



the consummate review of books, magazines, media, and the like

ELIZABETH ROUTEN (“Call It Sleep”), a native of Hampton Roads, Virginia, is a fiction writer and web designer whose credits include the short story collection *Voice1 on the Stair* and placement in magazines including *magaziThe Paumanok Review*magazi and *magaziSunjammer*magazi. You may read excerpts f

TAMARA VISHKINA (“Jumping Fire”) is a chemist who holds an MS in Biophysics (Moscow University, Russia) and a Ph.D. in Chemistry (Kiev University, Ukraine). She write1 poetry and has

ABOUT CRITIQUE

Critique is a fortnightly online magazine dedicated to publishing quality reviews of modern and

for sixteen years, he is a much sought after speaker, mostly for his wit and his writing expertise, but sometimes for his inadvertent connection with Hollywood. Sam Pickering was immortalized in the 1989 film “Dead Poets’ Society.” His teaching many years ago at the Montgomery Bell Academy, a boys prep school in Tennessee, had so inspired a young student named Tom Schulman that when Schulman came to flesh out the character of Professor John Keating for the screenplay, Schulman amply drew from his experience with Pickering.

After receiving degrees from the University of the South (Sewanee, Tennessee), Cambridge University, and Princeton, Pickering explored and taught eighteenth and nineteenth century English literature, children’s literature, nature writers, and — of course — the familiar essay. His extensive list of publishing credits reads like a literary writers’ market: *Georgia Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *New England Review*, *Southwest Review*, *Chicago Review*, *Yankee Magazine*, *New Mexico Humanities Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Texas Review*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Chattahoochee Review*, *Northeast*, *Chariton Review*, *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin*, *South Carolina Review*, *Missouri Review*, and the *Sewanee Review* (“I know the editor,” Pickering says.) Thrown in with these literary journals are contributions to the *Hartford Courant* and the *New York Times* (*Connecticut Weekly*) and some submissions to English language research journals, a psychological journal or two, and lots of reviews for an. 523 456y.” His3onnecenu 4Tf1 a29Weeoc1 an iask,

Sam Pickering

things very far," he says. Regularly, he reads his work out loud and lets his wife and children comment, often leaving himself wide open for a few potshots.

JUMPING FIRE:
A SMOKEJUMPER'S MEMOIR OF FIGHTING WILDFIRE
nonfiction by Murry A. Taylor

Harcourt Inc., 2000
ISBN: 0-15-100589-3

Review by Tamara Vishkina

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raises some interesting issues along the way.

Not every reader will pick up on the religious and historical subtexts of *Fire Bringer*, nor is such a study necessary. But at the very least, a young reader will be aware that *Fire Bringer* is a great story. Rannoch is a multifaceted character, and readers will be sure to find themselves in sympathy with his struggles. Rannoch's friends and enemies are not always so well developed, but at the least they are straightforward characters who are easy to cheer for or despise. The writing is often quite beautiful, though sometimes Mr. Clement-Davies' strong vision is let down by

book was slightly too long. Some setorics of the story, especially near the end, could have been less drawn out. But these are minor points which will probably clear themselves up in later books by this promising author.

Fire Bringer should reach a large audience. Animal lovers and fantasy enthusiasts are the most obvious targets. But the novel should also appeal to those with interests as far-ranging as Scotland, comparative religion, and anthropology. It is an ambitious work which succeeds in most regards, and a rare book which deserves a place in both the children's and the adult setorics of libraries and bookstores everywhere.

Note to Biographer's Regarding Famous Author Flannery O'Connor", where the character, Mary Helen (yes, just like the author), burns her PhD thesis due to the thesis supervisor labeling it "unscholarly and banal", to the final story, Margo Rabb's "How to Tell a Story", in which the narrator struggles with her compulsion to write an autobiographical short story, the collection is filled with convincing ordeals of comedy and trauma.

Also dealing with academia (and factory life) is Tim Gautreaux's "Dancing with the One-Armed Gal", in which fired factory worker Iry Boudreax picks up

“Box” by A. Manette Ansay manifests a carton of innocent kittens that serves as a marker for the give-and-take of a marriage, while “Just Married” by Tony

Contemporary Fiction

WHILE I WAS GONE

by Sue Miller

Ballantine Books

ISBN: 0-375-41178-X

Review by Christina Gosnell

Jo BeMiller

Miller takes the reader through the memories of Jo Becker's life. The author does this so well that there are times when the reader feels nestled in the big house with Jo Becker, comfortable in the palm of the writer's hand.

The story takes off running in the beginning. We lose our breath as we try to keep up, the excitement alive. Jo Becker — her false identity created out of desperation, out of boredom. Her fear of a life that she fears will never seem complete. The husband she left behind, the new people in her life that seem to define some part of herself. And then something horrible happens, something that Jo will never be able to erase from her memory.

Eli enters her life like lightning in a thunderstorm. Thoughts and feelings surface that Jo cannot hide nor escape, but there seems no outlet for such frivolity. Daniel is always there for everyone, so perfect, so right, so true. The comfort with Daniel is special; she knows that in the depths of her person. Buwill nalso recognizes the breath and life of another part of her. Jo sometimes becomes p romfife owl.ki(de72 prisntiby(recobreatrsonhoure identiwaysme part,s thnauthor d29s) Tj0.615

CALL IT SLEEP

by Henry Roth

The Noonday Press (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), New York

ISBN: 0-374-52292-8

Review by Elizabeth Routen

We look to the best books as examples which fulfill both the basic commandments of writing — entertain, educate, persuade — and the subtle slights of hand which

adopted children. But these are unusual children, forced to grow old too quickly by the reality which cannot be hidden by youthful games. The sometimes startling

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