



ALS-MLA

American Literature Section of the
Modern Language Association

Annual Report, 1994

Compiled by
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University of Tulsa

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Typewriter photo by Jennifer Perkinson

American Literature Section Officers, 1994

Chair: William Andrews (U of Kansas)

Executive Coordinator: Susan Belasco Smith (U of Tulsa)

Advisory Council:

- Donald Pizer (Tulane U), 1992-94
- Joyce Warren (Queens College, CUNY), 1992-94
- Elizabeth Ammons (Tufts U), 1993-95
- Margorie Perloff (Stanford U), 1993-95
- Amy Ling (U of Wisconsin, Madison), 1994-96
- Frances Smith Foster (U of California, San Diego), 1994-9

1994 Division Chairs:

- Lauren Berlant (U of Chicago)
- SallyAnn Ferguson (U of North Carolina, Greensboro)
- Susan Stanford Friedman (U of Wisconsin, Madison)
- June Howard (U of Michigan, Ann Arbor)
- Carla Mulford (Penn State U, University Park)
- Greg Sarris (U of California, Los Angeles)

Editorial Board, American Literature:

- Cathy N. Davidson (Duke U), Chair
- Michael Moon (Duke U), Associate Editor
- Susan Stanford Friedman (U of Wisconsin, Madison), 1995
- Susan Gillman (U of California, Santa Cruz), 1994
- June Howard (U of Michigan, Ann Arbor), 1996
- Deborah McDowell (U of Virginia), 1994
- James Miller (Trinity College, CT), 1994
- Carla Mulford (Penn State U, University Park), 1995
- Sharon O'Brien (Dickinson College), 1994
- Patrick O'Donnell (West Virginia U), 1994
- Kenneth Roemer (U of Texas, Arlington), 1995
- Ramón Saldivár (Stanford U), 1995
- Sarah Sherman (U of New Hampshire, Durham), 1996
- David L. Smith (Williams College), 1995
- Claudia Tate (George Washington U), 1996
- Michael Warner (Rutgers U, New Brunswick), 1995
- Christopher Wilson (Boston College), 1995

Nominating Committee:

- Paul Lauter (Trinity College, CT), 1994
- Cheryl Torsney (West Virginia U), 1994-96
- Sandra Zagarell (Oberlin College), 1993-95

Foerster Prize Committee:

- John Carlos Rowe (U of California, Irvine), Chair
- Donald Weber (Mt. Holyoke College)
- Helen Jaskoski (California State U, Fullerton)

Hubbell Award Committee:

- Mary Ann Wimsatt (U of South Carolina), 1995 Chair
- Nellie McKay (U of Wisconsin, Madison), 1996 Chair
- John Seelye (U of Florida), 1997 Chair
- Jackson Bryer, (U of Maryland, College Park), 1998 Chair
- Jonathan Arac, (U of Pittsburgh), 1999 Chair

Financial Statement, 1 July 1994-30 June 1995

BEGINNING BALANCE

Balance at Duke UP	\$10,571.00
Balance at VPI&SU	\$3,421.32
Total	<u>\$13,992.32</u>

INCOME

Luncheon	\$1,725.00
Membership Dues	\$18,165.00
Other (royalties, etc.)	\$109.00
VPI&SU Supplement	<u>\$3500.00</u>
Total	\$23,499.00

\$37,491.32

EXPENDITURES

Luncheon	\$1,805.25
Hubbell Medallion	\$278.00
Office expenses	\$210.00
Bank charges	\$6.12
Copying	\$2,679.55
Office supplies	\$369.12
Postage	\$745.00
Telephone	\$212.73
ALS volumes to members	\$16,092.00
Canadian GST	<u>\$52.00</u>
Total	(\$22,449.77)

ENDING BALANCE

\$15,041.55

Membership Statement

Number of paid members as of June 1995

	<u>6/94</u>	<u>6/95</u>
Individual rate		
U.S.	678	687
Foreign	<u>49</u>	<u>55</u>
	727	742
Student/retired rate		
U.S.	130	118
Foreign	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	134	123
Total	861	864

Note: This version of the 1994 Annual Report of the American Literature Section of the MLA differs from the one distributed in 1995 in format, pagination, and cover art. It was prepared specifically for download-ing in the form of a pdf (page description format) file from the ALS-MLA website: <<http://www.duke.edu/web/dupress/ALS/index.html>>.

**Minutes of the Advisory Council Meeting,
27 December 1994**

The advisory council of the Modern Language Association's American Literature Section met on 27 December 1994, 7:00-8:15 p.m., in the San Diego Marriott. Professors Cathy Davidson, Sally Ann Ferguson, Frances Smith Foster, June Howard, Carla Mulford, Marjorie Perloff, Kenneth Roemer (for Greg Sarris), Sarah Sherman, Paul Sorrentino, Eric Sundquist (chair), and Joyce Warren attended the meeting.

Following the acceptance of the previous year's minutes, Paul Sorrentino announced the results of this year's election: chair, William Andrews; executive coordinator, Susan Belasco Smith; advisory council, James Robert Payne and Priscilla Wald; and editorial board of *American Literature*, June Howard, Sarah Way Sherman, and Claudia Tate.

Sundquist gave the report of the outgoing chair, and Davidson reported for the editorial board of *American Literature*; Sorrentino read the reports of the Hubbell, Foerster, Scholarly Editions, and Manuscript Holdings Committees because their chairs could not attend the meeting. The committee reports appear in this *Annual Report*. Sorrentino also announced that the Section continues to be financially healthy.

Under new business the council expressed concern that proposed cuts in NEH's budget would weaken the humanities. After a brief discussion of the implications of these cuts, the Council passed the following resolution:

The advisory council of the American Literature Section of MLA voted unanimously at its annual meeting on 27 December 1994 to strongly support the continued funding of NEH and urges scholars to write their Congressional representatives endorsing the resolution. Congress could decide the fate of NEH as early as 4 January 1995.

Immediately following the meeting, copies of the resolution were sent to appropriate officials and posted on the Internet.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Paul Sorrentino
Executive Coordinator, ALS
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Parting Words from the Outgoing Executive Coordinator

As the outgoing executive coordinator of the American Literature Section of MLA, I have asked the new coordinator, Susan Belasco Smith, for the opportunity to say farewell and to publicly thank people who have

helped make my job easier during the last four years.

When I became the coordinator, I wanted to address three problems: outdated bylaws, declining membership, and potential loss of future institutional support for ALS. After four years, I am pleased to say that the Section has an updated set of bylaws, has added about 140 new members, and has a surplus of \$10,000. My modest contribution to this progress would have been even smaller had I not had outstanding guidance from four ALS chairs—Emory Elliott, Blanche Gelfant, Elaine Hedges, and Eric Sundquist; from my three immediate predecessors—Donald Yannella, Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV, and Jerome Loving; and from numerous committee and division chairs. I would also like to thank Stephen A. Cohn and Cathy Davidson, both of whom taught me much about the best way to manage the Section's activities and to assure a productive relationship between ALS and Duke.

As I leave office, I am delighted that my successor, Susan Belasco Smith, has all the skills to be a visionary coordinator, and I know that you join me in looking forward to her inspired leadership.

Paul Sorrentino
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

**Report of the Chair, Advisory Council of the
American Literature Section, 1994**

More complex issues having been resolved in the previous year, the chair's tasks this year were remarkably simple. I appointed the usual committee members, who have carried out their duties with graciousness and distinction, and some of them will be making their own reports on this occasion. I also arranged the annual double program for the Section, choosing as our topic "American Literary Study: The Next Century." It seemed none too soon to think about the next hundred years. To that end I invited a diverse group of younger scholars—those, that is to say, who are most likely to be the ones responsible for shaping literary criticism at the outset of the next century—to reflect upon the topic in whatever ways they deemed appropriate.

Let me thank all committee chairs and members, as well as MLA panelists representing the Section on this year's program, for their hard work and time spent in bringing all of our ventures to a sound conclusion once again. In particular, let me thank Paul Sorrentino for making my job quite easy—and thank him, too, for his own devoted service in this his last year as Executive Coordinator. We are all in his debt and will be hard pressed indeed to find his replacement.

Eric J. Sundquist, Chair

The Hubbell Medal 1994

Awarded to Leslie A. Fiedler, Distinguished Professor of English, State University of New York at Buffalo.

Churlish as it may seem, I propose today—before thanking you properly—to reflect a little on the ironies implicit in your giving me this award. Let me begin by making it clear that, unlike most of you and those you have thus honored before, I am not a professional scholar, specializing in American literature, but an unreconstructed amateur, a dilettante who stumbled accidentally into your area of expertise. I have, as you are surely aware, never been a member of the American Literature Section of the MLA. Indeed, if my failing flesh had permitted me to attend this luncheon, it would have been the first time I have ever attended one.

This is not, let me assure you, out of mere snobbishness, but because I would have felt an interloper, an uninvited guest. After all, in graduate school I took no courses and wrote no papers on American literature, concentrating instead on the poetry of the Middle Ages and the English Seventeenth Century under mentors who believed and sought to persuade me that only second-rate minds wasted their time in studying American books. I did not even then, however, share their elitist beliefs, convinced indeed that the canon should be opened even wider than the pioneers of American Studies were then proposing.

In fact, in a review of *The Literary History of the United States*, which I wrote shortly after getting my final degree, I scolded its editors for having sought to canonize only those classic American authors already dead and sanctified by the passage of time, while ignoring still living and problematical modernists like T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. Nonetheless, I was not sure (indeed, I have doubts to this very day) that any writers, living or dead, who embody in our own tongue our own deepest nightmares and dreams ought to be taught in American classrooms. Would it not be better, I wondered, to keep them sources of private delight rather than turning them into required reading for students in quest of good grades and teachers seeking promotion and tenure.

In any case, for nearly a decade after I had myself become an instructor, I taught no courses in American writers nor did I publish anything about them; though, of course, I did continue to read them secretly and in silence, not breaking that silence until one day in 1947 when quite inadvertently I found myself writing my infamous little essay, “Come Back to the Raft, Ag’in, Huck Honey.”

I had been reading to my two sons (then seven and nine), as I was accustomed to do at bedtime, a passage from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* about Huck and Jim

on the raft; and afterwards between sleeping and waking, I found myself redreaming Twain’s idyllic dream of inter-ethnic male bonding and the flight from civilization. Then, I awoke fully to realize how central that erotic myth was not just to our literature but to our whole culture and rushed to my desk to get the insight down before it vanished forever. The little prose lyric which it insisted on becoming I sent off immediately to the *Partisan Review*—the kind of little magazine, publication in which, in those benighted times, was still more of a hindrance than a help to academic advancement.

To my surprise, however, it was widely read (or more often misread) and responded to in the academy as well as out. Not that it was generally admired. On the contrary, it was either dismissed as a *boutade*, a joke in bad taste, or condemned as a calumny of the tradition it purported to explore and a travesty of scholarship. Needless to say, among those condemning it on the latter grounds were the sort of scholars who had at that point been awarded the honor you bestow on me today.

A half century later, however, that much-maligned essay has refused to die. I myself reprinted it in my first book, *An End to Innocence*, where it was flanked by a dozen or so other pieces, some literary, some autobiographical or political—but all more like what academics of the old school would have called “mere journalism,” rather than “true scholarship”. Yet it has appeared since in many languages; and, in another ironic turn of the screw, has become assigned reading in university classes on literature. In addition, it was this volume, that persuaded those with no sense of where I was really coming from or heading to, that I was—however misguided and perverse I might be—a would-be scholar of American letters.

Certainly, it was that misapprehension which led to my being granted a Fulbright Fellowship to Italy, where, I discovered I was expected to lecture (as I had never yet done at home) on the literature of my native land. Though I thought of myself as a comparatist, a mythographer, a literary anthropologist, anything but an “Americanist”, I felt disconcertingly at ease in that new role. This was, I have come to realize, because as a stranger in a strange land, I was able to teach our books as a literature in a foreign tongue. Indeed, at the University of Bologna my own language was so unfamiliar to the students I addressed that I had to lecture in theirs. In any case, what I ended up trying to do was to translate the parochial insights I had sketched out in “Come Back to the Raft” into more university terms; which is to say, treating our literature not in isolation but in relation to Western culture as a whole—specifically, to deal with it as the first post-colonial literature of the modern world.

To do so properly, it soon became clear to me, would require more than a handful of irregularly scheduled

lectures; and so, on my return home, I began to plan what turned out to be a rather formidable series of books, four in all, which together constituted a critical history of our literature from the end of the eighteenth century to the last decades of the twentieth. It took me nearly three decades to complete that project, and, indeed, I did not start *Love and Death in the American Novel*, the first of those books, until seven or eight years after I had conceived it. Though that volume has turned out to be finally the best-known and most highly respected of all my works, initially it baffled and dismayed many of its readers—mostly, perhaps, because of its generic ambiguity. Librarians have classified it either as literary history or criticism, but I have always considered it a work of art rather than scholarship, since it seeks not to prove its most outrageous theses but to charm the skeptical into a willing suspension of disbelief. More specifically, I think of it as a gothic novel in scholarly disguise: haunted like the dark novels so central to our tradition, by ghosts out of the European past which our white founding fathers fled, along with vengeful spectres of the Native Americans they displaced and menacing shadows cast by the Africans they enslaved to work the soil. But as its title indicates, its themes are erotic as well as thanatic, though, to be sure, its eros is as dark as thanatos, eventuating not in happy heterosexual unions, but in foredoomed male bonding, brother-sister incest and necrophilia.

Moreover, to make clear that the tale it seeks to tell is mythic rather than factual, poetic rather than prosaic, I eschewed such conventional academic trappings as footnotes and bibliographies. So, too, I spoke not just in the solemn and magisterial third person, but also in the informal first; thus permitting myself to indulge in high rhetoric and low humor. For this reason, the reaction of more conventional scholars was overwhelmingly negative, as it was to the three succeeding volumes, *Waiting for the End*, *The Return of the Vanishing American* and *What Was Literature?* So that for while it seemed as if I were to be doomed forever to be labeled a disturber of the peace, an *enfant terrible*, the “wild man of American Letters”.

But nothing is forever, of course. As I approach my eightieth year, I am made aware by occasions like this that I have come to be thought of as a perfectly respectable scholar, an Americanist *par excellence*. I must confess to being pleased a little, but even more I am dismayed—wanting to cry out against such misapprehensions, to protest that I have remained a jack-of-all-fields and master of none, continuing to write and speak as I have from the first, about whatever moves me at the moment. And this has turned out to be not just the literature of many nations and eras beside my own: ancient Greek tragedy, the classic Chinese novel, Old Provençal poetry, the English Victorian novel, Kafka and

James Joyce, Jaroslav Hasek and Chrétien de Troyes, and especially Shakespeare and Dante.

I have also dealt with subjects as remote from my presumable field of expertise as theology and psychology, voting studies and the war in Vietnam, Japanese woodblock engravings, pornography and comic books, sideshows and circuses, bioethics and organ transplants. I have talked about them, moreover, not just in the classroom and at gatherings of my fellow-academics, but to trade-unionists, nurses and dermatologists, as well as on talk shows presided over by Dick Cavett and William Buckley, Merv Griffin and Phil Donahue—earning myself a listing in *Who's Who in Entertainment*.

Similarly, I have less and less often published in academic journals (never in the PMLA), preferring to appear in magazines aimed at a non-professional audience, like the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, *Psychology Today*, *Esquire* and (most scandalous of all) *Playboy*. Despite all this, I am presently praised by the sort of scholars who first ignored me, then vilified me (sometimes while stealing my ideas without acknowledgement)—though, to be sure, it is only for what I have written about American literature.

Even more disturbingly, I am now routinely quoted in jargon-ridden, reader-unfriendly works I cannot bring myself to read, and am listed honorifically in the kind of footnotes and bibliographies I have always eschewed. But most disturbingly of all, as a result (in a culture where nothing fails like success) some younger, future-oriented critics have begun to speak of me as old-fashioned, a member of a moribund establishment. I was, however, heartened when Camille Paglia, the most future-oriented of them all, the *enfant terrible*, in fact, of her generation as I was of mine, was moved by a new edition of *Love and Death in the American Novel* to write, “Fiedler created an American intellectual style that was truncated by the invasion of faddish French theory in the 70’s and 80’s. Let’s turn back to Fiedler and begin again.”

Her words not merely reassure me that I am still not P.C. They also make me aware that whatever I have written about it has always been from an essentially American point of view and in an essentially American voice; and that therefore I am in the deepest sense an “Americanist”—a true colleague (despite their original doubts and my own continuing ones) of all those who have earlier received this award and you who so graciously bestow it on me now. As such a colleague, I feel free to say in conclusion—straight out and without irony—what I hope you realize I have been—in my customary perverse and ambivalent way—trying to say throughout these remarks, *thank you, thank you very much*.

Leslie A. Fiedler
Buffalo, New York
December 19, 1994

The Foerster Prize

This year's Prize Committee, composed of Donald Weber (Mt. Holyoke College), Helen Jaskoski (California State University, Fullerton), and myself, is pleased to award the Foerster Prize for the Best Essay in *American Literature* for 1994: Caleb Crain, a Ph.D. Candidate in English at Columbia University, for his essay "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels," which appeared in the March issue.

Donald Weber characterizes the essay as "a brilliant and provocative reading of how the discourse of homosexuality and cannibalism help us to read . . . A number of key Melville texts from *Typee* to *Billy Budd*. Crain shows how these discourses, especially in the nineteenth century, were often blurred together; how, most importantly, the feeling of 'homosexual panic' has its correlative in 'cannibalistic panic'; and how . . . the parallels and blurrings of these discourses can be shown . . . to shape Melville's imagination, even his unrequited affection, sounded in his famous letters, for Hawthorne."

Helen Jaskoski adds that this was the essay "I found I was citing most in the discussions in my fall seminar in American Romanticism. Over and over in the class, we found ourselves confronting the unspeakable, either in the literature . . . or in the attitudes we surprised among ourselves. Crain's essay offered a way to untangle some of these unsettling complications in our thinking and attitudes." Crain's essay concludes with a powerful reflection on contemporary cultural anxieties regarding both cannibalism and homosexuality, and Helen refers to this in her concluding remarks by noting that in this "bleak season, especially here in California where fear and loathing and hate have been expressed with remarkable candor and righteousness in political campaigns and at the voting booth," "Crain's essay sheds . . . light" "on what makes people think and say and do [such] things.

I have little to add to such eloquence, except to agree fully and say how much Crain's approach adds to our understanding of very familiar scenes and issues in Melville's writings, such as the often addressed relationship between Queequeg and Ishmael. In its command of Melville's works, its use of historical scholarship, its interdisciplinary method, and its ability to connect the present with the past, "Lovers of Human Flesh" distinguished itself amid the many excellent contributions to this year's *American Literature*.

John Carlos Rowe
English and Comparative Literature
University of California, Irvine
Chair of the Foerster Prize Committee, 1994

Report of the Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee has completed the slate for 1995. The nominees are as follows:

Chair: Linda Wagner-Martin (U of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Advisory Council:

Evan Carton (U of Texas, Austin)
Sharon M. Harris (U of Nebraska, Lincoln)
Robyn Wiegman (Indiana U)
Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano (Stanford U)

American Literature Editorial Board:

Michael Awkward (U of Michigan, Ann Arbor)
Joanne Dobson (Fordham U)
Emory Elliott (U of California, Riverside)
David Minter (Rice U)
Dana D. Nelson (Louisiana State U, Baton Rouge)

Report on *American Literature*:

In 1994, we published 25 essays as well as six brief contributions to a Forum guest edited by Elaine Hedges, "Repositionings: Multiculturalism, American Literary History, and the Curriculum," based on American Literature Section sessions she chaired at the 1993 MLA convention. We also received considerable press with the "New Melville" special issue (March 1994). 151 books were reviewed in the journal in 1994, and several hundred were given "Brief Mentions." Although there was also a small decline in the number of submissions last year, our acceptance rate remains less than seven percent.

In 1994, our subscription rate held relatively steady at approximately 5250, with only a slight decrease in town, high school, and university library subscriptions as well as a slight decrease in student subscriptions.

Currently Sharon O'Brien is guest editing a special issue on "American Writing in the 1980s and 1990s" which will appear in mailboxes and bookstores in 1995. 1995 will also see the publication of *Subjects and Citizens: Nation, Race, and Gender from "Oronooko" to Anita Hill*, a collection of twenty essays from the last five years of *American Literature*, including the essays that appeared in the Fall 1993 special issue of the same name.

We wish to extend our appreciation to Dr. Kathryn West (who is now Assistant Professor at Bellarmine College) for doing such an excellent job in 1994 while our Managing Editor, Dr. Carol Rigsby, was on leave in Germany. We appreciate Kathy's service and we welcome Carol's return.

We would also like to thank five superb colleagues who will be leaving the Board on January 1, 1995. Susan K. Gillman, Deborah McDowell, James Miller, Sharon O'Brien, and Patrick O'Donnell will all be sorely missed.

Cathy N. Davidson
Michael Moon
Duke University

Report of the Committee on Scholarly Editions

As a standing committee of the MLA, the Committee on Scholarly Editions dates from September of 1976, and its charge remains that of promoting the highest standards of scholarly editing and of helping editors and publishers to present reliable texts in expertly prepared scholarly editions. The Committee seeks to provide services to all scholarly editors, whether veterans or neophytes in the field, in all the historical periods and languages served by the parent organization. Collectively, the current Committee membership includes an editor from a university press and scholars of American, English, French, and Spanish literature, whose periods of historical specialization range from medieval through the Renaissance to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and whose interests center in minority literatures as well as mainstream traditions.

The two CSE-sponsored sessions scheduled for the 1994 MLA Convention in San Diego reflect the Committee's concern with the impact of new technologies on the field of scholarly editing: one, organized by Charles Faulhaber, is entitled simply "Electronic Scholarly Editions"; the other, organized by Peter Shillingsburg, is entitled "Practice and Ideal in Electronic Scholarly Editions." Together, these programs will feature seven presenters from his country and abroad who are deeply involved in the processes of encoding, editing, and presenting texts in the electronic medium. We believe these programs will speak to the interests of an already large segment of the MLA membership that is destined to grow rapidly in the future.

What has traditionally been perceived as the CSE's primary function—the careful inspection and approval of editions that exhibit a high standard of textual scholarship—has remained an important part of the Committee's activities during this past year, though most of this year's requests for inspections happened not to originate until late spring and summer of 1994. As of September 21st the Committee has awarded the "An Approved Edition" emblem to only two volumes since our last report (Sept. 15, 1993), but has reviews of five others underway. We have also had a number of recent inquiries from scholars working in diverse fields. A list of these activities appears at the end of this report.

At our meeting in New York on September 15-16, 1994, the Committee drafted plans for implementing the two new programs approved by the Executive Council last year: (1) the program to provide MLA-funded inspections for volumes seeking the CSE seal and (2) the program to award a biennial MLA prize for a scholarly edition. We are essentially ready now to begin conducting MLA-funded inspections, and we expect to complete our recommendations on the prize shortly so that the first award can be made in 1995. We are pleased that the Executive Council saw fit to appropriate funds for these two programs and believe that they will significantly enhance the Association's support of scholarly editing.

With respect to the inspection-fee program we need clarification from the Council on one point: our initial proposal (of 1-30-94) described the MLA-funded inspections as a "new service to MLA members"; in drawing up application procedures, however, we recognized that a members-only policy for applicants would either (a) contravene the rationale for Association-funded inspections (to avoid the ethical dilemma of having the edition pay for its own inspection) or (b) narrow our potential range of service to editors at a time when we have been trying to broaden it. We therefore ask the Council's concurrence in our preference to offer the inspection service to applicants without imposing the membership requirement. We would appreciate a decision on this point at the Council's earliest convenience.

In addition to the above-named issues, we devoted a good deal of time at our recent meeting to problems surrounding the publication of the long-awaited *Scholarly Editing*, a multi-disciplinary collection of essays on scholarly editing sponsored by the CSE, edited by D. C. Greetham, and in production by MLA publications. The difficulties surrounding this volume are complex and long-standing, and we will not attempt to detail them here (MLA staff members can describe them to the Council at its next session).

Therefore, we have asked the Council to take action on the following two points:

- (1) To sanction a few minor divergences from MLA style for the volume *Scholarly Editing*.
- (2) To implement a full-scale review of the *MLA Style Manual*. In addition, we ask the Council to authorize CSE inspection fees for non-members of the MLA.

Volumes Approved, 1994:

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur

Editor: Dennis D. Moore
Reviewer: Miriam Shillingsburg
Status: Approved 26 January 1994

George Herbert

The Temple: A Diplomatic Edition of the Bodleian Manuscript (Tanner 307)

Editor: Mario Di Cesare
Reviewer: Ted-Larry Pebworth
Status: approved 15 September 1994

Reviews Pending (as of 9/15/93):

Luis Vélez de Guevara

The Plays of Vélez de Guevara (twelve vols.), vol. 1
Editor: George C. Peale
Reviewer: Michael McGaha
Status: Committee voted to defer (July 24, 1992);
correspondence with editor during fall of
1992; awaiting further response from editor.

Charles of Orleans

Fortunes Stabilnes
Editor: Mary Jo Arn
Reviewer: John H. Fisher
Status: Review completed; committee voted to defer,
May 4, 1993; awaiting further word from editor.

William James

The Correspondence of William James, vol. 4 (1856-77)
Editors: Ignas K. Skrupskelis and Elizabeth M. Berkeley
Reviewer: Robert Sattlemeyer
Status: balloting

James F. Cooper

Afloat and Ashore, in *The Writings of James Fenimore
Cooper*
Editor: Tom Philbrick (Kay S. House, Editor-in-
Chief of the edition)
Reviewer: David Nordloh
Status: review underway

John Donne

*The Epigrams, Epithalamions, Epitaphs, Inscriptions,
and Miscellaneous Poems*. Vol. 8 in *The Variorum
Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*
Editors: Gary A. Stringer et al
Reviewer: Trevor Howard-Hill
Status: exchange of materials pending

James F. Cooper

Die Heidenmauer, in *The Writings of James Fenimore Cooper*
Editor: Ernest K. Redekop and James P. Elliott
(Kay S. House, Editor-in-Chief of the edition)
Reviewer: Ralph Orth
Status: review underway

William Wordsworth

Wordsworth's Translations from Chaucer and Virgil.
Vol. 17 of *The Cornell Wordsworth*
Editors: Stephen M. Parrish et al.
Reviewer: Paul Sheats
Status: exchange of materials pending

Sealed Volumes Recently Published:

The Correspondence of William James, vol. 3 (UP of Virginia,
1994); vol. 2 (1993)

Mark Twain, *Roughing It*. Vol. 2 of *The Works of Mark Twain*
(U of California P, 1993) [supersedes the 1972 edition
of the same work]

Recent Inquiries:

Allison Drew, U of Nevada-Las Vegas & U of Natal. She
is editing a two-volume documentary history entitled
"Sought Africa's Radical Tradition: A Documentary
History." Sent copy of "Aims and Services" brochure;
no further communication.

Marita T. C. Mathijsen-Verkooijen, Universiteit van
Amsterdam. She is preparing a manual on textual
editing for Dutch scholars. Wanted permission to
describe the "Aims and Services" document, to print
excerpts from the "Guiding Questions," and to reprint
the "Checklist for Inspectors" *in toto*. Referred her to
Martha Evans for official MLA permission.

Michael Heller, Roanoke College. Planning an edition
of the essays of John Woolman (18th c.). Sent "Aims
and Services" document; no further correspondence.

Tom Woodson, Ohio State University. Inquired about
inspections for two volumes in the Hawthorne edition
(Sept. 12); CSE awaiting formal letter of inquiry.

Elizabeth Witherell, Thoreau project. Inquired about
inspection of volume five of the Thoreau *Journal*.

Gary A. Stringer
University of Southern Mississippi
Chair, Committee on Scholarly Editions

**Online Catalogue for Primary Sources in American
Literature**

1 March 1993-31 May 1994

Final Report

This document constitutes the final report for the
project: Online Catalogue of Primary Resources in
American Literature (PS 20613-93). In the project, four
pilot institutions and an editorial office—serving to
coordinate the work of twenty-five test sites—worked to
test, expand, and amend guidelines, instruments, and
methodology, thereby laying the foundation for a
national effort to develop online access to the rich
resources for the study of American literature held in
repositories large and small.

Introduction:

The pilot project developed from a series of discussions among curators in RLG institutions who were faced with an ever-expanding number of queries concerning holdings of American literary manuscripts. The only available printed tools are J. Albert Robbins, ed., *American Literary Manuscripts* (2nd ed.; Athens: U of George P, 1977), the *National Union Catalogue of Manuscripts Collections* (1+, 1959-) and a few author bibliographies that list manuscript holdings. In discussions with curators, particularly in 1990 at the American Libraries Association Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) Pre-Conference and the Society of American Archivists annual meeting, it became clear that our ability to serve the needs of students and scholars would be best enhanced by providing online access to holdings of American literary manuscripts. At the same time, the American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association was considering a revision of Robbins' *American Literary Manuscripts*. This work was spearheaded by Professor Peter Conn of the English Department at the University of Pennsylvania. When the two groups learned of each other's activities, it was quickly determined that a joint effort would be the better approach. It should be made abundantly clear at the outset that Professor Conn's active involvement in the project was critical. Without his expertise and encouragement, the project would never have been carried out.

Narrative:

After a series of meetings, a proposal was submitted to NEH to fund a pilot project to test methodologies and assumptions. The goals of the project are included in the appendices of this report. The remainder of the report details the work of the project team. Members included Leslie A. Morris (Harvard-Houghton Library), Kristi L. R. Kiesling (U of Texas - HRHRC), Patricia C. Willis (Yale - Beinecke Library), Philip N. Cronenwett (Dartmouth), and La Vonne F. Gallo (RLG). Advisors to the project were Peter Conn (U of Pennsylvania), Jay Fliegelman (Stanford), and Linda Lear (Smithsonian Fellow). (Charge is appended.) The advice and counsel provided by the Advisory Group was critical to the project. It was vitally important to the project team to be able to consult with and receive advice from scholars working with these materials both in the classroom and in their own research. The final product has been greatly enhanced by their active involvement.

The work of the project was carried out using three methods: meetings, conference calls, and electronic mail. Two meetings were held of the project team and advisors, one in New Orleans in conjunction with the RBMS pre-conference in June, and one in Cambridge in January.

Both meetings resulted in significant advances in the project. Monthly and semi-monthly conference calls and the use of electronic mail kept the project team in regular contact. The remainder of this report will describe our work to accomplish the project goals.

At the outset, it was clear that the guidelines defining resources, i.e., the kinds of materials that needed to be described and recorded, were insufficient. With the assistance of the Advisory Group, a series of discussions was initiated to attempt to develop a list that included terms for these materials that scholars use in their research. These discussions were particularly fruitful in identifying terms for states of manuscripts important to researchers, types of research materials, and sub-sets of these material types. As a result, the project developed a very full list of material type descriptors that we believe will be of great use to researchers. Many of these descriptors are not to be found in the Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT), the standard thesaurus of descriptors used by many research libraries; we will submit those not found to AAT for consideration. It is clear that precise descriptors will assist scholars in their research efforts.

A second consideration was the need for a descriptive standard. The minimum requirements for a record to be added to the Archives and Manuscripts Control (AMC) file of the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) are clearly not sufficient to support the level of detail needed for this project. The original draft standard from which the project team worked will need to be revised on the basis of the outcome of the project. After discussion of a more comprehensive standard, we determined that this issue will need to be decided by RLG member institutions that make use of the AMC file in RLIN. The RLIN Archival Materials Task Force on Standards is currently developing a two-tier standard. The "full level" standard is consistent with the project standard. Recommendation 2 below treats this issue.

One of the more challenging issues with which the project team and the Advisory Group grappled was that of the author list for names to be included in any future project. The original list of some 105 names in the test was a sample based on Robbins' *American Literary Manuscripts*. (This list is appended as part of the survey package.) While this sample was useful in completing the pilot project, the list for an expanded project was a subject of lengthy discussion. One of the great concerns of the group was to avoid being exclusive, and to work towards being inclusive in any list that might be created. Discussion centered around the need to provide coverage for new writers, writers whose work had not been appreciated until recently, writers whose work would not fall within the "canon" of American literature, and, finally, individuals and organizations that were ancillary. In the latter grouping we would include

editors, the records of certain publishers, and literary agents. These were deemed of great importance so that the whole of American literary culture could be treated.

In the early stages of our discussions, we focussed on creating a list that would treat all aspects of American literature. Much thought was given to the necessary sources of the names to be included, mechanisms for updating the list, and the need—or lack thereof—for a cut-off date. These issues were finally resolved by determining that any American author listed in *American Literary Manuscripts*, the *Modern Language Association Bibliography*, and any author assigned an LC or Dewey classification number would be included. Thus, the inclusion of authors will be driven not by an artificial list, but by publication.

One of the most difficult aspects of the project was data gathering. When *American Literary Manuscripts* was compiled in the 1970's, the Modern Language Association used volunteers to gather information. Clearly, this model is not feasible given the level of detail that we hope to obtain. The project requires not only knowledge of collections, but also of standardized descriptive practice and the MARC format. In the project, we tested a methodology using a survey instrument with selected test sites. Criteria for selecting the test sites included size of repository, known collections, and interest in the project. A number of the originally designated test sites declined to participate in the project because they had no literary manuscripts or did not have the staff time to fully participate. (The final list of test sites is included with the appended editorial office final office.) The survey instrument and a set of instructions for completing the survey were sent to the survey institutions and returned to the editorial office at the Houghton Library. Through the excellent efforts of Leslie Morris and her associate Bonnie Salt, the data were clarified and edited, and 154 records were entered into the RLIN AMC file.

Testing the time and costs for creating entries, converting and upgrading existing catalog records, and updating existing online records was a central part of the project. In order for the project to assess the effectiveness of the work and to determine the real costs of any future endeavor, this portion of the work was critical. Each project team member committed to providing data on a specific number of records. Yale committed to 65 records, Dartmouth to 42 records, Texas to 60 records; Harvard to updating 60 existing records; and the editorial office would provide 250 records from a selected list of test sites. The average time for all of these institutions to provide a full record was between four and five hours. Collections of literary materials are generally quite large—often they are not fully processed, and generally are not described at a detailed level; for instance, the name of every

correspondent with an author is not usually listed. A great deal of project staff time was required to locate relevant materials in these large collections. We were surprised to learn that updating an existing record to RRAL standards took nearly as much time and effort as creating an entirely new record. At Houghton Library, in many cases it was necessary to check twenty-two separate catalogs, in addition to physically accessing the actual materials. Another time-intensive task was establishing authorized forms of names for individuals. The time consumed for these two tasks was even more significant for the editorial office because extensive correspondence and phone calls with the test sites were necessary.

Costs per record vary widely. Staff salaries are not comparable among institutions nationwide; further, the size of a collection and its state of processing affects the amount of staff time necessary to locate and describe materials. Actual cost incurred creating records were much higher than the projected per record costs. For instance, the actual cost per record at HRHRC was \$140.95, nearly doubling the projected cost of \$74.33 per record. At Houghton Library, it was estimated that the cost to update an existing record would be \$11.12; the actual per record cost was \$98.87. This means that each institution contributed a significantly higher amount in cost-sharing than originally anticipated.

What did we learn from the results of this test? First, we discovered that the survey instrument was considered daunting and complex by many of the repositories. At the same time, in order to provide full records we desired, the instrument had to be comprehensive. This is particularly important in light of our belief that a full level record, as defined by the RLIN Archival Materials Task Force on Standards, must be considered the norm. Knowledge gained from this experience will allow for a slightly modified survey instrument that will accomplish the task.

The second result is the realization that a centralized co-ordinating office and regional editorial offices are an absolute necessity. A central office would insure consistency and high quality in all the records created for an enlarged project; regional editorial offices would provide a close support and needed expertise for institutions in their areas. This assistance is needed particularly by institutions which have little or no experience in standardized cataloging or using the MARC format. Without such an editorial office structure, the quality of records would suffer. The final action of each editorial office would be to place the designator "RRAL" in the MARC 797 field to indicate that a record met the standards of the project.

Third, our discussions made it abundantly clear that the accessibility of collection guides and finding aids to collections is a goal toward which all institutions should

strive. We are aware of a number of institutions who have made their guides and finding aids available online as part of their OPAC or via Gopher from their mainframes. The project now underway at the U of California, Berkeley, using Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) and a customized document type definition (DTD), may well become the standard for finding aids in machine-readable form. Project participants agreed that RLIN, in a later iteration, could serve as the gateway to these finding aids. A further result of the work of the editorial office was to confirm that gathering information from smaller institutions, such as local historical societies, small public libraries, and small museums, will require staff site visits. Regional editorial office staff to make such visits will therefore be necessary in any enlarged project. A great deal was learned during the project about using a centralized editorial office and, while interesting problems developed during the project, we are convinced that the use of the editorial offices—regionally and centrally—is a critical factor in any larger project.

Based on the work of the project team and the Advisory Group, the following recommendations are offered:

1. A national project to provide online access to the records of American literary culture should be initiated. This project should be organized jointly by the Research Libraries Group and the American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association.
2. Research Libraries Group members and other major research repositories should develop and agree upon a single set of standards for description of literary collections. This standard should be detailed enough to provide the necessary information for scholars. The current proposal by the RLIN Archival Materials Task Force on Standards for a “full level” standard provides the precise vehicle needed. Further, the primary focus of any enlarged project should be on collection-level records.
3. The Research Libraries Group should explore the potential of emerging technologies to provide gateways for access to information about collections relating to American literary culture. This would include, *inter alia*, placing finding aids to collections on line.
4. The Art and Architecture Thesaurus should be enriched with the material descriptor terms developed by the pilot project and the use of these terms in the 655/755 fields should be mandated.
5. A significant effort must be made to increase the awareness of the scholarly community

regarding the project and the value of the AMC file in RLIN. We have made great strides in this area, but more must be done. Current plans to publicize this project include a seminar session at the upcoming RBMS pre-conference (in collaboration with the project co-ordinator for the Location Register of 20th Century Literary Manuscripts, U of Reading, UK), and news releases to scholarly and archive/library-related listservs on the Internet and professional journals.

The Research Libraries Group and the participating institutions are extremely grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for making this project possible. The success of the effort is reflected in the stronger ties we have established with scholar-advisors, our better understanding of pragmatic, workable methodologies, and the increased interest expressed by individuals in other countries—those who hold materials in American literary culture and want to join this effort, and those who would like to create similar projects for their own national literary cultures.

La Vonne F. Gallo
Project Director, NEH PS 20613-93
28 October 1994

American Literary Scholarship

The latest contribution to this series, *ALS 1992*, published in June 1994, marks an anniversary: it is the 30th annual review volume in the project initiated by James Woodress in 1965. That longevity is a tribute to Jim Woodress’s perceptiveness about the value to American literary studies of a substantial and selective bibliographical resource; to the unflagging efforts of Jim and the late J. Albert Robbins in co-editing the series through its first 25 years; to the under-rewarded contributions of scores of specialists who have prepared the individual chapters; and to the American Literature Section, which has from the beginning given *ALS* its institutional and intellectual support and made the volume a perquisite of section membership.

ALS 1993, which will be published in June 1995, is making its way through the editing and production processes now. Gary Scharnhorst, U of New Mexico, is editing the volume. Scharnhorst recently joined David J. Nordloh, Indiana U, in overseeing the series, and the two will take turns at the editor’s desk. The chapter contributors to *ALS 1993* are: for English-language scholarship—David M. Robinson, Leland S. Person, Jr., Benjamin F. Fisher, John Wenke, Martha Nell Smith, Tom Quirk, Robert L. Gale (coming out of “retirement” to do the Henry James Chapter one more time), George Kearns and Cleo McNelly Kearns, Alexander J. Marshall, III, Albert J. DeFazio III, William J. Scheick, Lawrence

Berkove, Jo Ann Middleton, Catherine Calloway, Jerome Klinkowitz, Timothy Materer, Lorenzo Thomas, James Martine, and Gary Lee Stonum; and for foreign-language scholarship—F. Lyra, Daniel Royot, Rolf Meyn, Algerina Neri, Keiko Beppu, Jan Nordby Gretlund, Elisabeth Herion-Sarafidis, and Hans Skei. Preparing a chapter essay is an onerous responsibility: as published scholarship on American literature continues to increase in quantity and diversity, so too do the demands on professional time, effort, and critical open-mindedness. Despite these challenges, however, the majority of the 1993 contributors have also agreed to participate in *ALS 1994*. And—it may be worth noting—as always they forego royalties on copies of *ALS* distributed to the section.

ALS 1993 will be the second volume produced under the latest five-year contract between the series editors and Duke University Press. That contract is still not represented by a piece of paper, but neither party is much concerned about the legalistic details. The recent institutional and administrative changes at the press have been a factor in the completion of the contract document, but they've had no effect at all on the longstanding cordial relationship between the parties. The return to the Chapel Hill, NC, area from Monterey, CA, of Bob Mirandon, who has copy-edited *ALS* chapters for many years now, has eliminated with one rough spot in an always smooth working operation. Inside the Duke offices themselves, the indefatigable Pam Morrison continues to be the conscience of quality.

There has been some general discussion in recent years of the need to redivide the 20th-century genre chapters to acknowledge that the century is almost one hundred years long, and possibly to revise the list of major authors given chapters of their own. So far, however—and partly because of continuing changes in the co-editorship positions—nothing definitive has been proposed. But with Professors Nordloh and Scharnhorst now settled in, the discussion will become more earnest. *ALS 1994* will incorporate the first significant alteration not in the 20th-century or author chapters, but in “19th-Century Literature.” It will be replaced by two chapters, one “Early” and the other “Late,” to improve the manageability of the amount of material, particularly on the great number of more recently recovered women writers.

ALS editors and contributors are as always grateful to publishers for their generosity in supplying review copies and to scholars for compensating for cutbacks in library serials budgets by forwarding offprints. All materials for *ALS*, no matter to which volume they are pertinent, can be directed to David J. Nordloh, Department of English, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Respectfully submitted,
David J. Nordloh

ABSTRACTS AND DIVISION REPORTS

American Literature to 1800

Report submitted by Jane Donahue Eberwein (Oakland U)

Present: Carla Mulford (chair), Jane Eberwein (secretary), Janice Knight, Frank Shuffelton, Phillip Gura; Absent: Mason Lowance, Phillip Richards (invited as newly elected members)

After a few items of preliminary business (considering how to handle the absence of two panelists, reminding Jane Eberwein and successors that our division chair is expected to attend the annual American Literature Section business meeting the night of December 27, and clarifying arrangements for Philip Gura to present the Richard Beale Davis prize that noon), Carla Mulford opened the meeting with thanks *in absentia* to Mason Lowance for last year's successful MLA program. She reported that she finds evidence of robust health in our division, which is evidently generating considerable interest among younger scholars. Her work over the past year had been made pleasant by interaction with early Americanists as well as with Karen Susznitzly, our capable and helpful MLA contact person, and she anticipated additional enjoyment in that evening's party for early Americanists to be held at the Pennsylvania State suite. Partial funding for that event came from the Society of Early Americanists. She then directed attention to the agenda circulated in advance.

The first item of necessary business involved nominating candidates for the 1996-2000 seat on our Executive Committee. MLA rules allow the Executive Committee to nominate one candidate on its own but require that it select a second from the list of names written in on the 1994 ballot by MLA voters. Eight names emerged this year through that process: Gillian Brown, Michael Clark, Joseph Fichtelberg, Jay Fliegelman, Wendy Furman, Giles Gunn, Cristine Levenduski, and David Shields. Other names, those of Nina Baym, Sharon Harris, and John Sekora emerged in our discussion. The Committee then authorized Jane Eberwein to invite Nina Baym, Giles Gunn, Jay Fliegelman, Sharon Harris, and John Sekora in that order to allow their names to appear on the ballot. Janice Knight's hope that the ballot would include both a man and a woman met with general approval.

Next came announcements of plans for the 1995 and 1996 conventions. Jane reported briefly on suggestions made last year by MLA staffers to upcoming divisional chairs to the effect that we should strive both to ensure that divisional programs over a five-year period reflect the full range of work being done in our area and to provide some variety within each year's offerings by

having several different persons plan sessions or by announcing distinctly different themes. She hoped the listing she had compiled last January of divisional programs since 1990 would help with such planning. Next year's theme (announced in flyers distributed at the spring ALA convention and in two MLA newsletters) is *Selves and Spiritualities in Early American Literatures*. Jane is organizing two panels, for which proposals have been reaching her. She has invited Michael Schuldiner to organize the third panel, which is to be a session on Edward Taylor in honor of Thomas Davis. The Committee encouraged the chair to exercise her discretion in deciding whether to include three or four speakers on each panel—with the first likely to have fewer papers offered in order to allow time for divisional business and presentation of the Richard Beals Davis Prize. Janice anticipated three quite different sessions in 1996: one on millennialism (anticipating the year 2000), another on various nationalisms, and a third on the prospects for "making it new" as scholars consider opportunities for reconfiguring our field.

Philip Gura's report on *Early American Literature* followed. Subscriptions have held stable with 798 subscriptions for volume 28 as compared to 796 the previous year. It remains true that libraries are our principal subscribers despite gains in individual subscriptions. The rate of contributions held stable also, but fewer pieces were accepted because of a very tough and, in some cases, slow editorial board. Consequently, he now has only a small backlog of manuscripts awaiting print. Round Tables help to fill the gap, while accomplishing their basic purpose of stimulating interest and generating vigorous spin-offs. Following last year's advice from the Executive Committee, Philip has also arranged to publish an exchange between a book author and *EAL* reviewer, although there is no policy to do that sort of thing on a regular basis. Last year's enlargement of the editorial board has proven very useful, while raising Frank Shuffelton's prudent concern about the need to stagger terms of those appointees or their replacements—a matter that had unfortunately eluded our vigilance last winter. Only one vacancy occurs this year, with Mason Lowance's completion of his term. The Committee advised Philip to invite Jeffrey Hammond, Robert Ferguson, and Andrew Delbanco in that order. This year's Richard Beals Davis Prize goes to Albert J. Von Frank for his essay in issue 3 on John Saffin. Because the chair of the Prize Committee, Leo Lemay, planned to attend the ALS luncheon that conflicted with our first session, Philip Gura agreed to make the presentation. Teresa Toulouse had been enlisted to accept the prize in Professor Von Frank's absence. Philip reported that the journal's new format draws compliments. The University of North Carolina Press considers the journal in good financial condition; it can continue to break even so long as we raise prices slightly every other year.

Addressing the problem of how to increase individual subscriptions, Philip foresaw financial pitfalls in offering special deals to SEA and MLA Division members. When asked whether a special rate could be provided for graduate students—maybe just a few dollars off, he expressed willingness to pursue the possibility of a \$2 reduction if means could be developed of validating student status without cumbersome and costly bureaucracy; at the moment he recommended taking no action. Jane suggested that private donations might be solicited to provide one year's gift subscription to doctoral candidates actually writing dissertations on early American literature. The last matter considered with respect to *EAL* was the probable impact of electronic publishing.

Following upon this *Early American Literature* report came deliberations on constituting the 1995 Richard Beals Davis Prize Committee. A number of names were presented, and the Committee authorized Jane to recruit David Shields as chair and Cristine Levenduski and Stephen Arch as his associates. Backups were Thomas Davis as chair and Constance Post as member. Jane will inform Philip when the group is appointed. The question arose again of who should present the prize during the Division's introductory MLA session each year, with the result being confirmation of current practice: if present at MLA, the chair of the Davis Prize Committee announces the award; in that worthy's absence, the editor of *EAL* does the honors.

With that procedural question in mind, Carla called attention to other concerns that had come to the fore in connection with this year's presentation of the Honored Scholar of Early American Literature award to Alan Heimert. She felt a need for access to some sort of divisional archive to find out what sorts of letters chairs have sent to previous recipients. It turned out that no precedent existed in this case, as recognition of Honored Scholars prior to David Levin and Alan Heimert had been accomplished on a surprise basis through coverage in *EAL*, and communication with David Levin had not been in writing. The decision to announce such awards at MLA creates a need for communication on our chair's part with the recipient as well as preparation of a certificate (handled this year by Philip Gura). Janice expressed concern that the Executive Committee develop clear procedures for such awards. She preferred that such recognition be extended only rarely and treated as a compelling honor—perhaps announced in the Convention Program as a feature of our first session (an idea also applicable to the Richard Beale Davis Prize conferral), if not announced at the annual American Literature Section instead. This year those two events conflicted, with Carla Mulford presenting a certificate to Professor Heimert at virtually the same time Paul Sorrentino announced our award to lurching Americanists. In commending Professor Sorrentino for

his good will toward our Division, Carla mentioned that Susan Belasco Smith will be assuming his duties in 1995. The scheduling conflict occurred despite Carla's efforts to communicate our hopes to the MLA office, which has otherwise done a good job of providing for our convention needs (even providing amply-sized rooms this year). It was decided that the Division's chair would serve as contact person to notify the recipient of Honored Scholar recognition and that she or he would enlist someone (the honoree's colleague, friend, former student) to prepare the citation that would be published anonymously in *EAL*. The Honored Scholar should be notified by October so that there is ample time for making MLA plans. The recognition should also be announced in the SEA newsletter.

Discussion moved inevitably toward anticipations of future Honored Scholar awards, with clear consensus that it should be a rare honor—not an annual routine. Although it is meant for persons toward the end of distinguished careers, it should not necessarily be associated with retirement. Carla's concern that the award has tended to recognize achievement in seventeenth-century rather than eighteenth-century study was generally thought to be simply a reflection of our discipline's history. The more dismaying problem is that, with so many senior scholars in our field who reach retirement, the Division will be unable to honor everyone whose contributions we highly respect. Jane suggested that next year's Division-sponsored session in honor of Thomas Davis offers an alternate model of recognition that could be repeated in subsequent years. It may be possible to announce the intent of the session within the MLA Convention Program.

Carla then directed attention to Everett Emerson's suggestion about other things the Division could be doing. One of those that struck her as useful would be to develop an archive for use of future Executive Committees. Everett's letter, materials assembled by Karen Rowe, and materials circulated by Carla in preparation for this meeting have value as stimuli to institutional memory. On the other hand, no chair wants to accommodate mountains of files. Philip suggested transferring such files to the American Literature Archives at Duke University. Carla's proposal was to have someone act as a contact person for the Division to provide ready access to records, such as digging up letters from the past. She mentioned Jane's listings of MLA sessions and Richard Beale Davis Prize recipients and committees as examples of useful archival materials that should be kept up to date. Janice drew a distinction between records that could be kept by a divisional archivist and those that should be passed from chair to chair, and Jane agreed that the chair should have direct access to materials. Janice also worried about the potentially oppressive weight of tradition. Frank

recommended developing a sort of handbook for incoming secretaries and chairs by way of keeping up listings of Executive Committee members, Davis Prize people, and MLA sessions. These, Carla proposed, could be preserved on one computer disk to be passed along. Jane, who already has most such records on her computer and volunteered to keep them up, suggested that the task of updating the annual record might be delegated to an Executive Committee member other than the chair in future years. On that note, the Committee adjourned so that members could get to the Convention Center for our first session.

Uses of the Past I: Telling "American Tales" (Session 227)
Presiding: Philip Gura, U of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

John McWilliams, Middlebury College, "Of Injin Tactics, Quabag and Bloody Heads"

White notions of Indian battle tactics (stealth, scalping, sadism) originated, far more than has ever been recognized, in the historical accounts of King Philip's War, in particular, Cotton Mather's accounts of Indian torture and the many renditions of the siege of Brookfield (Quabag). The trophyism of impaling bloody heads, practiced by both sides, was standard late medieval European practice, but denounced as "savagery" when committed by the Pilgrims' former friends, the Wampanoags.

Rafia Zafar, U of Michigan, "Joel Barlow's 'Hasty Pudding':
Columbian Prehistory and Culinary Preference"

Barlow's "The Hasty Pudding" is well known as the idiosyncratic and amusing poem written by the diplomat-poet during his stay in France. In this paper I examine this work as a locus for a kind of gastronomic nation-making, drawing on theorists of foodways as well as the example of Robert Burns. By rejecting the European past, described in part by its choice of provender, and contending that a particular Native American foodstuff is simpler and more honorable, Barlow affirms the utopian singularity of the United States.

Nina Baym, U of Illinois, Urbana, "'America Stands Alone': Early Women Historians and the Formation of National Identity"

My title quote is from Mercy Otis Warren's preface to her historical verse tragedy, "The Ladies of Castile," where she justifies the play's subject and treatment by relating them to the urgent project of American nationalism. My extensive research into (white) women's historical writings from 1790 to the Civil War shows that the paradigm of popular historiography typically associated with the antebellum era is already in place in the 1790s, and that women are centrally involved in

circulating it. I use Hannah Adam's history of New England and Mercy Warren's history of the American Revolution to show the general contours of this historiography in women's writing. There is no trace of a multicultural counterhistory based on recognition of shared oppression with non-white peoples under patriarchy; on the contrary, the women see themselves as uniquely privileged by the Protestant republicanism to whose success they are dedicated, and for whose eventual worldwide expansion they devoutly hope.

Uses of the Past II: The Question of Authority in Anglo-American Culture (Session 527)

Presiding: Teresa Toulouse, Tulane U

Pascal Covici, Jr., Southern Methodist U, "John Wise and the Proposals of 1705: At the Cutting Edge of Heroic Democracy"

The considerable humor in John Wise's *The Churches Quarrel Espoused: or, A Reply in Satyre, to certain Proposals* (New York, 1713; Boston, 1715), a lengthy document aimed at Increase and Cotton Mather's *Proposals* of 1705, stems mainly from one of the several masks through which Wix speaks, that of down-to-earth countryman. So does much of Wix's democratic point. He uses the voices of Harvard-educated lawyer, freedom-loving Englishman, and anti-Catholic (and anti-Presbyterian!) Protestant, too; but the rural voice of common sense counts most. Asserting the capacity of ordinary churchgoers to serve as Elders—New England churches need no central supervisory board—Wise insists that these ordinary men are as sharp as unused edged tools. Salting his attack on the city-bred *Proposals* with the lingo of farm, bed, and pocket-book, he elevates to heroic stature the ordinary citizen of New England, the bulwark of the democracy that was to come.

J.A. Leo Lemay, U of Delaware, Newark, "Benjamin Franklin and the Uses of the Past"

In "Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania" (October 1749), Benjamin Franklin advocated a radically new curriculum, completely different from the standard education in the classics typical of all English or colonial American colleges. He attempted to make the innovative program seem reasonable by adopting two strategies. First, he buttressed it with numerous quotations from the best authorities on education (not pointing out that he quoted selectively and sometimes changed the authors' meaning). Second, he tried to make the curriculum seem thoroughly traditional by founding it upon the study of history. But in Franklin's academy of learning, the uses of the past introduce us to nearly all the sciences of the future. Franklin's "Proposals" are a covert

contribution to the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns, with Franklin disguising his advocacy of the moderns under the guise of the study of history.

Sharon M. Harris, U of Nebraska, Lincoln, "Whose Past Is It? Women Writers in Early America"

This paper examines several histories by early women writers as a means of exploring some of the theoretical complexities of the work we do in early American studies, specifically to ask: What does it mean to historicize? How were early American writers constructing the past to inform their present and envision their futures? Who benefited from particular constructions of the past? And, what ideologies about the writing of history were circulating in early America? Rather than look to well-known published histories by early women, I examine the writings of lesser-known Euro-, African-, and Native American authors and nontraditional forms of historical narratives, including diaries, letters, and petitions, and especially the erasure of the boundaries between history and autobiography in these genres. The paper highlights three of the main forms of using the past that these informal historical narratives engaged: the use of history as a vehicle for personal revelation; the use of personal histories as cultural revelation; and their exploration of moments of cultural confrontation.

Uses of the Past III: Native Americans, African Americans, and the Problem of "History" (Session 631)

Presiding: Carla Mulford, Penn State U, University Park

Thomas W. Krise, U of Chicago, "In an Other World: Slave Societies and Ethnocritical Questions"

By examining two polemical pamphlets published in London during the Jamaican Maroon War of the 1730s, this paper argues that despite their opposed rhetorical aims, the two writers constitute a complex West Indian identity separate from, but blending elements of both European and African identities. "The Speech of Moses Bon Saam" (1735) is an early abolitionist text purporting to be spoken by a black leader of the Maroon rebels. "The Speech of Mr. John Talbot Campo-bell" (1736) is a reply to Moses Bon Saam that claims to be spoken by a black freedman slave owner, but which was authored in fact by the white clergyman slave owner Robert Robertson. By creating the character of Campo-bell and ventriloquizing a proslavery argument through his voice, the pamphlet attempts to quash the nascent abolitionist movement.

Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Remembering (in) the Nineteenth Century I: Media Amnesia (Session 159)

Presiding: Lauren Berlant, U of Chicago

Shelley Streeby, U of California, San Diego, "Opening Up the Story-paper: George Lippard and the Construction of Class"

While George Lippard is best known for his "sensational" novel, *The Monks of Monk Hall*, in this talk I focus on his story-paper, *The Quaker City* weekly, which he edited from late 1848 to June of 1850. Although after the mid-1850s many story-papers were controlled by large publishing firms like *Street and Smith*, in Lippard's hands the story-paper was a popular form with close ties to active communities such as the antebellum labor movement. Lippard addresses a diverse and internally divided community of laborers and opens up multiple, if at times contradictory, sites of identification as he "hails" male and female workers, promotes new working-class institutions, replies to letters about the slavery from his readers, and comments on local and national politics. I foreground this address and these sites, if you will—in order both to insist upon the importance of the category of class in the U.S. in the 19th century and to show that this classification was anything but uncomplicated, transparent, or unitary.

Remembering (in) the Nineteenth Century II: Nation and Blood (Session 308)

Presiding: Tracy Fessenden, Arizona State U

Susan Gillman, U of California, Santa Cruz, "Romance and Blood in Late-Nineteenth-Century U.S. Race Nationalisms"

During the heyday of global imperialism and the period of American intervention in Cuba and the Philippines, the post-Reconstruction US saw the consolidation of several strikingly different race-based nationalist movements. The most prominent of these are the various black nationalisms of Sutton Griggs, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey, some of which shade into Pan-Africanism, all of which developed in the domestic context of the increasing dominance of white supremacy in the law and in American culture at large. As interpreted by Thomas Dixon's novel *The Clansman* (1905), and culminating in D. W. Griffith's film *The Birth of A Nation* (1915), white supremacy came to define the US national imaginary in terms of "blood" and race. What role do gender and sexuality play in the representation of these racial nationalisms? How does the centrality of gender stereotypes to the development of antebellum "romantic racialism" reappear in the late-nineteenth-century context of radical racism and nationalism?

In this paper I read Sutton Griggs's 1899 black nationalist novel *Imperium In Imperio* as a representative response to, and transformation of, longstanding gender stereotypes of African-American and Anglo-Saxon characters (the former portrayed as soft, warm, and

feminine, the latter as a cold, hard, masculine "race"). Griggs links his narrative chronicling the birth and death of a black revolutionary movement to prevailing idea of masculinity and true womanhood, themselves, he shows, deeply implicated in the "blood" rhetoric of racial purity. His heroes, one an "accommodationist" black, the other a mulatto militant, embody racial stereotypes that are disrupted in the sphere of gender and sexuality. Not only does the former begin to be radicalized by an episode of cross-dressing, but also both characters demonstrate in their love relationship a destructive obsession with dominant theories of "blood" purity. Griggs's romance plot, following the fate of the two, paired couples, each of which differently confronts the possibility of a miscegenated union, articulates affective, erotic anxieties over racial intermingling—"blood mixture"—that, Griggs suggests, ultimately doom the nationalist project of the two male protagonist.

Using Dixon's *The Clansman* as a counterpoint to Griggs, I conclude that for both writers issues of interracial rape and female sexuality become protean focal points, with radically opposed visions at stake, shaping the construction of late-nineteenth-century US race nationalisms. As such they join with other "Reconstruction novels" to constitute, during the era of sectional reunion and national reconciliation, almost a second wave of foundational fictions narrating the rebirth of the nation. Like first-wave nationalist novels (by Cooper and Melville, for example), the romance plots common to all are no mere subplots but rather modes of mediating national conflict through interracial loves that leap across some of the nation's most terrifying inner conflicts but stay firmly within its territorial borders. The second-wave difference: while those borders have become porous and "the nation" a less stable entity, the race-nation equation has rigidified.

Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature

Report submitted by June Howard, U of Michigan (Ann Arbor)

The Division Executive Committee met at the San Diego Convention Center from 8 to 9 on December 27, 1994. Committee members present were June Howard (1994 chair), Cristanne Miller (1995 chair), Kenneth Yarborough, and Alfred Bendixen: Kenneth Warren, the Division's Delegate to the Assembly, also attended. Topics discussed were nominations for next fall's election of Divisional Committee members, panels for the 1995 Convention, and the prospect of cuts in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For the election to a term on the Committee beginning in 1996, one candidate and one alternate were chosen

from the list of nominations submitted by the membership; one candidate and two alternates were chosen from suggestions by Committee members. Concern was expressed that scholars whose primary interest is in poetry continue to be represented on the Committee after Miller's term ends.

We have also been informed by the MLA that Amy Ling was elected to the term on the Executive Committee that begins in 1995.

The 1995 Convention panels will be "Chicago: Migration, Ethnicity, and the Rise of Naturalism" (chaired by Kenneth Warren); "Race, Travel, and Imperialism in Late 19th-Century American Literature" (chaired by Sandra Gunning); and "Poetry and Politics, 1880-1924" (chaired by Alan Golding). Open calls for papers for the first two panels will appear in the MLA Newsletter.

Color Lines in Motion: Race, Expatriation, and Travel
(Session 190)

Presiding: Kenneth W. Warren, U of Chicago

Anita Haya Goldman, U of Illinois at Chicago,
"Comparative Political Identities: Exile in the
Writings of Frantz Fanon and W.E.B. Du Bois"

This discussion compares two different conceptions of Black identity, each of which derives from a distinctive tradition in political thought. The first is the model of Black American identity figured in Du Bois' *Souls of Black Folk*, a model that registers Du Bois' inheritance of Anglo-American political philosophy and his direct engagement with the premises of liberal contractarianism. The second is the framework put forward by Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*, which exhibits philosophical influences that are predominantly continental, and has formed much of the basis for critical thinking about colonial and postcolonial identities. Taking the central question of exile as my point of focus, I try to show how the distinctive renderings of exile arrived at by Fanon and Du Bois represent, in turn, distinctive philosophical solutions to the problem of political identity. I suggest that Du Bois' direct engagement with the premises of liberal contractarianism results in a vision of Black American exile as impaired relation to the state or deprivation of rights. Whereas for Du Bois the experience of exile may be effectively depicted in terms of physical mobility and the deprivation of rights—for example, in "The Quest of the Golden Fleece," when he observes that "A black stranger in Baker County...is liable to be stopped anywhere on the public highway..."—Fanon's writings exhibit an outright rejection of liberalism. Unlike Du Bois, Fanon is best known for his dismissal of civil disobedience as a deceptive, self-interested ruse on the

part of the colonialist bourgeoisie—a dismissal that fits well with his skepticism with regard to the referential capacities of liberal rights discourse, his repudiation of the premises of contractarianism, and, ultimately, his famous and controversial justification of defensive violence as a practice that binds revolutionaries to one another.

Cheryl A. Wall, Rutgers U, New Brunswick, "Jessie Redmon Fauset: Traveling in Place"

The author of four novels and literary editor of the *Crisis* from 1919 to 1925, Fauset was also a prolific essayist. The essays chronicling her journeys to Europe in 1914 and 1921 and to Europe and North Africa in 1925 deserve attention for several reasons. First, they provide an often moving account of Fauset's self-education and political concepts, Pan Africanism in particular. They record the process by which a woman, conditioned by background and training to accept a conservative social ethic, assimilated progressive ideas. To a substantial degree, however, Fauset remained bound by cultural dictates: hence wherever she journeyed, she was "traveling in place." Nevertheless, the essays provide a valuable view of interactions among black students and intellectuals from Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States in the early twentieth century. Finally, they contain much of Fauset's best writing.

Reciprocal Visions: Transformations of Print and Visual Culture at the Turn of the Twentieth Century (Session 406)

Presiding: Laura Wexler, Yale U

Martin Padgett, U of California, San Diego, "White Performance and the Hopi Snake Dance"

This paper examines Anglo fascination with the Hopi Snake Dance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. My inquiry focuses on photographic representations of the ceremony by Ben Wittick, A. C. Vroman, G. W. James, and E. Irving Couse. Drawing on "professional" and "popular" accounts of the ritual, I speculate on why so many Anglos were attracted to northern Arizona to enact their own ritual of curiosity-seeking and detailed descriptions of Hopi ceremonies. I contrast "outside" efforts to explain the meaning of the ritual with subsequent efforts on the part of Hopis to resist such explanations. The ritual, through which Hopis reaffirm their intimate tie to the harsh arid terrain of northern Arizona, remains an integral part of the Hopi calendar. For many turn-of-the-century Anglos, however, the Snake Dance was a remnant of "savagism" that magnetized their often appalled attention. Quickly, Hopis combated powerful forces of assimilation set against them by increasingly determining the grounds on which Anglo outsiders could represent Hopi culture.

Twentieth-Century American Literature

Report prepared by Susan Stanford Friedman, U of Wisconsin, Madison

The Executive Committee met on December 27th at 8:30 p.m. at the San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina. Members present were Susan Stanford Friedman (Chair), Rachel Blau DuPlessis (1995 Chair), and Louis Owens. Linda Wagner-Martin (1993 Chair) was unable to attend, but sent in her nominations and suggestions.

The Committee discussed the substantial response to the Division's 1994 Call for Papers under the rubric The New Modernist Studies (some 70 submissions). It then considered nominations for a replacement position (two-year term, 1996-1997) and the regular position (1996-2000). For the replacement position, the Committee nominated Jay Clayton and A.L. Nielsen, along with four alternates: Alicia Ostriker, Peter Quatermain, Cary Nelson, and Paul Lauter. For the regular position, the Committee nominated Kathryn Lindberg, Anne DuCille, with four alternates: Arnold Krupat, Ramon Saldivar, Linda Kinnahan, and Sidonie Smith. Several of the names came from the substantial list (about 25) nominated by the membership: Quatermain, Lindberg, Kinnahan, and Smith.

The Committee also elected the Division's Delegate to the Delegate Assembly. Marisa Januzzi (Columbia U) will serve a three-year term, 1995-1997. Then the Committee discussed a variety of possible topics for the Division's three panels at the 1995 MLA Convention. The Committee made a final selection of three topics for the Division's Call for Papers: (1) Literary and Cultural constructions of Twentieth-Century "Whiteness"; (2) Creolization, Hybridity, Syncretisms, and Mixings: Theory and Practice; and (3) The Zone of Walden: Hybrid Genres—Essay, Poetic Essay, Essay-Poem.

On December 30th, Friedman and DuPlessis conferred briefly to assess the three 1994 Division panels. Attendance at the panels was excellent: about 70, 150, and 40. All three panels provoked lively discussions, one lasting a full forty-five minutes past the end of the session.

The New Modernist Studies I: Definitional Problematics
(Session 98)

Presiding: Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Temple U

Carla Kaplan, Baruch College, CUNY, "Modernist Expansion/'Modernism' Under Erasure: Problems in Reconstructing Cultural Conflict"

Recent works of feminist and African-American criticism, as well as of gay and lesbian studies and cultural studies,

have redrawn the map of the modernist canon. Thankfully, it is no longer possible to simply herald American modernism as the aesthetic innovations practiced by Eliot, Stevens, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Dos Passos. Jean Toomer, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Gertrude Stein, Elizabeth Bishop, Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, Willa Cather, and Susan Glaspell, among others, are becoming more frequent features of many modernist survey courses and of the newly emerging studies of modernism which seek to disrupt what Raymond Williams has called "the machinery of selective tradition." We not only have many more ways in which their modernism can be understood: in relationship to a more widely conceived terrain of modern philosophy, in relation to the social construction of the gendered and racialized modern "self," in relation to histories of colonialism and imperialism, in relation to the discourses and strategies of modern politics, in relation to the discourse and strategies of a range of other disciplines, from anthropology to theology and the modern sciences, and so on.

But such canon-expansion, I want to argue, while invaluable, does not necessarily lend itself to wide-scale rethinking of periodization per se. On the contrary, canon-centered critiques of modernism may serve to strengthen traditional understandings by arguing that marginalized writers share the qualities or attitudes generally assumed to belong to modernism and, on this basis, therefore "deserve" to be called modernists as well, rather than questioning the process by which certain attitudes and qualities have come to be associated with modernist cultural production. "Gendering" or "queering" modernism, in other words, by itself is no guarantee of a new set of interpretive methods or questions, let alone of a substantial rethinking of modernism.

More radical reconstructions of modernism tend to focus not either on cataloguing its characteristics—fragmentation, concern with subjectivity, break-up of linearity, anti-romanticism, alienation and so on—or on augmenting its list of practitioners by adding a few non-traditional writers to traditional survey courses but, instead, on reconstructing modernism as a field of contestation, as the site in which different—and ultimately irreconcilable—cultural and literary values came into conflict: the archeological record, in a sense, not of a coherent set of practices and ideas, but instead of the complicated victory of one set of (internally variegated and inconsistent) values in its struggle with many competing alternatives.

This more radical approach to rethinking modernism is not without its difficulties and limits, however. Most dramatically, it creates the problem of working to reconstruct a category, to redefine the boundaries of a concept as its very categorical status is being called into

question. What does it mean, after all, to be remapping “modernism” once we have established that “modernism” may be, finally, little more than the label we have learned to give to those characteristics, attitudes, and practitioners we have caused, for whole complexes of reasons, to triumph over their rivals? In light of these questions, a number of scholars now question any unparodic use of the term “Modernism” and suggest, implicitly or explicitly, that it has a status altogether different from other period designations such as “Romantic,” “Victorian,” “Renaissance,” or “Medieval” and that, in the case of twentieth-century studies, our only choice is to abandon all pretense at periodization.

It often seems as if we must choose between these two approaches—one that would help us expand what we mean by “modernism” and one that would move us outside of that project altogether. In fact, I want to suggest, the “new modernist studies” encounters its best resources in the oscillation—and conflict—between them.

To illustrate the usefulness of this oscillation, my paper will take up the example of romance as a site in which, on the one hand, connections between a range of putatively divergent writers (“modernist” and “non-modernist,” popular and “high” cultural) become readily visible and, on the other hand, a site which is rich for reconstructing just the sort of cultural conflict—over identity, citizenship, and subjectivity itself—that any effort at periodization could not, apparently, help but obscure.

Perhaps implausibly, my examination of modern uses of the love plot begins with a discussion of what I call a “taxonomic fever” for categorizing and classifying human types in the modern period: exhibiting human “types” in carnivals, freak shows, and dime museums, popularizing ethnography and anthropology through “native culture” exhibits at the Worlds’ Fairs, fixing national identity through immigration laws and quotas which restricted citizenship in terms of national origin to fulfill a national fantasy of the “true” American type.

I am reading romance, throughout this period, as an embodiment of just this “structure of feeling,” to borrow from Williams again, as much so when romance was being rejected, paradoxically, as when it was being deployed more or less uncritically. The phenomenon by which romance participated in the “taxonomic fever” of its time, I will be arguing, becomes evident only from a perspective that can imagine both expanding modernism and, simultaneously, putting it under erasure.

Marianne DeKoven, Rutgers U, “Postmodern Modernism”

It is a commonplace that postmodernism, in its name as in its history, exists in inevitable relationship to modern-

ism. One aspect of that relationship, as the postmodern time moves on, has become a retroactive revision: postmodernism has changed modernism. In the wake of the violent historical rupture with Enlightenment modernity that has instituted postmodernity, modernism now appears, in the newly focused retrospect, as far more continuous with the great emancipatory, utopian projects of modernity than it appears disruptive of them. Modernism, finishing in the spectacular fireworks of the 1960s, is the end of the *longue-duree* of Western modernity; postmodernism, despite its belatedness and its characteristic pastiche—its leveling, indifferentiating appropriations of history—had really “made it new.”

Cyraina E. Johnson, U of Notre Dame, “The Looking Glass, Cracked”

The study of non-established authors has created a crisis in the literary profession, one which centers on the relationship between canonical and non-canonical authors, or canon revision. Though it has become clear that there is a pressing need for canon revision, it is not clear how this change is to be accomplished. How is the cultural diversity represented by the voices of neglected authors to be accommodated without destroying 2000 years of Western history and culture? And how are such voices to be included without implying a measure of cultural inferiority, the residue of centuries of neglect and devalorization?

When brought to bear on the subject of literary modernism, these issues are complicated by the fact that modernism as a literary and artistic movement is already deeply anti-traditional. This is particularly evident in the implications of its international character, which threaten the assumptions of national identity underlying traditional literary canons. Such assumptions lead to a tendency to partition modernist literature into clusters of authors grouped together on the basis of shared nationality, rather than on the basis of internationalism (largely a result of World War I, as well as a plethora of technological developments) by which the period was characterizes. Discussions of modernism that embrace its interdisciplinarity (which they must if they are to do justice to this internationalism) are usually regarded as suspect, because they seem to deny the validity of analyses derived from traditional epistemological categories based on the concept of national literatures. Yet modernism’s international, anti-traditional nature not only produced a cultural phenomenon that resists containment within traditional structures, but one which was also produced in resistance to such structures, the larger significance of which is often ignored in traditional literary criticism of the period.

When considered in relation to a number of recent theoretical developments (such as poststructuralism,

postcolonialism, cultural studies, feminist theory, etc.), it is understandable that the effect on literary modernism of the traditionalizing tendencies of periodization and canon formation in national literatures has been to produce a current critique of modernism as exclusionary. However, critics such as Frederick Jameson point out that such discussions are part of a larger debate that involves a re-examination of our own understanding of what we believe modernism actually was. In this is implied a critique that suggests our traditional understanding of modernism is one that we have created, just as our re-visions of that understanding are and will be cultural creations. How do we define “modernism”? Is it a label for a chronologically determined period, or is it an umbrella for a number of identifiable characteristics? What do we discover when we analyze not only the assumptions underlying the development of the national literature, but those which serve as the foundation of modernist literature itself, as opposed to simply accepting the notion of “modernism,” the cultural construct we have built around such literature?

My essay suggests that if the idea that “modernism” as we presently understand it does not consider the actual political nature of many of its literary examples, the formation of a modernist literary canon not based on national literary canons may be seen as forming a subtle critique of the values, assumptions, and goals of such canons, which would not for the most part encompass modernism’s anti-traditional characteristics and would, rather, seek to undermine or ignore them. Lacking the legitimization offered by a connection to the overall knowledge of one geographical space, as in the case of a national literature, international modernism is legitimized through over-emphasizing its aesthetic character. As a result, when what I will call the two narratives of modernism (the narrative of modernist periodization, or that placing modernist authors within national literary traditions, and the narrative of international modernism) are placed in conflict with each other, the result is a new understanding of the significance of the aesthetic in modernism as a whole. This is because the over-emphasis on modernist aesthetics in analyses of the literature of this period camouflages a deeply political character that translates itself into what is described as specifically “modernist” literary representation. Through examining the relationship between these two modernist narratives, then, this essay seeks to further complicate what has become a very contentious aspect of literary modernism: the relationship of modernist aesthetics to the social and political world. In doing so, it will examine a central metaphor, that of the looking-glass (suggesting the traditional idea of verisimilitude in artistic representation, particularly in relation to the realism of the Victorian era in Great Britain), cracked: so that we

may see beyond that reflected reality to a clearer understanding of its hidden foundation, that of a colonized “otherness” and exclusion.

Helen McNeil, U of East Anglia, “Fetish and Fragment in the Modern”

Fragmented texts, images and selves are defining hallmarks of “the modern” in literature and art. This paper argues that modernist fragmentation in, for example, Pound, Eliot, and Picasso is illuminated by examining the convergence of African art and awareness of the erotic fetish. “Fetish,” from the Portuguese *feitico*, has a greater expressiveness in Portuguese due to the early (15th and 16th century) impact of an African “other” associated with Witchcraft and, by extension, feminine wiles. The sudden and intense late 19th century impact of African votive art (termed “fetishes”) on Northern Europe and America shifted the disciplines of anthropology and art history and the practices of art, literature and colonial power. What was termed “the primitive” offered the modern ways of adoring and fearing an objectified “other” without acknowledging the author’s complicity; castration theory is not needed to explain this power. Metonymic and untranscendent, fetish is arguably *the* modern trope.

The New Modernist Studies II: Cultural Narratives of Race, Gender, and Sexuality (Session 309)

Presiding: Susan Stanford Friedman, U of Wisconsin, Madison

Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Temple U, “‘HOO, HOO, HOO’: Some Episodes in the Construction of Modern Whiteness.”

Using a method I call “social philology,” I track the ideological, emotive, and cultural meanings, and the historical resonances of the syllable “hoo” as it appears in a poem of Wallace Stevens, in “The Congo” of Vachel Lindsay, and in “Sweeney Agonistes” by T. S. Eliot. I discover a cornucopia of radicalized materials constructing whiteness by making Africanist allusions to hoodoo/voodoo, to cannibalism, and to minstrel forms.

Joseph Allen Boone, U of Southern California, “Queer Sites in Modernism: Harlem/ The Left Bank/ Greenwich Village”

This paper investigates an alternative modernist enterprise located in the urban gay and protogay spaces of the Left Bank, Greenwich Village, and Harlem that in the 1920-30s created linguistically complex, highly experimental fictions, as well as texts of mass culture, whose circulations of sexual and textual desire anticipate the rise of what is now being called “queer” in gay studies, arts, and politics. I suggest that this deviating and deviant

modernist practice presages 1990s queer theory in at least 3 ways: (1) in the sense of queerness as *communal affiliation* shared by sexual dissidents and marginal members of society who find a rallying point, whatever their orientation, under the “sign of the homosexual”; (2) in the sense of queerness as a deliberately *non-normative* identity that defines itself primarily in opposition to mainstream culture, rather than defining itself exclusively by the (same sex) gender of one’s object choices; and (3) in the sense of queerness as *an effect of representation* and hence of style, whether played out in fantasy, or on the body, or in writing. Texts I examine include Bruce Nugent’s stream-of-consciousness inspired “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade” (which appeared in the Harlem Renaissance journal *Fire!*), Djuna Barnes’s spatially disorienting epic of the inverted nightworld of Paris in *Nightwood*, Charles Henri Ford and Parker Tyler’s co-written surrealist narrative of gay Village life in *The Young and the Evil*, and Blair Niles’s account in *Strange Brother* of a straight white woman’s identification with gay men and blacks forged in Harlem. The potentially disruptive power of this series of texts cannot be separated from the quintessentially urban experience—unique to the 20th century—that provides the geographical, psychological, and ultimately textual “sites” in which their projections of queer identity, desire, and community unfold.

Daylanne English, U of Virginia, “W.E.B. Du Bois and T.S. Eliot: A Race of Writers?”

Eugenics, the modern pseudo-science of breeding human beings, represents a remarkable Protean ideology. Eugenics stands as a fertile site where all sorts of emergent methodologies and models meet a widely divergent range of politics. Indeed, many modern intellectuals—including “white” modernists and “black” Harlem Renaissance writers—participated in the period’s characteristic anxiety regarding the quality of the American gene pool.

Both W.E.B. Du Bois and T.S. Eliot have been regularly labeled “elitist” by African Americanists and modernists, but no one, until now, has located the eugenic underpinnings common to both Eliot and Du Bois’s cultural “uplift” agenda. Certainly the stakes for Du Bois in a discourse of eugenics are quite different than they are for Eliot. Nevertheless, both seek to expand the ranks of the elite while containing the “lower” classes. Du Bois, for example, worries in 1926 that “There are to be sure not enough children in the [Negro] families of the better class....” Likewise, Eliot diagnoses “depopulation” among the “elite” as a symptom of a deteriorating culture. Eliot’s “international fraternity of men of letters finds its counterpart, then, in Du Bois’s “Talented Tenth.” Such commonalities of discourse (between Du Bois and Eliot) challenges conventional academic segregation of “Modernism” and the “Harlem Renaissance.”

The New Modernist Studies III: Modernism after Poststructuralism and Postmodernism (Session 368)
Presiding: Jay Clayton, Vanderbilt U

Elizabeth Hirsh, U of South Florida, “‘Modernism’ After ‘French Feminism’: The Case of Djuna Barnes”

Although no longer “New,” “French Feminisms” remain suggestive for the ongoing revision of literary “Modernism.” A case in point: Djuna Barnes’s high modernist masterpiece, *Nightwood*, read in conjunction with Luce Irigaray’s critique of epistemological formalism developed in *Speculum of the Other Woman* and elsewhere. Consistent with the Materialist critique of modernism, feminists have tended to repudiate Barnes’s longstanding association with Joseph Frank’s famous doctrine of “spatial form” and the mythicizing anti-historicism it theorizes. Male post-structuralists, meanwhile, have rejected Frank and the formalist critical tradition for their blindness to the play of linguistic difference. At once both post-structuralist and feminist, Irigaray’s critique of formalism provides a way of reinterpreting *Nightwood*’s radical anti-historicism in terms of an effect that Frank identified as key to formalist narrative: the privilege of “the view from the end.” Inverting the upright gaze of straight formalism, *Nightwood* inscribes “the view from the end,” at once thematically and textually, as the undoing of hetero-familial or hom(m)osexual genealogies specifically. Here, Irigaray permits readers to discriminate between the formalism of nostalgic authoritarians like Pound and Eliot, and the feminist formalism of writers such as Barnes, Woolf, Stein, and H.D.

Michael Tratner, Stanford U, “Mass Minds and Modernist Form: Political and Aesthetic Theory in the Early Twentieth Century”

In this talk I drew on early twentieth-century theories of the mass mind to show that modernist literary forms emerged out of the effort to influence for political purposes a new form of mentality known as the mass unconscious. The contest between modernist and realist literary forms was not, then, a contest between coterie and mass but rather between different ways of speaking to and from the mass mind. Modernism joined with movements on the left and the right to disrupt the rational, individual consciousness and release the power of myths and images streaming through the crowd mind. I derived from this theory an explanation of why Eliot left America: because he felt that the country had become a racially divided caste system, fragmenting the “mob part of the mind” inside everyone. His American poems reveal his fears of psychological and cultural dissociation, and his later works show his dream of a cure: dissolving the self into the homogeneous English masses.

Black American Literature and Culture

Report prepared by SallyAnn H. Ferguson (U of North Carolina, Greensboro)

The Executive Committee corresponded with each other throughout the year and met informally at the San Diego Convention in order to prepare an agenda for the annual open business meeting and cash bar (# 597 on the Convention program). Over 100 members of the Division attended this meeting including Executive Committee members Lorenzo Thomas, Cheryl A. Wall, Dolan Hubbard, Bernard Bell, and SallyAnn H. Ferguson, the presiding chair. (An ailing Wahneema Lubiano was absent).

During an enthusiastic discussion about the goals and directions for the Division, several ideas emerged and will be reflected in future Division programs, beginning with the three sessions the Division will sponsor at the 1995 MLA Convention in Chicago. Bernard Bell of Pennsylvania State University and SallyAnn H. Ferguson of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro will organize and chair panels on black nationalism; Cheryl A. Wall of Rutgers University will organize and chair a session devoted to poet Gwendolyn Brooks.

Also, Joseph Skerrett from the U of Massachusetts at Amherst and Herman Beavers from the University of Pennsylvania were nominated to run in the Fall 1995 Executive Committee election.

Black Migrations I: California Voices (Session 99)
Presiding: Dolan Hubbard, U of Georgia

Mark A. Reid, U of California at Davis, "Bob Garnell Kaufman: An African-American Jewish Hipster"

I will discuss the life, politics, and poetry of the San Francisco Beat poet Bob Garnell Kaufman. The essay will analyze how his poems criticize racial discrimination, atomic warfare, and American consumerism. In assessing Kaufman's poetry, I will compare [sic] his poetic expression shares a philosophical vision with the poetry of Jean Toomer and Allen Ginsberg

Ethel A. Young, Bowling Green U, Ohio, "Performing California Imagination(s): Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight* as Transformational State Work"

In 1992, as the not-guilty verdict for the four police officers involved in the Rodney King incident was handed down, a new voice emerged from the streets of Los Angeles. L.A. citizens, or Angelinos, who felt the court's decision was the ultimate expression of disregard for their concerns, filled the street with physical evidence of their rage. Their stories created a new and magical

literature, one of discontent and disillusionment with the American dream: stories written in blood, imprinted with shattering glass and highlighted by an upheaval in uncontrollable violence that swept through the city. Their stories begged for someone who could act as mediator between their oppressed reality and the reality of the oppressor. One person who entered to help bridge the gap in meaning that existed between different realities is [sic] Anna Deavere Smith—Stanford professor, performer, and playwright.

Smith's approach to aiding the community's effort to create dialogue was manifested in her production of a performance piece entitled *Twilight* that has been referred to as one of the best available discourse on race issues in the United States. *Twilight's* reflection of the Los Angeles community seems to be successful primarily because of three factors that re-surface in her most recent performance pieces:

1. The first factor that contributes to her success is that Smith intently listens to the voice of the people intimately involved in the conflict. After listening to ideas that are in opposition to one another, Smith presents the actual information gathered from the community, without adding her personal commentary, on the stage. Using "real words and phrases" from the interviews helps to stimulate dialogue within the troubled community.

2. Smith also extends the use of the "stage as a mirror of life" metaphor. She works to move the interpretive lens of the theater away from the playwright/performer and place it with people who live in the communities she is working within. This factor encourages audience members to make significant connections between a staged reality and their everyday existence.

3. Finally, Smith uses her work to move towards exposing factors that underlie surface ideologies, such as the connections between the signifying body and the ideology it expresses. Each of these three areas is explored in the paper and examined in relation to how art that reflects community is especially important to residents of California. By reconstructing how Smith's innovative approach to the problems in the Los Angeles community has helped Angelinos heal and realize positive transformation, one can use her model to work towards dialogue between heterogeneous communities.

Chris Funkhouser, U of Albany, "At Edges: The Art and Imagination of Nathaniel Mackey"

In an essay entitled "On Edge," Nathaniel Mackey writes he is "more drawn to the idea of an edge than the idea of a whole." The concept of an "edge" which permeates Mackey's writing is a multiple fold, a continual interplay between interior and exterior, dream and waking, speech

and song. In his expansive literary projects there is a restless struggle with the integration of sensibilities that exist at the borders of a collective cultural knowledge and imagination. This essay explores the ways Mackey's writing brings these forces into concrete interactions which explore these edges, at time sharpening them in order to cut through monolithic judgements as to what constitutes literary form.

Black Migrations II: Contemporary Voices (Session 407)

Presiding: SallyAnn H. Ferguson, U of North Carolina, Greensboro

Margaret D. Bauer, Texas A&M U, "I love you, baby, but I sure do hate your ways': Reluctant Friendships in *Dessa Rose* and *Can't Quit You, Baby*"

In perhaps the seminal article on the subject of interracial friendships between women in American literature, Elizabeth Schultz contrasts these friendships as they are depicted in books by black and white women writers. Since the appearance of Schulze's essay, other critics have examined the interracial relationships between women in various American novels. In one such article, Nancy Porter includes an analysis of Sherley Anne Williams's 1986 novel *Dessa Rose*, and in perhaps the most recent chapter on this subject, Linda Tate includes an analysis of Ellen Douglas's 1988 novel *Can't Quit You, Baby*. Although the interracial relationships within these two books have therefore already been discussed critically, they have not been examined together. Such a pairing highlights, first of all, the different yet similar historical time period and setting of each novel: *Dessa Rose* is set in the pre-Civil War South, while the present time in *Can't Quit You, Baby*, also set in the South, is shortly before the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. The time period and setting of each novel compound the difficulties of friendship between black and white women and thus make the accomplishment of such a friendship in each novel all the more poignant and promising. Secondly, this pairing of their novels reveals that these two contemporary authors—Sherley Anne Williams, a black woman from California, and Ellen Douglas, a white woman from Mississippi—ultimately have the same vision of what kind of relationship can develop between black and white women once they recognize each other as individuals rather than as representatives of the opposite race. Both Williams and Douglas present the possibility for friendship *sans* condescension and resentment where the odds are against the women involved being able to establish such a relationship because of their inequality in the eyes of their communities.

Joyce Ann Joyce, Chicago State U, "Washing Dirty Linen: Ishmael Reed and Black Women Writers"

It would seem, then, that much of the fiction of African-American women writers has now joined mainstream literature in its portrayal of Black lives in a self-propelling Black community only indirectly affected by a White presence in much the same way that Blacks in White American novels function as waiters and cooks unconnected to the main thread of the stories. While African-American women are writing about incest, Black male-female relationships mother-daughter relationships, female independence, the mother's relationship to her children, etc., the individuals who comprise the American reading audience, for the most part, particularly those who subscribe to *Ms. Magazine*, *Essence*, *Ebony*, and *The New York Times* and who watch the Donahue Show (which aired a segment on Black women writers) do not find themselves arguing over the works of John Edgar Wiedeman, Ernest Gains, John A. Williams, Clarence Major, William Melvin Kelley, John McCluskey, Samuel R. Delaney, Charles R. Johnson, Al Young, and even Ishmael Reed, all of whom to various degrees and with varying techniques focus on racism and how it affects African-American lives.

Of these ten male writers, Ishmael Reed is the most controversial both because he boldly challenges the characterizations of Black males in the fiction of Black women writers and because his own work questions the very foundation of the Western literary aesthetic and political establishment. While Reed has been stereotyped as a misogynist and a humorist who follows the Western mode of satire, a look at some of his comments and at those aspects of his work that are ignored reveals that his is an African-American male mind that is not entrapped by Western definitions of Black male sexuality and literary art.

Sandra Y. Govan, U of North Carolina, Charlotte, "And Yet Another Dark Cloud: The Future in Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*"

Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* is the first of an intended multi-book saga. As such it sets the stage, establishes the premise for the series to follow. If the series develops as Butler has indicated, its saga will be vast, exciting, and primarily set in far corners of the universe and in the far future. But *Parable of the Sower* extrapolates from the perspective of an immediate future and it has the tone of a grim prophecy. Thus, the focus of this presentation, "And Yet Another Dark Cloud: The Future in Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*" is threefold. While the overall intent of the presentation is to examine Butler's dark and apocalyptic vision of the very near future, I shall make the case for that vision by first linking *Parable* to similar themes in Butler's two previous series novels. Then, I shall connect the novel to the particular science fiction tradition it springs from— notions of life on the Earth after a holocaust or

cataclysmic change (when society as we know it breaks down) and the subsequent restructuring of a new society. And finally, I want to explore the apparent dark vision of this new world using both biblical and archetypal imagery, and I will examine the tension between despair and hope, through humanity's effort, led by a young African-American woman, to start anew. Hence, what I shall suggest is the proverbial silver lining within that cloud.

American Indian Literatures

Voices of Native California (Session 191)

Presiding: Greg Sarris, U of California, Los Angeles

Two Native American authors read selections from their poetry, fiction, and collaborative auto/biography. Janice Gould (U of New Mexico) read poetry, including selections from her collection *Beneath my Heart*. Greg Sarris read selections from his collection of fiction *Grand Avenue* and from his collaborative work *Mabel McKay*. After the readings, both authors responded to questions from the audience.

Performance of Diane Glancy's Halfact (Session 722)

Presiding: Susan Scarberry-Garcia, Colorado College

Three graduate students from the University of California, Los Angeles (Carole Gentry, Derek Milne, and Fred H. White) gave a reading of *Halfact*, which is part of Diane Glancy's forthcoming drama collection *War Cries*. After the performance, Professor Glancy discussed *Halfact* and the collection and responded to questions from the audience.

Past, Present, Future(s): Literary Criticism and Native American Indian Literature(s) (Session 689)

Presiding: Arnold Krupat, Sarah Lawrence College

David L. Moore, Cornell U, "Contextual Aesthetics and Textual Ethics: Silence and the Sacred in American Indian Literature"

Reading through a poem, "The Motion of Songs Arising," by Luci Tapahonso, the paper addresses issues in the politics of representation and cross-cultural appropriation in the writing and reading of contemporary native American literature. The ways in which Tapahonso employs silence and impressionistic

gesture rather than ethnographic definition in her rendition of a Navajo ceremony suggest a graceful strategy for eluding modern, postmodern, and postcolonial problems of difference and co-optation. The poet responds to both her Navajo and her cross-cultural contexts by including in the poem an aesthetic silence which performs an ethical act of preserving the sacred in textual memory. Deftly negotiating Lyotard's "le differend," which separates the representable and the unrepresentable, and similarly navigating Eliade's separation of the sacred and the profane, Tapahonso's poem both gives and withholds its sacred center from the reader. The Navajo ritual is treated as cultural property which must be protected from profane representation by the very poem which evokes the ritual memory. Yet that protection itself connotes the sacred. Tapahonso's silence does not inscribe the anxiety over an abyss or aporia which a reductive theory of difference might suggest, and which critics such as Paula Gunn Allen and Jane Tompkins seem to evoke in their more conflicted theories of Native American self-representation. Instead this writer, like others such as Ray Young Bear, Ofelia Zepeda, or Simon Ortiz, treats silence around the sacred materials as strategically communicative of both cultural and cross-cultural information and negotiation. Silence itself, in concert with highly articulate representation, becomes an act of agency identifying subjective and cultural or political realities.

Phillip Round, The U of Iowa, "The Persistence of History and the *Autobiography of Delfina Cuero*"

This paper argues that the *Autobiography of Delfina Cuero*, a composite of California Indian (Kumeyaay) text which was initially assembled to provide evidence of its author's U.S. citizenship, is especially useful to American Indian studies for the way it introduces borderlands theory and the discourse of immigration into the critical debate over the nature of narrated Indian autobiographies. After working through interpretive narratives which cast Delfina Cuero's life history either as a "tragic" story of cultural dissipation or a "comic" assertion of what Gerald Vizenor calls "tribal presence," Round arrives at a hermeneutical method of reading based in Delfina Cuero's own "talk"—that persistent trace of improvisation which spills over such normalizing narratives to unleash a discourse of *migration* and *mestizaje*.



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