ethically questionable imposition of a nationalist narrative that not only suppresses important bio-regional differences, but also compromises the horse's "biological essence" by appropriating it for symbolic use (212). Official attempts to read the horse's tough but gentle nature as somehow representative of an essentialized Canadian national character speak to a desire that is also addressed in Adam Carter's essay, a fascinating critique of how Charles G.D. Roberts' "Canada" and "An Ode for the Canadian Confederacy" trope the nation as a human (white, male) subject in a way that "falsely covers over … structural inequalities and differences of race, gender, and class" (127).

This is a highly readable and important book that should prove invaluable to scholars and enjoyable to anyone with an interest in early Canadian literary, historical, or cultural studies.

Sara Jamieson

Lee M. Jenkins, *The Language of Caribbean Poetry: Boundaries of Expression.* Gainesville: Florida UP, 2004. Pp. 232. $55 cloth.

Lee Jenkins is a faculty member at Cork University in Ireland and, while holding this position, she has contributed to the renown of what is now known as the Cork School of Poetry: a critical grouping also comprising such members as Graham Allen, Patricia Coughlan, Alex Davis, and formerly Anne Fogarty and John Goodby. The group is primarily recognized for its groundbreaking studies of Anglo-Irish poets ranging from Davis's watershed account of such Irish modernists as Denis Devlin, to Coughlan's pioneering feminist approaches to the poetry of Seamus Heaney and John Montague. Jenkins's latest book would seem to depart from a focus on Irish literary matters by dealing with another area of the postcolonial nexus, but this is only partly the case as one of the most remarkable aspects of her criticism is that it draws attention to numerous points of contact between the apparently unconnected islands of Ireland and the Caribbean. In fact, Jenkins's work centres on intertextual kinship between Caribbean and European writers as well as the now sizeable tradition of local Antillean literatures, which examines uniquely Caribbean genres and subgenres such as the Letter Home poem, the Antipraise poem, the Apostrophe to the Nation poem, and Caribbean poems about America. The study offers lengthy accounts of Claude McKay, David Dabydeen and Kamau Brathwaite and closes on a highly invigorating discussion of three female poets, Una Marson, Loma Goodison and Marlene Nourbese Philip, thus giving this panoptic study a gender balance too.

McKay, who has been called a "literary prostitute," is given extensive treatment as the problematic founding father of Caribbean verse. The book examines indigenous resistances to McKay's aesthetic as well as his watershed explorations of Jamaican vernacular and his bi-cultural exilic response to America, viewed in part through his contributions to the subgenre of the "Harlem Pastoral" poem. Jenkins argues, "far from disclosing that McKay is in thrall to English colonialism, both "My Native Land, My Home" and "Old England" carry nascent suggestions of the anticolonialism and black nationalism that inform his later work." She also convincingly counters Charles Bernstein's contention that McKay's Jamaican poetry is weighed down by the iambic chains of British tradition. Most strikingly, Jenkins draws parallels between McKay's use of the mask of the Midnight Woman and Yeats's Crazy Jane persona, a link that is carried through later on in connection with Goodison's Wild Woman antitype and Nourbese's "jamette (loose woman) poet," whose genealogy is also traced to Nanny of the Maroons and Nzinga of Angola. McKay's antipastoralism and his hostility towards Modernism are identified as two of the driving tenets of his poetic. In a very natural way, McKay is also placed in relation to Scottish literary "devolutionists" like Burns and MacDiarmid, who are read as "diagnosticians of decline" preoccupied by the notion of revival. Significantly, Jenkins documents McKay's response to the Irish subaltern and Irish men of letters such as Shaw, through a biographical account of McKay's travels to Britain and Ireland, which complements Walcott's later statements regarding the links between Ireland and the Caribbean. In the concluding parts of this chapter, Jenkins highlights McKay's bitter-sweet relationship to what he humorously called the "United Snakes" of America, as well as his subversive use of the sonnet tradition.

Another figure of exile examined in this context is David Dabydeen, the Indo-Guyanese poet. Dabydeen's relationship to Modernism is persuasively discussed along with his double-edged relationship to contemporaries such as the so-called Barbarian poets. In "Coolie Odyssey," he delves into his solitary sense of displacement with regard to both Metropolitan poets and decentred writers.

In the third chapter, Brathwaite's epic poetry is profitably related to Eliot's theories of the dissociation of sensibility. Jenkins's discussion of Brathwaite's relationship to Modernism benefits from her explorations of Modernist *topoi* in a book on the literary geography of Modernism she has jointly edited with Alex Davis. Both Brathwaite and Dabydeen are justly submitted to the Feminist gaze for their dabbling in gendered stereotyping of the nation and their sometimes misogynistic representations of women, but Jenkins is never scathing, arguing for instance that Brathwaite has responded creatively to the

reception history of his poems by revising his reductive Jungian sexual typology in the 2001 edition of *Mother Poem* in *Ancestors*.

The fourth chapter evaluates the unequal merits of Una Marson's poetry, arguing that the unavailability of her books suggests that her final significance "is contextual rather than textual." Although Jenkins's treatment of Marson is not unsympathetic, she clearly favours the more accomplished poetics of Loma Goodison whose inventiveness and stylistic features are seen to surpass her matrilineal predecessor's. Jenkins's impressive intertextual knowledge reaches its culminating point in her fascinating discussion of Caribbean reworkings of Homeric and Ovidian ur-texts by both female and male poets. The book closes on a thought-provoking account of Nourbese Philip's experimentalism and her points of contact with L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poetry. Her daring explorations of mother/daughter relationships are treated in conjunction with psycholinguistic gendering of Father and Mother tongues in her poetry.

While it does engage in postcolonial, feminist and intertextual theory, the overall emphasis of Jenkins's work is never overly theoretical. She relies on her vast knowledge of contemporary poetry (she is also a Wallace Stevens specialist) to carry the reader's interest through an often breathtaking, panoramic view of twentieth-century European and Caribbean poetry. The tone of her writing is always sober and the content is far-reaching yet always accessible, even for readers new to postcolonial or Caribbean literature. Jenkins is also to be commended for painstakingly defining her critical criteria, never taking the arcana of jargon for granted. Her study benefits from impeccable documentation, which is frequently enriched by references to letters written by the poets to the author, an invaluable resource that enhances her arguments. Epistolary correspondence is a form of dialogue that is too infrequently considered by critics.

If one assents to Dash's assertion that "the only useful approach to Caribbean literature is an intertextual one," then Jenkins's book is indeed an indispensable work. Her volume is valuable in exploring the formal aspects of Caribbean poetry, ranging from the traditional to the experimental. This being said, one can at times be mildly disappointed that Jenkins does not explore in greater detail the linguicidal attempts to "mug de Queen's English" to use John Agard's words. Examples of hybridized English such as Louise Bennett's "turning History upside *dung"* go a long way towards liberating Received Pronunciation and ideological hegemony into derisive, scatological *jouissance.* However, Jenkins's book is so accomplished and informative that it makes this objection seem like a quibble, as does the niggling desire for a more eye-catching title. *The Language of Caribbean Poetry: Boundaries*

of Expression does not quite succeed in conveying how exciting this work is. Jenkins relays the flavour of the Caribbean literary scene with great panache. Her work is also peppered with savoury anecdotes for the reader in search of literary curios. Ultimately, however, its greatest attribute is the Penelope-like warp and weft of connections it makes both within Caribbean literature and between the old world and the new.

Erik Martiny

Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster, eds. *The Child Writer from Austen to Woolf*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. Pp. xv, 312. $70.20 cloth.

The time has come, editors Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster say, "to listen to the authentic literary voice of the child" (1). And so the contributors to this volume set out to consider the "non-canonical" writings by children who later became, for the most part, canonical writers. Sixteen chapters—the first an introduction and the last an annotated bibliography of nineteenth-century juvenilia—survey the territory and scrutinize a few famous cases. The famous cases, who provide the focus, are Jane Austen, the Brontës, Byron, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, George Eliot, John Ruskin, Louisa May Alcott, Mary Augustus Ward, and Amy Levy. Other juveniles considered in the opening survey chapters include Lewis Carroll, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Virginia Woolf, Opal Whiteley, and Iris Vaughan. In every case, with the exception of Daisy Ashford, the juvenile develops into a professional writer, and for the most part, into a famous professional writer. Obviously, the editors had to place restrictions on what they included in their study, and their choice was to remain close to the hundred years between 1800 and 1900, to include writing completed before a person's twenty-first year, and to centre on the work of writers who are recognized for their adult achievements. This is fine, but as Peterson and Robertson wonder in their opening remarks to the annotated bibliography (Chapter 16): "how many lively and original young voices faltered into silence or convention-driven cliché in later years, whose early work remains to be recovered or recuperated" (269)? Implicit in what Peterson and Robertson say is the very narrow focus a study like this almost inevitably takes. The young voices are still with us because they are, for the most part, young voices of privilege and young voices that matured into public voices that our culture has valued. In other words, the emerging study of juvenilia perpetuates a liberal humanist bias towards the cultural elite.