Another Creature, by Pamela Gemin. University of Arkansas Press, 100 pp., $16.


Elephants & Butterflies, by Alan Michael Parker. BOA Editions, 92 pp., $16.

Let Me Open You a Swan, by Deborah Bogen. Elixir Press, 96 pp., $17.

As I sifted through books this summer, thinking about what I might like to review, I noticed that I tend to lay aside volumes by poets I know, even if only tangentially. It's always been my habit, and one I thought--still think for the most part--reviewers ought to have. At some point, however, I looked back to that pile of rejects and considered how unfortunate it is that books by one's friends, associates, colleagues, or acquaintances feel out of bounds--or at least have felt so to me--because the practice cuts out a great many books for any reviewer. It's an inevitable problem of the contemporary poetry world, resulting from its small size; we go to the same conferences, attend the same schools, teach in the same programs. It's almost impossible to pick up a handful of new books and not find someone I know.

Does this familiarity, I wondered, mean that reviewing such acquaintances can't be fair, or worse, that good books can't be reviewed because positive words will be construed as back-scratching or favoritism? I don't have a complete answer for these questions, but I finally decided that I would take on a batch of books to all of whose authors I have had some kind of personal connection. Perhaps I will reveal biases of which I myself am unaware, but I hope that the poems will bear out what I say and help me prove to myself that creative and critical communities need not always be mutually exclusive.

Pamela Gemin and I went to Vermont College at the same time. I liked her poems then and I like them now. Her latest collection, Another Creature, is no exception. It focuses on American girlhood of the Boomer era, a historical period in which Gemin has had an interest for a long time. Many poets, myself included, have written loosely autobiographical poems on this subject over the last few decades, but the topic is far from exhausted. Unfortunately, many of the poems in this four-part collection, while carefully crafted and symmetrically presented in neat stanzaic forms, introduce potentially dramatic events on which the poems fail to deliver.

The first poem, "Sweet Engine," is one of the best in the book, though it seems to make use of Mark Doty's signature combination of spirituality and sexuality in his book Sweet Machine (as well as his title) without ever acknowledging the debt. Despite that, the poem begins wonderfully: "God for the furnace, god for the fire, god / for the engine of love, where are you now?" This lyric petition quickly gives way to an anecdotal memory. As a...
Tracing the Ties that Bind Blacks and Jews in History and Myth. Tudor Parfitt, once described as “a sort of British Indiana Jones,” writes in Black Jews in Africa and the Americas that he first encountered black Jews “in any form” in late 1984, when he’d traveled to the Sudanese border with Ethiopia. The body of African people has been crucified, cut into pieces, and scattered throughout the world. Yet it can be made whole and resurrected. A history of Afro-Hispanic language: five centuries, five continents. [John M Lipski] -- "In this book, John Lipski describes the major forms of Afro-Hispanic language found in the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America over the last 500 years. (Natural News) Five days ago, we published a breaking story that was originally uncovered by Dave Janda (DaveJanda.com), detailing the use of CIA-developed software to steal votes by intercepting voting machines and switching Trump votes to Biden votes. That story is entitled, “RED ALERT: Dems collude with CIA to launch intelligence operation that ALTERS voting machine results in Pennsylvania and other swing states.” (See full video interview below, which was banned by YouTube.) Earlier today it was discovered that a software “glitch” in Michigan had switched 6,000 votes from Trump to Biden. T Start by marking “The Ties that Bind Us” as Want to Read: Want to Read saving… Want to Read.

We're in Draco's head for the whole story, and that's a delightfully disturbed and deliciously delusional place to be for these events. The story begins with Pansy sharing a rumor with Draco that Ginny's accused Harry of being gay. Draco decides to confront Harry about this in a hallway filled with students. I've read this one at least five times now. I can't say exactly why, but when I'm having a bad day, I read this one and it makes me smile. I've read Drarry-fics I think are much better ones, but this one is the only one I've returned to this many times. The history of American literature can be divided into five periods: Colonial and Early National, Romantic, Realism and Naturalism, Modernist, and Contemporary. Each has its own unique characteristics, notable authors, and representative works. It can be divided into five major periods, each of which has unique characteristics, notable authors, and representative works. The Colonial and Early National Period (17th century to 1830). The first European settlers of North America wrote about their experiences starting in the 1600s. This was the earliest American literature: practical, straightforward, often derivative of literature in Great Britain, and focused on the future.