorded in more detail and “understood” in more depth by Western observers than ever before. Grosrichard engages this Enlightenment project through the work of Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire and others, methodically detailing each potent figure in this western imagination: the nature of the sultans power, and that of his vizier; the construction of the seraglio and its many phantasms: the dwarves, the deaf-mutes, and the eunuchs. Each is interpreted through Lacanian psychoanalysis as a manifestation and a reflection of “His Highness,” each a functionary within an economy of power and “*jouissance*” which provides an Otherness through which libertarian rational ideals could be opposed and legitimized.

The Sultan’s Court offers a remarkable insight into a Western fantasy of power that still influences modern relations between West and East. It is a classic of its kind.

Matthew Dimmock
Royal Holloway, University of London.

¹ Mladen Dolar, Intro, ix.

² See particularly Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge, UK 1998), 11.

³ See J. Brotton and L. Jardine, *Global Interests; Renaissance Art between East and West* (London 2000).

Jan F. Dizard, Robert Merrill Muth, and Stephen P. Andrews Jr., editors, *Guns In America: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

Guns In America: A Reader serves as a commentary on, and a contribution to, the current gun control debates in the United States. Although the editorial inserts illustrate an eagerness to appear somewhat disconnected from the concerns of other participants, there is little doubt that Jan E. Dizard, Robert Merrill Muth, and Stephen P. Andrews, Jr., have done more here than gather together a number of articles loosely connected by the theme of guns and their love/hate relationship with U. S. society. An effort seems to have been made to turn away from the “polarized deadlock” between those that reject “mild restrictions” to a remarkably ambiguous Constitutional right to keep and bear arms, for fear that these would only be a first step towards confiscation, and those that regard privately owned guns as an unnecessary evil long overdue for extinction. *Guns in America* creates its own public forum for that silent majority drowned out by the cries of those at opposite extremes in the current media