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Newman, A Reader's Guide to the Short Stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Pollin, Poe, Creator of Words

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Lea Bertani Vozar Newman. *A Reader's Guide to the Short Stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne*. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1971. xvii, 380 pp. \$32.50.

Burton R. Pollin. *Poe, Creator of Words*. revised and augmented edition. Bronxville, N.Y.: Nicholas T. Smith, Publisher, 1980. 96 pp. \$11.00.

These handbooks will interest students of the American Renaissance, as well as those with more strict concentrations on Hawthorne and Poe. In fact, because Pollin's subject has in part already seen print, Newman's book might be said to complement *Poe, Creator of Words*, with references to Poe's critiques of Hawthorne's tales and her placement of both writers within greater contexts of nineteenth-century literary currents. Pollin and Newman seek to provide keys with which others may gain entrance to their subjects' creative aims and methods.

As to aims and methods, in *A Reader's Guide* we encounter four-fold structure in the considerations of Hawthorne's fifty-four tales. First comes publication history, second the circumstances of composition, next the relationship of the individual story to other Hawthorne works, and, finally, a "review of all significant interpretations ... and profile of critical status." Newman ultimately furnishes an encyclopedia of many facets: bibliographical, biographical, and analytical. Although some may cavil at her classifications — which exclude, for example "Sights from a Steeple," "The Hall of Fantasy," and "P's. Correspondence"—her book will mightily assist Hawthorne studies for years to come. A more careful proofreading of the bibliography, plus an index would enhance the utility of this book.

Pollin's book expands his work of the early 1970's, prepared for the fifty-first annual lecture to the Edgar Allan Poe Society. He wishes to list words originated by Poe, depending primarily on the *OED* for assistance. His aim is laudable: to reveal of untapped depths in Poe's creative impulse. Motley features crop up, however, in the practical mechanics of Pollin's method. For example, words derivative from "demon," "fancy," "fantasy," or "vampire" illuminate Poe's artistic regions, but how much does "anti-Romantic?" The syllabification in words, called up by this last, should prompt us to recall, too, that in hyphenation publishers' house styles during the nineteenth century

accounted for much. In line with this observation, we note *Mudford* for *Mudfog* (p. 89). Pollin might also comment upon the confusion of “hare” with “nare” in Harrison’s printing of the Folio-Club prologue (2: xxxvi), an error repeated, although long since rectified by Richard, Mabbott, and Hammond. Curiosities also appear in the list of Pollin’s own publications. Overall, though, this book leads us to a significant portal into Poe studies, that of the writer’s inventiveness with language. From such a book as this, we hope, will ultimately come more extensive studies of Poe’s wordplay — still a much untrodden path.

To conclude: Newman and Pollin give us research tools. Their books will assist the plowing and cultivating of fertile fields in Hawthorne and Poe scholarship. There is value in contemplating the field in prospect. There is also, perhaps greater, worth in the eventual harvests in their uses away from the field, long after the sowing is past.

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