

T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

NEWS & NOTES

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THE SOCIETY'S 1990 MEETING

The eleventh annual meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society will take place in St. Louis September 28 - 30, primarily at Mayfair Suites (Eighth and St. Charles Streets). Mayfair Suites is a downtown landmark hotel renovated in 1990 with great fidelity to its original style. Information about the hotel reservations appears elsewhere in this newsletter. The Sunday morning sessions will assemble at the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis (5007 Waterman Boulevard).

The meeting will begin on Friday evening, September 28, with a paper-reading session by members of the Society. Members are asked to register with the Treasurer and the Secretary at the opening session, but there is no registration fee this year. On Saturday morning the reading of a second round of papers will be followed by discussion and morning coffee. After a brief musical interlude the meeting will resume for the annual T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture, given by Shyamal Bagchee. Saturday evening at seven-thirty, members of the Society are invited to embark for a dinner cruise on the Mississippi riverboat *President*. The Sunday morning sessions at the Church consist in a forum presentation and discussion at ten o'clock and an address by the Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Historian of the Society, an hour later.

Following is the complete program of events.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

7:00-7:25 p.m. REGISTRATION *Boodles and Raffles Rooms, Mayfair Suites*
Dr. Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio, Secretary
Dr. Linda Wyman, Treasurer

7:30 p.m. OPENING SESSION

Dr. Grover Smith, President
Dr. Leslie Konnyu, Founder

SOCIETY MEMBERS' PANEL

Chaired by Dr. Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio

Dr. Nancy K. Gish, "Eliot and Marianne Moore: Modernism and Difference"
Dr. Bruce Hayman, "We Are the Hollow Men"
Dr. Linda Wyman, "Where the Words are Valid: The Language of Eliot's Drama"
Discussion

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

9:30 a.m. GREETINGS
Dr. Smith

SOCIETY MEMBERS' PANEL *Boodles and Raffles Rooms, Mayfair Suites*
Chaired by Dr. George T. Wright

Dr. Anthony Fathman, "Viv and Tom: The Eliots as Addict and Co-dependent"
Dr. Jewel Spears Brooker, "Paradox and Puzzle in *Four Quartets*"
Dr. Russell Elliott Murphy, "Demeaning Eliot: The Future of Literary Studies"
Discussion
Morning Coffee

11:00 a.m. INTERVAL OF MUSIC

ELEVENTH ANNUAL T. S. ELIOT MEMORIAL LECTURE
Dr. Shyamal Bagchee, Professor of English,
University of Alberta
"Eliot and Coleridge"

7:30 p.m. DINNER CRUISE ABOARD EXCURSION
BOAT *PRESIDENT* *Riverfront*

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

10:00 a.m. FORUM *First Unitarian Church*
Dr. Virginia B. Phelan, "Unidentified But Invited: Charles Williams at *The Cocktail Party*"
Discussion

11:00 a.m. ADDRESS
Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Historian of the Society

MISSISSIPPI CRUISE AND SHIPBOARD DINING FOR "SATURDAY NIGHT OUT" - AT LAST!

Members of the Society who attend this year's meeting will have the opportunity, offered through Board member Melanie Fathman, of mingling at a shipboard dinner party and Mississippi River cruise on Saturday evening, September 29. No reservations need be booked in advance of the meeting; members wanting to participate will be asked to make their wish known at the Saturday session. The riverboat *President*, berthed near the Arch, only blocks from the hotel Mayfair Suites, is billed as "America's largest floating ballroom," with a "live" dance band and sumptuous dining to music as well as top-deck sightseeing on the river voyage. The time will be 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.; the inclusive cost is \$27.50 per person at a group rate. Informal.

Details about how and when to board the *President* will be announced after the Memorial lecture.

A riverboat cruise has been bruited as a possible Eliot Society outing for several years. This year we really are going to have a ball. The *President* is the largest of four boats operated by the Gateway Riverboat Cruises enterprise, the others being the *Becky Thatcher*, the *Huck Finn*, and the *Tom Sawyer*.

SHYAMAL BAGCHEE APPOINTED TO BE MEMORIAL LECTURER

The T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecturer for 1990 is Shyamal Bagchee of the University of Alberta. His topic will be "Eliot and Coleridge." Professor Bagchee is a well known Eliot scholar, the founder in 1974 of what eventually became the *Yeats Eliot Review*. He has published numerous articles and reviews (*inter alios* on Wordsworth, Thoreau, Melville, Tagore, and Yeats) as well as making interesting contributions to the study of Eliot. He sits on the editorial board of the *South Asian Review* and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London. In 1987-88 he was a visiting Professor at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, and during 1988-89 held a visiting professorship at the University of Delhi while tenured as the Senior Faculty Research Fellow of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. He is currently doing research on the Scottish poet, antiquarian and orientalist John Leyden.

Professor Bagchee's work in recent years includes the editorship for the Macmillan Press, Ltd., of the *T. S. Eliot Annual* and *T. S. Eliot: A Voice Descanting*, the latter to mark the Eliot centenary of two years ago. In May 1988 the University of Arkansas in Little Rock, at its Eliot centenary conference, awarded Professor Bagchee one of two citations for scholarly distinction in the field of Eliot studies. (The other was presented to Grover Smith, now President of the Society.)

Shyamal Bagchee, as T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecturer, will figure in a list of notable predecessors. The lectureship, mandated by the Society's Bylaws, has previously been conferred on Dr. Marcella Holloway C.S.J., Robert C. Roach, Charles Guenther, Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Jewel Spears Brooker, W. Ronald Schuchard, Grover Smith, James Olney, A. D. Moody, and Leonard Unger.

REMINDER: RESERVE HOTEL ROOMS NOW FOR SEPTEMBER MEETING

Society members are reminded that Mayfair Suites will serve as the headquarters for the September, 1990 meeting. The ambience of the hotel and its history will be a particular attraction for members of the Society. Although much of the interior of the building has been replaced or refitted, including all the plumbing and wiring, the hotel is on the National Historic Register, for the historic design has been respected wherever possible. The arrangement for members of the Society: all suites whether for single or double occupancy, \$85.00 nightly. (Hence members may team up to reserve a suite for two occupants at the same charge as for one.) Members may phone in reservations by calling 1-800-444-3313 or by writing to Mayfair Suites, 806 St. Charles Street, St. Louis, MO 63101.

SUITES MAY BE RESERVED AT THE SPECIAL RATE WHILE STILL AVAILABLE. MEMBERS MUST HURRY IF THEY WISH TO BE ACCOMMODATED.

SOCIETY PEOPLE

Shyamal Bagchee of the University of Alberta has edited two collections of essays on Eliot, both issued by the Macmillan Press, Ltd. Published simultaneously in London this July after considerable delay, they are the *T. S. Eliot Annual* (No. 1) and *T. S. Eliot: A Voice Descanting*.

The opening number of the *Annual*, prepared in 1984, contains besides book reviews ten critical studies, of which Society members contributed seven as follows: Lois Cuddy, "Eliot's Classicism: A Study in Allusional Method and Design"; Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio, "Tzara in *The Waste Land*"; Armin Paul Frank, "New Notes on the 'Bradieian Vein' in Eliot Studies" (review article); Richard Shusterman, "Wilde and Eliot"; Grover Smith, "From 'Burnt Norton'

to 'East Coker': The Passing of the Unified Sensibility"; Stanley Sultan, "The Function of 'Prufrock' for Criticism" (monograph); George T. Wright, "Sustained Stages and States: Eliot's Peculiar Personae."

The centenary volume *T. S. Eliot: A Voice Descanting*, which is distributed in the United States by St. Martin's Press, includes among other papers the following studies by Society members: Shyamal Bagchee, "Eliot and the Poetics of 'Unpleasantness'"; Lois Cuddy, "Circles of Progress in T. S. Eliot's Poetry: *Ash Wednesday* as a Model"; Armin Paul Frank, "*The Waste Land*: A Drama of Images"; Russell Murphy, "It is impossible to say just what I mean": *The Waste Land* as Transcendent Meaning"; Richard Shusterman, "Eliot and the Mutations of Objectivity"; Grover Smith, "Eliot and the Ghost of Poe."

In various scholarly journals Robert F. Fleissner of Central State University in Ohio has brought out "Another Baskerville Hound and Moriarty Cat: T. S. Eliot and Conan Doyle," *Baker Street Miscellanea* (Northeastern Illinois University) 56 (1988), 1-13; addendum in 57 (1989), 47; "The Germanic Insect Image in 'Prufrock,'" *Germania Notes* 20, 1 (1989), 2-3; "Eliot's 'Prufrock,'" *Explicator* 48, 3 (1990), 208-10; "T. S. Eliot and Anti-Semitism One More Time," *Yeats Eliot Review*, 10, 3 (1990), 80-81.

Dominic Manganiello of the University of Ottawa has published *T. S. Eliot and Dante*, Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1989.

The officers of the Society have learned with regret of the death of former member Charlotte Crane, Hillsboro, NH.

ELIOT SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN ALA INAUGURAL CONFERENCE

The T. S. Eliot Society joined in the first annual conference of the American Literature Association, May 31 - June 2, 1990, in San Diego, CA. A total of thirty-two literary groups took part. Of these all but five fitted the description "author societies" and either were founding participants or were poised to enroll as soon as qualified under ALA Bylaws. The remaining five consisted of regional and special-study interests rather than author societies. Altogether 105 hour-long sessions were held, a number of these dealing by invitation with popular topics ranging beyond the specialities of organized groups.

The readers of papers at the Eliot Society session were as follows: E. Philip Bollier, Tulane University, "T. S. Eliot and the Agony of Cynthia Ozick"; Bruce Hayman, La Grange, IL, "Narrative Consciousness in 'Portrait of a Lady' and 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'"; James Torrens S. J., Santa Clara University, "Eliot's Unpublished Lecture on 'Shakespeare's Art of Verse.'" The session was chaired by Grover Smith.

ALA takes no positions on political or social issues and encourages a variety of approaches, both established and innovative, in the study of American literature.

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 1991 ALA

The second annual American Literature Association conference will take place at the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC, the week end preceding Memorial Day (May 23-26, 1991). Members of the Society, who are automatically members of ALA, are requested to submit papers having significance for Eliot scholarship.

For the occasion the T. S. Society projects two sessions at ALA, one of open topics concerned mainly with Eliot and his own work, another on the special topic "T. S. Eliot's Literary Influence." (Please note the limiting adjective.) All papers are restricted to 20 minutes' reading time and must not have been read or published previously or used elsewhere in a different form. Papers to be considered should be mailed and should reach Grover Smith, P. O. Box 6043, Durham, NC 27708, by January 7, 1991. Papers that cannot be scheduled will be returned if postage is enclosed.

A large response to this call is desired in order that the Society may be represented as competitively as possible.

An additional call for papers, for the 1991 St. Louis meeting of the Society, will be announced in the Fall 1990 number of NEWS & NOTES.

AND HAVE YOUR 1990 DUES BEEN PAID?

Ahead of the annual dues notice, we remind you that the date for payment of your 1991 calendar year dues is November 1, 1990. Your dues include your subscription to three issues of NEWS & NOTES, which contains information about publications, recent events and calls for papers devoted to Eliot, as well as reports on the activities of the American Literature Association, a coalition of author societies of which our Society is a member. Of course, also, you won't want to miss our Society People column, surely our trump card when it comes to member activities and accomplishments.

To send 1990 dues, address Linda Wyman, Treasurer, 1121 East McCarty Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101. The scale of membership remains: REGULAR, \$15-24; SUPPORTING, \$25-49; SUSTAINING, \$50-99; PATRON, \$100.00 and above. The T. S. Eliot Society provides a rare opportunity for scholars and general readers of Eliot's work and related topics to meet on both a formal and an informal basis. It is one of the many such small organizations and groups which generate a continued and vital interest in arts and letters in our culture. We think it's worthy not only of your contribution in dues, but of whatever further donation you are able to make. Such contributions not only may be tax deductible but are deeply appreciated by your fellow members.

REFLECTIONS

By the President of the T. S. Eliot Society

The editor of NEWS & NOTES, elsewhere in this issue, mentions the Society's smallness with reference to its nevertheless vital diffusion of artistic and literary interest. By comparison with most of the author societies in the American Literature Association, the T. S. Eliot Society is not small. Many of these, besides being newly founded, address themselves to authors of far less general attractiveness than Eliot and without the extra-academic public fascinated and bewildered by him. But I think that the Eliot Society, with its fewer than 150 members, is smaller than ideally it should be if it is to supply vigorous and lively scholarship in the form of papers composed for ALA and our annual meeting in St. Louis.

It is no accident that some members have read papers on successive occasions. The reason has been that they write the best papers on successive occasions. The number of papers tendered for the 1990 ALA conference totalled eleven, more than I had expected. The three I accepted were the best and were very good; still, one would like to see even stiffer competition - say among twenty-four, if three are to be chosen. The amount of lead-time affects the number of papers and the ratio. And the earlier the notice, hypothetically, the higher the collective quality. Hypothetically! At any rate if the Society had 250 members, would the number of responses increase whenever papers were sought? Undoubtedly, but actual improvement would require that the added members apply themselves comparably to serious, informed, significant scholarship. This fact is elementary.

The T. S. Eliot Society has among its members a good diversity of types: poetry-lovers, Eliot-fans, elderly Eliotists, and best of all, young Eliot scholars with "good" curiosity. From these last especially the usable papers of the immediate future will undoubtedly come. I know that many members, of whatever type, cannot offer to participate in conferences because they live too far away from them or, what is the same thing, can obtain no travel funding to go to them. For this ill I know no remedy; I do not think that, for university and college teachers in general, travel subsidies will improve. For those who rank as "stars," I hear, practically unlimited slush funds are available; but

one must be political to achieve such amenity. I am willing to augment the membership of the Society by encouraging larger numbers of young scholars to join than in practice can come to all the annual meetings. Always there will be many such. The Society values members even if they cannot attend all meetings.

Besides needing, I think, to swell its ranks with people who appreciate Eliot in diverse ways, and particularly with people ready to offer contributions of a learned order, the Society needs to reach and interest more of the established scholars and arriving scholars with a book or a clutch of articles already in their nest, who despite the obvious gain from affiliation with the T. S. Eliot Society have shown no interest yet. I have in mind perhaps half a dozen elusive scholars from whose presence the Society would benefit. I don't know whether they hang back because being outside has made them consider themselves outsiders; I hope not, for truly the Society has no insiders except people inside it. I don't know if perhaps one or two of these scholars, though having made substantial contributions to the corpus of Eliot commentary, worry over some past grumble, even the searing pain of some past lukewarm book review. If the reason should prove disgruntlement over a review (my own hands I hope are clean), then I would testify that one can learn to forgive all reviews, of which I have had to suffer several loaded with ignorance or troubled with rancor, whose authors must have sadly repented the moment such disorders went on exhibit in disgraceful cold print. To the aggrieved and forgiving aggrieved, if they exist, the Society opens its ranks of membership.

The Society remains too small so long as earnest scholars of any degree of proficiency stay out of it. It could become too big, though it won't, if the friendly atmosphere at meetings should ever be charged with what so blessedly the Society is spared - the ill-will of pompous rivalries. Not in the Society, not in all the author societies I know about, nor in ALA, are civil sessions invaded by some shrilling cockalorum denouncing excellent scholars merely because excellence is intolerable - as, it is said, wholesome garlic is to the vampire!

GROVER SMITH

REQUEST TO MEMBERS

Please inform NEWS & NOTES of meetings on Eliot, exhibits, symposia, lectures or special sessions of which you are aware, as well as of anthologies, essay collections or new serial publications featuring criticism devoted to his work. Include as much information as you can about titles, names and addresses of sponsors or publishers. Let us know, too, if you have published recently on Eliot or related topics. We will publicize this information in NEWS & NOTES as much as space allows. Write to: Cleo Kearns, 81 Lawrence Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey 08904.

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