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into the rude coffin of his argument. The parody was written out of affection for Pauline Kael's writing, which has taught me (and anybody who possesses a functioning nervous system) an enormous amount about how to look at movies. As a parodist, I was frustrated to find in her work none of the hypocrisy that parody delights in; I was stuck with jokes about her style. I have also parodied Henry James, Kenneth Koch, and Mao Tse-tung, swell stylists all.

—Veronica Geng
East 64th Street

Andrew Sarris replies: I am not familiar enough with the inner workings of Veronica Geng's literary mechanisms to comment on her tortured but but dutiful defense of her New Yorker colleague.

Whose Blues?

Dear Editor:

"What is a white woman like you doing with my music?" is the insistent cry I have been hearing from your paper lately. It is as absurd as if only German men could write about Thomas Mann or Jewish lesbians about Gertrude Stein or New England spinsters about Emily Dickinson.

Your "white Negroes," as outdated as Norman Mailer's concept of 1957, want to keep the blues in their own stereotypical back yard. And the arrogance of Stanley Crouch to accuse the audience of "Blues Is a Woman" as being so "far out of it" that they stupidly gave Big Mama Thornton "a standing ovation for what was a pathetic performance" ["Blues Misused," *Voice*, July 23-29]. He, like your other reviewers, missed the point of the concert. It was a celebration!

The way your vituperative rhetoricians use the word feminist, as though it were a dirty word, reminds me of the time Dick Cavett asked 86-year-old Janet Flanner if she was a feminist. She looked at him with contempt and said, "What intelligent woman doesn't want equality? Of course I'm a feminist." I found Crouch's concept of "feminist mummies" intriguing, even if he coined it facetiously.

Thulani Davis's irresponsible reporting matches that of Rex Reed ["The Blues Talk Back," *Voice*, July 9-15.] A telephone call could have corrected her naive assumption that I did not discuss the Newport concert songs with the singers. What a put down of them. Her interest, she implies, in these women is more sincere, more authentic, and more honest than mine. Why then, has it taken her so long to write about them? Why did she not badger the director of the Smithsonian Institution's Oral History archives for a year, as I did, to include Sippie Wallace's historic testimony, so Sippie could get \$2000 she needed for new teeth? How many jobs has Thulani arranged for blues singers? How many blues women and songs has she retrieved that were lost?

I am very lucky to be receiving royalties from my latest book so that I can pursue my interest in blues women full-time. I have succeeded in collecting one of the largest archives of blues women's music and would be happy to loan Thulani or Stanley or Gary Giddins my valued 78

get my label together, but since they are so knowledgeable, maybe they could do it faster. And I would be happy to help them even though they have been insulting, patronizing, and malicious, because I want to see more of this music made available.

—Rosetta Reitz
West 16th Street

Beware Tricky Pairs

Dear Editor:

John Calvin Batchelor's attribution of the invention of the gothic novel to "Hugh Walpole, the Brontes, and Mary Shelley" ["Hot News: Funny Oates," *Voice*, July 30-August 5] does not inspire confidence in his grasp of literary history. He means Horace Walpole (1717-1797), the author of *The Castle of Otranto*, not Hugh, who lived into the 1940s. Other tricky pairs to watch out for: Henry Adams and Jane Addams, George Eliot and his nephew T.S.

—Michael Moon
West 107th Street

Now Hear This

Dear Editor:

What "Bell Tells" apropos Tom Robinson's new band, Sector 27, is sadly uninformed and "completely apolitical" bullshit [*Voice*, July 16-22]. All the new material engages the theme of sexual politics and is hardly worthy of summary dismissal via the throw-away gesture. Moreover, if Bell had done the simplest homework he would have discovered, as I did by talking with Tom before a recent gig, that Sector 27 fully intends to assimilate all the earlier material of the two previous TRB's.

—Tom McCutcheon
Westbury, New York

Arthur Bell replies: What Robinson meant to do, what he will do, is not what he did.

Alfresco Fiasco

Dear Editor:

After reading Barbara Garson's article on the absence of Shakespeare in the Park this summer ["Don't Mourn for Shakespeare, Organize," *Voice*, July 23-29], an absence which she perceives as one more example of the classes depriving the New York City masses, I would like to ask a few questions about her own class background.

Imagine my surprise on discovering a new class of oppressed people, one whose members have the education to enjoy Shakespeare, and the leisure to spend afternoons picnicking in Central Park. These poor people are further cursed with apartments coveted by doctors and/or businessmen as \$50,000 investments.

Instead of bemoaning the fact that she can no longer wait on line to see Shakespeare for free, why doesn't Ms. Garson go check out the lines at her local welfare office? (Assuming there is one in her neighborhood.)

—Susan Casey
East 75th Street

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