

T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

NEWS & NOTES

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CLEO M. KEARNS 1991 MEMORIAL LECTURER, SEPTEMBER MEETING PLANNED

Cleo McNelly Kearns, formerly Vice-president of the Society, will give the T.S. Eliot Memorial Lecture at the 1991 meeting in St. Louis, September 27-29.

Dr. Kearns is the author of *T.S. Eliot and Indic Traditions: A Study in Poetry and Belief* (Cambridge, 1987), of various critical examinations of Eliot's religious development, and of forthcoming essays in several collections. Continuing the emphasis she has maintained on Eliot's historical response to formal religions, she will lecture on "Apocalypse and Wisdom: The Problem of Tone in *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*."

She teaches at present a course on Dante, Milton, and Eliot at the Princeton Theological Seminary, where she is visiting lecturer. Her present research focuses on literary language and sacramental theology, drawing on the work of Julia Kristeva, concerning whom she is presenting a paper this month at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.

In St. Louis a program of short papers, distributed among several sessions at the three-day annual meeting, is being arranged to round out the weekend. In the Summer 1991 number of NEWS & NOTES, hotel reservation information will be provided, as well as a form on which to indicate attendance plans when returning to the Treasurer a nominal advance registration fee.

DEFINITIVE CALL FOR PAPERS TO BE READ AT 1991 ANNUAL MEETING

As was announced in the Fall 1990 NEWS & NOTES, a number of 20-minute papers by members of the Society are required for the meeting in St. Louis, September 27-29.

The deadline for submission of scripts is June 15. They should be mailed (not sent by carrier) to Grover Smith, P. O. Box 6043, Durham, NC 27708. Any Eliot topic may be appropriate, but papers should not have been published nor used at other conferences. Please bear in mind that after each group of presentations open discussion will be held; so a certain amount of documentation may be kept in reserve for dealing with questions from the audience. This year, owing to plans for a group luncheon after the Saturday morning sessions, and other considerations after the Friday evening and Saturday afternoon ones, the discussion periods will not be protracted, though ample.

Obviously only the best papers can be accepted; if there are not enough papers, one or more sessions may have to be skipped, and the whole plan of the annual meeting may have to be reconsidered before 1992. It is recognized that since the Society cannot provide travel funds and since these may be elusive at home bases, attending the annual meeting from a distance is not always easy. The interest of the meeting, however, both for participants and for

others, increases with the variety of intellectual stimuli; and the opening up of opportunities to read papers is intended to attract both attendance and the enrollment of active Eliot scholars as new members.

PHELAN'S UNOPPOSED NOMINATION ENSURES SEAT ON BOARD

Virginia B. Phelan, of Colts Neck, New Jersey, has been duly nominated by the Society's membership to succeed Glenn P. Wright on the Board of Directors for a three-year term beginning June 1. Members wishing to vote should return the ballot printed in this issue of NEWS & NOTES. This is only the second time in the Society's history that a Board candidate has run unopposed.

Dr. Phelan, whose book *Two Ways of Life and Death: Alcestis and the Cocktail Party* appeared last year, has taught comparative literature at Rutgers University and has published in the *Yeats Eliot Review* and the *New York Times*. Next year she will divide her teaching time between Monmouth College and Drew University. At the T. S. Eliot Society's 1990 meeting she read a paper "Unidentified but Invited: Charles Williams at *The Cocktail Party*," scheduled for publication in the *Yeats Eliot Review*.

The Board of Directors consists of the six officers of the Society, four members chosen by the Society, and two permanent members. It is responsible for the governance of the Society and specifically for approving the annual program proposed by the President and for electing the officers. This year the Board is to elect, in course, a Treasurer and a Vice-president. It will also consider amendments to the Bylaws.

SEPTEMBER MEETING TO DISPLAY MEMBERS' BOOKS ABOUT ELIOT

A display of book-length studies and essay collections, representing Eliot scholarship by members of the Society, will again be set up, as it was last year, for the Society's meeting at St. Louis, September 27-29, 1991. Larry C. Melton will supervise the exhibit, which will contain only works in print. Notably some volumes not yet available last year will be on hand for inspection. Members with books in print on Eliot are invited to lend them, either temporarily or else quasi-permanently if preferable, by bringing them to the meeting. Books may also be mailed to Mr. Melton at Box 198, Route 3, Union, MO 63084. All reasonable precautions will be taken against loss, but no liability can be assumed by Mr. Melton or the Society. Books lent for future display will be stored.

A recent essay collection holds particular interest because of the Society members contributing to it (see "Society People" in this issue). It bears the title *T. S. Eliot: Man and Poet*, Vol. I, was edited by Laura J. Cowan, and was published for the National Poetry Foundation, of Orono, Maine. Most of the included papers were

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read at the NPF's Eliot Centenary conference in 1988. Among volumes likely to become available before September is the long-expected collection of T. S. Eliot Society lectures edited by Jewel Spears Brooker, *The Placing of T. S. Eliot*. This will present texts of the Eliot Memorial Lectures from 1984 to 1989, with a liberal addition of papers chosen by Dr. Brooker from the Society's Eliot Centenary meeting. The compilation, now in press, is being issued by the University of Missouri Press, at Columbia. Though not an "official" publication, it will be a "must" for all Eliot Society members, for reasons both extrinsic and intrinsic. Dr. Brooker has prefixed to the selections an explanatory and historical Introduction. Still another pending collection, *The Fire and the Rose: New Readings of Eliot's Four Quartets*, promised by the Athlone Press, will present writings by Society members as well as others. And finally, in the special category of a journal honoring the T. S. Eliot Society, the Summer 1991 number of the *Yeats Eliot Review* will, it is believed, come out in time to be added to the display. It is being guest-edited by Grover Smith on invitation from the journal editor, Russell E. Murphy, to assemble a group of Eliot Society papers for inclusion.

The 1990 exhibit ran to several dozen volumes. There will be space also for publishers' flyers and announcements of specific books on Eliot, present or forthcoming.

SOCIETY PEOPLE

Nancy Hargrove, of Mississippi State University, who served as Secretary of the Society 1986-88, reports that at the SCMLA meeting in San Antonio last October, she presented her paper "T. S. Eliot and Sylvia Plath: A Study in Influence."

Russell Kirk, Honorary Member of the Society, is the general editor of "The Library of Conservative Thought," a series issued by Transaction Publishers at Rutgers University. The series, though new, already contains 11 book titles, the authors reaching from Edmund Burke and John Randolph to William Hurrell Mallock and V. A. Kravchenko. Most of the volumes have forewords or introductions by Dr. Kirk, who himself edits Orestes Brownson's *Selected Political Essays*.

The founder of the T. S. Eliot Society, Leslie Konnyu, will visit the University of Szeged, Hungary, to attend a conference August 12-16 at which he will lecture on "Alex Finta: Famous American-Hungarian Sculptor and Writer."

A. D. Moody, of the University of York, who was the Eliot Memorial Lecturer in 1988, gave the keynote address for the T. S. Eliot Society of Japan last November, his subject being "Eliot's Fear." Dr. Moody is editing *The Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot*.

Virginia B. Phelan's *Two Ways of Life and Death: Alcestis and the Cocktail Party* appears under the imprint of "Garland Publications in Comparative Literature" (New York: Garland, 1990).

Society members contributing to the National Poetry Foundation compilation *T. S. Eliot: Man and Poet*, Vol. I (Orono, ME, 1990), are as follows: Richard Badenhause, "When the Poet Speaks Only to Himself": The Chorus as First Voice in *Murder in the Cathedral*"; Shyamal Bagchee, "Eliot's 'Only' (and 'All')"; Joseph Bentley and Jewel Spears Brooker, "How to Read the End of *The Waste Land*"; Jewel Spears Brooker, "T. S. Eliot and the Revolt Against Dualism: His Dissertation on F. H. Bradley in Its Intellectual Context"; Harvey Gross, "Compound Ghost, Triple Devil, Terminal Books"; Joan Fillmore Hooker, "Visions and Revisions: 'Gerontion' in French"; Cleo McNelly Kearns, "Doctrine and Wisdom in *Four Quartets*"; Louis L. Martz, "Ash-Wednesday: Voices for the Veiled Sister"; A. D. Moody, "Eliot's Formal Inventions"; Russell Elliott Murphy, "Eliot's Grandchildren: The Poet of *The Waste Land* and the Generation of the Sixties"; Jeffrey M. Perl, "A Post-War Consensus"; Richard Shusterman, "Reactionary Meets Radical Critique: Eliot and Contemporary Culture Criticism."

ELIOT SOCIETY MEMBERS COMPOSING PANEL AT WASHINGTON CONFERENCE OF A. L. A.

A panel of Society members has been selected to read papers at the American Literature Association's second annual conference, in Washington, DC, May 24-26, 1991.

The participants, who responded to the open call to members for Eliot papers, are Jewel Spears Brooker ("From Equilibrium to Rhapsody: Mind and World in Wordsworth and Eliot"), Mark Jeffreys ("The Book Reviewer as Artist: T. S. Eliot on John Donne's Sermons"), and Shyamal Bagchee ("Empson's Eliot? Eliot's Empson?"). Grover Smith will chair the program. Dr. Brooker, past President of the Society, and Dr. Bagchee have both been honored as T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecturers. Dr. Jeffreys, a recent Ph.D. recipient from Emory, teaches at Morehouse College in Atlanta. The time assigned to the panel is 9:00-10:20 a.m., May 26. All Eliot Society members attending ALA are requested to contact Dr. Smith at the Mayflower some time on the 25th.

Members of the Society are automatically members of ALA and are entitled to attend its conferences. The registration fee this year is \$30 (\$10 for retired persons, independent scholars, and graduate students) and may be sent in advance to ALA, c/o Dr. Alfred Bendixen, Executive Director, California State University, 5151 State University Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90032. For hotel reservations if still available (special rate \$60 s/d) telephone the Mayflower Hotel (202/347-3000) in Washington.

About thirty-five American author societies, besides assorted groups addressing special topics, are expected to contribute to the annual meeting.

UNPUBLISHED ELIOT VERSE TO BE READ AT VIRGINIA WOOLF COMMEMORATION

It is reported in the press that certain of T. S. Eliot's verse, never published, will be read by Alan Bennett playing the part of the poet at a festival marking the 50th anniversary of Virginia Woolf's death.

The poems were contained in letters from Eliot to Mrs. Woolf between 1922 and 1940. For the event Mrs. Eliot has authorized use of the material in a one-time dramatization written by Patrick Garland. The festival will take place this May at Charleston house near Lewes, Sussex.

REFLECTIONS

By Grover Smith

Carrying on as editor *pro tem.* of NEWS & NOTES, I have been tempted to editorialize under the story heading "Definitive Call for Papers." The purpose of the newsletter embraces advice as well as information. My advice to the Society's membership, as regards planning for the 1991 meeting, is to "get cracking." About two months remain before the deadline requested for the submission of Eliot papers. The papers destined to be submitted have perhaps already been written, perhaps not; in either case a shower of agreeable surprises may occur on June 15. Blessings reward the members who purpose firmly and fulfill positively.

The happiest news of the season, making more tolerable *la cruauté d'avril*, concerns the numerous publications coming lately or soon from our members—the papers in essay collections. There are a few things to say on this topic. First, these publications are, as a matter of course, long delayed from the time of writing and public reading. The state of scholarly publishing, I suppose because so much goes on, excludes that marvel of times past, the rapid handling of manuscript, processing of proofs, and issuance of

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printed copies. Questions of cost, both for technology and for labor, enter into such delay. The consequence of it for scholarship itself is that papers or articles fail to appear before they are well aged, commonly more than three years old. "New" books may be much older, if of single authorship, since they may have to wait in a long queue. Among essay collections the *T. S. Eliot Annual*, No. 1, waited *six years* for publication: the article I wrote for it was commissioned in July 1984 and was posted to meet an editorial deadline of November; the work appeared only in the late summer of 1990. This case must be extraordinary. It ought never to have been possible. The Macmillan Press has not explained it.

If we accept the hypothesis that research publishing ought to imply current dialogue among scholars (thus passing over the case of impressionistic or "hermeneutical" writing indifferent to other points of view), we see the grave disadvantage in delayed publication. An article replying to one delayed three years may be delayed for three years more; it's like communicating with a remote galaxy. And in the same elapsed period there are endless chances of ignorant overlap, as one scholar considers points already examined by another. The problem of claiming priority of discovery, latent in this time-lag, should be dealt with by insistence on the part of scholars and editors that, as is normal in scientific publishing, every article must be dated with the day, month, and year of editorial receipt. The difficulty of conducting dialogue may soon be solved by alternative publishing—that is, through computer networks; but the eventual extinction of printing in book form, as urged by a vanguard of academic reformers, can hardly be welcome to everyone.

Happy then though the news of ongoing Eliot scholarship must appear, it cannot escape implications inherent in the shortcomings of learned publishing. A second thing that has to be said about these collections of essays, and applies also to books by individual authors, is that they cost the purchaser too much. Nor do I blame this fact only on the inflationary economy of our time; books have risen in price, in this country, by more than the factor of 10 or 12 common to consumer goods over the past half-century, and one reason, I am persuaded, is that except for mass-market leaders there are too many titles competing for too limited an audience. In scholarly publishing this fact is especially unfortunate; for though there may be in a year twenty books, say, on Eliot which I should like to buy, I am not inclined to spend a thousand dollars on them. And they may cost more than that. The retort to my grumble is that I can do nothing about the situation, and I agree. A few years ago the *T. S. Eliot Annual* was announced, by its prospective American distributor, at \$50—with a discount of one-half to Eliot Society members. From its actual distributor, now, it costs \$75. (Order from International Specialized Book Services, 5602 N. E. Hassalo Street, Portland, OR 97213, telephone 503/287-3093.) It is a fine collection (I do not speak of my own essay) with several valuable critiques. Graham Clarke's 4-volume assemblage *T. S. Eliot: Critical Assessments* (London, 1990) fetches \$400.

The practice among many book publishers, of charging "permissions fees" for the use of copyright material, especially poetry, quoted in scholarly writings, seems to me one of the most counterproductive strategies for royalty enhancement that their benefited authors and clients could sanction. If the copyright proprietors and royalty recipients—I am not speaking of poets themselves—would accept the proposition that their income from the sale of books to which they own rights depends, first to last, on the goodwill of the same scholars and poetry-lovers they are taxing, they would logically be abashed. Especially, to charge fees for what, under earlier copyright law, was treated as "fair use," seems highly unreasonable when the user receives little or nothing for the work in which the "permitted" quotation occurs. I have had little experience in recent years with poets other than Eliot; but I know that the vetting of applications for permission can take many weary months, and that the fees can be staggering. In the matter of quotations from Eliot, the solution I strongly recommend is to avoid using them wherever possible, until at length the copyright proprietors recognize that Eliot's reputation and the sale of his books depend in measure on critics and scholars. So does *learning*.

The linkage between fees for permissions and prices charged for scholarly books is doubtless real, though variable. Such fees certainly affect costs even when, as is usual, they fall on the users; for the slow process of obtaining permissions may cause publication to be deferred, with costly consequences for manufacturing and promotion.

Before turning from worrisome topics, may I suggest that NEWS & NOTES in years ahead should either produce a bibliographic issue annually or else, like some of the other author-society newsletters, devote one page of each number to current bibliography. We already notice our own members' publications; perhaps, with some language-area restrictions to be agreed on, we could list a wide range of items. The office of Bibliographer would be required, possibly combined with some other elective office under the Board of Directors.

No copy of the National Poetry Foundation's *T. S. Eliot: Man and Poet*, Vol. I, has come into my hands, but from the list of contributors kindly supplied to me by Dr. Brooker I have mentally reconstructed the pleasures and rewards of the Orono conference of 1988. Indeed it was one of the pleasantest conferences I have attended. One curious thing happened in the arrangements. The Foundation, that summer, had circulated copies of a gala promotional poster, depicting Eliot and inviting that wide public which scrutinizes the notice boards in university corridors, to come-one-and-all to the conference in August. Names of expected participants were supplied; and there, leading all the rest, *four* "keynote speakers." The print, though small, unerringly proclaimed them to be Cleanth Brooks, Hugh Kenner, A. D. Moody, and me. (This was very fine and impressive: one might feel rather as Dante felt in *Inferno*, IV.)

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BALLOT

When the printed program came out, this colorful publicity proved to be a lie. Brooks and Moody, right enough, were named as purposing "keynote addresses"; but Kenner and I had been BUMPED. Oh, we were there in the program, but not "keynoting," only reading papers among the multitudes. When, as assigned, I introduced Kenner at the session I chaired, and he rose to preface his paper with remarks of explanation, I heard a note of polite indignation in his voice. He and I both, he declared, had been listed as keynote speakers, but now we were not. And the consequence of course was that his long paper, suitable for the other purpose, had to be abridged to fit the panel. But reduce his paper he would—and so he did, as he read it. I was sorry it was cut; it deserved better.

My mention of Michael Hoover Eliot and C. Landon Martin II in the last issue of NEWS & NOTES elicited comments from both gentlemen, and to the same effect—that I was wrong in calling Mr. Martin first cousin *twice* removed, of T. S. Eliot. Mr. Martin, unlike Michael Hoover Eliot, is T. S. Eliot's first cousin *once* removed. My regrets for the blunder. Michael Hoover Eliot writes that Society members interested in Eliot family genealogy, whether or not they have any information to add to it, are invited to communicate with him at 1325 Moody Bridge Road, Cleveland, SC 29635.

A Society member takes up another point and suggests, but does not wish to be named as the exponent of, a supposed Cockney pronunciation of "political" as the source of Eliot's term "pollicle," i.e., in "Pollicle Dog." Frankly I like this, though it seems less Cockney than "slurred boozy," a pronunciation under the pub influence, beer and probably fatigue. But I can't accept "political" as the source. Eliot's "pollicle" occurs in *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* and also in a piece called "The Marching Song of the Pollicle Dogs," the latter printed in *The Queen's Book of the Red Cross* (1939), where I suspect it languishes permanently in the limbo of Crown copyright. This "Marching Song" appeared in December 1939 after the appearance of some other "Marching Songs," namely those in Yeats's *Last Poems*, that had seen print before but not with the marching title. These were political; but in Eliot's marching verses the two closing lines were adapted from a song, likely a music-hall ballad (I can't recall where I once encountered it), containing the following:

My name is little Jack Elliot,
And wha maun meddle wi' me?

Eliot substituted "Tom Pollicle" for "Jack Elliot," thereby bonding Pollicle to Eliot—to himself. Which brings me back to my half-facetious "Tom Thumb" attribution last fall. Not Barnum's little General, nor the train engine "Tom Thumb," nor the Lilliputian character of the English folk tradition, but rather the Petit Poucet of Perrault's nursery tale corresponds best to Tom Pollicle. Perrault's Tom Thumb is the youngest of seven, like Eliot himself, and is the cleverest. The Latin *pollex* yields "Pollicle" easily; but was "Tom Thumb" little Tom Eliot's juvenile nickname, *en famille*? Who knows?

AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1980 as the T. S. Eliot Society of St. Louis, since which occasion it has developed internationally, specializing in literary and cultural scholarship in a single-author concentration. Many of its members (not all of them academics) maintain parallel interests of equal force, and publish on other topics whether literary or theoretical. In its affiliation with the American Literature Association (ALA), founded in 1990, the T. S. Eliot Society has strengthened its position in alliance with other groups having humanistic commitment. The stated purposes of the Society range from commemoration of Eliot's life and work, involving encouragement of scholarship and communication among Eliot readers, to cooperation with persons and organizations having similar concerns.

The Society's annual meeting in St. Louis on a weekend late in September always includes as its principal event the delivery of the T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture. The honor of appointment as Eliot Memorial Lecturer has been conferred, in the past, on Sr. Marcella Holloway CSJ, Robert C. Roach, Charles Guenther, Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Jewel Spears Brooker, W. Ronald Schuchard, Grover Smith, James Olney, A. D. Moody, Leonard Unger, and Shyamal Bagchee. For the Eliot Centenary in 1988, the Society mounted an extended conference with presentations by well known Eliot scholars from several countries. The conference was attended by hundreds of students and specialists.

In its trimesterly newsletter the T. S. Eliot Society issues calls for papers, makes announcements, and records events of significance to scholarship in the field, noting activities and publications of its diversely occupied members.

The Society is registered as a non-profit organization, and contributions to it may be tax deductible. The scale of annual dues, which are renewed each November 1 on an advance basis for the next calendar year, is as follows:

Regular Membership	\$15-\$24
Supporting Membership	\$25-\$49
Sustaining Membership	\$50-\$99
Patron Membership	\$100-above

Anyone subscribing to the Society's purposes is invited to join by tendering payment for 1991 dues, in any category above, to Dr. Linda Wyman, Treasurer, 613-5 Woodlander, Jefferson City, MO 65101. Currently the other officers of the Society are Grover Smith, President; Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio, Vice-president; Mildred Boaz, Secretary; Earl K. Holt III, Historian; Jewel Spears Brooker, Supervisor of Elections.



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MEMBER'S BALLOT FOR ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE T.S. ELIOT SOCIETY

(Term ending 1994)

VIRGINIA B. PHELAN
(unopposed)

Signature _____ Dated _____ 1991

Mail to the Secretary: Dr. Mildred M. Boaz, 603 Radliff Road, Bloomington, IL 61701.

MAIL BEFORE MAY 24.