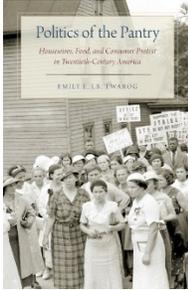
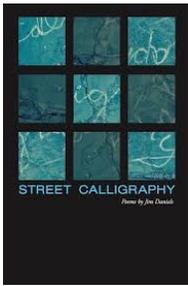


BOOK NOTES



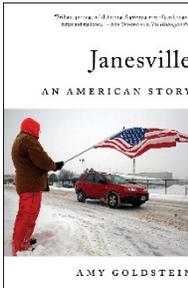
***Politics of the Pantry: Housewives, Food, and Consumer Protest in Twentieth Century America* (Oxford U. Press), Emily E. LB. Twarog**

Rooted in case studies of activist housewives in Detroit, Chicago, Long Island, and Los Angeles across the 20th century, this book focuses on the wide range of working-class and middle-class women who engaged in political activity “when they found it increasingly challenging to feed their families and balance their household ledgers.” Twarog argues that these women “both challenged and embraced the social and economic order, rather than simply being an oppositional force.” Dorothy Sue Cobble says: “*Politics of the Pantry* puts breadmakers, not breadwinners, at the center of American women’s activism. By capturing the recurrent struggles over food from the 1930s to the 1970s, this beautiful, illuminating study shows how women used their supposedly dependent status as housewives to assert political power and secure a more just, prosperous society. An important revisioning of feminism and feminist history.”



***Street Calligraphy* (Steel Toe Books), Jim Daniels**

Of the latest collection of poetry by Jim Daniels, reviewer Afaa M. Weaver of Drew University writes: “In *Street Calligraphy*, Jim Daniels acknowledges grief, and sets his feet on the path to another beauty. It is the beauty of tough beginnings in American cities, the urban *ars poetica* of challenges written in tar and concrete, where children learn to negotiate fear and cultivate hope. The real and the lyrical are the systolic and diastolic of the poet’s heart. He speaks both to humanity and Detroit as he describes the city with ‘its odd magic, how you could both stay in one place and move.’ This is an honest and well-honed collection that will bring light to the lives it celebrates, our own.”



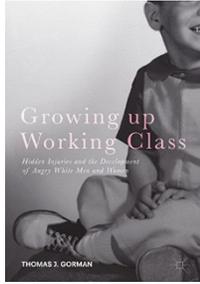
***Janesville: An American Story* (Simon & Schuster), Amy Goldstein**

Amy Goldstein is a Pulitzer Prize winning 30-year veteran journalist, and *Janesville* is her first book. Focused on the 2008 closing of the mammoth General Motors plant in Janesville, Wisconsin, the book details what happened to the workers, their families, and the community over the five years after Janesville lost its principal employer. Bob Woodward calls it a “gripping story of psychological defeat and resilience.” Another reviewer says it “combines a heart-rending account of the implications of the closing on GM workers and their families with a sobering analysis of the response of the public and private sectors.” And another reflects: “One is awed by the dignity and levelheadedness of its protagonists, who seem to represent the best of America . . . Goldstein is a talent storyteller, and we root for her characters as, moment by moment, they try their hardest.”



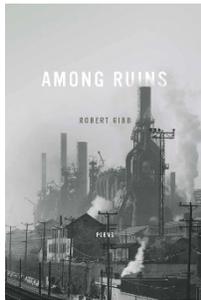
***Big Julie* (Blue Cubicle Press “Overtime” Chapbook Series: Hour #45), Brett Busang**

From WCSA member John Beck: “The newest “Hour” in the series is Brett Busang’s “Big Julie” (Hour #45). This chapbook story may be one of the most disturbing of the series to date. The story explores the relationships, human and animal, of a carnival employee. Set at the turn of the last century, Busang’s chapbook follows what happens when a mean-spirited employee pushes a circus elephant to violence. The tale also explores the relationship between the worker and his easily manipulated employer. This is an impressive work in its character development, plotting and descriptive power concerning both time and place.”



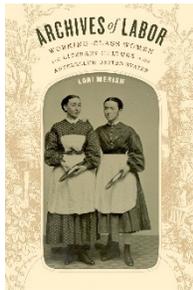
***Growing up Working Class: Hidden Injuries and the Development of Angry White Men and Women* (Palgrave Macmillan) Thomas J. Gorman**

Thomas Gorman is a sociologist who grew up working-class in the 1960s in New York City in a neighborhood along the border between Brooklyn and Queens. He presents this book as an “auto-ethnography” that “investigates how American children and young adults are impacted by the ‘hidden injuries’ of class, and offers a rich description of how these injuries manifest and curdle later in life.” According to the publisher, the book “demonstrates the connections between working-class attitudes toward schooling, sports, politics, and economics” and “also examines how and why white working-class people tend to lash out at the wrong social forces and support political action that works against their own interests.”



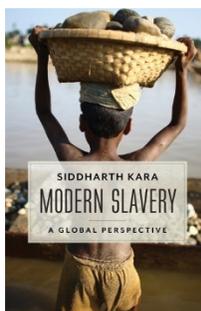
***Among Ruins* (U. of Notre Dame Press), Robert Gibb**

From the publisher: “*Among Ruins* is the final volume of *Homestead Works*, a collection of four books of poetry that explore the industrial past and legacy of the old steel town of Homestead, Pennsylvania, and, by extension, Pittsburgh. National Poetry Series–winner Robert Gibb’s haunting historical narratives capture the Steel City, ‘Where the crucible mills poured fire, / Slag erupted nightly above the other shore.’ The ruins in this book are various—personal, historical, cultural—and are filtered through a variety of perspectives, including the poet’s own as well as those of visual artists (Aaron Harry Gorson and Lewis Hine) who have made Pittsburgh their subject and artists (James Whistler, Eugène Atget, J. M. W. Turner) who have been imagined here.”



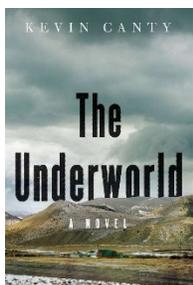
***Archives of Labor: Working-Class Women and Literary Culture in the Antebellum United States* (Duke U. Press), Lori Merish**

From the publisher: *Archives of Labor* “establishes working-class women as significant actors within literary culture, dramatically redrawing the map of nineteenth-century US literary and cultural history. Delving into previously unexplored archives of working-class women’s literature—from autobiographies, pamphlet novels, and theatrical melodrama to seduction tales and labor periodicals—Merish recovers working-class women’s vital presence as writers and readers in the antebellum era. Her reading of texts by a diverse collection of factory workers, seamstresses, domestic workers, and prostitutes boldly challenges the purportedly masculine character of class dissent during this era. Whether addressing portrayals of white New England “factory girls,” fictional accounts of African American domestic workers, or the first-person narratives of Mexican women working in the missions of Mexican California, Merish unsettles the traditional association of whiteness with the working class to document forms of cross-racial class identification and solidarity.”



***Modern Slavery: A Global Perspective* (Columbia U. Press), Siddharth Kara**

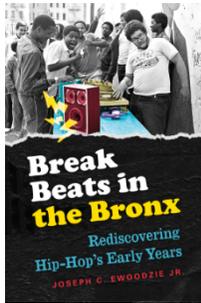
Based on 16 years of field research in more than 50 countries, this “searing expose documents one of humanity’s greatest wrongs and lays out the framework for a comprehensive plan to eradicate it.” Siddharth Kara reports on modern slavery in its many different forms – from debt bondage in the Southeast Asian construction sector to sex trafficking in Nigeria to forced labor in the Thai seafood industry and labor trafficking in the U.S. agricultural sector – and shows how “it is embedded in global supply chains.” One reviewer describes Kara as an investment banker, Harvard researcher, screenplay writer, poet, and activist, and says the book “grounds the reader through statistics and definitions before launching into scenes more true than any statistic or definition could ever be. No reader, however carefully clad in hyper-rationality, will emerge unchallenged and unchanged.”



***The Underworld* (Norton), Kevin Canty**

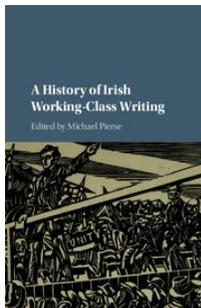
From the publisher: “In *The Underworld*, Kevin Canty tells a story inspired by the facts of a disastrous fire that took place in an isolated silver mining town in Idaho in the 1970s, in which almost everyone in town lost a friend, a lover, a brother, or a husband. *The Underworld* imagines the fates of a handful of fictional survivors and their loved ones—Jordan, a young widow with twin children; David, a college student trying to make a life for himself in another town; Lionel, a lifelong

hard-rock miner—as they struggle to come to terms with the loss. It’s a tough, hard-working, hard-drinking town, a town of whores and priests and bar fights, but nobody’s tough enough to get through this undamaged. A powerful and unforgettable tale about small-town lives and the healing power of love in the midst of suffering.”



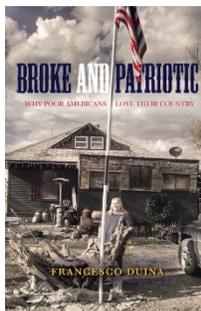
Break Beats in the Bronx: Rediscovering Hip-Hop’s Early Years (U. of North Carolina Press), Joseph E. Woodzie

This book sets out to revise and enrich “the origin story of hip-hop” and, in the process, to explain why “the South Bronx and not any other borough or city is considered the cradle of the form.” According to the publisher: Joseph Woodzie “questions the unexamined assumptions about hip-hop’s beginnings, including why there are just four traditional elements—DJing, MCing, breaking, and graffiti writing—and which artists besides Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash founded the genre. Unearthing new evidence, he shows what occurred during the crucial but surprisingly underexamined years between 1975 and 1979 and argues that it was during this period that the internal logic and conventions of the scene were formed.”



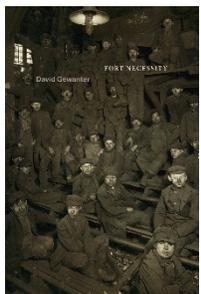
A History of Irish Working-Class Writing (Cambridge U. Press), Michael Pierson, ed.

Of this new collection, the publisher writes: “*A History of Irish Working-Class Writing* provides a wide-ranging and authoritative chronicle of the writing of Irish working-class experience. Ground-breaking in scholarship and comprehensive in scope, it is a major intervention in Irish Studies scholarship, charting representations of Irish working-class life from eighteenth-century rhymes and songs to the novels, plays and poetry of working-class experience in contemporary Ireland. There are few narrative accounts of Irish radicalism, and even fewer that engage ‘history from below’. This book provides original insights in these relatively untilled fields. Exploring workers’ experiences in various literary forms, from early to late capitalism, the twenty-two chapters make this book an authoritative and substantial contribution to Irish studies and English literary studies generally.”



Broke and Patriotic: Why Poor Americans Love Their Country (Stanford U. Press), Francesco Duina

Sociologist Francesco Duina poses the following questions: “Why are poor Americans so patriotic? They have significantly worse social benefits compared to other Western nations, and studies show that the American Dream of upward mobility is, for them, largely a myth. So why do these people love their country? Why have they not risen up to demand more from a system that is failing them?” To answer them he interviewed scores of poor people in bus stations, laundromats, senior citizen centers, homeless shelters, public libraries, and fast food restaurants. According to one reviewer, “the answers Duina finds . . . are startling and reveal deep and enduring beliefs in freedom, God, and the American Dream.”



Fort Necessity (U. of Chicago Press, forthcoming), David Gewanter

From the publisher: “Haunted by his father’s autopsy of a workman he witnessed as a child, Gewanter forges intensely personal poems that explore the fate of our laboring bodies, from the Carnegie era’s industrial violence and convict labor to our present day of broken trust, profiteering, and the Koch brothers. Guided by a moral vision to document human experience, this unique collection takes raw historical materials—newspaper articles, autobiography and letters, court testimony, a convict ledger, and even a menu—and shapes them into sonnets, ballads, free verse, and prose poems. The title poem weaves a startling lyric sequence from direct testimony by steelworkers and coal-miners, strikers and prisoner chain-gangs, owners and anarchists, revealing an American empire that feeds not just on oil and metal, but also on human energy, impulse, and flesh.”