

is very clear in a conference description which mentions speakers who "range into very marginal areas like the effects of networking CD-ROMs in academia."

The contributors come from Britain. American and some continental European products are frequently mentioned, but most of the vendors and users interviewed are British or the British representatives of non-British firms. The (admittedly selective) list of hypertext products in one issue omits such major United States companies as DynaText and Eastgate. Since most related publications come from North America, it is interesting to see a different perspective, but unfortunate that the coverage stresses Britain at the expense of its partners in the European Community.

The price, which is not unreasonable for a publication researched and written in-house, will probably keep most libraries from subscribing to *Electronic Documents* to help meet staff information needs in emerging technologies, but libraries should consider it seriously if they support programs in publishing, information science, or business programs with an interest in document handling.—James Campbell, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Giroux, Henry A. *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education*. New York: Routledge, 1992. 258p. \$45.50 (ISBN 0-415-90466-8); paper, \$15.95 (ISBN 0-415-90467-6).

About a quarter of a century ago in the northeast of Brazil, Paulo Freire developed theories that have had a global ripple effect among educators concerned with the kind of society that results from the process of education. Freire's ideas and his friendship have had a significant influence on Henry Giroux, professor of education at Pennsylvania State University. Giroux has published many monographs, compilations, and journal articles—all stressing the importance of education in the search for freedom and as an essential component in the survival of democracy.

The 1980s saw the emergence of the term *politically correct* which, as Calvin

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Trillin has noted in the *New Yorker*, is "that rare term which appears at first glance to be positive but is always negative." In *Border Crossings*, Giroux describes the use of this term as an example of the "politics of erasure" in which all manner of problems are "no longer addressed in serious terms; instead, it has become commonplace to deflect or mask one's complicity with these practices by labelling those who argue against them ideological tyrants." Giroux looks for new models for dialogue which will lead to real solutions to real problems, and he focuses on the critical role of the "cultural worker," that individual who creates symbolic representations that have a pedagogical dimension and can foster liberation and enhance democracy. He includes lawyers, artists, journalists, but especially teachers. Librarians, nurses, country western singers and waitresses never make it in to his text, but presumably he would approve of their inclusion.

In eight dense, theoretical chapters and two lighter interviews, Giroux skillfully advocates a "discourse of possibility," reaching for a perspective that ignores or denies rigid boundaries or borders. As one of the leading advocates of critical pedagogy, Giroux struggles to formalize theory that draws inspiration from many ideologies and rejects rigidity: "Any pedagogy that acts in the service of only one outcome generally constitutes a form of terrorism." The chapter, "Modernism, Postmodernism, and Feminism" is a useful summary of the strengths and contributions of each, and it nicely articulates their evolution. Giroux's border pedagogy is particularly useful to the extent that it provides an antidote to the "limited-good" mentality that assumes that the only solution is money, and since there isn't enough to go around, we'll solve my problem, but yours will have to wait.

The danger that critical pedagogy presents to the library is that its advocates will assume that the content of libraries represents yesterday's canon (see Mark Cyzyk's article, "Canon Formation, Library Collections, and the Dilemma of Collection Development," in the January

1993 *C&RL*) and needs ruthless reconstruction to flourish, rather than understanding what libraries really represent: the interplay of culture, ethnicity, gender, and language across time and generations. Librarians need to pay attention to the debate and attempt to deepen the dialogue. Although Giroux does not mention the library, it is clearly one place on campus and in our society where the exchange of ideas is open and free. Neither tests nor grades nor time constraints come between the reader and the record. New technology and access to worldwide resources leave any attempt to confine the academic library to monocultural or monolingual content as hopeless as keeping mosquitoes out of the house with fishnet. But what, then, if we set out to collect the world's diversity? A few university libraries try to. They quickly panic, not from the rush of dangerous ideas and alien truths, but from the implications for space, staff, and budget. The other constraint on the capacity of university libraries to assimilate the world's diversity is time—faculty time. Big collections can intimidate scholars who cannot possibly know or read everything or search every database. The logical extension of border pedagogy is limitless humility, which is, after all, the ultimate empowerment. Giroux is hoping for dialogue and the exchange of ideas and narratives. As librarians, we need to speak up, meet his challenge, and join the discussion.—Ellen Brow, *University of Nevada, Reno*.

Thomas, Gillian. *A Position to Command Respect: Women and the Eleventh Britannica*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1992. 212p., alk. paper, \$24. (ISBN 0-8108-2567-8).

In the 1992 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* over 250 women are listed among the contributors. Although this represents a small percentage of the total contributors, it is nonetheless a reflection of the major impact women have made on modern scholarship. Yet, as Gillian Thomas ably demonstrates in her feminist study of the influential and still revered eleventh edition of the *Britan-*