What’s America to do when, one day, Mexico suddenly disappears? That question, asked by the title story in *Mexico Is Missing*, sets the tone for a collection whose individual stories have been described as “provocative,” “intensely relevant,” and “wickedly macabre.” Thematically and formally diverse, these pieces are unified by their devotion to the offbeat, even insane, moments of contemporary life. A widow hears a voice from her computer that claims to be God. An unnamed narrator develops an unhealthy fascination with his mailman. Several characters from a joke come to life and wonder what to do with themselves. A poet married to a porn star considers the real meaning of love.

The subjects of this volume range widely. From Snoopy to Southern Baptists, from witch trials to infomercials, from the President’s golf game to . . . well, the President’s penis—anything is fair game in a collection that blends satire with a sincere desire to find meaning in the jumbled world that we daily inhabit. A literary critic and author, Stevens also demonstrates his formal range by juxtaposing traditional linear stories with micro-fictions and longer “fractured” narratives. The result is a book that traverses the literary map with impressive dexterity. Individually, the stories in *Mexico Is Missing* will provide various pleasures for every reader. But taken together, they represent a more profound effort to blend those diametric impulses—formal, cultural, and sociopolitical—which so often define contemporary experience.

This collection of twenty-three short stories by J. David Stevens is clever, sardonic, and humorous. While you’re laughing Stevens also gives you plenty of things to think about—spirituality, the negligence of the mass media, American politics, and relationships.

**J. David Stevens** is associate professor of English and creative writing at the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia.
“Zunshine proved beyond doubt that even the more conservative literary student who just wants a better reading or understanding of a specific novel stands to gain considerably by adopting the cognitive outlook and vocabulary she suggests.” — Uri Margolin, University of Alberta

Why We Read Fiction offers a lucid overview of the most exciting area of research in contemporary cognitive psychology known as “Theory of Mind” and discusses its implications for literary studies. It covers a broad range of fictional narratives, from Richardson’s Clarissa, Dostoyevski’s Crime and Punishment, and Austen’s Pride and Prejudice to Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway, Nabokov’s Lolita, and Hammett’s The Maltese Falcon. Zunshine’s surprising new interpretations of well-known literary texts and popular cultural representations constantly prod her readers to rethink their own interest in fictional narrative. Written for a general audience, this study provides a jargon-free introduction to the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field known as cognitive approaches to literature and culture.

Lisa Zunshine teaches English literature at the University of Kentucky, Lexington.
Narrative Causalities

EMMA KAFALENOS

“This lucidly written, well-researched, and insightful study promises to have a major impact on several fields, including literary theory, comparative literature, analysis of inter-art relations, history and criticism of the novel, and above all, interdisciplinary narrative theory. Overall, the project contributes to the growing body of research suggesting that narrative, besides being a target of interpretation, constitutes in itself a fundamental resource for making sense of experience.”—David Herman, The Ohio State University

Narrative Causalities offers both an argument and a methodology. The argument is that interpretations of the consequences and causes of events are contextual and that narratives, by determining the context in which events are perceived, shape interpretations. The methodology, on which the argument is based, is a theory of functions. A function, in this theory, is a position in a causal sequence. A set of functions provides a vocabulary to analyze and compare interpretations of the causes and consequences of events—in our world, in narratives about our world, and in fictional narratives.

Focusing throughout on the temporal dimension of the cognitive process, this study considers perceivers’ interpretations of causality in response to nonfiction as well as to fiction, to visual as well as to verbal communication, and to events we perceive directly as well as to reported events. Many of the narratives analyzed are fictional and range from fairy tales to canonical literature (Shakespeare, Poe, Henry James, Kafka, Racine, Balzac) to recent novels (Robbe-Grillet, Sebald). But in the same ways that fictional narratives guide readers’ interpretations of causality, so too, the author reminds and warns us, do the newspaper accounts, friends’ stories, and other narratives through which we learn about events in our world.

In other words, Emma Kafalenos seeks to answer the question: “What can we know if a narrative is the source of our information?” Her book is a significant addition to the Theory and Interpretation of Narrative Series.

Emma Kafalenos teaches comparative literature at Washington University in St. Louis.
The Old Story, with a Difference

Pickwick’s Vision

JULIAN WOLFREYS

“Brilliant! Wolfreys sets out to reposition Pickwick for us and allow us to see it differently, have we but the eyes to see. In the process, he roams far and wide, always suggestively and usually delightfully, in wondering out loud how it is we do see, especially how we see the past.”—James Kincaid, author of Annoying the Victorians

The Old Story, with a Difference: Pickwick’s Vision explores in radically different ways from most approaches to nineteenth-century studies the tropes and metaphors of vision in Dickens’ first novel, The Pickwick Papers. Julian Wolfreys provides a close reading of Dickens’ Pickwick Papers and argues that this novel is an exemplary text for the re-consideration of concepts such as literature, history, the novel, and the whole notion of Victorian studies. True to the purpose of the Victorian Critical Interventions Series, Wolfreys challenges scholars to rethink the use of a canonical text in Victorian literature.

Challenging the commonplaces of historicist criticism, and demonstrating the need for a return to close reading, The Old Story, with a Difference presents a reading of the novel grounded in the twinned rigors of materialist historiography and theoretical inflections tending toward attentiveness to epistemological and linguistic concerns. Through such an orientation, Wolfreys unpacks the relation between the tropes of visuality and matters of memory, history, and the necessity of fiction to bear witness to the cultures, past and present, from which literature becomes generated and which it mediates. In doing so, he situates an argument for rethinking Dickens’ novel as the inaugural novel of Victorian fiction par excellence, in that novel’s efforts to remain open to the traces of the past in particular ways.

The Old Story, with a Difference holds profound implications for the study not only of Dickens’ works but Victorian literature and culture in general. Provocative and inventive, this ambitious analysis will challenge, goad, and invite the reader to return to acts of materialist reading informed by ethical and ideological urgency, rather than relapsing into the commonplaces of humanist cliché.

Julian Wolfreys is professor in the department of English at the University of Florida.

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Novel Professions
Interested Disinterest and the Making of the Professional in the Victorian Novel

JENNIFER RUTH

“Novel Professions is filled with dazzling insights, careful readings, and lucid argumentation. It is original and substantial and offers a new way to consider the role of professions in establishing definitions of value in Victorian literature.”—John Plotz, author of The Crowd: British Literature and Public Politics

Between 1840 and 1860, the emergent professional developed a sturdy and compelling identity and saw explosive growth in its ranks over the next two decades. Novel Professions showcases the Victorian novel’s central and critically misunderstood role in this development. Taking a revisionary turn on influential sociological analyses of the profession, Novel Professions offers a new way of reading the last twenty years in Victorian studies. Jennifer Ruth argues that a shrinking academic market has confronted critics with an unprecedented pressure to professionalize, generating an ironized climate in which the Foucauldian outing of the expert class (and of its idealized “disinterest”) has become an irresistible and now stubbornly entrenched ritual. In this atmosphere, scholars have seen the novel as disingenuously reinforcing the complacent opposition between professional disinterest and market values. Ruth finds instead that the mid-century novel figured the professional as negotiating a less mystified, more intimate relationship to the market, one that acknowledged the material conditions making professional service at once more possible and more plausible.

In readings of novels by Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, and Anthony Trollope, Ruth not only demonstrates how the novel professionalized its protagonists but how, in doing so, it advanced modern conceptions of aesthetic value and intellectual labor. Novel Professions proposes that when scholars stop loathing themselves for being professionals, they may better interpret the Victorian novel and more productively reconceive their own precarious place on the brink of deprofessionalization.

Jennifer Ruth is assistant professor of English Literature at Portland State University, Portland, Oregon.

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Consuming Fantasies
Labor, Leisure, and the London Shopgirl, 1880–1920

LISE SHAPIRO SANDERS

“Sanders ably demonstrates how literature and language interact with ‘real’ life in the complex construction of the individual and collective identity of the shopgirl, making a valuable contribution to studies of modern leisure and consumption.”—Peter Bailey, author of Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City

The shopgirl was the subject of popular novels, newspaper articles, and political treatises on women’s work and leisure at the turn of the twentieth century. But who exactly was she, and why did she feature in so many narratives about women, sexuality, and urban life?

In Consuming Fantasies: Labor, Leisure, and the London Shopgirl, 1880–1920, Lise Shapiro Sanders examines the cultural significance of the shopgirl—both historical figure and fictional heroine—from the end of Queen Victoria’s reign through the First World War. As the author reveals, the shopgirl embodied the fantasies associated with a growing consumer culture: romantic adventure, upward mobility, and the acquisition of material goods. Reading novels such as George Gissing’s The Odd Women and W. Somerset Maugham’s Of Human Bondage as well as short stories, musical comedies, and films, Sanders argues that the London shopgirl appeared in the midst of controversies over sexual morality and the pleasures and dangers of London itself. Sanders explores the shopgirl’s centrality to modern conceptions of fantasy, desire, and everyday life for working women and argues for her as a key figure in cultural and social histories of the period.

This innovative interdisciplinary study makes an important contribution to research on women, class, and consumer culture and will appeal to scholars, students, and enthusiasts of Victorian and Edwardian life and literature.

Lise Shapiro Sanders is assistant professor of English literature and cultural studies at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts.
The Imagination of Class
Masculinity and the Victorian Urban Poor

DAN BIVONA AND ROGER B. HENKLE

A fascinating meld of two scholars’ research and conclusions, The Imagination of Class is a synthetic journey through middle-class Victorian discourse posed by poverty in the midst of plenty—but not that alone. Rather Dan Bivona and Roger B. Henkle argue that the representation of abject poverty in the nineteenth century also displaced anxieties aroused by a variety of challenges to Victorian middle class masculinity. The book’s main argument, in fact, is that the male middle class imagery of urban poverty in the Victorian age presents a complex picture, one in which anxieties about competition, violence, class-based resentment, individuality, and the need to differentiate oneself from the scions of inherited wealth influence mightily the ways in which the urban poor are represented. In the representations themselves, the urban poor are alternately envisioned as sentimentalized (and feminized) victims who stimulate middle class affective response, as the objects of the professionalized discourses of the social sciences (and social services), and as an often hostile social force resistant to the “culturalizing,” taming processes of a maternalist social science.

Through carefully nuanced discussions of a variety of Victorian novelists, journalists, and sociological investigators (some well known, like Dickens, and others less well known, like Masteman and Greenwood), the book offers new insight into the role played by the imagination of the urban poor in the construction of Victorian middle class masculinity. Whereas many scholars have discussed the feminization of the poor, virtually no one has addressed how the poor have served as a site at which middle class men fashioned their own class and gender identity.

Dan Bivona is associate professor of English and Divisional Dean of Undergraduate Programs, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University in Tempe. Roger B. Henkle was professor of English at Brown University and died in 1991.
A Thousand Words
Portraiture, Style, and Queer Modernism

JAIME HOVEY

“I found A Thousand Words a pleasure to read, the writing smooth, clear, clever, and provocative. It is one of the freshest most interesting approaches to modernism I have read in a long time. Hovey’s innovative mustering of the portrait in relation to issues of self-consciousness and dynamics of desire, accounts for part of modernism’s élan. This book will be an important presence in conversations to come.” —Judith Roof, author of All About Thelma and Eve: Side-Kicks and Third Wheels

A Thousand Words argues that there is such a thing as queer modernism, and that the (mostly) literary portrait—one of the more prominent forms of experimentalism in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century writing—functions as one of its most important erotically dynamic aesthetic mechanisms, one modeled on visual portraiture’s relationships of looking between the artists, sitters, and spectators of paintings. Jaime Hovey looks at how the dynamic structure of visual portraiture was appropriated by modernist writers—including Oscar Wilde, Gertrude Stein, T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, and Colette, among others, who used the self-conscious literary portrait.

Portraiture speaks to the complex relationship between identity, sexuality, and art, and the presence of so many portraits in this era suggests that sexual, gender, and racial aspects of character, personality, and personal identity were of major concern to most modernist writers. Yet it took most of the twentieth century for critical work to appear that meaningfully explored these themes, and very little has been said about the queerness of literary portraiture. This book demonstrates that literary portraiture is enamored of its own self-consciousness, with the pleasures of looking at itself seeing itself, and that its texts circulate this pleasure between writers, narrators and other characters, and readers as a perverse aesthetics.

Jaime Hovey is an independent scholar who has taught English and gender and women’s studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Miami.

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A Superficial Reading of Henry James
Preoccupations with the Material World

THOMAS J. OTTEN

“A Superficial Reading of Henry James is a smart, intellectually rigorous and searching study that engages the range and depth of contemporary American Studies scholarship.” —Gordon Hutner, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

“Otten brings a literary sensibility to his critical writing—but even more impressively, he writes with wonderful lucidity, fine-tuning his critical concepts in a way that gives them intellectual vitality. His book is more engaging to read than so many of the other recent books on James. Its style and approach are, in particular, a refreshing departure from cookie-cutter New Historical studies on James.” —Dorothy Hale, University of California, Berkeley

Do the surfaces matter? In this provocative book, A Superficial Reading of Henry James: Preoccupations with the Material World, Thomas J. Otten demonstrates that surfaces matter profoundly. Taking seriously the accessories of Henry James’s fiction—the china and bric-a-brac, the antique cabinets and tapestries, the ribbons and hats—this book argues that James’s famous ambiguity is a material state, an indeterminate zone where the difference between essence and ornament disappears. Ranging between fictions as well-known as The Portrait of a Lady (whose heroine is celebrated for her psychological complexity) and ones as understudied as “Rose-Agathe” (whose heroine is a hairdresser’s manikin), Otten suggests that the distinction between what counts as thematic depth and what counts as physical surface is, for James, impossible to maintain. Achieving a superficial reading of Henry James means demonstrating the persistence of the material within the novelist’s most conceptual formations of meaning—an argument with important consequences for literary theory, as Otten shows in his concluding chapters.

Eloquently written and guided by a perverse love for the superfluous detail, this book makes an important contribution to a fast-growing area of the humanities, one newly committed to the serious study of material culture, the concrete experiences of everyday life, and the history of the physical senses.

Thomas J. Otten teaches English at Boston University.
The Reverend Mark Twain
Theological Burlesque, Form, and Content

JOE B. FULTON

“This book will emerge as a mandatory point of reference about a subject that will keep attracting commentary. The book is compelling and it unquestionably deserves to be read by all Twain scholars.”—Louis J. Budd, James B. Duke Professor Emeritus at Duke University

“I was made in His image,” Mark Twain once said, “but have never been mistaken for Him.” God may have made Mark Twain in His image, but Twain frequently remade himself by adopting divine personae as part of his literary burlesque. Readers were delighted, rather than fooled, when Twain adopted the image of religious vocation throughout his writing career: Theologian, Missionary, Priest, Preacher, Prophet, Saint, Brother Twain, Holy Samuel, the Bishop of New Jersey, and of course, the Reverend Mark Twain. Joe B. Fulton has not written a study of Samuel Langhorne Clemens’s religious beliefs, but rather one about Twain’s use of theological form and content in a number of his works—some well-known, others not so widely read.

Twain adopted such religious personae to burlesque the religious literary genres associated with those vocations. He wrote catechisms, prophecies, psalms, and creeds, all in the theological tradition, but with a comic twist. Twain even wrote a burlesque life of Christ that has the son of God sporting blue jeans and cowboy boots. With his distinctive comic genius, Twain entered the religious dialogue of his time, employing the genres of belief as his vehicle for criticizing church and society.

Twain’s burlesques of religious form and content reveal a writer fully engaged with the religious ferment of his day. Works like The Innocents Abroad, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, Roughing It, and What Is Man? are the productions of a writer skilled at adopting and adapting established literary and religious forms for his own purposes. Twain is sometimes viewed as a haphazard writer, but in The Reverend Mark Twain, Fulton demonstrates how carefully Twain studied established literary and theological genres to entertain—and criticize—his society.

Joe B. Fulton is associate professor of English at Baylor University.
The Economics of Fantasy
Rape in Twentieth-Century Literature

SHARON STOCKTON

“The Economics of Fantasy is a smart, well researched and persuasive study that presents an intelligent and provocative overview of the way in which twentieth-century rape narratives negotiate tensions associated with the construction of masculine subjectivity within the shifting forces of capitalism.”—Laura E. Tanner, author of Lost Bodies: Terminal Illness, Grief and Embodiment in Contemporary American Literature

In The Economics of Fantasy: Rape in Twentieth-Century Literature, Sharon Stockton examines the persistence and the evolution of the rape narrative in twentieth-century literature—the old story of male power and violence; female passivity and penetrability. What accounts for its persistence? How has the story changed over the course of the twentieth century? In this provocative book, Stockton investigates the manner in which the female body—or to be more precise, the violation of the female body—serves as a metaphor for a complex synthesis of masculinity and political economy. From high modernism to cyberpunk, Pound to Pynchon, Stockton argues that the compulsive return to the rape story, articulates—among other things—the gradual and relentless removal of Western man from the fantastical capitalist role of venturesome, industrious agency. The metamorphosis of the twentieth-century rape narrative registers a desperate attempt to preserve traditional patterns of robust, entrepreneurial masculinity in the face of economic forms that increasingly disallow illusions of individual authority.

It is important to make clear that the genre of rape story studied here presumes a white masculine subject and a white feminine object. Stockton makes the case that the aestheticized rape narrative reveals particular things about the way white masculinity represents itself. Plotting violent sexual fantasy on the grid of economic concerns locates masculine agency in relation to an explicitly contingent material system of power, value, and order. It is in this way that The Economics of Fantasy discloses the increased desperation with which the body has been made to carry ideology under systems of advanced capitalism.

Sharon Stockton is associate professor of English at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
During the twentieth century modern births in America came to involve mostly male physicians, hospitals, technological interventions, and quick, routine procedures. In a unique and detailed historical study, *Nurse-Midwifery: The Birth of a New American Profession*, Laura E. Ettinger fills a void with the first book-length documentation of the emergence of American nurse-midwifery. This occupation developed in the 1920s involving nurses who took advanced training in midwifery. In *Nurse-Midwifery*, Ettinger shows how nurse-midwives in New York City; eastern Kentucky; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and other places both rebelled against and served as agents of a nationwide professionalization of doctors and medicalization of childbirth. *Nurse-Midwifery* reveals the limitations that nurses, physicians, and nurse-midwives placed on the profession of nurse-midwifery from the outset because of the professional interests of nursing and medicine. The book argues that nurse-midwives challenged what scholars have called the “male medical model” of childbirth, but the cost of the compromises they made to survive was that nurse-midwifery did not become the kind of independent, autonomous profession it might have been.

Today, nurse-midwives have assumed a larger role in mainstream health care than before, yet they are still marginalized. As in the past, nurse-midwives’ futures will depend on continuing changes in American attitudes about childbirth, health care, and women professionals as well as on their own ability to adapt to the changes. The history of the profession suggests that nurse-midwives will continue to navigate in difficult waters in a middle space between the mainstream and the margins of medicine and between the nursing profession and midwifery traditions.

Laura E. Ettinger is assistant professor of history at Clarkson University, Potsdam, New York.
Desiring Rome
Male Subjectivity and Reading Ovid’s Fasti

RICHARD J. KING

“King draws a clear and cogent thread of argument through a consistent, coordinated methodology drawn from psychoanalysis and film theory. As King persuasively illustrates, the calendar is a seen object that also shapes the viewer, making its very perception a matter of negotiation, insofar as the calendar brokers a relationship between the citizen-subject and his cultural symbolization system.”—Micaela Janan, Duke University

During his last two decades (ca. 2 BCE–17 CE), Ovid composed, but never completed, his Fasti, an elegiac representation of Rome’s rites and festivals: only six of twelve month-books remain. Earlier scholars have claimed that this is due either to Ovid’s exile from Rome (which put him out of touch with the Roman literary world) or else his frustration over the Roman calendar’s discontinuity. Drawing upon recent scholarship in gender studies and Lacanian film theory, Richard J. King analyzes this exilic incompletion as inviting the citizen male reader into what he calls an “angular” or “skewed” viewpoint, which interrogates the Roman hierarchical and male-dominated social order, insofar as it is mirrored in the Roman calendar of rites and festivals. Ovid (already well known and even infamous as the composer of erotic poems and the Metamorphoses) does this by emulating the civic gesture of “calendar presentation,” whereby upwardly mobile adult male citizens caused calendars to be carved in stone and set up in conspicuous public places to reflect the city’s pride and to build their own prestige as public figures. In this innovative study, King discusses the Fasti as Ovid’s socially strategic use of this gesture. Interrupted by exile and filled with varying explanations of Roman festivals, Ovid’s poetic version manifests a form whose brokenness comments on the fractured identity of the exiled poet and citizen-subjects generally in an imperial order ambivalent toward its greatest poet.

Desiring Rome expands upon recent recognition of the Fasti’s centrality to early imperial politics by situating the poem’s “failure” within broader negotiations of identity between early imperial citizen-subjects and the cultural ideology of Roman manhood.

Richard J. King is assistant professor of classics in the Department of Modern Languages and Classics at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.
Challenging Parties, Changing Parliaments
Women and Elected Office in Contemporary Western Europe

MIKI CAUL KITILSON

“Kitilson asks why some parties respond to pressure to promote women candidates and others do not. Her attention to the party-parliament nexus provides a nice link between the women and politics literature and the party politics literature. This book will be valued by many scholars.”—Cindy Simon Rosenthal, University of Oklahoma

In Challenging Parties, Changing Parliaments, Miki Caul Kitilson examines women’s presence in party politics and national legislatures, and the conditions under which their entrance occurs. She theorizes that parties are more likely to incorporate women when their strategy takes into account the institutional and political “opportunity structures” of both the party and party system. Kitilson studies how women pressed for greater representation, and how democratic party systems responded to their demands. Research on women’s representation has largely focused at the national level. Yet these studies miss the substantial variations between parties within and across European democracies.

This book provides systematic cross-national and case study evidence to show that political parties are the key mechanism for increasing women’s parliamentary representation. Kitilson uncovers party-level mechanisms that explain the growth in women’s parliamentary participation since the 1970s in ten European democracies. The inclusion of new challengers in party politics is often attributed to mounting pressures from activists and public opinion at large. This book contradicts the conventional wisdom by demonstrating that women’s gains within parties flow not only from pressure from party supporters, but also from calculated efforts made by the central party leadership in a top-down fashion under specific circumstances. Certainly women’s efforts are essential, and they can be most effective when they are framed, timed, and targeted toward the most opportune structures within the party hierarchy. Kitilson concludes that specific party institutions encourage women’s ascendance to the top ranks of power within a political party.

Miki Caul Kitilson is assistant professor in the department of political science at Arizona State University.

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14 The Ohio State University Press
Who Intervenes?
Ethnic Conflict and Interstate Crisis

DAVID CARMENT, PATRICK JAMES, AND ZEYNEP TAYDAS

"Who Intervenes? articulates a well thought out theory of the relationship between ethnic conflict and international conflict. It builds on the work of Robert Putnam on two-level games, but sets out a quite new and original theory that ties domestic institutional constraints, affect, and ethnic interests together into a coherent argument. This is a fine study that will stimulate considerably more research on the nexus between ethnic conflict and international conflict."
—Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Stanford University and New York University

Who Intervenes? takes as a given that there are tensions among ethnic groups throughout the world. But it is not at all clear when and why these tensions escalate into violence. The likelihood and character of intervention depend upon the interplay of two factors: ethnic composition and institutional constraint. A fourfold typology is produced. For example, states with high constraints and ethnic diversity are likely to intervene only for reasons related to national interests, while states with both ethnic dominance and low constraint are most disposed to intervene. The disposition to intervene is catalyzed, the authors hypothesize, by the presence of ethnic affinity and cleavage.

The book includes a comparative analysis of five case studies: India and Sri Lanka, Somalia and Ethiopia, Malaysia and the Thai Malay (a non-intervention), the immediate aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia, and Greece and Turkey with Cyprus. The case histories produce strong support for the relevance of the typology and catalysts. Ethnic composition, institutional constraint, and ethnic affinity and cleavage are very useful factors in distinguishing both the likelihood and form of intervention.

Policies that encourage institutional reform and support ethnic diversity can be expected to reduce the likelihood and even the perceived need for intervention.

David Carment is professor of international affairs, NPSIA, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Patrick James is professor of international relations at the University of Southern California. Zeynep Taydas teaches courses in international relations and comparative politics at the University of Missouri-Columbia.
Starting under President Edward Jennings and continuing under Gordon Gee, The Ohio State University began a long-term drive to match the school’s ranking in football with a commensurate reputation for academic excellence. Initiatives to admit better-prepared students, attract and retain world-class faculty, and build highly rated programs were promising, but the university needed a broad strategy to coordinate these and other initiatives into a focused approach.

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Continuing the Ohio State tradition of chronicling the university’s history through the work of its past presidents, *The Kirwan Years* recounts the Academic Plan’s creation, acceptance, and initial implementation, along with many major university accomplishments from mid-1998 through mid-2002. It also details the university’s ongoing, uphill struggle to maximize state financial support and its success in private and other fundraising. It provides a compelling look at the complexity permeating today’s research universities. And yes, it describes the firing of football coach John Cooper and the hiring of Jim Tressel.

Chris Perry is a freelance writer and editor of speeches, articles, and other public policy documents.
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