historian much less to interpret than the rather garrulous and opinionated Douglas. Douglas would only approve of such an essentially academic and office-bound exercise, of course, if it was accompanied by lots of strenuous field work retracing the trails (and trials) of the tough old Scot, his sometime companion A.P. Harper, his dog Betsey Jane, and his long-forgotten Maori guides Ruera Te Naihi and Kere Tutoko.

TOM BROOKING

University of Otago

Disseminating Darwinism: The Role of Place, Race, Religion, and Gender. Edited by Ronald L. Numbers and John Stenhouse. Cambridge University Press, Oakleigh, Victoria, 2000. 312 pp. Aus. price: $99.00. ISBN 0-521-62071-6.

DISSEMINATING DARWINISM comprises ten essays that bring into focus place, race, religion and gender as factors influencing how Darwin's theory of natural selection and evolution was debated, interpreted, accepted and rejected. All but one of the essays in this volume were presented at the 'Responding to Darwin: New Perspectives on the Darwinism Revolution' conference held in Dunedin in 1994. In this volume, these papers have been well edited into a related set of essays, which widens our understanding of the reception of Darwinism by revealing complex influences beyond science and religion.

The first five papers articulate the dissemination of Darwinism in different geographical locations. Each of these highlights the importance of place, and within this, the role of non-scientific and non-theological factors in informing and shaping debates on evolution and influencing the receptiveness of societal élites and the general public to Darwinian ideas. Some present a rich description of factors that shaped the reception of Darwinism. For instance, Barry W. Butcher's essay on 'science, religion, and evolution in Australia' locates the impetus for the eventual receptiveness of Australian institutions to Darwin's theory in the new breed of individual scientists coming to Australia from Britain where they had been trained by evolutionists. Suzanne Zeller's essay is equally rich in articulating the scientific, historical and personal factors that shaped the gradual acceptance of Darwinian evolution in Canada. Of particular interest is her account of human relationships in Canada's often harsh and unforgiving environment in easing the reception and gradual acceptance of Darwinism.

Others are more analytical in style. David N. Livingstone, for example, examines the reception of Darwinism in Edinburgh, Belfast and Princeton, focusing on debates among theological élites in each city. He is principally concerned with how these élites 'manage theological space' to set limits on what was 'said' and 'heard' about evolution. The essay by Ronald L. Numbers and Lester D. Stephens challenges the standard historical account of the American South's rejection of Darwinism. While not discounting resistance in the South, they find that the reception was mixed and, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, Darwinism did find favour among a number of Southern scientific thinkers and religious educators. The essay by John Stenhouse provides a richly textured account of the reception of Darwin's theory in New Zealand. Focusing principally on Protestant thinkers, Stenhouse discusses the attitudes to evolution of these Pakeha colonizers in a country where no one religious creed dominated and clergymen were often too busy establishing churches and ministering to widely scattered congregations to dwell long on the ramifications of evolution and natural selection. Stenhouse notes that the establishment of New Zealand scientific institutions coincided with the beginning

Darwinian debates. This absence of a pre-Darwinian scientific establishment and the lack of any prominent anti-Darwinian spokesperson such as Richard Owen or Louis Agassiz was, he argues, influential in easing the reception of Darwin's ideas. Darwinism was more readily embraced in New Zealand than in Britain, not least because it could be used to support racist attitudes against Maori, which cast them as inferior and destined to die out in the struggle for existence.

Religion is the lens through which three of the essays conduct their appraisal of the dissemination of Darwinism. Jon H. Roberts concentrates on the responses of American Protestants to Darwinism. In his stated desire to move beyond mere description, he also eschews a social constructivist approach and embraces instead one that examines the theological and philosophical motivations that led Protestant thinkers to either accept evolution, reject it or position themselves in between; what Roberts calls 'progressive creationists'. Protestants were more able to establish a personal position on evolution in relation to their reading of the Bible than were American Catholics, as R. Scott Appleby points out in his account of 'Roman Catholic responses to evolution 1875–1925'. According to Appleby, the reception of Darwinism by Catholics was mediated by the Roman Catholic Church, which never formally condemned the scientific theory of evolution but did express grave concerns about the impact of materialism on moral order. The efforts of the Catholic Church were directed at separating evolution as a scientific theory from ideas of evolution that encompassed a materialist philosophy. Appleby argues that Catholic tradition rather than biblical literalism became the contested terrain that shaped the Catholic response to Darwinism. A similar situation existed among the American Jewish community, as Marc Swetlitz points out as he traces the attitudes of both traditional and Reform Jews to evolutionary ideas. Swetlitz argues that Darwinian ideas were used chiefly to reinforce already established positions in each case.

The final two essays complete the set. The first is an account of 'Black responses to Darwinism 1859–1915' by Eric D. Anderson, and in the second, Sally Gregory Kohlstedt and Mark R. Jorgensen return to that 'irrepressible woman question'. Anderson's essay holds particular appeal in providing a view from the 'otherside' of how Darwinism was used by 'whites' to support racist attitudes towards 'blacks'. Yet as Anderson notes, the black response to Darwinism was limited, in part because there were more pressing practical issues to be dealt with and also because Darwin's theory was not always the primary impetus behind racist views. Kohlstedt and Jorgensen provide an account of women's responses to Darwinism which takes account of the limitations imposed by women's restricted access to publication forums, education and social support. They show, however, that women were very interested in evolutionary arguments and a few women took up Darwinism directly and made efforts to extend and challenge the Darwinist ideas promoted by Huxley, Spencer, Galton and others.

This is an excellent collection of essays and the book makes an important contribution to scholarly debates about the reception of Darwinism. Its strength lies in each essay's capacity to remind us that the dissemination of Darwin's theory of evolution, and of Darwinism more generally, was extremely complex, varied and contingent upon several factors, not least of which were place, race, religion and gender.

ROSEMARY ROBINS

University of Melbourne