

emergence of the futurists, socialist politics. In this milieu, the alchemy of Joyce's most potent art transformed many of the people, places and incidents of Trieste into important sections of *Ulysses*, which Joyce himself described as "the epic of two races (Israel and Ireland)." Laboring in relative obscurity, Joyce struggled not only with Leopold Bloom, but also with timid publishers who balked when it came to releasing *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. While honoring the work of his predecessors in Joyce scholarship, McCourt (who was born and educated in Dublin and now teaches at the University of Trieste) also examines material that was until recently unused or unavailable. This, along with his understanding of the culture and dialect of the once-vibrant port city, deepens our appreciation of Trieste both as a crossroads of cultures and as a profound influence on Joyce's thinking and writing. As one critic has it, "Joyce was born in Dublin... [but] grew up in Trieste." (July)

#### HUNTING WITH HEMINGWAY

HILARY HEMINGWAY AND JEFFRY P. LINDSAY.  
*Riverhead* (272p) ISBN 1-57322-159-7

This is a disappointing narrative based on audiotaped accounts left by Hemingway's younger brother Leicester (himself a writer overshadowed by Ernest) and revealed here by Leicester's daughter. These tales, ostensibly related by Leicester to an anonymous professor researching the Hemingway mystique, are said to be ones "Papa never made public." The death-defying feats by Leicester and Ernest in Africa include escaping from a pack of man-eating wild dogs, killing a cobra that hovers inches from Leicester's head, even planting explosives on Nazi U-boats. Through listening to these tapes, an epiphany comes to Hilary about her father, who, like Ernest and his father before him, committed suicide: "Dad's stories are all that's important.... The stories are for you, for me, for everyone, to know my Dad as he really was, a man who had the courage to love life." Never before able to forgive his suicide, Hilary "for the first time... could mourn my father." The entire work seems apocryphal, which is forgivable; and the adventure stories themselves, while predictably misogynist, are relatively absorbing, but two factors ruin the integrity of this work. First is the mocking portrayal of the literature professor on the tape: he seems to have no manners, no real life experience and ridiculously symbolic interpretations of Hemingway stories. The stereotype is overdone to the point that few readers will sympathize with Hilary's father, a man who is hostile to even the most basic questions about himself and his brother. Second, while some of the information documented is important for anyone wishing to learn more about Hemingway's family, Hilary's frame narrative about her discovery of the tapes is so insipidly written that

it reads like a work of young adult fiction. (July)

#### MYSELF WHEN I AM REAL:

**The Life and Music of Charles Mingus**  
GENE SANTORO. *Oxford Univ.*, \$30 (480p)  
ISBN 0-19-509733-5

Santoro, who covers music for New York's *Daily News*, has attempted not only to capture the complex, contradictory character of jazz bassist and composer Mingus, but also to assert his music's towering significance in American culture as a whole. With such an ambitious goal in mind, it is hard to understand why he dispenses with a critical approach to the man and his music in favor of hagiography, portraying Mingus as a larger-than-life genius who was beyond reproach. Misdeeds often attributed to Mingus, whether they be numerous betrayals of friends and lovers or an alarming tendency to pull knives on people, are explained away as the eccentricities of an artist. This rambling book is not without revealing details about Mingus's life, however. In the Watts section of Los Angeles, where he grew up, Mingus, with his light complexion, could pass for neither black nor white, which, Santoro argues, cemented the feeling of being an outsider that both haunted and drove the musician for the rest of his life. When writing about Mingus's actual musicmaking, Santoro is in his element. He does an admirable job of describing the rough-and-tumble atmosphere of the jazz workshops. There is also an abundance of anecdotes about Mingus's legendary onstage hijinks, including smashing his bass (he did it before Pete Townshend), haranguing the audience and sitting down to a steak dinner in the middle of a performance. Yet Santoro ultimately fails to marshal his sources into a nuanced portrait, producing a mythological figure, not the man himself. (July)

#### LESBIAN ART IN AMERICA:

**A Contemporary History**  
HARMONY HAMMOND. *Rizzoli International*,  
\$50 (207p) ISBN 0-8478-2248-6

Lesbians have an uneasy relationship with the art world establishment. When painter Jody Pinto wanted her work to appear in the 1978 "Lesbian Show," her art dealer informed her that "if she exhibited as a lesbian, she could say good-bye to the gallery's representation of her work." More than another decade passed before artists openly celebrated their sexual identities in a Houston show entitled "Out! Voices from a Queer Nation." Hammond, an art teacher and cofounder of *Heretics Magazine* as well as an artist, documents three decades of post-Stonewall efforts to find acceptance and recognition for painting, sculpture, mixed media and photography by lesbian women. The author contends that "lesbian art is not a stylistic movement but rather, in its simplest definition, art that comes out of a feminist consciousness"; she then

shapes her inquiry to those who fit her definition. Hammond combines a historical overview of art shows, conferences and publications with written portraits of, and interviews with, representative artists from diverse backgrounds. Internationally recognized artists like Kate Millett, Louise Fishman and Catherine Opie rub elbows with those known primarily within political circles. While the writing offers little in the way of formal analysis, the collection itself is a handsome tribute to lesbian creativity. Illus. (Aug.)

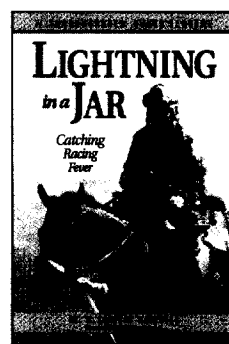
#### VACLAV HAVEL: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts

JOHN KEANE. *Basic*, \$27.50 (532p) ISBN 0-465-03719-4

As a Communist-era dissident, successful playwright and leader of Czechoslovakia's velvet revolution and democratic government, Vaclav Havel is a timely and deserving subject for biography. Unfortunately, while Keane's authorized study fills some gaps, it is not the biography many have been waiting for. For those who seek the basic outline, this volume provides ample (though select) material on Havel's prominent prewar family, his marriages and numerous affairs, and his political and literary activities over the years. But this is, by no means, for the casual reader. It strives to be much more than an ordinary biography, and it doesn't suc-

## Lightning in a Jar

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ceed. Its major flaws are that, first, Keane takes an idiosyncratic approach to biography, insisting on viewing Havel as the emblematic 20th-century man, and second, that he has an awkward rhetorical style. Keane offers us the story of Havel's life not as a linear narrative but as a series of tableaux vivants "designed to heighten readers' sense that his actions in the world are understandable as a tragedy." The tragedy is that of a man who "suffered the misfortune of being born into the twentieth century... [and whose] fate was politics." While to Keane, editor of a collection of Havel's writing and biographer of Tom Paine, this formulation is convincing, many readers will find it too restricting. This exaggerated conceit of writing about Havel as a character in a Shakespearean tragedy, which depends on inflated prose and frequent references to the role of fate, climaxes in a tasteless finale, a macabre rendering of the tragedy's end in Havel's (future) funeral. (July)

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN: And the Forge of National Memory**

BARRY SCHWARTZ. *Univ. of Chicago*, \$27.50 (360p) ISBN 0-226-74197-4

There have been many studies of Lincoln's life and how it has come to be perceived in the minds of Americans, the best being Merrill Peterson's *Abraham Lincoln in American Memory* (1994). Schwartz's scholarly account manages only to be a workman-like job of surveying the power of Lincoln's image since 1865. Unlike Peterson's user-friendly book, Schwartz's volume appears to have been written with an academic readership in mind: a scholarly dryness permeates the prose. Nevertheless, Schwartz, a professor of sociology at the University of Georgia, hits all the important points on his way to a larger argument about memory and history. He contends that the common view of Lincoln changed over time alongside changes in national interests and priorities. In the Progressive era, for example, Lincoln was lauded as a common man who rose to the White House despite all obstacles; during the mid-20th-century civil rights struggle, on the other hand, he was known as the Great Emancipator. Lincoln buffs might protest that Schwartz then uses up too much space talking about the sociology of collective memory as represented in the work of scholars like Charles Horton Cooley and Emile Durkheim—but they'd be missing the point. Ultimately, this is not a book about Lincoln as a man or a symbol. It's a study that uses the American commemoration of Lincoln as a vehicle for studying the whims and whiles of national memory. As such, it is a success. (July)

**THE WESTERN FRONT: Ordinary Soldiers and the Defining Battles of World War I**

RICHARD HOLMES. *TV Books*, \$26 (256p) ISBN 1-57500-147-0

★ This book invites dismissal as a nonbook, since it is the accompanying volume to a

television documentary on WWI for the History Channel, hosted by the author. It focuses only on the Western front, although several of the war's other theaters—Russia, Mesopotamia, Palestine—are discussed in an appendix. The British perspective is emphasized: Holmes (*Acts of War*, etc.) is a professor of military and security studies at England's Cranfield University and Royal Military College of Sciences, and writes for that country's audience; German and French experience receive correspondingly limited coverage. Yet among many recent outstanding works on the war, such as John Keegan's *The Great War* and Niall Ferguson's *The Pity of War*, this book, a U.K. bestseller, comes closest to depicting the conflict's essential nature in a limited compass. Holmes blends a clear familiarity with the subject and its literature with a sense of the English language that reflects years of careful writing. He is sympathetic to the problems of command in a war where the defense eclipsed the offense, and firepower overshadowed both mobility and protection. He pulls no punches in describing the consequences in the early battles of 1914 and 1915, where men were mowed down by machine guns, blown to pieces by high explosives and hung on barbed wire by the tens of thousands. Four years later, despite improvements in tactics and communications, despite the introduction of new weapons like tanks and aircraft and despite the arrival of the Americans, the Western front was never broken by either the Germans or the Allies. The ultimate reason, Holmes shows, was the everyday heroism of the men who held the line on both sides. Holmes reconstructs the daily routines of the trenches and the often raffish life out of the lines. He takes readers into the big offensives, the Somme and Passchendaele, where whole battalions disappeared in minutes, and on the raids and patrols that generated the everyday "wastage" of lives and bodies. World War I was the last war primarily fought by soldiers, but Holmes never forgets that the soldiers were civilians in uniform. They endured because they believed in their country's cause, or they held on from pride and for comradeship, from habit or from lack of alternatives. In the end, Holmes calls on readers to respect their sacrifice. His book helps us understand it. (July)

**A GREAT CIVIL WAR**

RUSSELL F. WEIGLEY. *Indiana Univ.*, \$35 (624p) ISBN 0-253-33738-0

Weigley's history of the Civil War accepts slavery as the conflict's moral center, but describes the war as a military contest for political ends. For Weigley, professor of history emeritus at Temple, the Confederacy fought to defend a way of life that could be sustained only in an independent nation, while the Union government insisted on the unconditional surrender of that claim to sovereignty. The war's outcome thus depended on the adversaries' respective

mastery of war-making. Weigley contends that the Civil War was not the modern, and modernizing, event described on so many television programs. North and South alike waged war on artisanal lines, making do with the tools available to them. Extensions of government power on both sides were limited and channeled. The major exception was at the war's sharp end, when improved firearms drove casualty lists relentlessly upward at the same time that armies had grown too large to be crushed in decisive battles on the Napoleonic model. Weigley's encyclopedic command of his sources enables him to combine narrative clarity and analytic perception in evaluating behaviors and decisions. To cite only one example, his discussion of Gettysburg makes clear in a few sentences why the Confederates were unlikely to have captured Cemetery Hill on July 1 under any circumstances. Weigley goes on to show the logistical reasons why Lee rejected Longstreet's proposal for an operational flanking maneuver. And he concludes by making a throwaway case that Dan Sickles may in fact have saved the Union army on July 2 by an often condemned advance to the Peach Orchard that created some maneuvering room for a constricted left wing. That kind of intellectual virtuosity, regularly repeated in these pages, makes this notable book the counterpoint to James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom*. (July)

**THE OUTPOST WAR: The U.S. Marine Corps in Korea, 1952**

LEE BALLENGER. *Brassey's*, \$24.95 (332p) ISBN 1-57488-241-4

Marine-focused works about the Korean War tend to concentrate on earlier events of that conflict: the Pusan Perimeter, Inchon or the Chosin Reservoir. Yet the war's second half cost almost as many marine casualties. A marine veteran of Korea, Ballenger highlights the First Marine Division's specific difficulties adjusting to static war on the DMZ. His reconstruction of the outpost war, whereby a main line of defense was screened by outpost positions, relies heavily on first-person accounts, mostly from retired officers who were platoon leaders during this period. It describes how the outposts, constructed as buffers, became troublesome centers of the action, but it does not contextualize the fighting. Ballenger stresses, for example, the youth of the enlisted marines, most of whom were 19 or younger, in contrast to the men of the war's earlier years. Did the age of the new replacements have any effect on marine operational performance or fighting power? This and similar questions are not raised. Despite such lapses, Ballenger has taken more pains to cross-check stories than is usual in this genre, and his narrators are painfully, almost brutally, honest in discussing their own behaviors, motives and emotions. The result is some of the best descriptive narratives of small-unit combat to come out of the