

Of Faulkner, Warren notes how the great Mississippian dug into his native soil but at the same time created his own myths. By contrast, Warren took the legends that filled the slow, murmured porch talk of his Kentucky boyhood and forced them to reveal what it means to live in a particular time and place with a particular history. The observation that Warren made about Nathaniel Hawthorne could serve as an epitaph to his own career: "What [he] found in the past was not the quaint charm of distance but the living issues of moral and psychological definition."

#### THE COMPLETE FICTION OF BRUNO

**SCHULZ:** *The Street of Crocodiles and Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass.* By Bruno Schulz. Trans. by Celina Wieniewska. Walker and Company. 311 pp. \$22.95

#### LETTERS AND DRAWINGS OF BRUNO

**SCHULZ.** Edited by Jerzy Ficowski. Trans. by Walter Arndt with Victoria Nelson. Harper & Row. 256 pp. \$25

With novels of fable and myth now in vogue, it is little wonder that the star of Polish writer Bruno Schulz (1892–1942) is on the rise. I. B. Singer—one of a long rollcall of writers now praising Schulz's originality—compares him to both Franz Kafka and Marcel Proust, saying that Schulz "succeeded in reaching depths that



neither of them reached." Such acclaim would have terrified the modest Schulz. Like Emily Dickinson (in the delicacy of her perceptions, his nearest American counterpart), he knew that his creativity depended on the protective coloring of a

quiet, hermit-like background.

In Schulz's case, that background was the provincial Polish town of Drohobycz, which he made famous in *The Street of Crocodiles* (now re-issued in a hardback edition, accompanied by Schulz's lesser fiction).

*Street* is both example and product of Schulz's wish to "mature into childhood." (By childhood, he meant that time when what we

see is still permeated by our imagination.) Drohobycz, in Schulz's "child's vision," appears as delightful as a town balanced on a highwire, populated with improbable dreamers who hatch rare bird's eggs in attics, treat tailors dummies courteously, and where boys tossing pennies turn into oracles.

When the Polish novelist Witold Gombrowicz claimed that Schulz's Drohobycz would mean nothing to the proverbial middle-class doctor's wife, Schulz replied that the spiritual world can be undermined by depression, doubt, the attack of a malicious critic, but not by a fictitious doctor's wife. Schulz's defense of his art, as well as a sense of his life, is woven through *Letters and Drawings of Bruno Schulz*. His daily life—teaching arts and crafts in a boys' school while living at home with his Jewish parents—appears as ordinary as his fiction was singular. The only dramatic event of his life was his death, from a Gestapo officer's bullet in 1942. But his letters and drawings, like his fiction, show how he bore a quotidian existence that he compared to a room without an exit. "I have only to imagine a door . . . There is no such room so walled-up that it will not open with such a trusty door, if you have but the strength to insinuate it."

#### Science & Technology

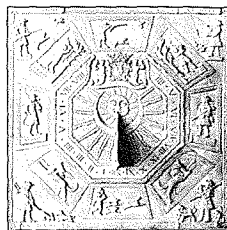
**THE DYNAMICS OF PROGRESS:** Time, Method, and Measure. By Samuel L. Macey. Univ. of Ga. 288 pp. \$35

**EMPIRES OF TIME:** Calendars, Clocks, and Cultures. By Anthony Aveni. Basic Books. 352 pp. \$24.95

St. Augustine once said of time: "If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to him who asks me, I do not know." Do we have a better understanding of time today? Macey and Aveni provide quite different answers.

Macey, an English professor at the University of Victoria, views the way we measure time as part of a much broader effort by man to control his universe. Standardizing languages, weights and measures, production and distribution led man to the brink of the Industrial Revolution. But it took a realization that production could be measured against time for in-

dustrialists such as England's James Watt in the 19th century and America's Henry Ford in the early 20th to transform the workplace. Indeed, Macey shows, technological advances throughout



history both demanded and created increasingly exact measures of time and distance. Before trains, people could not travel fast or far enough in a single day to be concerned with variances in "local" time; telegraphs also brought confusion to long-distance communications. In response, the International Meridian Conference of 1884 was convened to divide the globe into 24 equal time zones, to give people communicating across vast distances a common time reference. As much as anything, Macey says, this decision marks "the beginning of our global village."

Macey views man's endless quest to quantify as both measure and means of his advancement. But Aveni, an astronomer and anthropologist at Colgate University, wonders how man got so out of step with the rhythms of nature. "With the development of technology," he says, "we have removed our reckoning of time from nature's realm." Since 1967, for instance, what we know as a "second" has become defined by the vibrations of cesium 133 atoms, a measurement so precise it can be subdivided into one billion trillion parts. And from the pendulum clock, patented by Christiaan Huygens in 1657, we have now come to the hydrogen laser, a device for measuring time accurate to one second in 50 million years. But tying time to the cesium atom means severing our connections to the Earth's rotation. Does a better clock make man happier or more productive?

To find an answer, Aveni studies various non-Western cultures. The Nuer tribe on the upper Nile, for instance, never developed a linear notion of time: They experience events more in relation to natural cycles (e.g., seasons are *wet* or *dry*). Anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard said of the Nuer, "I do not think that they ever experience the same feeling of fighting against time" as those in the West.

The Western quest for an orderly worldview, evident even in our creation myths,

has during this century run head-on into the scientific discovery that the universe is constantly changing, possibly ever-expanding. "We find ourselves in the role of bystanders, not participants," Aveni says, in our efforts to understand cosmic time. Without "a change of philosophy," he suggests, "that gets us back in the picture as active participants," it seems "cosmic determinism is sure to defeat us."

**GENE DREAMS:** Wall Street, Academia, and the Rise of Biotechnology. By Robert Teitelman. Basic. 237 pp. \$19.95

**DANGEROUS DIAGNOSTICS:** The Social Power of Biological Information. By Dorothy Nelkin and Laurence Tancredi. Basic. 195 pp. \$18.95.

"Biotechnology" conjures up images of scientific wizards working with organisms too small for the eye to see, using methods too grand for the imagination to grasp. Unfortunately, it's only when scientists become—or become allied with—marketeers and investors that the real biotechnologists emerge.

"Biotechnology—the very word was invented on Wall Street," writes Teitelman, a senior editor at *Financial World* and a columnist for *Oncology Times*. He shows how Isaac and David Blech, two brash young Wall Street dealmakers, decided in 1980 to capitalize on the public's growing faith that molecular biologists could cure cancer. They created Genetic Systems, lured research scientists away from colleges, and promoted a few minor discoveries as major advances toward the cure of cancer. The result: The company's stock skyrocketed, and the original investors made millions when Bristol-Myers bought out the company in 1985. (And we are still a long way from a cure.) Biotech companies such as Genetic Systems routinely feature "advisory boards, mice, consultants, forecasts, and laboratory miracles," says Teitelman. But the real miracles—the cures—have yet to be produced.

It is not the business but the social side of biotechnology—the opportunities for abusing biotechnological information—that concerns Nelkin, a sociologist at New York University, and Tancredi, director of the University of Texas's Health Law Program. Diagnostic testing,