

Marxism and Literature (1977), could have never taken place without the numerous English translations of Western-Marxist texts spearheaded by Anderson and *NLR*. By the same token, Anderson always accorded great respect for Williams's work, especially after French intellectuals began moving to the Right *en masse*, following the disappointments of the May events. The connections between these two men were made possible by a shared commitment to the new left. Taken together, the work of John Higgins and Gregory Elliot demonstrate how rich a terrain it was.

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¹ Cornel West, "In Memoriam: The Legacy of Raymond Williams" in C. Pendergast, ed., *Cultural Materialism: Essays on Raymond Williams* (Minneapolis 1995), ix.

² Dennis Dworkin, "Cultural Studies and the Crisis of British Radical Thought" in Dennis Dworkin and Leslie Roman, eds., *Views Beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics* (London, 1993), 54.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Alan O'Connor, *Raymond Williams, Writing, Culture, Politics* (Oxford, 1989); Fred Inglis, *Raymond Williams* (London, 1995); and Dennis Dworkin, *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain: History, the New Left and the Origins of Cultural Studies* (Durham, 1997).

⁵ For instance, Linn Chun, *The British New Left* (Edinburgh, 1993).

⁶ Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left Review* (London, 1979).

Hans Turley, *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash. Piracy, Sexuality and Masculine Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

There is not much rum, little lash and hardly any sodomy in Hans Turley's *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality and the Masculine Identity*. Turley is not into "reality," he protests many times. He is interested in the way pirates were depicted as "the common enemy of humanity," why they were so disturbing and why they could be both criminals and romanticized antiheroes. He doesn't know how many pirates were sodomites, and doesn't really care. He leaves the history of piracy to the Marcus Redikers, Christopher Hills and, less confidently, the B. R. (*Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition*) Burgs.

True, Chapter One, "Life on Board an Early-Eighteenth Century Ship"

begins with a lurid description of one Captain Jeane's eighteen days of murderous sadism towards a cabin boy who stole a dram of rum. Captain Jeane gets his due, though. He dangles for a long eighteen minutes on the hangman's rope. Captain Jeane's grisly cruelty is real enough. It provoked moral outrage at the time, and a prurient interest in the story afterwards. But it is not what Turley is about. Turley uses Jeane's ugly extremes in violence to make his point. Jeane's violence is reality without mystique. Piratical violence? It is more extreme, bloodier, more outrageous both in reality and in fiction. But it has mystique. Take Blackbeard – take Kidd, Avery – take a near endless list of fictional pirates – they all have a touch of theatre that tweaks at something in us as we look at them. What that something is Turley's story of Piracy, Sexuality and Masculine Identity.

There is going to be a lot of “wink wink, nudge nudge” in our reading for us to recognise this story. It is going to mean that we have to sense what “Inclinations,” “wild oats,” “dark secrets,” “roguery,” “rods in hand” really mean. Daniel Defoe described the transgressive, wild language of pirates as “Sodomy of the Tongue.” There is much sodomy of the tongue, much double entendre in *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash*. Turley is always bending our heads to the hidden homoeroticism in a word, in a plot. Not for its own sake, but as an indicator of how truly subversive piracy was. It threatened masculine identity.

No simplifying on my part will do justice to Turley's exhaustive readings and display of complex ideas. He hangs his narrative on Captain Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724), which he believes was written by Daniel Defoe. But he takes us through a considerable array of piratical literature, displayed in an extensive and interesting bibliography of over 250 volumes. Turley wanders through this literature always in the marginal spaces of the real and the fictional – the trials of men like Captain Kidd and Captain Avery's crew, and the early-eighteenth century equivalent of our tabloid press, the pamphleteers who transcribed the trials. There is a chapter on the making of an antihero, how Captain John Avery is “mythologized and eroticized” in the stories of his plundering of the Great Mogul's treasure ship and the ravishing of his granddaughter, and Avery's creation of a Madagascar haunt.

There is a reflective chapter on Captain Roberts, who Johnson/Defoe in a nice phrase writes “made more Noise in the World than some others.” “Noise in the World” – that is the theatre that Turley is trying to catch.

If I say that *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash* just ends with two chapters on Daniel Defoe's novels, I am being both precise and ungenerous. Ungenerous because the last two chapters are the best in the book. Precise, because the book just ends. There is no conclusion, no stage exit for Turley's theatre.

That is a pity. As a book it deserves much better.

So Turley is in my hands. I think that this is what he is saying to us. The

mystique of pirates – the reason why their theatre is so attractive – is not their show of macho masculinity. On the contrary, it is the subversive femininity in their masculinity. That makes a blurred genre of living, an attractive model because that is what living actually is. It is the “reality” of rhetorical certainty that is so unreal. The good in evil; the evil in good: the centre in the margins; the margins in the centre. Piracy is a parable on the edginess of living.

This is what I hear in Turley’s wonderful chapter on Daniel Defoe’s novel *Captain Singleton*, anyway. Quite rightly Turley brings this chapter into *Rum, Sodomy and the Lash* from elsewhere in his writings. Turley’s gentle, wistful style lingers on the sweetness of a life-long relationship that Defoe presents between Captain Singleton and Quaker William. These two dissenters – Singleton dissenting to the power of the state, William dissenting to establishment belief and values – marry their edginess. The love of men for one another is truly subversive. Defoe, Turley writes, “challenges the standards by which individuality must be integrated with and defined by social norms.”(127)

That’s piracy for you!

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Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

Adele Perry’s *On the Edge of Empire* offers a very unique study of the history of colonial British Columbia. By carefully combining feminist theory with post-structuralism, post-colonial research and, to a lesser extent, Marxist theory, Perry adeptly weaves a powerful argument that the region Jean Barman calls “the West beyond the West” was a colonial project at once powerful and vulnerable, asserting whiteness as the dominant norm despite the resistance to Victorian ideals by working-class white men, many working-class white women, and, of course, the numerous First Nations peoples of the region. Perry’s analysis uses gender as the central category to demonstrate the significant gap between imperialist theory and actual imperialist experience, particularly emphasizing “the importance of race to the social experience of gender in nineteenth-century British Columbia” (8).

Perry’s study locates her within several schools of research. First of all, by placing gender as the central organizing principle describing the colonial experience, Perry is positioned within feminist postcolonial scholars such as Ann Laura Stoler, Robert J. C. Young, and Anne McClintock, all of whom she refers