



ALS-MLA

American Literature Section of the
Modern Language Association

Annual Report, 1997

Compiled by
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University of Tulsa

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American Literature Section Officers, 1997

Chair: Susan K. Harris (Pennsylvania State U, University Park)

Executive Coordinator: Susan Belasco (U of Tulsa)

Advisory Council:

- James Robert Payne (New Mexico State U), 1995-97
- Priscilla Wald (U of Washington), 1995-97
- Sharon Harris (U of Nebraska), 1996-98
- Evan Carton (U of Texas), 1996-98
- Michael Bérubé (U of Illinois, Urbana), 1997-99
- Gay Willenz (East Carolina U), 1997-99

Nominating Committee:

- Steven Mailloux (U of California, Irvine), 1996-97
- Margaret Anne O'Connor (U of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) 1997-98 (1998 chair)
- Frank Shuffelton (U of Rochester) 1997-99 (1999 chair)

Foerster Prize Committee:

- Deb Clarke (Pennsylvania State U, University Park), Chair
- Sharon Harris (U of Nebraska)
- Lawrence Buell (Harvard University)

Hubbell Award Committee:

- John Seelye (U of Florida), 1997 Chair
- Jackson Bryer (U of Maryland, College Park), 1998 Chair
- Jonathan Arac (U of Pittsburgh), 1999 Chair
- Eric Sundquist (U of California, Los Angeles), 2000 Chair
- Shari Benstock (U of Miami), 2001 Chair
- Judith Fetterley (State U of New York at Albany), 2002 Chair

Editorial Board, American Literature:

- Cathy N. Davidson (Duke U), Co-Editor
- Michael Moon (Duke U), Co-Editor
- Tom Ferraro (Duke U), Acting Co-Editor
- Michael Awkward (U of Michigan), 1997
- Joanne Dobson (Fordham U), 1997
- Emory Elliott (U of California, Riverside), 1997
- David L. Minter (Rice U), 1997
- Dana D. Nelson (U of Kentucky), 1997
- Marianne DeKoven (Rutgers U), 1998
- Lee Edelman (Tufts U), 1998
- José Limón (U of Texas, Austin), 1998
- Timothy Sweet (West Virginia U), 1998
- Jay Clayton (Vanderbilt U), 1998
- Herman Beavers (U of Pennsylvania), 1999
- Lisa Lowe (U of California, San Diego), 1999
- Donald Pease (Dartmouth Coll.), 1999
- Marjorie Pryse (State U of New York at Albany), 1999
- Valerie Smith (UCLA), 1999

Division Chairs:

- American Literature to 1800**
- Frank Shuffelton (U of Rochester)
- Nineteenth-Century American Literature**
- position unfilled
- Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature**
- Amy Kaplan (Mt. Holyoke Coll.)
- Twentieth-Century American Literature**
- Cary Nelson (U of Illinois, Urbana)
- Black American Literature and Culture**
- Wahneema Lubiano (Duke U)
- American Indian Literatures**
- position unfilled

Financial Statement and Membership, 31 December 1997

BEGINNING BALANCE	
Balance in Duke account	\$8,287.00
Balance in ALS/MLA account	
at Bank of Oklahoma, Tulsa	\$2,930.00
INCOME	
Memberships	\$17,456.00
Royalties	\$0.00
U of Tulsa supplement	\$2,000.00
BALANCE AND INCOME	<u>\$30,673.00</u>
EXPENDITURES	
ALS volumes to members.	
(postage included)	\$18,262.00
ALS reception and microphone	
charges at MLA	\$618.00
Postage	\$577.00
Office supplies	\$220.00
Clerical Help	\$135.00
Hubbell Medal	\$293.00
Printing.....	\$1,044.00
Total	\$21,149.00

ENDING BALANCES	
Balance in Duke UP account	\$7,481.00
Balance in ALS/MLA account	
at Bank of Oklahoma, Tulsa	\$2,088.00

Membership Statement

Number of paid members		
	6/97	6/98
Individual rate		
US	687	661
Outside-US	66	70
Student/retired rate		
US	224	190
Outside-US	9	8
Totals	986	929

**Minutes of the Advisory Council Meeting,
27 December 1997**

The Advisory Council of the Modern Language Association's American Literature Section met on 27 December 1996, 7:00-8:15 p.m. in the Montebello Room of the Royal York Hotel, Ontario. Professors James Robert Payne, Sharon Harris, Cathy Davidson, Deb Clarke, Gary Scharnhorst, Susan K. Harris (Chair), Susan Belasco Smith (Executive Coordinator), and Matthew Bedell (Duke University Press) attended the meeting. Council members Priscilla Wald, Evan Carton, and Gay Willenz were unable to attend the meeting and had communicated their regrets to Smith.

Reports were given by Harris (as outgoing chair), Davidson (for *American Literature*, Clarke (for the Foerster Prize Committee), and Smith (for the Nominating and Hubbell Committees Committee) in the absence of Steven Mailloux and John Seelye. The text of these and other reports appear in this *Annual Report*. Smith also announced the outcome of the contested election for two seats on the Advisory Council: John Carlos Rowe and Robert Levine.

The central business of the meeting was to consider the revision to the Articles of Organization of the American Literature Section, as raised last year by the Council. After some discussion and the reports of absent Council members, the Council voted to revise the Articles. The revised Articles of Organization as well as the Articles of Agreement with Duke University Press are printed in this Report. In the second item of business, Smith commented briefly on the membership and finances of the Section, mentioning that the membership figures are up again, especially for students. The Council then considered the proposal to change the dues structure for ALS. Last year, the officers of Duke University Press have asked the Section to consider a modest increase in the dues—the student membership rate of \$12.00 does not, for example, cover the actual production costs of the bound volume of *American Literary Scholarship*. After discussion of the proposal, the Council voted to increase the rates to \$25.00 for regular members and to retain the membership fee of \$10.00 for students and retired members. Smith also reported on a conversation with Regina Vorbeck, Deputy Director of the Modern Language Association about the possibility of a link from the MLA website to one at Duke University Press. Council members encouraged Smith to pursue working on an ALS site at Duke. Finally, Smith reminded the Council that 1998 is the final year of her four-year term as Executive Coordinator and asked the Council to encourage interested members to contact her for information.

Harris thanked the Council members for their work and support during the year, as did Smith. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

American Literature Section Chair's Report for 1997

This year has seen some welcome structural shifts in the American Literature Section. The most visible of course is the change from morning-sessions-and-a-luncheon to afternoon-sessions-and-a-cash bar. I'm particularly enthusiastic about this because I hope it will be a way to attract new, and younger, members to the section. .

The sessions and social events are the visible manifestations of changes taking place on a structural level. The organizational changes impose a rationality on the section, which I sense it has lacked for a long time. We've probably all been through faculty fights over trying to straighten out curriculums and/or governance documents that have become irrational because they have been changed piecemeal over time. At some point a radical overhaul has to be made, and that seems to be the case here. At the moment it's a little hard to explain to outsiders exactly what the American Literature Section IS. The re-organization is a move towards re-visioning the Section.

Over the course of this year I've accumulated a lot of debts, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the many people who actually run the section. The first, and most heartfelt, is to Susan Belasco Smith, now entering her final year as the executive coordinator for the section. Susan is the person who really runs the section, and she does it wonderfully: thoroughly and thoughtfully and always diplomatically. The section is all the stronger for her leadership.

I also want to thank the members of this year's Foerster Prize committee—Sharon Harris, Larry Buell, and chair Deb Clarke, and the members of the Hubbell Award committee—Jackson Bryer, Jonathan Arac, Eric Sundquist, Shari Benstock, and Judith Fetterley, and John Seelye, chair. These awards are important because they provide both honor and memory to the section. The Hubbell prize, especially, since it is given for lifetime achievement, forces us to be mindful of the history of literary criticism. I also want to thank the nominating committee, composed of Steve Mailloux, Margaret O'Connor, and Frank Shuffelton, which had the difficult task of coming up with nominations for, among other jobs, that of executive coordinator.

Finally, although I still haven't quite figured out what it is I acknowledge that I have enjoyed serving as chair of the American Literature Section. I thank those of you who gave me the opportunity of doing so, and I welcome Cecilia Tichi as she assumes the chair.

Susan K. Harris

The 1997 Jay B. Hubbell Award Committee Report

The committee, chaired by John Seelye, conducted a round of ballots and selected James M. Cox, Professor Emeritus of Dartmouth College as the recipient of the Hubbell Medal for Lifetime Achievement.

Citation for Professor James M. Cox

It has been my fortune to serve twice on the Hubbell Award Committee, beginning in the days when we handed the winner a silver medal actually made of silver. Back then, when my turn came to be chair of the committee, the winner was James Woodress. Today it is James M. Cox. Now those are two people in our profession who have very little in common except for their given names and the fact that during the balloting they both won the first time around, hands down, testifying to the variety that the discipline of American Literature allows and the generous purview of our colleagues when it comes to honoring accomplishment.

Last year, Nellie McKay in presenting the Hubbell Award gave a moving tribute to Blyden Jackson, starting with his relatively humble and impoverished beginnings, against which Blyden labored, with the added impediment of race. I am not going to follow Nellie's lead, that being a hard act to follow, further than to say that Jim Cox was born in Western Virginia and that he now resides on the family farm on which he was raised. He was a country boy, and like many such in the South he grew up surrounded by kinfolk. I have visited his home there in Western Virginia, and there are more Coxes in that community than there are hills, and there are a lot of hills.

There are lawyers and doctors and undertakers and ministers, all named Cox. I believe that without trying very hard you could be attended from the cradle to the grave by a Cox, and you can certainly buy a house or car, new or used, from one. They are an influential family in the vicinity of Galax, the urban center of the area, a town named for a material harvested there that is used in the manufacture of an item equivalent to the one made in Willett, Massachusetts.

The name of the actual town in which Jim grew up is Independence, and it is, I think, also well named. There are about twenty towns in the United States called Independence, and perhaps someday a book should be written about all of them, each different I am sure in its own way. But Independence in Virginia, a state that gave birth to the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence, has I think a special mandate therefrom. When Jim Cox gets up to accept this award, he will be in more ways than one the man from Independence. Harry S Truman was from Independence, Missouri, as I recall, but not Independence, Virginia. This is an important distinction, yet Truman and Cox I think share some qualities in common. If you are from a place called In-

dependence, you must from time to time acknowledge it, and this serves as a reminder and an encouragement to develop certain positive traits of character.

On Jim's *c.v.*, it mentions that he attended the University of Michigan, graduating in 1948, and Indiana University, from which he received a doctorate in 1955, but I also know that prior to those years he served as an enlisted man in a submarine during World War II. This was very difficult and hazardous duty, and seamen were screened carefully before being assigned to it. You had to be able to perform capably under considerable pressure. We have all seen the movies, and understand the general idea, but I don't imagine many of you here today have served aboard a battery-powered submarine. It is a unique experience, I think, not common shared by professors of English. Nor are most of you from a place called Independence, though we all strive to get there, I hope.

Before he entered the graduate program at Indiana, Jim was already teaching English, at Emory and Henry College in Virginia, and about this time he received a teacher's certificate. If he would like another I would be glad to write one for him. He first taught during the years 1950-52, at which time I was still an undergraduate, so that he was teaching and I was learning but in different places at the same time. I have been learning from Jim Cox ever since I first met him while we were both at the University of California in Berkeley, he on leave from Indiana to work in the Mark Twain papers, and I a lowly because untenured assistant professor. I never did get tenure at the University of California at Berkeley, nor did Jim, although it did look for a while as though he might. Henry Nash Smith had been made an offer by Yale and Mark Schorer thought that Jim would make a dandy replacement, and he would have been more than that, I know. Berkeley in 1961 badly needed and even now could benefit from the presence there of Him Cox.

But Henry decided that the call from Yale had come too late and though Mark went ahead and offered a position to Jim, he had promises to keep, and returned to Indiana, where he had been teaching since 1957. But it wasn't long before Jim returned all the way east, to where the woods fill up with snow, to Dartmouth College, where he first taught after getting his Ph.D. from Indiana, from 1955-57, and where he remained from 1963 until he retired. Along the way he served as Dean and was given a chair, the Avalon Professorship of Humanities, which, whatever other virtues and benefits it might bestow, is certainly the most beautiful sounding honor a person could ever be awarded. Avalon of course was associated with paradise in the Arthurian legends and more recently with a town on Catalina Island off the coast of Southern California, which is the place to which the singer hopes to be carried back in the song. I

think we need to put Avalon next to Independence, Virginia, as we go about constructing a mythology for Jim Cox, which is what I am attempting in a small way to do. It is the place to which King Arthur retired and from which he is expected to return to Camelot—though in fewer and fewer numbers by Democrats these days—and Dartmouth I know keeps hoping the same thing from Jim.

As I was saying before I interrupted myself, I first got to know Jim Cox when we were together at Berkeley, and I remember very well how he made a special effort to extend himself to the kind of low-placed faculty member whose existence very few visiting professors in those days would have bothered to acknowledge. He somehow made you feel part of a conspiracy against the dunces who made up the large part of the department, indeed any department, indeed the entire profession. He made you feel that you and he were part of a knowing and affectionate community, a kind of low-wattage illuminati, like that immortal pair on the raft.

I remember driving Jim down the coast to Leland Stanford Farm where he participated in a graduate symposium and I am sure he does too. I remember his saying that the problem with the faculty at Berkeley was that California (the place, not the institution) was too good for them, that they were like persons who had arrived in Heaven before their time, and it gave them psychic wrinkles and problems with moral posture, never mind a bottle in a bottom desk drawer. I'm not sure he really meant it, but it did make a person without tenure feel good at heart, knowing that if a body didn't make it into Heaven, he would have Huck Finn's consolation.

Shortly afterward I moved on to the University of Connecticut and because of proximity saw more of Jim, and the more I saw the more I learned. I remember the time he came down from the heights of Hanover and gave a lecture in Storrs in which he made the point that Thoreau was a secessionist, and I have never forgotten that point, indeed have used it ever since to draw a baseline and vector through much of the vast confusion that is American culture. For what was new Secession but old Separatism in political form? New England is proud of Plymouth Rock and the First Thanksgiving but it keeps quiet about the Hartford Convention. Daniel Webster among others wanted to keep out of Mr. Madison's War, and Henry David Thoreau felt the same about Mr. Polk's War. We have just witnessed a shack about the dimensions of Thoreau's at Walden being trucked to a trial in Oakland, California, just in case you missed the connection. Championing John Brown or firing on Sumter or constructing pipe bombs pretty much amounts to the same thing once you have declared war on the State.

Well, that is my thesis, not Jim's, but the test of a true teacher is the ability to set ideas in motion, not put a

fence around them. I am not going to stoop to further details, being inclined toward the neoclassical view. But those of you who have ever had conversation with Jim Cox about any aspect of American literature and life will understand what I mean. The region around

Independence is deeply pious in character, and religion there is practiced with an evangelical fervor, a characteristic that was passed on to Jim in a modified but identifiable way. I think it can be said that he converts you to his way of thinking, not by haranguing but by the onrush of enthusiasm, and if you know the etymology of that word, you will grasp the divine connection.

The main criterion for the Hubbell Award is "influence," that the recipient must have been influential in the study of American Literature, and if citations count, there are a few more influential books about Mark Twain's writings than *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*. But Jim I think has during a career now nearing a half-century been influential the way a great orator or preacher is influential, by the sheer power of his presence and voice. He is as a man of words unique in this profession. I have myself been teaching for nearly forty years, a period during which I have almost always attended the MLA annual convention, that being an act of duty essential to the New England conscience, and I have never heard the like, though I have had frequent opportunity to listen to the unlike.

His delivery does not resemble Mark Twain's, which was rather quiet as I understand it and full of exaggerations and understatements for effect. Like Mark Twain, Jim has a great sense of humor, but it is not ironic and poker-faced, but exuberant, like the man himself. His syntax is not plain but complex, and illuminates with that tangled fire we associate with Faulkner, who is perhaps the greatest comic genius after Twain in our literature, and both in different ways understood the humor inherent in *Fate*, as does Jim Cox. He for years edited the journal *Studies in American Humor*, but that is not what I am talking about. Scholarship about humor is not very humorous, and when it tries to be, it strains at the traces against an immovable burden. Our profession in general is humorless, as I have had frequent occasion to observe. Not that we don't enjoy a good joke, but we take our subjects of study very seriously, though there are occasional and very welcome exceptions. Let me give you one example.

Some years ago, Louis Rubin organized a meeting at the MLA in which the cardinal directions of the academic world were recognized and celebrated in what was intended to be a humorous way, and it was. Louis chose people who taught in regions different from those of their origin: for example, Hennig Cohen, who was from the South but was on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, addressed himself to Philadelphia, and did surprising and memorable things with the statue of

William Penn on the Statehouse dome; Norman Grabo spoke about the West, namely Texas, from A to M; Louis himself talked about New York, chiefly I think because he had an anecdote about a cab driver he wished to unload; and Jim Cox talked about the experiences of a southerner in New England. He talk mostly about wood stoves, as I remember, or at least that's *what*. I remember, and it was very, very funny.

Jim lived on a farm near Hanover, or what was left of a farm after the Dartmouth authorities peeled off the acreage before selling it to him for what they had paid for it with the acres, and he did heat the house with a wood stove, so he knew whereof he spoke. Wood stoves like mules have a certain inherent humor and like mules must be dealt with directly yet with circumspection. More often than not a stick of firewood is involved in both transactions. Jim brought that all out, and he addressed himself to firewood, too, as I recall. Firewood, the kind you cut down, saw up, and split yourself, can also be a topic of comedy, mostly to those who are watching the process. I wish Him had done more of that sort of thing. I wish we all did more of that sort of thing, and much less of what we do do, which is funny only in the way that cutting up firewood is fun . . . Incidentally to the intention.

Recently I participated in screening candidates for a position in our department, and one of my colleagues noted succinctly that a sample of work submitted for our scrutiny and evaluation "lacked theory." This was meant as a negative judgment, but when I say that Jim Cox lacks theory, I mean it as praise. What he does have is practice. He has written close to a hundred essays and reviews on writers from Frost to Poe, from Hawthorne to Stowe, Henry Adams to Hemingway. He is a particularist, and moves out from his subject, not back toward it and around it in the service of an ideology.

In his essay on regionalism in the *Columbia Literary History of the United States*, Jim addresses what he calls a "diminished thing," regionalism having gradually disappeared from both the American and the academic landscape. As he calls it, the South was the last region worth its salt, but as a definable place it too is fast disappearing from the map. In cadences echoing Faulkner, who also wrote in the spoken word, Cox talks of the South as "a worn land and place representing both the ruin of and resistance to the civilization it has survived. In precisely such resistant ruin [does] the beauty and power" of Southern writing reside. In Cox's view the South as a region may have ended, for "even as the South came into the nation's literature, the nation's economy came into the South," but then that is the common doom of all regions, "the fate of their imaginative space before the ever-encroaching Union. The point is that they are *always* ending, which is to say that ending is their eternal process."

Now I suppose you could boil down some theory out of those sentences, but you would kill the life in them by so doing. What they are vibrant with is a kind of eschatology, a faith sustained by and in final things, the power that is shared by so many other writers, including Willa Cather, so often catalogued as a writer of the Midwest but who was also raised on a farm in Virginia and for whom, as Cynthia Griffin Wolff tells us, loss was a constant theme. But I quoted those words not so much for their sense but their sentience, the power of feeling they convey, which is so essential to Jim's writing as well as his talk, both being redolent with the cadences of the region the loss of which he is there commemorating, so alive with paradox and persuasiveness. In sum, Jim Cox not only evokes the subject he is talking about, he becomes inseparable from it.

Where are such voices today? Who comes to us now trailing the glory of origins, of place of birth, writing words with the scent of native soil still on them? I turn to the most recent PMLA bibliography available to me, and find I can learn about "Spouse and Child Abuse in Faulkner," or about "In-Forming Texts: Ideology, Subjectivity in Black Characterizations." Under the topic "Regional Novelists" I am referred to a (and I quote) "*narrower term*: Women regional novelists," which brings me to a lone dissertation that addresses the role of nationalism in relation to Puritanism. These are studies fertile with theory, but sterile of passion. They bring me back to cutting, chopping, and splitting wood, and I return instead to James M. Cox.

In the truest sense, Jim is his own subject, what he writes best about being of and out of himself, the Emersonian criterion. It is therefore fitting that his latest book is on autobiography, gathering together essays written over the years, but what I want from him now, as soon as he gets that piece on Walt Whitman out of the way, is something specifically autobiographical, something about Jim Cox. Something beyond the academic honors he has earned over the years, from the Guggenheim fellowship to the Danforth award for teaching and this present award, something that reaches back to and in and then out of Independence and to the heart of what it means or perhaps what it meant to be a member of our profession in what from here is beginning to look like our Golden Age.

Like regionalism, the teaching of the humanities is a diminished thing, nor do those who practice it today threaten to reverse the trend. Region and Section are much the same, and let me note that we who are gathered here today occupy the last section sponsored by the MLA, which stands for the More is Less Association I reckon, everything else being a matter of longer and longer division, and multiplying sessions of seldom sweet and never silent thought. We have given over the lun-

cheon, that essential act of communion and *companionship*, which as Thoreau would tell us means the breaking of bread, and after such loss, what gain?

It will never be any better than it was between 1950 and 1990, and there will never be anyone in our profession more worthy of it than is James M. Cox, the Avalon Professor in the Humanities Emeritus at Dartmouth College, owner and at present operator of the family farm in Independence, Virginia, and the latest recipient of the Hubbell Award.

John Seelye

On Receiving the Hubbell Award

Reflecting upon my utter surprise on receiving Susan Smith's letter saying that I would be this year's recipient of the Hubbell Award, and reflecting too on the list of illustrious prior recipients, and now hearing Professor Seelye's extended remarks, I feel both humbled and honored. Put the two feelings fully together, and you have the sum of my present consciousness: a recognition of my luck.

My luck began early. I was born in 1925, the year that saw publication of *In Our Time*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *An American Tragedy*. Then too I was drafted into the Navy just early enough to get a touch of submarine war action even as the end of the war loomed into view. Returning to college, I found the G.I. Bill waiting to assure my financial independence for the rest of my education. I drifted into an English Major, and, just at the threshold of applying to Michigan high schools for a teaching position, I abruptly wrote letters of application to fifteen small colleges. Receiving two offers, I chose Emory and Henry College, which was only sixty miles from my Virginia home.

At the same time, Austin Warren, who had come to Michigan fresh from having co-authored *Theory of Literature* with Rene Wellek, encouraged me to go to John Ransom's Kenyon School of English the summer before I was to begin teaching at Emory and Henry. I did, and took a course from Kenneth Burke. After two years at Emory and Henry, I decided to get a Ph.D. And thought I would begin my studies by going to The School of Letters (the Kenyon School of English renamed and moved to Indiana University).

So I found myself in Leslie Fiedler's *Myth in American Fiction and Verse*, which he taught in Bloomington, Indiana, in the summer of 1952. And that, dear hearts, is how I came to be in American literature. But enough! I am about to sink into a narrative of my life. Autobiography is, as I am sure you will have divined, suicide, just as biography is murder—which is why Henry Adams told Henry James to take his own life before a biographer had a chance to take it.

I therefore skip to the present. For the past twelve years I have lived, with my wife, in the house I was born in and on the farm where I was raised (I used the very advisedly, since the farm is almost twenty-eight hundred feet above the sea). People who should know better told me that the farm should prove a wonderful place for writing. How little they knew. I saw early and even wrote that *the farm is against writing*. Now, ten years later, my ignorance has steadily been growing exponentially in relation to my knowledge, and I am well on my way to what I foresaw when I first returned: lying down beside Saddle Creek that runs through the center of the farm and, in harmony with its plangent rush to reach New River, falling into complete illiteracy. That would not be bad. After all, Whitman wrote in his introduction to the 1855 *Leaves of Grass*:

There is that indescribable freshness and unconsciousness about an illiterate person that humbles and mocks the power of the noblest expressive genius.

That quotation could well be placed over the door of every English department in the country.

Such an observation facing us from our greatest poet reminds us of the immense attraction of ignorance. It is surely, to follow Henry Adams, the inertial energy always attracted by the accelerating electro-magnetic field of the dynamo. Much as he found himself attracted to the dynamo, Adams never forgot that inertial energy was the object of dynamic attraction—whether the object was woman as sexual generator or nature as raw material. Like coal in the ground or Booker T. Washington in a coal mine, this oppressed inertial energy was yet the necessary fire to drive the steam engines that powered the dynamo. Ignorance is nothing more or less than the energy of inertial mind, and it should be sought rather than opposed. There are those, even—or is it especially?—in higher education, who fatuously subscribe to “stamping out ignorance,” as they are wont to say, and they constantly regret that students coming from high school are utterly ignorant of this or that. There is probably nothing to be done about this eternal contingent. Greet them with preternaturally ignorant face and listen with a dead pan equating Mark Twain's to their lamentations. That is, I hope, the sum of my advice on this occasion. Thoreau's great sentence early in *Walden* comes hauntingly to mind: “I have lived some thirty years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice from any of my seniors.” I would not go quite as far as Thoreau in this matter, but his account is true enough to serve as admonition at moments like this one.

I have left until last the middle years (1950-1990), which I spent teaching in colleges and universities. To return again to my luck, there was probably no better year to emerge with a doctorate than 1955, the year I went on

the market. There were positions everywhere, particularly in American literature. It was still a relatively new field, new enough that an outstanding Ph.D. candidate could reasonably believe that he could read all the secondary material on even the most celebrated American writer. Great writers—Eliot, Frost, Faulkner, Hemingway—were still alive and writing. If the field attracted students, it also attracted the ablest critics and scholars. F. O. Matthiessen's *American Renaissance*, which was to remain the most influential book of the entire forty years of my academic life had just made its way fully into the academy, quickly establishing the American canon up to the Civil War. His pentad of writers seemed, to the true believer entering the field, related to the pentagonal power that had made the nation the leader of the free world. At the same time, the New Criticism had displaced the belletristic tradition as well as the old Germanic scholarship; beyond that, it had, in the academy, triumphed over the Marxist criticism with which it had contended in the thirties. Far from being elitist, as later critics would have us believe, the New Criticism was a great democratizing force, allowing a poem to be faced directly without all the historical, biographical, and cultural paraphernalia that had come to attend literary study. Equally important, the New Criticism, which had fully fleshed itself out before World War II, was particularly appealing to a society emerging from a war in which everything including literature had assumed the identity of propaganda.

It was just Matthiessen's power, in 1941 (it is still difficult for me to realize that his book appeared that early), to unite left-liberal politics, which he found more or less directly expressed in the forms of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman, with his essentially conservative literary "aesthetics" expressed in the "imaginative" and "tragic" fiction of Hawthorne and Melville. No wonder his book afforded the basis for the strengthened study of American literature inside English departments at the same time that it provided ground for the interdisciplinary programs of American Studies. You know the rest from the books you have read, to misquote slightly a writer largely displaced by Matthiessen's canon formation.

I belonged to the generation that enjoyed the opportunity offered by the ever-expanding fields of American literature and American studies. The burden of expansion appeared in burgeoning enrollments, the descent of insight into methodology, and the overwrought interpretations inevitably attending overworked authors. Twenty-five years after receiving my doctorate, I could hardly face the mass of books and articles that had been added to the shelf of every major writer. One of these books was my own.

Fortunately—and inevitably—new forces appeared, exerting pressure on both canon and existing criticism. The Civil Rights and Women's Movements brought new

people into classroom and faculty and new authors and books into the canon. At the same time, critical theory accelerated through phenomenology, affectivism, reader response, structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, and new historicism. Couple all this with the new technology, and the sense of acceleration becomes acute. Small wonder that older faculty members are likely to envision a world of falling standards and criticism that seems to obfuscate rather than clarify. Yet it was ever thus, as Whitman saw:

*There was never any more inception than there is now,
Nor any more youth or age than there is now,
And will never be any more perfection than there is now,
Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now.*

Attending a recent MLA conference on the American Renaissance, I heard papers on Emerson and Melville bearing the stamp of recent criticism that matched anything I could remember. Long before I took early retirement, I saw (and like to think I supported) colleagues in American literature that I knew could see more and see farther than I could see.

I retired early partly to make room for and partly to escape the accelerating minds and machines; then too, there was the genuine attraction of the farm I was raised on. I still dream of writing—writing something different from anything I wrote as a teacher. But it eludes me and will probably always elude me. No matter. My wife and I will search for firewood on the farm, and I shall from time to time ponder Hawthorne's fine observation in "The Custom House":

It is a good lesson—though it may often be a hard one—for a man who has dreamed of literary fame, and of making for himself a rank among the world's dignitaries by such means, to step aside out of the narrow circle in which his claims are recognized, and to find how utterly devoid of significance, beyond that circle, is all that he achieves, and all that he aims at.

1997 Foerster Prize

The 1997 Foerster Prize Committee was composed of Larry Buell of Harvard University, Sharon Harris of the University of Nebraska, and myself. We are pleased to announce that this year's Foerster Prize for the best article in American Literature goes to Lisa A. Long, Assistant Professor of American Thought and Language at Michigan State University, for "'The Corporeity of Heaven': Rehabilitating the Civil War Body in *The Gates Ajar*," forthcoming in the December issue

Long's essay deftly interweaves medical research and spiritualist writings in its examination of the cultural implications of rehabilitating Civil war bodies. She argues that "*The Gates Ajar* offers not only sentimental consolation but also a rigorous exploration of the ontological systems unraveling during the Civil War and its after-

math.” In insisting on reconstructing a detailed historical context for the novel, she places Phelps clearly in the tradition of war literature, reading Gates Ajar against the work of Civil War doctor and later nerve specialist Weir Mitchell, the Gettysburg Address, and Matthew Brady’s photographs, as well as religious and sentimental work on cultural mourning. She intricately examines the impact of the war on the bodies of soldiers and mourners, declaring that these bodies “express the displacement, alienation, and insensibility—the unstable subjectivities—of postbellum society.” By establishing Phelps as a major contributor to this conversation, she also reiterates the significance of women’s voices and women’s noncombatant bodies in dealing with war and its aftermath.

The comments of the committee were succinct and to the point. Larry Buell commends the essay for its medical history research, particularly the juxtapositioning of Phelps and Mitchell, calling the piece “provocative, mind-bending, and persuasive.” Sharon Harris adds that Long brings a new reading to *Gates Ajar* and “adds considerably to Phelps scholarship.” I was quite taken with her discussion of the body not just in the context of war but also in relation to religion and medicine.

Lisa Long’s article is widely and meticulously researched, opening up a fascinating and intriguing discussion of postbellum culture. It’s lively and engaging prose and persuasive reading will help to shape future examinations of late 19th-century culture. Among many fine essays, it stood out, and we are pleased to award it the Foerster Prize.

Deborah Clarke
The Pennsylvania State U, University Park

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee has completed the slate for 1999 as follows:

Appointment:
1999 Chair: Paul Lauter (Trinity College)

Advisory Council Nominees, 1999-00
(for the contested election):
Thadious Davis (Vanderbilt U)
Betsy Erkkila (Northwestern U)
Gregory Jay (U of Wisconsin, Milwaukee)
Larry Reynolds (Texas A&M U)

Appointments to Editorial Board, *American Literature*:
Maria Damon (U of Minnesota, Twin Cities)
Walter Herbert (Southwestern U)
Frances Smith Foster (Emory U)
Sharon Harris (U of Nebraska)
Priscilla Wald (U of Washington)

Submitted by
Steven Mailloux, U of California Irvine

American Literature: Annual Report for 1997

American Literature published the third special issue in its history last year, “Unnatural Formations,” edited by Michael Moon. This issue examined the concept of the “natural” and the “unnatural” and the way sexuality, in particular, has been regulated by and has challenged codes of “naturalness” throughout American literature and history.

Overall, scholars submitted 324 essays to *American Literature* last year. The Journal published twenty-four essays (an acceptance rate of approximately 8%). We reviewed 100 books, and included Brief Mentions for over 150 additional titles. By continuing to ask authors to hold articles (and sometimes extensive endnoting) to reasonable lengths, we were able to hold the total number of pages to 905, almost exactly the number of pages for which we are actually budgeted. Our expert Managing Editor, Dr. Carol Rigsby, was promoted this year to Executive Managing Editor. As always, we’re grateful for everything she does for the Journal. We are also grateful to Tyler Curtain, our capable Assistant Managing Editor, who has gone on to another job, and who has been replaced by Dr. Frances Kerr, a Fitzgerald scholar who also happens to be a whiz in the *American Literature* office. Finally, Michael Moon has taken a leave this year from his duties as Co-Editor in order to be the DGS for the English Department at Duke. Thomas J. Ferraro, Associate Professor at Duke University, has stepped in as the Acting Co-Editor for the 1997-98 academic year. The author of *Ethnic Passages*, Tom brings special expertise in twentieth-century American literature and ethnic literatures to the position.

Editorial Board members rotating off the Board at the end of 1997 include Michael Awkward, Joanne Dobson, Emory Elliott, David L. Minter, and Dana D. Nelson. They will be sorely missed. We enthusiastically welcome new Board members Maria Damon, Francis Smith Foster, Sharon Harris, T. Walter Herbert, and Priscilla Wald.

Cathy N. Davidson
Co-Editor

Report on American Literary Scholarship

ALS 1996, the 34th annual volume in the series, is on schedule for publication in June 1997, with immediate distribution of copies to dues-paid members of the American Literature Section. The editor of this volume is David J. Nordloh, Indiana University, who alternates in the task with Gary Scharnhorst, University of New Mexico. Contributors new to ALS 1996 are Benjamin F. Fisher, University of Mississippi, who resumes the duty of writing the “Poe” chapter from Kent Ljungquist, Worcester Polytechnic Institute; Richard A. Hocks, University of Missouri, who takes over the “James” chapter from Greg Zacharias, Creighton University; Alec Marsh,

Muhlenberg College, and Lee Oser, Millikin University, who contribute "Pound and Eliot," succeeding Michael Coyle, Colgate University, and Laura Cowan, University of Maine; Joseph R. Urgo, Bryant College, who joins Philip Cohen, University of Texas at Arlington, in writing "Faulkner"; and Priscilla Wald and Mark Patterson, University of Washington, who assume the "Themes, Topics, Criticism" chapter from Gary Lee Stonum, Case Western Reserve University.

The on-going reconfiguration of ALS chapter coverage continues in ALS 1997 with the commissioning of a chapter to appear in Part I of the annual devoted to scholarship on Wharton and Cather. Elsa Nettels, College of William and Mary, will be the inaugural contributor of this chapter. The discrete chapter on Poe will be discontinued, given the terms of royalty payments specified in the contract with Duke University Press to publish the annual, and folded into the chapter on "Early 19th-Century Literature." Kevin J. Hayes, University of Central Oklahoma, succeeds Robert Burkholder, Pennsylvania State University, as the contributor of this chapter. Other contributors new to ALS 1997 are Brenda Wineapple, Union College, who takes over "Hawthorne" from Leland Person, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Daneen Wardrop, Western Michigan University, who joins Kenneth M. Price, College of William and Mary, in writing the "Whitman and Dickinson" chapter; Sarah Daugherty, Wichita State University, who succeeds Hocks as the author of "James"; John Clendenning, California State University, Northridge, who takes over "Late 19th-Century Literature" from Larry J. Oliver, Texas A & M University; Jeanne Campbell Reesman, University of Texas at San Antonio, who succeeds Jo Ann Middleton, Drew University, as the author of "Fiction: 1900 to the 1930s"; Anita Helle, Oregon State University, who assumes "Poetry: The 1940s to the Present" from Lorenzo Thomas, University of Houston—Downtown. The section on Scandinavian scholarship will be contributed by a new trio of scholars: Bo G. Ekelund of Uppsala University, Axel Nissen of Oslo University, and Henrick Lassen of Odense University. ALS 1997 will also feature a section on Americanist scholarship in Central Europe and the Baltics contributed by Zoltan Abadi-Nagy, University of Debrecen, and Elzbieta Oleksy, University of Lodz.

Professor Nordloh and I are, as always, grateful to Terence Ford and his staff at the MLA Center for Bibliographic Services for a preprint of the annual MLA Bibliography, to publishers who supply review copies, to scholars who forward offprints for the convenience of ALS contributors, and of course to the many contributors for their Herculean labors. All materials for ALS, no matter the year of coverage, should be directed to David J. Nordloh, Department of English, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.47405. Notices of publica-

tion may also be sent to him.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Scharnhorst

Report of the Committee on Scholarly Editions

The Committee on Scholarly Editions (CSE) has been a standing committee of the MLA for exactly twenty-one years—since September 1976, when it replaced the advisory board of the Center for Editions of American Authors (CEAA). As the change in name implied, the CSE was charged with fostering high standards for scholarly editing, not just for American authors, but for any author in any language or historical period recognized by the MLA. From the start, but especially under its last two chairs (Jo Ann Boydston, 1988-92, and Gary A. Stringer, 1992-96) the CSE has gradually enlarged the scope of its activities so that it has, for instance, provided professional assistance of various kinds to editors of works in English ranging from *The Play of Wisdom* and the *Showings of Julian of Norwich*, to works by Donne, Herbert, Thackeray, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Blake, Conrad, and Woolf, but also of works in French and Spanish by Charles of Orleans, Marie de France, and Luis Velez de Guevara. It has continued to provide these services for editors of works by a wider range of American writers than those favored few of the old VEAA—writers including Frederick Douglass, Willa Cather, Anne Vaughan Lock, Robert Penn Warren, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Harriet A. Jacobs, and Robinson Jeffers—even as it continued to inspect editions of William James, Mark Twain, Cooper, Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman.

The committee has nine members (up from seven in 1992 when the council approved the expansion). Currently they are Jackson R. Bryer, Morris E. Eaves, Charles B. Faulhaber, Roberta Frank, Heather Jackson, Fred H. Kameny, Mary B. Speer, Johns Unsworth, and Robert H. Hirst (chair since 1 July 1996). This is a group with diverse expertise in American, English, French, and Spanish literatures, in periods including medieval, Renaissance, Eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. It is also particularly experienced with electronic editions, as well as the present needs of university presses, which publish almost all scholarly editions. (One of the committee's major projects in the last two years has been to write, and publish for comment, specific guidelines for electronic editions.) Members are appointed for terms of four years and rotate off the committee in an orderly fashion, two, or at most three, each year. Traditionally the CSE's primary function has been to carry out careful inspections and scholarly editions before they were published, thereby providing the kind of peer review and quality control that most if not all university presses are still unable to provide on their own. Since the committee's last report it has awarded its emblem

("An Approved Edition") to three more volumes in ongoing scholarly editions of Mark Twain, Frederick Douglass, and William James. Inspections of nine additional volumes are under way or about to begin (two volumes of Willa Cather, one each of Cooper, William James, Whitman, Anne Vaughan Lock, Julian of Norwich, Robert Penn Warren, and Thomas Carlyle). For a checklist of the volumes inspected or now being reviewed, see the end of this report.

Under its most recent chair (Stringer) the committee has tried in several additional ways, and with some success, better to serve the scholarly community at large by: (1) making the professional services it offers more widely known; (2) fostering enlightened editorial procedures at the start of an edition by appointing experienced editors to advise the new edition in the planning stage—so-called consultations, of which there are no four ongoing; and (3) with the blessing of the Executive Council, by helping to ensure that the MLA gives professional recognition on a regular basis to overall editorial excellence in scholarly editing—specifically, through the recently established MLA Prize for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition, first awarded in December 1996: "Focusing on Editorial Scholarship at Century's End," presided over by committee member Roberta Frank, and "The Future of Extramural Funding for Scholarly Editions Projects," presided over by then committee member Elizabeth Witherell, which boasted brief comments by John Hammer of the National Humanities Alliance, and James Herbert, the new director for the Division of Research and Education at NEH, with two members of the committee (Witherell Hirst) also participating. Attendance at the latter session was embarrassingly light—perhaps 20 people—partly because of the timing (early on the morning of the last day of the convention), but partly because we failed to advertise the panel's most important speaker (Herbert from NEH). This coming December the committee will sponsor one session, a panel called "Historical Annotation: A Necessary Evil?" arranged by committee member Heather Jackson.

The committee publishes a statement about the value of scholarly editing in the Summer 1996 issues of the MLA Newsletter, inviting comment from the membership. At its meeting in New York on 19-20 September 1996, the committee discussed the seven responses received to date and began deliberations on how to report this response to the membership. Two letters commenting on the statement were published in the Fall 1996 MLA Newsletter.

Editions Approved, September 1996-August 1977

Mark Twain

Mark Twain's Letters, Vol 5: 1872-1873.

The Mark Twain Papers, Robert H. Hirst, General Editor
 Editors: Harriet Elinor Smith and Lin Salamo
 CSE Inspector: David Chesnutt, U of South Carolina
 Status: Approved by CSE 13 May 1997 [To guard against conflict of interest, the inspection and the committee's review of the inspector's report were conducted by the Deputy Chair, Heather Jackson.]
 Publisher: U of California Press, June 1977
 MLA Deposit Copies (2): Yes

Frederick Douglass

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
 The Frederick Douglass Papers, John W. Blassingame, General Editor
 Editors: John R. McKivigan, John W. Blassingame, Peter P. Hinks, and Gerald Faulkerson
 Inspector: Thomas L. McHaney, Georgia State U
 Status: Approved by CSE 20 June 1997
 Publisher: Yale UP, Forthcoming
 MLA Deposit Copies (2): No

William James

The Correspondence of William James, Vol. 6
 The Correspondence of William James, John J. McDermott, General Editor
 Editors: Ignas K. Skrupskelis and Elizabeth M. Berkeley
 Inspector: Anthony Harrison, North Carolina State U
 Status: Approved by CSE 20 June 1997
 Publisher: U of Virginia Press, Forthcoming
 MLA Deposit Copies (2): No

Editions Under Review

Willa Cather

Obscure Destinies
 The Works of Willa Cather, Susan J. Rosowski, General Editor
 Editors: Susan J. Rosowski, et al.
 Inspector: James L. W. West III
 Status: Two inspections needed: June 1996 and July 1997; balloting halted in September 1996, pending reinspection after new documents were found by the editors: balloting after the second inspection is now in progress

Death Comes for the Archbishop
 The Works of Willa Cather, Susan J. Rosowski, General Editor
 Editors: Susan J. Rosowski, et al.
 Inspector: Noel Polk, U of Southern Mississippi
 Status: Inspection under way as of April 1997; we

are awaiting the inspection report, pending editorial changes called for by the inspector

Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman: The Journalism, Vol. 1: 1834-1846.
The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman, Gay Wilson Allen and the late Sculley Bradley, General Editors
Editors: Herbert Bergman, Douglas A. Noverr, and the late Edward J. Recchia
Inspector: David J. Nordloh, Indiana U
Status: Inspection under way as of February 1997; we are awaiting the editors' reply to the inspection report

Anne Vaughan Lock

The Collected Works of Anne Vaughan Lock
Editor: Susan M. Felch
Inspector: Mario A. Di Cesare, State U of New York, Binghamton
Status: Inspection under way as of September 1997

William James

The Correspondence of William James, Vol. 7.
The Correspondence of William James, John J. McDermott, General Editor
Editors: Ignas K. Skrupskelis and Elizabeth M. Berkeley
Inspector: Now being sought
Status: Inspection requested for November 1997

Julian of Norwich

The Showings of Julian of Norwich
Editors: Anna Maria Reynolds and Julia Bolton Holloway
Inspector: Now being sought
Status: Inspection requested September 1997

Robert Penn Warren

The Collected Poems of Robert Penn Warren
Editor: John Burt
Inspector: Now being sought
Status: Inspection requested in March 1997, then delayed because the editor was negotiating with a new publisher (Louisiana State U Press)

Thomas Carlyle

Sartor Resartus
The Norman and Charlotte Strouse Edition of the Works of Thomas Carlyle, Murray Baumgarten, Editor-in-Chief
Editor: Rodger Tarr
Inspector: Peter Shillingsburg

Status: Waiting for the Editor-in-Chief to set a beginning date

James Fenimore Cooper

Die Heidenmauer
The Writings of James Fenimore Cooper, Kays S. House, Editor-in-Chief
Editors: Ernest K Redekop and James P. Elliott
Inspector: Ralph Orth
Status: Review under way; no recent developments

Formal Consultations

Emily Davies

The Letters of Emily Davies
Editor: Ann B. Murphy
Consultant: Elizabeth M. Berkeley
Status: Continuing

Harriet A. Jacobs

The Papers of Harriet A. Jacobs
Editor: Jean Fagan Yellin
Consultant: W. Speed Hill
Status: Continuing

Robinson Jeffers and Una Jeffers

The Collected Letters of Robinson Jeffers with Selected Letters of Una Jeffers
Editor: James Karman
Consultant: Robert H. Hirst
Status: Continuing

Recent Inquiries

Professor Glynis Carr from Bucknell University requested a copy of our guidelines, both for print and for electronic editions. She has prepared "an online edition of a selection of short fiction by Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880)."

David E. Schults from Milwaukee requested a copy of our guidelines. He and his colleague S. T. Joshi are "preparing several editions of works of Ambrose Bierce. One is an edition of his complete fiction."

American Literature Section Forums

Session 216. The Role of Publishing in the Shaping of American Literature I: Historical
Program arranged by the American Literature Section.
Presiding: Susan Kumin Harris, Penn State U, University Park

Michael D. Warner, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, "Colonial Geographies of Print"
Frances Smith Foster, Emory U, "African Americans, Publishing, and 'the Word' in the Nineteenth Century"
Janice A. Radway, Duke U, "The Book-of-the-Month Club, Middlebrow Culture, and the Structure of the Literary Field in the Twentieth Century"

Session 251. The Role of Publishing in the Shaping of American Literature II: Contemporary (A Roundtable)

Program arranged by the American Literature Section.
Presiding: William J. Harris, Penn State U, University Park

Speakers: Susan Chang, Oxford U Press; Malcolm Lester, Assn. of Canadian Publishers; Douglas Messerli, Sun and Moon Press; John Seelye, Penguin USA; Steve Dickson, Small Press Distribution, Inc.; Andre J. McNeillie, Blackwell Publishers

American Literature to 1800

Session 443. Discursive Formations I: Writing Travel in Early America

Program arranged by the Division on American Literature to 1800.

Presiding: Frank Shuffelton, U of Rochester

Michelle Habell-Pallan, Arizona State U, "Gender, Nation, and Popular Music: Refiguring Representations of Chicana Cultural Identity"

Ellie Hernandez, U of California, Berkeley, "Chronotope of Desire: Emma Perez's *Gulf Dreams*"

Dionne E. Espinoza, U of California, San Diego, "Chicana Standpoints: Feminism, Media, and Audiences"

Session 578. Discursive Formations II: Writing Family in Early America

Program arranged by the Division on American Literature to 1800.

Presiding: Sharon Marie Harris, U of Nebraska, Lincoln

Caleb Crain, Columbia U, "The Romantic Friendships of the Philadelphia Norrises"

Julia Ann Stern, Northwestern U, "The Failure of Fraternity in *Ormond*"

Bryce Traister, U of Western Ontario, "Authoring the Family in *Arthur Mervyn*"

Session 606. Discursive Formations III: Writing Cultural Confrontation in Early America

Program arranged by the Division on American Literature to 1800.

Presiding: Frank Shuffelton, U of Rochester

Thomas Joseph Scanlan, U of Virginia, "Fear and Love: Text and Image in Early Virginia"
Christopher D. Castiglia, Loyola U, Chicago, "Abolition Pedagogy, Cultural Conflict, and the Whitening of America"

Elizabeth Jane Wall Hinds, U of Northern Colorado, "In the Eyes of the Law: Olaudah Equiano, *The Life*, and the Juridical Self"

Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Session 579. Rethinking Classical Texts

Program arranged by the Division on Nineteenth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Susan K. Gillman, U of California, Santa Cruz

Barbara T. Ryan, U of Michigan, Ann Arbor, "Henry the Homemaker: *Walden* as Domestic Advice"

Jenine A. Dallal, Yale U, "Domesticity and Imperialism in *Moby-Dick*"

Bill Brown, U of Chicago, "Whitman's Use Value"

Howard Horwitz, U of Utah, "Can We Learn to Argue? Huck Finn and Culture"

Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century American Literature

Session 44. Forms of Ethnic Representation in Late-Nineteenth-Century and Early-Twentieth-Century United States Popular Culture

Program arranged by the Division on Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Richard Alan Yarbrough, U of California, Los Angeles

Michael A. Elliott, Columbia U, "'Old Indian Legends': The Textual Representation of Traditional Native American Literatures at the Turn of the Century"

Lafayette Bluford Adams, U of Iowa, "'Tis a Man's Game . . .': Mr. Dooley and the Making of Irish American Masculinity"

David E. E. Sloane, U of New Haven, "Dialect Poetry in Later-Nineteenth-Century American Poetry: Bibliographical Cautions concerning Interpretation"

Session 72. Ethnic Theater

Program arranged by the Division on Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Karen L. Kilcup, U of North Carolina, Greensboro

John W. Lowe, Louisiana State U, Baton Rouge, "Ethnic Carnival as Rite of Assent in Edward Harrigan's Comedies"

Annemarie Bean, New York U, "'Miss Lucy's Teeth Is Grinning': Wench Songs of Blackface Minstrelsy"

Elizabeth Ammons, Tufts U, "Sarah Winnemucca,

Self-Impersonation, and the Late-Nineteenth-Century 'Indian Show,'"

Respondent: Claudia C. Tate, Princeton U

Session 151. What's in Name? Pseudonyms and Pseudo Identities
Program arranged by the Division on Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Amy Ling, U of Wisconsin, Madison

Jean Marei Lutes, U of Wisconsin, Madison,
"Sensational Pseudonyms: Stunt Reporters in
the Popular Press of the 1880s and 1890s"

Alejandro J. Mejias-Lopez, U of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill, "Subverting from within: Female
Pseudonym, Authorship, and Misogyny in
Martí's 'Fatal Friendship'"

Martha J. Cutter, Kent State University, Kent,
"Smuggling across the Borders of Race and
Gender: Names as Identificatory Sites in 'Mrs.
Spring Fragrance'"

William Boelhower, U of Padua, "Pseudonyms and
Pseudo Identities: A Micromethodological
Approach to Identity Construction"

Twentieth-Century American Literature

Session 152. Does Modernity Have a Future? I: Knowledge Frames
Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Walter Kalaidjian, Emory U

Aldon L. Nielson, San Jose State U, "The Future of
an Illusion: The Color of Modernity"

*Session 290. Does Modernity Have a Future? II: Radical Pasts
and Radical Futures*

Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Cary Nelson, U of Illinois, Urbana

Barrett James Watten, Wayne State U, "Free
Radicals, Modernist Examples: Ellissitsky, Louis
Zukofsky, and Detroit Techno"

Daniel Moshenberg, George Washington U,
"Sweating Modernity: Textile, Sexual, Textual
Industry"

Alan M. Wald, U of Michigan, Ann Arbor, "From
Modernism to Communism: The Long Journey
of Aaron Kramer"

*Session 580. Does Modernity Have a Future? III: Economies of
Constraint*

Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-Century American Literature.

Presiding: Michael T. S. Thurston, Yale U

James F. English, U of Pennsylvania, "Toward a
Reflexive Sociology of Modern American
Culture"

Peter John Mountford, Queen's U, "Diminishing
Subjective Returns: Modernist Selfhood and
the Cash Sublime"

John G. Nichols, U of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, "The
Pedagogical Futures of Modernism: Negotiat-
ing Difficulty, Negotiating Reading"

Black American Literature and Culture

Session 189. James Baldwin: Artist, Intellectual, Activist
Program arranged by the Division on Black American
Literature and Culture.

Presiding: Dwight A. McBride, U of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh

Marlon Bryan Ross, U of Michigan, Ann Arbor,
"White Fantasies of Desire: Baldwin and the
Racist Identities of Sexuality"

Sharon Patricia Holland, Stanford U, "Our Worst
Fears in Blackface: the Black Gay Presence in
the African American Literary Imagination"

Joshua L. Miller, Columbia U, "One Can Only Face in
Others What One Can Face in Oneself: The
Baldwinian Witness and the Dialectics of Distance"

*Session 547. Cross-Generational Connections I: New Black
American Male Narratives*

Program arranged by the Division on Black American
Literature and Culture.

Presiding: Bernard W. Bell, Penn State U, University Park

Deborah Ann Cadman, Skidmore Coll., "Staged at
the Crossroads: Tragic Performances in the
Fiction of Randall Kenan and Charles Chesnut"

Aimé Jero Ellis, U of Texas, Austin, "Mapping
Black American Identity in the Narratives of
Nathan McCall, Malcolm X, Ralph Ellison, and
Richard Wright"

Doris S. Witt, U of Iowa, "'The Life You Save': John
Wideman's *Philadelphia Fire* and Mumia Abu-
Jamal's *Live from Death Row*"

*Session 592A. Cross-Generational Connections II: Black
Women's Fictions, Formulas, Markets*

Program arranged by the Division on Black American
Literature and Culture.

Presiding: Hortense Jeanette Spillers, Cornell U

Sabine Engle, Duke U, "Making More of Misfits:
Gayle Jones and the New Orthodoxies"

Sivagami Subbaraman, U of Maryland, College
Park, "'Words without Masters': Ethics and
Ethnics in the Marketplace"

Robin Wood, State U of New York, Albany, "Every-
one We Dream About We Are: Complicating
Notions of Authenticity in Contemporary Black
Women's Writing"

Corinne E. Blackmer, Southern Connecticut State U,
"Melancholic Mothers: Authenticity as Commod-
ity in Contemporary Black Women's Literature"

American Indian Literatures

Session 226. To Celebrate Canada's First Nations I: The Works of Thomas King

Program arranged by the Division on American Indian Literatures.

Presiding: Virginia I. Carney, U of Kentucky

Stuart Christie, U of California, Santa Cruz, "Time-Out (Slam-)Dunking Photographic Realism in Thomas King's *Medicine River*"

Renee Hulan, U of British Columbia, "Cultural Literacy in Canada: Teaching Thomas King's *Medicine River*"

Gillian H. Siddall, U of Guelph, "Cartography and Colonial Desire: Bodies, Mapping, and Resistance in Green Grass, Running Water"

Kathryn Winona Shanley, Cornell U, "Tricksters in the Insanitarium: Politics and American Indian Literature"

Session 607: Encounter and Assimilation Stories from Native American Perspectives

Program arranged by the Division on American Indian Literatures

Presiding: Alanna Kathleen Brown, Montana State U, Bozeman

Virginia I. Carney, U of Kentucky, "Ongoing Encounters: Robert Conley's Vision for Survival in *The Way South*"

Deborah Michelle Garfield, U of California, Los Angeles, "'Ripe Hunting ground of My Word's Beginnings': Zitkala-Sa, American Literacy, and the Quest for Indian Logos"

Susan L. Rockwell, Arizona State U, "The Autobiography of Mike Burns; or, The Assimilation of Ho-Mo-Thy-Oh (Wet Nose)"

James Richard Keegan, U of Delaware, Georgetown, "Twin Sons of a Different Father: Recouping Cultural Identity in the Aftermath of Assimilation in Sherman Alexie's 'This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona'"

Session 637. American Indian Literatures: Creating Syllabi
Program arranged by the Division on American Indian Literatures.

Presiding: James K. Ruppert, U of Alaska, Fairbanks

Speakers: Peter Grant Beidler, Lehigh U; Laurie E. Grobman, Lehigh U; Kenneth Morison Roemer, U of Texas, Arlington

Session 663. Joint Business Meeting of the Division on American Indian Literatures and the Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures.

1997 Articles of Organization of the American Literature Section of the MLA

This document was originally adopted on December 31, 1947 and has been revised and amended several times over the years. This 1997 version becomes the current "Articles of Organization" for distribution to members of the Section and of the American Literature Divisions.

MEMBERSHIP

Any member of the Modern Language Association who pays the American Literature Section yearly dues to the Journals Department of Duke University Press will be a voting member in good standing in the Section.

OFFICERS AND OFFICES

The officers of the Section will be a Chair, a Chair-elect, and the Executive Coordinator.

Offices of the organization will consist of an Advisory Council, an Executive Committee of three members, the Chairs of Standing Committees, the Secretaries of the five American Literature Divisions, and the Editor and the fifteen other members of the Board of Editors of *American Literature*.

TENURE OF OFFICE

The Chair of the Section will hold office for one year and will not be eligible for successive re-election. The Executive Coordinator will be eligible to continue in office for successive one-year terms, but the term of the Executive Coordinator will not exceed four consecutive years.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Chair. In consultation with the Advisory Council, the Chair will plan and preside over the program and the open meeting of the Section. He or she will appoint one member of the Hubbell Award Committee, three members of the Foerster Award Committee, and the members of other committees recommended by the Advisory Council. He or she will observe the regulations established by the Modern Language Association for guidance of its organization.

Chair-elect. The Chair-elect will attend the Council meeting immediately following his or her election to office as an ex-officio member. He or she may assume other duties as sitting Council and Chair determine.

Executive Coordinator. The Executive Coordinator will maintain the files of the Section, handle daily correspondence, monitor the collection of dues by Duke University Press, pay the bills of the Section, organize the annual Section functions at MLA, order Hubbell Medalion, conduct the annual election, work with the chair to plan and conduct the annual business meeting, work with the Chair and other members of the Advisory Council.

cil to run the Section, and compile, print, and distribute the annual report.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Advisory Council will consist of the Chair of the Section and the Executive Coordinator, six members to be elected two each per year for terms of three years each, and the Chairs of each of the five American Literature Divisions. The six elected members will not be eligible for successive re-election. If any member of the Council expects to be absent from its annual business meeting, that member can give a proxy to vote to a person from the following group: the Chairs of the Standing Committees, the Editor and the Members of the Board of Editors of *American Literature*, and the Secretaries of the Division. The Council will hold at least one session at each business meeting of the Section.

The Council will make nominations to the standing committees, to the Board of *American Literature*, and to the Council and certify all nominations submitted by members of the Section; after the balloting is completed, it will certify the election of candidates duly chosen according to the provisions of these articles; and it will consider such matters of policy as may be brought before it and make appropriate recommendations to the Section and the Divisions.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Members of these committees will be appointed by the Chair of the Section upon the recommendations of the Advisory Council or as specified herein.

1. *Executive Committee*. It will consist of the Chair of the Section, the Executive Coordinator, and one other member of the Section selected by the Chair. It will have power in all urgent matters that require action between meetings of the Section.

2. *Hubbell Award Committee*. It will consist of five members, oriented to four regions and serving five-year terms. The Chair of the Award Committee will be the member serving his or her fifth and last term. The Committee will be responsible for nominating candidates for the Hubbell Medal according to provisions adopted by the Advisory Council.

3. *Foerster Award Committee*. It will consist of three voting members of the Section appointed annually by the Chair of the Section. It will be responsible for selecting the best essay in *American Literature* during the calendar year.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

The annual general election will include the officers of the Section and two members of the Advisory Council. The two members of the Advisory Council in the sec-

ond of their three-year terms will constitute the annual slate for the election of the Chair of the Section. The winner of this election will serve as Chair in the following year. Nominations for the annual general election of the Section will come from the Advisory Council, who will serve as a nominating committee as a whole.

Upon receiving from the Advisory Council the names of approved nominees, the Executive Coordinator will announce the names at the business meeting of the Section and in his or her annual report to all members of the Section.

Each year, the Executive Coordinator will mail to each voting member of the Section a ballot containing the nominations. Thus circulated, these names constitute a ballot to be marked and returned to the Executive Coordinator not later than December 1. It will be the duty of the council to certify the election of candidates. The Executive Coordinator will announce the results of the election at the annual business meeting.

Whenever vacancies occur in any elective offices, the Executive Committee will appoint for the unexpired terms in all cases except those of Chair and of Executive Coordinator. The Executive Coordinator will serve out the unexpired term of the Chair. The Advisory Council will appoint someone for the unexpired term of the Executive Coordinator.

AMERICAN LITERATURE DIVISIONS

In order to preserve the advantages of a unified American literature organization within the Modern Language Association, an organization that can effectively plan and sponsor projects research and publication, the divisions will be represented by voting members on the Advisory Council.

The Section and the Divisions will work intensively and conscientiously to preserve and strengthen the unity of the American literature establishment as a whole. If the officers and Executive Committee members are not already members in good standing of the Section, they should become members.

AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to these Articles of organization originate with the Advisory Council. Copies of the amendments approved by the Council will be mailed to all members of the Section with the final ballots or published in the Executive Coordinator's Report or in *American Literature*. Proposed amendments submitted to the Council too late to receive circulation before the annual meeting will not be voted on until the following year.

All ballots will be submitted in writing and signed. A proposed amendment will be adopted if approved by a majority of the total number of votes cast.

1997 Articles of Agreement Between the American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association of America and Duke University

1. The American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association of America (hereinafter designated as “the Section”) will continue to cooperate with the Duke University Press (hereinafter designated as “the Press”) in the management and production of the journal entitled *American Literature* (hereinafter designated as “the Journal”). The cooperation between the Press and the Section will continue in force without specific terms of renewal, but either party may, of course, review the relationship from time to time. Duke University Press reserves the right to sever the association between the Section and *American Literature*, and the Section reserves the right to dissociate itself and remove its name from *American Literature*. One year’s prior declaration of intent by either party will constitute reasonable advance notice of dissociation.

2. Each issue of the journal will carry on its inside front cover the words “Published with the co-operation of the American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association of America and will be called *American Literature*.”

3. All fiscal matters and allied functions such as rates, the handling of subscriptions, advertisements, rights to reprint, copyright, etc., will be the responsibility of the Press, which will continue to hold legal ownership of the journal.

4. Responsibility for *American Literature* will reside with the American Literature Section, with Duke University Press, and with the Editor, who will be ex officio a member of the Council and will be appointed by the appropriate authorities of Duke University after consulting with the Advisory Council of the Section and securing its approval.

5. The Editor will be appointed for a five-year term, with the approval of the Advisory Council of the Section, renewable, with the further approval of the Council, for one more five-year term only. Duke University will release him or her from part of his or her regular university duties and provide secretarial assistance sufficient to allow proper performance of editorial duties in connection with editing the journal. The Chair of the Duke University Department of English, the Director of the Duke University Press, and the Editor will consult regularly with the chair of the Advisory Council on their mutual interest in the journal.

Upon accession to the position of Chair of the American Literature Section, the Chair of the Section will write to the Chair of the Duke University English Department to ascertain any probable changes in personnel pertinent to the Editorship of *American Literature*. In the third

year of the tenure of the Editor, the Chair of the Section will ask the Chair of the Duke University English Department to propose a nominee or nominees for the next five-year term.

Should an emergency require the temporary appointment of an Acting Editor, the Chair of the Duke University Department of English will propose a nominee or nominees through the Section’s Chair to the Section’s Advisory Council for approval.

6. The Board of Editors will consist of fifteen members of the Section, who will be selected by the Advisory Council of the Section and the Editor working together and approved by the vote of the Section. Members of the board of Editors will serve for terms of three years each. The members of the Board elected by the Section will be drawn from the ranks of established scholars and critics and will be distributed with a view to representing the various fields of American literature and, so far as possible, the various geographical sections of the United States. The contents of the journal will finally be the responsibility of the Editor, except that no article will be published that has not been approved by the Board of Editors, with the exception that the Editor may publish one article in each issue that has not been approved by the Board of Editors; the primary purpose of this provision is to allow the Editor to continue the present practice of including “Extra” essays that address issues of immediate importance to readers and the Section.

The Editor and the Board of Editors may appoint an Associate Editor. The Associate Editor is not automatically to be the successor to the Editor. The Associate Editor will be appointed by the Editor with the approval of a majority of the Board of Editors.

The Editor may appoint an acting Associate Editor should an emergency require such an appointment. The Editor’s appointee must be approved by a majority of the Board of Editors.

The Advisory Council of the Section and the Press will approve any other editor whom the Editor may call upon to help carry on the editorial functions of the journal, should some need arise.

When the Associate Editor or any additional editors are appointed, the Editor will request that their academic institutions grant them release from a part of their regular university duties and secretarial assistance sufficient to allow them properly to perform their duties in connection with editing the journal. Such appointments will be for five years.

**Lists from the Jay B. Hubbell Center for American
Literary Historiography
Special Collections Library
Duke University
Durham, NC 127708-0185
Telephone: 919-660-5820
FAX: 919-684-2855**

American Literature Group/Section Chairs

1921: Killis Campbell
1922: Arthur H. Quinn
1923: Percy H. Boynton
1924: Fred L. Pattee
1925-27: Jay B. Hubbell
1928-29: Kenneth B. Murdock
1930-31: Robert E. Spiller
1932: Ralph L. Rusk
1933-34: Stanley T. Williams
1935-36: Howard Mumford Jones
1937-38: Sculley Bradley
1939: Jay B. Hubbell
1940-41: Napier Wilt
1942: Milton Ellis
1943: Tremaine McDowell
1944: Louise Pound
1945: Gregory Paine
1946: Willard Thorp
1947: Perry Miller
1948: Harry H. Clark
1949: Ernest E. Leisy
1950: Harry R. Warfel
1951: Randall Stewart
1952: Floyd Stovall
1953: Leon Howard
1954: William Charvat
1955: Gay Wilson Allen
1956: Theodore Hornberger
1957: Charles Anderson
1958: Walter Blair
1959: Clarence Gohdes
1960: Norman Holmes Pearson
1961: Herbert R. Brown
1962: Hyatt H. Waggoner
1963: Henry Nash Smith
1964: Lewis Leary
1965: Lyon N. Richardson
1966: Henry A. Pochmann
1967: Arlin Turner
1968: Roy Harvey Pearce
1969: John Gerber
1970: Hugh Holman
1971: Harrison Hayford
1972: Michael Millgate
1973: Norman Grabo
1974: Louis D. Rubin, Jr.
1975: Richard B. Davis

1976: Russel B. Nye
1977: Nathalia Wright
1978: William M. Gibson
1979: Edwin Cady
1980: Walter B. Rideout
1981: Joseph Blotner
1982: James M. Cox
1983: Lewis Simpson
1984: Nina Baym
1985: Martha Banta
1986: Roger Asselineau
1987: Leo Marx
1988: John Seelye
1989: J. A. Leo Lemay
1990: James Justus
1991: Emory Elliott
1992: Blanche Gelfant
1993: Elaine Hedges
1994: Eric Sundquist
1995: William Andrews
1996: Linda Wagner-Martin
1997: Susan K. Harris

**American Literature Section Secretary/Treasurers/
Executive Coordinators**

1921-22: Francis A. Litz
1923: Robert Spiller
1924-26: Ernest Leisy
1928-36: Sculley Bradley
1937-41: Tremaine McDowell
1942-45: Alexander Cowie
1946-49: Allan Halline
1950-53: Arlin Turner
1954-57: Robert P. Falk
1957-61: Alexander Kern
1962-64: James Woodress
1966-69: Paul J. Carter, Jr.
1970-73: Robert Edson Lee
1974-77: William Mulder
1978-81: Charles Milon
1982-85: Donald Yannella
1986: Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV
1987-90: Jerome Loving
1991-94: Paul Sorrentino
1995- Susan Belasco

Jay B. Hubbell Medal Winners

1964: Jay B. Hubbell
1965: Norman Foerster
1967: Robert E. Spiller
1970: Howard Mumford Jones
1972: Willard Thorp
1973: Leon Howard
1974: Walter Blair
1975: Henry Nash Smith
1976: Lewis Leary

1977: Gay Wilson Allen
1978: Cleanth Brooks
1979: Malcolm Cowley
1980: Robert Penn Warren
1981: Lewis Mumford
1982: Alfred Kazin
1983: R.W.B. Lewis
1984: Roy Harvey Pearce
1985: James Woodress
1986: Leon Edel
1987: Daniel Aaron
1988: Richard Poirier
1989: Nathalia Wright
1990: Edwin Cady
1991: Lewis Simpson
1992: Merton M. Sealts, Jr.
1993: Leo Marx
1994: Leslie Fiedler
1995: Blanche H. Gelfant
1996: Blyden Jackson
1997: James M. Cox

1993: Lauren Berlant
1994: Caleb Crain
1995: Carla Kaplan
1996: Chadwick Allen
1997: Lisa A. Long

Note: This version of the 1997 Annual Report of the American Literature Section of the MLA differs from the one distributed in 1998 in format, pagination, and cover art. It was prepared specifically for downloading in the form of a pdf (page description format) file from the ALS-MLA website: <<http://www.duke.edu/web/dupress/ALS/index.html>>.

**Norman Foerster Award for the Best Article in
*American Literature***

1964: Allen Guttman
1965: Daniel Fuchs
1966: Eugene Huddleston
1967: Robert Reilly
1968: Lawrence Buell
1969: Benjamin Spencer
1970: Margaret Blanchard
1971: Thomas Philbrick
1972: Alan Howard
1973: Patricia Tobin & Eddy Dow
(separate articles)
1974: Robert Marler
1975: James Barbour
1976: Robert Lee Stuart & William Andrews
(separate articles)
1977: Charles Scruggs & Philip Gura
(separate articles)
1978: Stephen J. Tapscott
1979: Bryan Short
1980: Robert A. Ferguson
1981: Thomas M. Walsh & Thomas D. Zlatic
1982: Christopher P. Wilson
1983: Michael North
1984: Karen Dandurand
1985: David Hesla
1986: Joan Burbick
1987: Cynthia Jordan
1988: Margaret Dickie
1989: Richard Lyon
1990: Catherine Rainwater
1991: Lora Romero
1992: Michael Warner