Unusable Past Theory And The Study Of American Literature

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Loose Ends - Russell Reising 1996
In this study of American cultural production from the colonial era to the present, Russell Reising takes up the loose ends of popular American narratives to craft a new theory of narrative closure. In the range of works examined here - from Phillis Wheatley's poetry to Herman Melville's Israel Potter, from Henry James's "The Jolly Corner" to Disney's Dumbo - Reising finds endings that violate all existing theories of closure, and narratives that expose the often unarticulated issues that inspired these texts. Reising suggests that these "nonendings" entirely refocus the narrative structures they appear to conclude, accentuate the narrative stresses and ideological fissures that the texts seem to suppress, and reveal "shadow narratives" that trail alongside the dominant story line. He argues that unless the reader notices the ruptures in the closing moments of these works, the social and historical moments in which the narrative and the reader are embedded will be missed. This reading not only offers new interpretive possibilities, but also uncovers startling affinities between the poetry of Phillis Wheatley and the fiction of Henry James, between Charles Brockden Brown's Wieland and Melville's Israel Potter, and between Emily Dickinson's poem "I Started Early - Took My Dog " and Disney's animated classic. Pursuing the implications of these failed moments of closure, Reising elaborates on topics ranging from the roots of domestic violence and mass murder in early American religious texts to the pornographic imperative of mid-century nature writing, and from James's "descent" into naturalist and feminist fiction to Dumbo's explosive projection of commercial, racial, and political agendas for postwar U.S. culture. General readers interested in American literature as well as students of literary theory will find Loose Ends enlightening and provocative.

American Cultural Studies - Neil C. Campbell 2005-08-12
Drawing on literature, art, film theatre, music and much more, American
Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary introduction to American culture for those taking American Studies. This textbook: * introduces the full range and variety of American culture including issues of race, gender and youth * provides a truly interdisciplinary methodology * suggests and discusses a variety of approaches to study * highlights American distinctiveness * draws on literature, art, film, theatre, architecture, music and more * challenges orthodox paradigms of American Studies. This is a fast-expanding subject area, and Campbell and Kean's book will certainly be a staple part of any cultural studies student's reading diet.

**Comparative Cultural Studies and Latin America** - Sophia A. McClennen 2004

The genesis of Comparative Cultural Studies and Latin America stems from the contributors' conviction that, given its vitality and excellence, Latin American literature deserves a more prominent place in comparative literature publications, curricula, and disciplinary discussions. The editors introduce the volume by first arguing that there still exists, in some quarters, a lingering bias against literature written in Spanish and Portuguese. Secondly, the authors assert that by embracing Latin American literature and culture more enthusiastically, comparative literature would find itself reinvigorated, placed into productive discourse with a host of issues, languages, literatures, and cultures that have too long been paid scant academic attention. Following an introduction by the editors, the volume contains papers by Gene H. Bell-Villada on the question of canon, by Gordon Brotherston and Lúcia de Sá on the First Peoples of the Americas and their literature, by Elizabeth Coonrod Martínez on the Latin American novel of the 1920s, by Román de la Campa on Latin American Studies, by Earl E. Fitz on Spanish American and Brazilian literature, by Roberto González Echevarría on Latin American and comparative literature, by Sophia A. McClennen on comparative literature and Latin American Studies, by Alberto Moreiras on Borges, by Julio Ortega on the critical debate about Latin American cultural studies, by Christina Marie Tourino on Cuban Americas in New York City, by Mario J. Valdés on the comparative history of literary cultures in Latin America, and by Lois Parkinson Zamora on comparative literature and globalization. The volume also contains a bibliography of scholarship in comparative Latin American culture and literature and biographical abstracts of the contributors to the volume.

**Jewish American Literature since 1945** - Stephen Wade 2013-04-11

First published in 1999. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

**American Literature** - Hans Bertens 2013-11-12

This comprehensive history of American Literature traces its development from the earliest colonial writings of the late 1500s through to the present day. This lively, engaging and highly accessible guide: offers lucid discussions of all major influences and movements such as Puritanism, Transcendentalism, Realism, Naturalism, Modernism and Postmodernism draws on the historical, cultural, and political contexts of key literary texts and authors covers the whole range of American literature: prose, poetry, theatre and experimental literature includes substantial sections on native and ethnic American literatures explains and contextualises major events, terms and figures in American history. This book is essential reading for anyone seeking to situate
Cooper's Leather-Stocking Novels - Geoffrey Rans 2000-11-09

James Fenimore Cooper's Leather-Stocking tales, published between 1823 and 1841, are generally regarded as America's first major works of fiction. Here, Geoffrey Rans provides not simply a new reading of the five novels that comprise the series but also a new way of reading them. Rans analyzes each of the five novels (The Pioneers, The Last of the Mohicans, The Prairie, The Pathfinder, and The Deerslayer) in the order in which they were originally composed, an achronological sequence in terms of the stories they tell. As events in early written novels interact with those in later ones, the reader is compelled to construct political meanings different from Cooper's ideological preferences. This approach effectively precludes reading these works as Natty Bumppo's life story, or as an aspect of Cooper's. Rans presents the series as a text that faithfully reproduces the conflicts Cooper faced, both at the time when he wrote the novels and in the history that the novels contemplate. Cooper emerges as a composer of richly problematical texts for which no aesthetic resolution is possible and in which every idealization, political or poetic, is relentlessly subjected to the gaze of historical reality. The tension between potential and practice, which is apparent in the final two volumes of the tales, is present, Rans contends, from the inception of the series. Because the problems of racism and greed that Cooper addresses remained as unresolved for us as for him, Rans concludes that this reading of the Leather-Stocking tales reinforces both Cooper's central canonical position and his value as an articulator of political conflict. Originally published in 1991. A UNC Press Enduring Edition -- UNC Press Enduring Editions use the latest in digital technology to make available again books from our distinguished backlist that were previously out of print. These editions are published unaltered from the original, and are presented in affordable paperback formats, bringing readers both historical and cultural value.

The Unusable Past - Russell J. Reising 1983

City on a Hill - Abram C. Van Engen 2020-02-25

A fresh, original history of America’s national narratives, told through the loss, recovery, and rise of one influential Puritan sermon from 1630 to the present day In this illuminating book, Abram Van Engen shows how the phrase “City on a Hill,” from a 1630 sermon by Massachusetts Bay governor John Winthrop, shaped the story of American exceptionalism in the twentieth century. By tracing the history of Winthrop’s speech, its changing status throughout time, and its use in modern politics, Van Engen asks us to reevaluate our national narratives. He tells the story of curators, librarians, collectors, archivists, antiquarians, and often anonymous figures who emphasized the role of the Pilgrims and Puritans in American history, paving the way for the saving and sanctifying of a single sermon. This sermon’s rags-to-riches rise reveals the way national stories take shape and shows us how those tales continue to influence competing visions of the country—the many different meanings of America that emerge from its literary past.

The Unusable Past - Russell J. Reising 1986
In Their Own Terms - Francesco Pontuale 2007
In a historical period of international and global frames of literary investigation, In Their Own Terms is a timely and valuable contribution to cross-cultural forms of dialogue between non-American modes of analysis and US American literary studies. It is a wide-ranging and provocative look into American literary historiography that engages readers in analytical examinations of US literary histories considered landmarks in their field, from the early nineteenth-century work of Samuel L. Knapp to the newly completed Cambridge volumes. It focuses on texts that have had a decisive influence in constructing dominant understandings of American literature, its various genres, significant historical periods, and major writers, both inside and outside the United States. For the first time, this work compares and contrasts the tradition of US literary historiography with Italian histories of American literature. Characterized as they are by the particularities of the Italian cultural scene, these histories have always been conversant with US literary historiography, beginning with Gustavo Strafforello in 1884 and continuing in Agostino Lombardo's most recent series. In Their Own Terms cogently argue that American literary histories, regardless of the different critical and theoretical principles on which they are based, have invariably played an important role in national cohesion and in articulating an autonomy that is cultural as well as academic.

A Reference Guide for English Studies - Michael J. Marcuse 2023-11-10

Conspiracy and Romance - Robert S. Levine 1989-09-29
Robert Levine examines the American romance in a new historical context. His book offers a fresh reading of the genre, establishing its importance to American culture between the founding of the Republic and the Civil War. With convincing historical and literary detail, Levine shows that anxieties about foreign elements--French revolutionaries, secret societies, Catholic immigrants, African slaves--are central to the fictional worlds of Brockden Brown, Cooper, Hawthorne and Melville. Ormond, The Bravo, The Blithedale Romance, and Benito Cereno are persuasively explicated by Levine to demonstrate that the romance dramatized the same conflicts and ideals that gave rise to the American Republic. Americans conceived "America" as a historical romance, and their romances dramatize the historical conditions of the culture. The fear that reputed conspiracies would subvert the order and integrity of the new nation were recurrent and widespread; Levine illuminates the influence of such fears on the works of major romance writers during this period.

Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism - Martin Coyle 2002-09-11
This Encyclopedia is the most comprehensive guide yet both to the nature and content of literature, and to literary criticism. In ninety essays by leading international critics and scholars, the volume covers both traditional topics such as literature and history, poetry, drama and the novel, and also newer topics such as the production and reception of literature. Current critical ideas are clearly and provocatively discussed, while the volume's arrangement reflects in a dynamic way the rich diversity of contemporary thinking about literature. Each essay seeks to provide the reader with a clear sense of the full significance of its subject as well as guidance on further reading. An
essential work of reference, The Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism is a stimulating guide to the central preoccupations of contemporary critical thinking about literature. Special Features * Clearly written by scholars and critics of international standing for readers at all levels in many disciplines * In-depth essays covering all aspects, traditional and new, of literary studies past and present * Useful cross-references within the text, with full bibliographical references and suggestions for further reading * Single index of authors, terms, topics

_The Unusable Past_ - Russell John Reising 1983

_The Invention of Native American Literature_ - Robert Dale Parker 2018-08-06

In an original, widely researched, and accessibly written book, Robert Dale Parker helps redefine the study of Native American literature by focusing on issues of gender and literary form. Among the writers Parker highlights are Thomas King, John Joseph Mathews, D'Aracy McNickle, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Ray A. Young Bear, some of whom have previously received little scholarly attention. Parker proposes a new history of Native American literature by reinterpreting its concerns with poetry, orality, and Indian notions of authority. He also addresses representations of Indian masculinity, uncovering Native literature's recurring fascination with restless young men who have nothing to do, or who suspect or feel pressured to believe that they have nothing to do. The Invention of Native American Literature reads Native writing through a wide variety of shifting historical contexts. In its commitment to historicizing Native writing and identity, Parker's work parallels developments in scholarship on other minority literatures and is sure to provoke controversy.

_The Usable Past_ - Lois Parkinson Zamora 1997-12-13


_Willa Cather in Context_ - G. Reynolds 1996-04-01

Drawing on a range of material from archives in the USA and from a variety of primary historical sources, this study places Cather's major fiction in its cultural context. Reynolds explores 'progressivism', 'primitivism' and 'Americanization' in such novels as My Antonia and O Pioneers! Willa Cather in Context develops interdisciplinary readings of this important Nebraskan novelist, placing her as a writer actively engaged with many of the key debates of early twentieth-century America, from immigration to evolutionary theory.

_Unusable Past_ - Russell J. Reising 2013-11-05

First Published in 2002. Amongst a time of rapid and radical social change, New Accents is a positive response to change, with each volume seeking to encourage rather than resist the process of change, to stretch rather than reinforce boundaries that currently define literature and its academic study. This study offers the authors’ theories of American literature and more specifically, his interest here is in how those theories define the canon of American literature and how those definitions influence our understanding and teaching of that canon.

_Critical essays on the mith of the american Adam_ - María Eugenia & Díaz 2001-01-01
The Presence of the Past in Modern American Drama - Patricia R. Schroeder 1989
This study focuses on Eugene O'Neill, Thornton Wilder, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams, who, within the overall framework of formal realism, reshaped dramatic form to depict a past that interacts with the present in complex and often surprising ways. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press Award in Modern Drama.

Do the Americas Have a Common Literature? - Gustavo Pérez Firmat 1990
In contrast to traditional criticism which tends to examine World counterparts, the essays in this collection identify a distinctive pan-American consciousness (and literary idiom), engaging not only the major North American and Spanish American writers, but also such literatures as the Chicano, African-American, Brazilian, and Quebecois. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

The Routledge Handbook to the Culture and Media of the Americas - Wilfried Raussert 2020-03-02
Exploring the culture and media of the Americas, this handbook places particular emphasis on collective and intertwined experiences and focuses on the transnational or hemispheric dimensions of cultural flows and geocultural imaginaries that shape the literature, arts, media and other cultural expressions in the Americas. The Routledge Handbook to the Culture and Media of the Americas charts the pervasive, asymmetrical flows of cultural products and capital and their importance in the development of the Americas. The volume offers a comprehensive understanding of how inter-American communication is constituted, framed and structured, and covers the artistic and political dimensions that have shaped literature, art and popular culture in the region. Forty-six chapters cover a range of inter-American key concepts and dynamics, divided into two parts: Literature and Music deals with inter-American entanglements of artistic expressions in the Western Hemisphere, including music, dance, literary genres and developments. Media and Visual Cultures explores the inter-American dimension of media production in the hemisphere, including cinema and television, photography and art, journalism, radio, digital culture and issues such as freedom of expression and intellectual property. This multidisciplinary approach will be of interest to a broad array of academic scholars and students in history, sociology, political science; and cultural, postcolonial, gender, literary, globalization and media studies.

Writing and America - Gavin Cologne-Brookes 2016-07-01
Writing and America surveys the writing genres that have contributed to the American notions of America. Essays from scholars from both side of the Atlantic chart the range of responses to American nationhood from colonial times to the present and include dissenting responses from communities such as native American, black and feminist writers. Case studies from writers such as James Fenimore Cooper and William Carlos Williams provide a framework for discussions on topics such as colonial notions of America as the promised land, the discourses of nationhood in the republic, the sense of nationhood in American historiography, and the formation of the American Canon. Draws upon extracts from the American Bills of Rights and the Constitution as examples of different types of writing.

American Literature and the Culture Wars - Gregory S. Jay 2018-09-05
Gregory S. Jay boldly challenges the future of American literary studies. Why pursue the study and teaching of a distinctly American literature? What is the appropriate purpose and scope of such pursuits? Is the notion of a traditional canon of great books out of date? Where does American literature leave off and Mexican or Caribbean or Canadian or postcolonial literature begin? Are today's campus conflicts fueled more by economics or ideology? Jay addresses these questions and others relating to American literary studies to explain why this once arcane academic discipline found itself so often in the news during the culture wars of the 1990s. While asking some skeptical questions about new directions and practices, Jay argues forcefully in favor of opening the borders of American literary and cultural analysis. He relates the struggle for representation in literary theory to a larger cultural clash over the meaning and justice of representation, then shows how this struggle might expand both the contents and the teaching of American literature. In an account of the vexed legacy of the Declaration of Independence, he provides a historical context for the current quarrels over literature and politics. Prominent among these debates are those over multiculturalism, which Jay takes up in an essay on the impasses of identity politics. In closing, he considers how the field of comparative American cultural studies might be constructed.

The History of American Literature on Film - Thomas Leitch 2019-06-13

From William Dickson's Rip Van Winkle films (1896) to Baz Luhrmann's big-budget production of The Great Gatsby (2013) and beyond, cinematic adaptations of American literature participate in a rich and fascinating history. Unlike previous studies of American literature and film, which emphasize particular authors like Edith Wharton and Nathaniel Hawthorne, particular texts like Moby-Dick, particular literary periods like the American Renaissance, or particular genres like the novel, this volume considers the multiple functions of filmed American literature as a cinematic genre in its own right-one that reflects the specific political and aesthetic priorities of different national and historical cinemas even as it plays a decisive role in defining American literature for a global audience.

Unusable Past - Russell J. Reising 2013-11-05

First Published in 2002. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

American Literature Before 1880 - Robert Lawson-Peebles 2014-07-17

American Literature Before 1880 attempts to place its subject in the broadest possible international perspective. It begins with Homer looking westward, and ends with Henry James crossing the Atlantic eastwards. In between, the book examines the projection of images of the East onto an as-yet unrecognised West; the cultural consequences of Viking, Colombian, and then English migration to America; the growth and independence of the British American colonies; the key writers of the new Republic; and the development of the culture of the United States before and after the Civil War. It is intended both as an introduction for undergraduates to the richness and variety of American Literature, and as a contribution to the debate about its distinctive nature. The book therefore begins with a lengthy survey of earlier histories of American Literature.

Multi-volume history of American literature.

Early American Literature and Culture - Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola 1992

"Early American Literature and Culture: Essays Honoring Harrison T. Meserole, a timely collection that reflects changing conceptions of the field, contains studies by leading scholars and celebrates the achievements of Harrison T. Meserole—colonialist, bibliographer, and Shakespeare scholar extraordinaire. These dynamic essays deal with areas at the forefront of current research, such as popular culture, minority and non-Anglo writings, recanonization, genre studies, and Anglo-American links. All the contributors were Meserole's students sometime during the twenty-eight years he taught at The Pennsylvania State University, and all have established their own scholarly reputations since then." “Timothy K. Conley examines the institutionalization of American literature. Donald P. Wharton considers the influence of the English Renaissance on Colonial sea literature. Paul J. Lindholdt provides an overview of a vast popular genre, the colonial promotion tract." "Raymond F. Dolle uncovers the satire against Sir Walter Raleigh, the romantic treasure-seeker, by his more hard-nosed contemporary, John Smith. Reiner Smolinski's revisionist essay argues that New England's leading divines did not—as many still believe—justify their Errand eschatologically. Ada Van Gastel discusses the main text of the early Dutch colonists, by Adriaen van der Donck." "Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola analyzes Sarah Kemble Knight's travel journal as an unusual example of a Puritan picaresque. Jeffrey Walker probes eighteenth-century undergraduate commonplace books revealing the seamy side of Harvard undergraduate life. Stephen R. Yarbrough examines Jonathan Edwards's conceptions of time in the last work he saw to press before he died." "Robert D. Arner introduces and annotates two unpublished poems by the Samuel Pepys of eighteenth-century Virginia, Robert Bolling. Robert D. Habich explores Franklin's rhetorical method as rooted in contemporary empirical science. Cheryl Z. Oreovicz shows how Mercy Warren's tragedies contained stern messages for the post-Revolutionary "Lost generation."

Jayne K. Kribbs looks at the popular novelist John Davis as a candidate for recanonization, and Paul Sorrentino shows that Mason Lock Weems's so-called children's classic, The Life of Washington, is a complex, artistic work for adults."--BOOK JACKET.Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

American Literature and the New Puritan Studies - Bryce Traister 2017-09-07

This book contains thirteen original essays about Puritan culture in colonial New England. Prompted by the growing interest in secular studies, as well as postnational, transnational, and postcolonial critique in the humanities, American Literature and the New Puritan Studies seeks to represent and advance contemporary interest in a field long recognized, however problematically, as foundational to the study of American literature. It invites readers of American literature and culture to reconsider the role of seventeenth-century Puritanism in the creation of the United States of America and its consequent cultural and literary histories. It also records the significant transformation in the field of Puritan studies that has taken place in the last quarter century. In addition to re-reading well known texts of seventeenth-century Puritan New England, the volume contains essays focused on unknown or lesser studied events and texts, as well as new scholarship on post-Puritan archives,
monuments, and historiography.  
*Homosexuality in Cold War America* - Robert J. Corber 1997-05-22

Challenging widely held assumptions about postwar gay male culture and politics, this book examines how gay men in the 1950s resisted pressures to remain in the closet.

*Feminism and American Literary History* - Nina Baym 1992

For more than a decade Nina Baym has pioneered in the reexamination of American literature. She has led the way in questioning assumptions about American literary history, in critiquing the standard canon of works we read and teach, and in rediscovering lost texts by American women writers. *Feminism and American Literary History* collects fourteen of her most important essays published since 1980, which, combining feminist perspectives with original archival research, significantly revise standard American literary history. In Part I, "Rewriting Old American Literary History," the focus is on male writers. Essays range from close readings of individual works to ambitious critiques of the main paradigms by which scholars have conventionally linked disparate texts and authors in a narrative of nationalist literary history: the self-in-the-wilderness myth, the romance-novel distinction, the myth of New England origins. Part II, "Writing New American Literary History," studies examples of women's writing from the Revolution through the Civil War. Stressing much overtly public and political writing that has been overlooked even by feminist scholars, noting public and political themes in supposedly domestic works, the essays substantially modify and historicize the paradigm by which premodern American women's writing is currently understood. The contentious and influential essays in Part III, "Two Feminist Polemics," address feminist literary theory and pedagogy, advocating a pluralist practice as the basis for scholarship, criticism, and humane feminism. No one interested in American literature or in women's writing can afford to ignore Baym's revisionist work. Humorous and gracefully written, this book is enjoyable and indispensable.

*Professing Literature* - Gerald Graff 2008-11-15

Widely considered the standard history of the profession of literary studies, *Professing Literature* unearths the long-forgotten ideas and debates that created the literature department as we know it today. In a readable and often-amusing narrative, Gerald Graff shows that the heated conflicts of our recent culture wars echo–and often recycle–controversies over how literature should be taught that began more than a century ago. Updated with a new preface by the author that addresses many of the provocative arguments raised by its initial publication, *Professing Literature* remains an essential history of literary pedagogy and a critical classic. “Graff’s history... is a pathbreaking investigation showing how our institutions shape literary thought and proposing how they might be changed.”— The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism

*American Cultural Studies* - Neil Campbell 2013-06-17

Praise for previous editions: 'Something of a godsend ... as a teaching resource this book is second to none ... achieves levels of multiplicity rarely, if ever, reached by others.' - Borderlines: Studies in American Culture

This third edition of *American Cultural Studies* has been updated throughout to take into account the developments of the last six years, providing an
introduction to the central themes in modern American culture and explores how these themes can be interpreted. Chapters in the book discuss the various aspects of American cultural life such as religion, gender and sexuality, and regionalism. Updates and revisions include: discussion of Barack Obama’s rise to power and the end of the ‘Bush Years’ consideration of ‘Hemispheric American Studies’ and the increasing debates about globalisation and the role of the USA up-to-date case-studies, such as The Wire and Nurse Jackie, more on suburbia, the Mexican-border crossing, the Twilight phenomena etc updated further-reading lists.Accompanying website. American Cultural Studies is a core text and an accessible introduction to the interdisciplinary study of American culture.

**Cohesion and Dissent in America** - Carol Colatrella 1994-01-01
This book addresses one of the most important theories to arise in recent American literary scholarship. Developed over the past two decades, Sacvan Bercovitch’s ideas about the relationship of American cultural institutions to voices of dissent have repeatedly posed challenges to pervasive assumptions about American culture and the methods used by cultural critics and literary historians. The contributors to this book respond to different aspects of Bercovitch’s ideas by exploring a wide range of scholarly disciplines, including American, Chicano, Amerindian, African-American, Asian-American, feminist, comparatist, philosophical, legal, and critical studies. In addition to essays that focus on the theoretical backgrounds and implications of Bercovitch’s concepts, this book interrogates the uses of those concepts in the study of American literatures. Works by a variety of American writers are analyzed: the Colonial poet Phillis Wheatly; nineteenth-century writers Hawthorne and Melville; modernists Pound and Eliot; contemporary authors John Barth, Norman Mailer, Arturo Islas, and John Yau; and philosophers William James and Stanley Cavell. This book offers new directions to students of American culture, while it participates in the ongoing reassessment of American cultural and literary scholarship.

**The Cambridge Companion to Early American Literature** - Bryce Traister 2021-11-25
This book introduces readers to early American literary studies through original readings of key literary texts.

**Disciplining English** - David R. Shumway 2012-02-01
Offers historical and present-day perspectives on what English departments do, and how and why they do it.

**The New American Studies** - John Carlos Rowe 2002

**Ethnic American Literature** - Dean J. Franco 2006
Offers a comparative approach to ethnic literature that begins by accounting for the intrinsic historical, geographical, and political contingencies of different American cultures. This work looks at a range of writing, from novels to literature.

**Slavery, Philosophy, and American Literature, 1830-1860** - Maurice S. Lee 2005-06-17
Lee demonstrates how Melville, Emerson and others tried to find rational solutions to the slavery conflict.