

19 Title	<b>American Studies in Review: The Recuperative Trend in Hawthorne Studies: New or Improved?</b>
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Abstract	<p>This essay reviews two collections of essays (<i>Hawthorne and the Real: Bicentennial Essays</i>, edited by Millicent Bell, and <i>The Cambridge Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne</i>, edited by Richard Millington) and Brenda Wineapple's <i>Hawthorne: A Life</i>. These books raise questions about the currency of late-twentieth-century reassessments of Hawthorne's significance: is "our" Hawthorne still to be read as an anxious conservative, tainted by sexist, racist, and nationalist ideologies? The collections offer various responses to this question but reveal a broadly recuperative tendency. Critics no longer blame Hawthorne for the way that modernist (especially New Critical) literary histories canonized him. Though the political topics that New Historicists first scrutinized in Hawthorne's fiction continue to preoccupy, they no longer point invariably to the limits of Hawthorne's moral, political, and cultural consciousness. Like the collections, Wineapple's biography complicates our picture of Hawthorne's politics (including gender politics) and values his earnest, often conflicted responses to social change.</p>