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Ann Murphy (Sara) and Joan Gale (Nora) in Boston's Lyric Stage production of A Touch of the Poet, directed by Polly Hogan. A review appears on pp. 29-30.
EDITOR’S FOREWORD

A May issue in July? A double issue comprising May and September? What’s up? And why is the editor sporting that rhapsodic grin and kicking up his heels in glee? He hastens to explain, after expressing the hope that tempers aroused by the tardiness of the May issue will be calmed by the precociousness of its September half!

The Publications Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society has, after lengthy deliberation, consummated the merger of the Society and the Newsletter. For the present, the Newsletter will serve as the semi-official voice of the Society, whose members will receive it automatically, the subscription cost being a part of their annual Society dues. And each issue will include a special Society Section; in the present issue, it comprises pp. 18-24. To answer the last of the questions above, it is the Society-Newsletter marriage that arouses the editorial grin and glee.

As chairman of the Society's Membership Committee, the editor hopes that non-member subscribers will choose to join the Society at subscription-renewal time or before. The Newsletter will continue to be available to non-members, but the non-member subscription rate for individuals will jump to $10 in 1981—a necessity as illustrations, which entail a more costly printing process, proliferate in response to readers' approbation. So, for just $10 more than the subscription rate, readers can reap all the additional benefits of Society membership as well. (Anyone interested in fuller membership information should write to the address cited at the top of p. 19.)

One might ask why lengthy deliberation was required to achieve such appropriate and propitious nuptials. An answer to that question will also answer the first two questions with which this foreword began. Society dues and memberships are based on the calendar year, whereas the thrice-annual Newsletter, since the first issue of Volume I appeared in May, has always had its unbalanced feet in two years—the big foot (two issues: May and September) in one year, and the little foot (one issue: January) in the next. To facilitate the consolidation of the Newsletter as an organ of the Society, and to make it too a calendar-year enterprise, it was the recommendation of the Publications Committee, with the assent of the editor, that there be two rather than three issues in Volume IV, one of them being a double issue. And it was my decision, considering its richness and length, that this issue constitute the "double bill." Hence its delayed publication, its date of May and September rather than the traditional May, and its designation as Volume IV, Nos. 1-2.

The second issue of Volume IV (Number 3) will appear in late October, and I vow to make it as substantial as the May-September issue, so that no current subscriber will feel aggrieved at receiving two rather than three copies of the Newsletter for his/her subscription payment. To solemnize that vow, I affix—well, lacking the wax for hundreds of seals, I affix my signature. I hope that you will share my pleasure at the merger and at the contents of what I consider one of the best issues yet.

[Signature]
THE TRANSITIONAL NATURE OF ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT WINGS

All God's Chillun Got Wings, written in 1923, represents an interesting transition for O'Neill. Following The Fountain (1921-22), a rhapsodic epic embarrassing even to its author, and Welded (1922-23), a drastic reversion to Strindberg's early style of naturalism, All God's Chillun carries with it the double imprint of the works immediately preceding it. Characterization is developed with greater attention to detail, and there is a willingness on the part of O'Neill to temporize the inevitable while groping toward some new formulation of human development measured against the background of symbolic forces. However, O'Neill has not abandoned expressionism for social realism. Although the surface theme is miscegenation (treated with a sensitivity far in advance of its time), the interior action of the play is of a piece with The Emperor Jones and The Hairy Ape, dealing with the corruption of selfhood and destruction of vitality associated with a warped community. One theme implicit in the earlier plays is sounded here even more clearly: the violation of personal selfhood is one with the collective violation of the communal spirit.

In one sense we may consider Jim Harris's union with Ella Downey as an extension of the relationship between Yank and Mildred left undeveloped in The Hairy Ape. Significantly, this marriage of symbolic opposites results in madness and regression to a childhood past. Like Yank, Jim destroys his innate, positive vitality by attempting to define himself through Ella's eyes, which are those of a corrupt society. Like Mildred, Ella is the misguided agent of Jim's recognition. Together Jim and Ella succeed only in destroying one another, although at the play's end a fragile bond of love appears to remain intact.

A comparison with The Emperor Jones also proves revealing. Jim's error, like that of Jones, is a mistaken belief that freedom and selfhood may be acquired through the external trappings of status and success. Jones breaks from the community to play "white man" to the natives of his island empire. Jim leaves for Europe but returns demanding only to be accepted by the community at large. Yet Jim's desire is tainted also by his longing to "buy white," his drive to wear the white man's mask by which he hopes to be acknowledged. That dream corrupts his innocence, for "white" in the world of All God's Chillun (as defined by Ella) means the will to power: "I want the whole world to know you're the whitest of the white! I want you to climb and climb--and step on 'em, stamp right on their mean faces!" To achieve this end, Jim enslaves himself to a false image of white selfhood before which he bows down as to an idol.

One may go so far as to say that O'Neill has created for us here (with no trace of levity) "the son of Emperor Jones," a self-conscious Black no longer isolated on an island but struggling at the center of American society. Interestingly, a prominently displayed photograph of Jim's father suggests a portrait of the Emperor himself. Framed in gold, it reveals "an elderly Negro with an able, shrewd face but dressed in outlandish lodge regalia, a get-up adorned with medals, sashes, a cocked hat with frills--the whole effect as absurd to contemplate as one of Napoleon's Marshalls in full uniform" (II, ii, p. 112). Jim's father, we are told, made it "to de top," became the owner of a building and a business and died with lots of money in the bank. O'Neill's meaning is obvious: the illusions of the father are visited upon the son. But hanging opposite that portrait in the Harris home is "a Negro primitive mask from the Congo--a grotesque face, inspiring obscure, dim connotations in one's mind, but beautifully done, conceived in a true religious spirit" (Ibid.). For Jim as for Jones the mask is a symbol of projected identity and possibly communal expiation. But Jim's identity can be discovered only in the context of the present, and only through an acknowledgement of Ella's identity as well.

The form of the play is innovative and worthy of attention. O'Neill divides his play into two long acts--the first tracing the childhood, adolescence and eventual marriage of Jim and Ella; the second beginning with the couple's return from France, where they had fled to

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1 Nine Plays by Eugene O'Neill (New York: Modern Library, 1954), Act II, scene i, p. 120. Additional references are identified parenthetically in the text.
escape the pressures of American prejudice. The four scenes in Act I are filled with the "spirit of music"—White and Black choruses, solo singers, a Salvation Army Band, church bells, and an organ grinder. In the second act there is no music, but the sustaining presence of some vital force is suggested by Ella's madness and the expressionist distortion of objects which become symbolic dream images. It is worth noting that while there are four scenes in the first act (an afternoon, evening, night, and morning in the Spring of different years), there are but three scenes in the second (at morning, at twilight, and at night), suggesting a conscious lack of structural parallelism on O'Neill's part in keeping with his painful yet irresolute ending.

In other significant ways, too, the play's structure is unique. Song and sound effects are invested with thematic meaning, rooms and objects increase and diminish in size, and the whole stage is separated into geometric divisions. O'Neill's advanced concepts of production clearly are the result of Kenneth Macgowan and Robert Edmond Jones's influence, and in particular, the latter's notion of "group-beings." O'Neill himself would later write: "In All God's Chillun Got Wings, all save the seven leading characters [Jim, his mother, his sister Hattie, Ella, Shorty, Joe and Mickey] should be masked; for all the secondary figures are part and parcel of the Expressionist background of the play, a world at first indifferent, then cruelly hostile, against which the tragedy of Jim Harris is outlined."2

O'Neill's comment directs our attention to unspoken feelings in the play and to the symbolic objects on stage which are intended to express them. When the curtain goes up on the second act, the stage is dominated by a "queer clash" of incongruities characterizing the Harris parlor; in particular, the outlandish photograph of Jim's father fronting that great Congo mask which seems to have been "conceived in a true religious spirit." The mask is Jim's wedding present from his sister Hattie, a proud Black separatist. As a totemic link between Jim, his tribal roots, and the old collective unity between the tribe and nature, the mask, one expects, ought to exert a dynamic influence in the apartment. But the force symbolized by the mask, O'Neill tells us, has been perverted by its context. "In this room ... the mask acquires an arbitrary accentuation. It dominates by a diabolical quality that contrast imposes upon it" (II, i, p. 112).

The contradictions symbolized by the mask are representative of Jim and Ella's relationship at this juncture in the play. They have returned to America, Jim tells Hattie, "to come back and face it," hoping that "by being brave we'd free ourselves, and gain confidence and be really free inside" (II, i, p. 116). For in France they found it impossible to face themselves; their first year together they spent living "like a brother and a sister." Now they have no alternative but to face themselves, and the pressure proves overwhelming. Ella genuinely loves Jim, but she still cannot accept him without making him over in her image. And Jim continues to allow Ella to define the terms of his existence, although his motives now are somewhat purified, even selfless: "To hell with me!... I'm all she's got in the world! I got to prove I can be all to her! I've got to prove worthy! I've got to prove she can be proud of me! I've got to prove I'm the whitest of the white!" (II, ii, pp. 124-125).

Subconsciously Ella does everything in her power to undermine Jim's chances of passing the "Bar" in order to maintain her own self-image of superiority. But in her more rational moments she keeps pushing Jim to pass. These opposing motives constitute an inner conflict that eventually pushes her toward madness. In Act II, scene ii, the walls of the apartment "appear shrunken in, the ceiling lowered, so that the furniture, the portrait and the mask look unnaturally large and domineering" (p. 121). In a somnambulist trance, Ella tries to kill Jim with a carving knife while he is bent over his law books. When she regains her senses she has become a little girl again, attempting to find her way back to the world depicted at the opening of the play.

In the final scene ("the ceiling now seems barely to clear the people's heads") these contradictions are magnified and are disbursed in an explosion of symbolic violence. When

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Ella learns that Jim has failed in his last attempt to pass the bar, she enters into a wild dance, grabs the Congo mask from the wall, slashes it and pins it with her carving knife to the table. "You devil!" Jim cries out. "You white devil woman! (In a terrible roar, raising his fists above his head) You devil!" (II, iii, p. 131). But Ella argues that the devil was the mask: "It's all right, Jim! It's dead! The devil's dead! See! It couldn't live--unless you passed. If you'd passed it would have lived in you. Then I'd have had to kill you, Jim, don't you see?" (Ibid.) There is some truth in what Ella says here, but the ultimate meaning of her action is ambiguous. In "killing" the mask Ella has exorcised her own devil, perhaps, but what of Jim's? Although not entirely responsible for her actions, she has robbed Jim, it would appear, of the symbolic link to his original communal context. Yet the mask itself has always been a diabolical presence in their household--an image rather than a reality--and in purging her hatred by destroying it, she at least has made Jim's task easier. She is correct also in her belief that if Jim had passed the "Bar," had "bought white," the devil would have lived in him. Now that threat has ended.

Jim also senses this. When Ella asks him whether God will forgive her for what she has done, he replies: "Maybe He can forgive what you've done to me; and maybe He can forgive what I've done to you; but I don't see how He's going to forgive--Himself" (II, iii, p. 132). The speech is a close rewording of Zarathustra's message, "On the Pitying": "And if a friend does you evil, then say: 'I forgive you what you did to me; but that you have done it to yourself--how could I forgive that?' Thus speaks all great love: It over­comes even forgiveness and pity." Although Jim and Ella's union ultimately ends in infantile regression--"Be my little boy, Jim. Pretend you're Painty Face and I'm Jim Crow" (II, iii, p. 133) --a new kind of love is born to them which does indeed transcend both pity and forgiveness. It would seem that, instead of sacrificing the character to the mask (as in The Emperor Jones), O'Neill here sacrifices the mask to the character. The result is a vision of beatitude which Jim attains as the play draws to a close: "Forgive me, God, for blaspheming you! Let this fire of burning suffering purify me of selfishness and make me worthy of the child You send me for the woman You take away!" (Ibid.) Some aspects of that beatitude may seem perverse; yet T. S. Eliot called this ending of the play "magnificent." Jim does seem transfigured by an outside force. But the play's ending is disturbing.

In Desire Under the Elms, written in 1924, O'Neill is able to arrive at a more positive affirmation. The powerful ending of the play is a return to that of All God's Chillun, but in Desire the life force is genuinely exalted in the passionate love of Abbie and Eben, while Ephraim, god-like in his towering isolation, is left to "forgive himself" for a creation brought to abundance and then blighted by his own hand. This parallel points to another aspect of the transitional nature of All God's Chillun Got Wings and suggests again its importance to O'Neill's development in the twenties. After Beyond the Horizon (written in 1918), O'Neill completed eleven plays (including some one-acts) and worked on several others. But Chillun is his most successful effort to depict a psychologically complex relationship between a man and woman. In this respect it looks ahead to the great character explorations of the later plays as well as back to the dynamic symbolism of his apprenticeship.

--Michael Hinden


THE EMPEROR JONES: A JUNGIAN VIEW OF THE ORIGIN OF FEAR IN THE BLACK RACE

While few of Eugene O'Neill's plays are staged as effectively as The Emperor Jones, none, however, receive interpretation as tentative and as indecisive. Travis Bogard's comment—that "What the action of Brutus Jones means, set apart from its stereotypical embellishments, is not entirely obvious"—is representative of the dilemma that the play presents to critical judgment. One may account for the dilemma by recognizing that O'Neill seldom exploited stage business so fully, allowing it such primary importance in carrying the play's meaning. Perhaps because this drama's meaning is lodged so completely within the stage setting and stage sounds, interpretations of it appear to be incomplete.

Engel maintains that "The Emperor Jones ... is a simple representation of psychological naturalism for its own sake, ingeniously contrived to a point where one must recognize the performance as a tour de force." John Henry Raleigh's excellent work hardly even treats the play, giving most of its attention to the misfortunes of Charles S. Gilpin, the creator of the role of Brutus Jones. Carpenter acknowledges Jung's Collective Unconscious as a paradigm for the play's action, but he avoids that perspective when he holds that Jones's chief error is his denial of Romantic Idealism as an operating base for human conduct. Falk, on the other hand, stresses Jung's Collective Unconscious as a perspective within which to approach the play, but, while seeing more than mere naturalism at work, confuses the meaning of the crocodile by confining it to being an incarnation of Jones's evil, emerging as an avenging God.

There are several matters missing from this approach. For one, the crocodile is not viewed, in Falk's analysis, with reference to the tribe itself, nor is it readily understood as an incarnation of the tribe's evil made over in the form of an avenging God. Further, what is really lacking is a justification of the tribe's ancestral past being meaningful to Jones's experience as an individual at his own (much later) point in time. The struggle, as well as the fate, of the tribe is not seen as being continued and paralleled in the struggle of Jones. Primarily, the Crocodile God is not seen as that object of ideal belonging brought to sinister dimensions by superstitious, primitive religious ritual.

Common to most criticism is the failure to examine the palpable fear generated within Jones in the light of a more extensive application of Jung's Collective Unconscious. No one discounts the issue of fear in the play; in fact, fear, all too intensely present, actually determines the nature of stage setting and sound. Yet an understanding of the genesis of this fright might increase if one persisted in an analysis that allowed its perspective to be set for it by The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Most accounts do not utilize Jung's views to explain the nature of fear in both the personal and racial pasts of Jones. Little effort has been made to show Jones's quest as only a slight permutation of the ancestral tribe's quest—both being paradigms of the quests of all men. Yet the collective unconscious does supply a framework that allows the two different pasts to be interpreted in the light of a common referent. Certainly, it allows fear to be seen more clearly as deriving from one, single root condition.

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In brief, Jung's observations stress the existence of a collective unconscious, an instinctual life below the ready access of consciousness, which all men share in common. Instincts of a sublunary nature might be the communally-shared fear of night, or the need for both a feminine and masculine influence in one's life in order to attain psychic wholeness. Instincts of a spiritual nature, however, come closer to O'Neill's purposes: such instincts as the need for a parentage of divine proportions, such as that embodied in the divine syzygies, or the need for a spiritual as well as a physical birth, or the need for a God.

These unconscious instincts, present in all men, seek successful expression at the conscious level. When allowed to find a continuous path up from unconscious life into conscious expression, the collective unconscious successfully releases an instinctual energy which becomes a source of exhilaration, strength, and personal unity—all properties of the Romantic unity of being after which an early O'Neill protagonist chased. Since it is constituted of energy, the instinctual life, once emerging complete and fulfilled, affords that inner harmony that allows for non-selfconsciousness, another important property of O'Neill's Romantic ideal. Naturally, the archetypal instincts, satisfied, do not provide the material for drama; certainly not for O'Neill's tragedies, centered as they are in struggle and quest. Thus, the successful expression of the archetypal instincts, for dramatic purposes, has to be aborted in order to set the terms for an O'Neillian tragic struggle.

With the Death of God, Jung affirms the disconnection of the archetypal instincts from their easy expression in conscious life. The ready outlets that religion supplied for the release of the collective unconscious instincts are no longer available. Jung's principal point—is at least for consideration of The Emperor Jones—is the observation that the instinctual energies, robbed of ready release, do not dry up and dissipate; instead, they continue to exist in a repressed state and are forced to turn inward upon man, producing subsequent sieges of anxiety, fear, and projection. In Jung's words, "The archetype behind a religious idea has, like every instinct, its specific energy, which it does not lose even if the conscious mind ignores it." The often quoted letter of O'Neill's to George Jean Nathan reveals his sensitivity to Jung's stress on the survival of such instincts independent of a denied religious life. "The playwright today must dig at the roots of the sickness of today as he feels it—the death of the Old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new one for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in."

The Emperor Jones, therefore, is not a play about the black man's and the white man's attempts to satisfy the surviving religious instinct. The black man fails to satisfy his need to quell fear due to the religious ritual being superstitious in nature. And the white man, despite the fact that his conscious mind ignores the archetypal need for God, still tries, and fails, to conquer the fear of spiritual displacement because the modern surrogate for God, Money, is equally superstitious in nature.

The Emperor Jones, therefore, is really O'Neill's demonstration of how the black race has failed to achieve a continuity between unconscious, archetypal instincts and the conscious expression of those instincts. The terror of not belonging to self and of not belonging in a unity with all being borders on the either/or terrors of Puritan election. For this reason, the black man is an inheritor of fear, of a terror that is ongoing from his racial past even into his American present. But the fear urges, in fact demands, that he make his attempts at belonging. Unfortunately for Jones, his attempts to satisfy the archetypal instincts must be conducted in a modern setting whose only equivalent for the black man's Crocodile God is now Money. Even as the tribe sought to become one with the ultimate power that sinewed the universe, so Jones attempts to anneal himself to that single power that

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makes all life move the way it does. Money, in the modern setting, is the ultimate power that sinews the earth; its possession makes one master of life and, therefore, master over fear.

While it may be reversing the order of the play, it is probably easier to reveal its Jungian parallels by dealing with the earliest point in historical time, Scene Seven, the racial scapegoat sacrifice. The sacrifice exists as a ritual intended by the primitive blacks to fulfill primitive religious aspirations. So that the will of that power which pervades existence be made to cohere with the tribe's will for itself, the human sacrifice is offered to a specific agent who either symbolizes or possesses divine power. Jones is offered to the crocodile so that the tribe may be reconciled with a spiritual father and a God. Typical of a ritual offering, the wished-for result is to harmonize the deity's will with man's will so that the divine power now accords with human needs. Divine power, then, is to inhere within the tribe and its individual members. To exist within power and yet have that power operate as pure benefice is the ritual's aim. This, in effect, is the tribe expressing its archetypal instinct to belong. Succeeding in this, the tribe would possess its own soul by identifying its aims and intentions with a transcendent object. An imperturbable spiritual power existing as a dimension of its inner life would make for the tribe's controlling experience.

At this point, O'Neill's accent on superstition can be seen in its full importance. Superstition pervades the play. It opens with Jones's position, established by superstition, being threatened by the tribe's superstition. The whole movement of the play is within the framing device of one superstition replacing another, whether it be Lem's replacing Jones's or the white man's replacing the black man's. In his ancient, tribal superstition, the black man does not secure a belonging whereby he would be master of his own psychic and spiritual state. The tribe's superstition subordinates man to nature, and, rather than achieving the ideal independence of soul so necessary to O'Neill's characters, the black man becomes dependent upon the vagaries of nature. Weather changes, crop failures, the death of offspring; these force a reconsideration of the tribe's successfully belonging to God, to the cosmos, and to itself. The continuum between unconscious instincts and conscious expression of those instincts, though satisfied by the tribe's ritual, is resolved erratically. Fear is never eliminated.

At this point in historical time, the black race is absorbed into white civilization, which has its own formula to appease the archetypal instincts. The aggressive materialism reflected in slave trading gives witness to the type of power the white man seeks in order to quell fear. Thus the black man, his archetypal instincts still alive in the modern setting, is made subject, in that setting, to others who believe they have the answers to belonging. The black man's Behind Life force, aggravated and internalized, becomes enamoured of a substitute deity offering a newer version of connection between the unconscious instincts and their conscious evocation. To his physical slavery is added the slavery to the proposition that the basic issues of life are settled by a materialist solution. The belief that they can possess their own souls through the possession of things outside of it is, for O'Neill, the white men's answer to the problem of belonging. The black man, in his spiritually weakened state, is made the victim of those who, under the illusion of satisfying their instinctual life, seek physical power and depend on it to sustain their illusion.

Jones sees the white world as pursuing an aim common to the black race—a participation in power and a harmony with the laws of the universe—that the white man seeks in his materialist belonging. But an essential distinction lies in the fact that, while the black man sought an internal power, a spiritual power, the white man understands his power in a purely material, external, physical sense. For the whites, then, worldly goods and their benefits become the surrogate objects of belonging through which spiritual satiety is, presumably, made possible.

Of course, Jung's position denies that these objects will ever serve satisfactorily as substitutes for the real religious objects that harmonize unconscious life with conscious life. Wealth can only be an illusory solution to satisfying the archetypal instincts. But for a time, perhaps for two hundred years or more, the capitalist appeal mesmerizes with its
power and its prospect of self-sufficiency. This explains the setting bathed in white and in light in the opening scene. As Michael Hinden notes, "The entire setting is a projected wish fulfillment of Jones's power craving self." Coupled with Jones's resplendent, regal attire, summoning the images of power, are the whiteness and light that illustrate the presumed clarity of purpose and the personal destiny possessed by Jones in his dedication to the white materialist ideal. The subsequent forest gloom, however, announces the tentative and illusory nature of this new, materialist resolution of the unconscious life-conscious life continuum. Jones's fulfillment of the archetypal instincts is as illusory as the ancient tribe's failed attempt.

Immediately Jones's material mastery of life is challenged: the formless fears emerge. And his fears intensify as his sense of spiritual direction, founded on a false God, diminishes. As the accouterments of power are stripped away, Jones's near-naked self is vivid testimonial to the need to belong to something within self rather than to something external to self. Jones moves from the light of "salvation" to the terror and darkness of "damnation." Having no satisfying state of spiritual belonging surviving from his roots in his ancestral past, Jones has pursued an equally bankrupt belonging by imitating the white man's erroneous solution to the unconscious archetypal instincts' expression. That fear is so quickly and so completely precipitated in Jones is a full representation of the Jungian picture of fear when man's unconscious instincts are internalized and given no conscious objectification.

This not-belonging-to-self, made inevitable by not belonging to the appropriate external, eternal object, is what the fear motif of The Emperor Jones is all about. With no true source of spirituality from his past to satisfy belonging, and with nothing to satisfy spiritual needs in his present but an impotent materialism, Jones is a representative of many black men—disenfranchised from purposeful life throughout their histories. The power that true belonging to a divinity predicates becomes, in terms of the white man's materialist belonging, a naked, raw, unmediated physical power symbolized by slave ships, slave sales, chain gangs, and weapons—all vestiges of criminal purpose.

Obviously, power, in the white man's sense, does not derive from any internal state of being. Exterior condition is the exclusive preoccupation of white civilization. Since the white world disallows any alternative deity to Money, Jones has no choice but to accept the general precepts of white civilization and to define in his own person their failed content. Even in his flight, he fails to rely on inner strength to cope with fear, and, in exhausting white civilization's trusted forms of power, represented by the gun and the bullets, he prompts the magnification of fear in himself, a fear finally uncontrollable due to the now-absolute disconnection of unconscious instincts from satisfying implementation at the conscious level. In this absolute failure, Jones is merely describing the absolute failure of any surrogate God to supply secular resolution to the archetypal instincts of the collective unconscious.

In the play's entirety, O'Neill does not represent any time when such successful concord was extant. He closes the play still asserting that the black man's struggle, generally, has been far more close to the truth of the human condition than the white man's struggle has been. Even if superstitious, the black race's quest, at least, seeks to identify with a transcendent power. Lem's superstition renders Smithers' perception pale.

--Patrick J. Nolan

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In early December, 1979, I was presented with the opportunity to serve as guest artistic director in the Drama Department of Centralia College, a community college in Centralia, Washington. As a guest faculty member I was to direct a play of my choosing, preferably a drama. In addition, I offered to design the costumes. Upon mention of a drama, I immediately thought of O'Neill, for I had been longing for an opportunity to direct one of his plays for some time. The department chairman, Phillip R. Wickstrom, was quite responsive to my suggestion since the department had never produced an O'Neill, and also because the opportunity would provide acting students with strong dramatic roles. It was suggested, however, that the play selected contain more than one female role, and that as many student actors as possible be included. *A Touch of the Poet* occurred to me as an ideal choice, having three female roles and seven male roles, not all requiring experienced performers. I knew that casting the lead role could prove to be difficult, but a former student of the department, Thomas Roberson, was asked to audition and was subsequently cast as Melody (Figures 1 and 2). Most other roles, including Nora, Sara, and Cregan, were cast from within the department.

Though I was delighted with this opportunity, I knew in advance of problems that would have to be resolved. I would like to discuss these problems, explaining how they were overcome. The first was the depth and weight of the material. I knew that in a community college little course work would be devoted to dramatic literature, theory and criticism, and theatre history. Therefore I suspected that most of the students with whom I would work would have little familiarity with the plays of O'Neill or with the structure of Greek tragedy. To succeed in this production, I felt I must present the students with a concise study of O'Neill's plays, their themes, O'Neill's unfinished cycle, and the Greek tragedy structure on which this play was based.

During the first weeks of rehearsal, much time was spent discussing O'Neill, man and playwright. I provided the cast with his history, both personal and literary, hoping to impress upon them the magnitude of O'Neill's writing, as well as my own enthusiasm for his work. I devoted time to the unfinished cycle, *A Tale of Possessors*, *Self-Dispossessed*, attempting to place the characters of *A Touch of the Poet* in their proper context in the master plot of the cycle. The relationships between the characters were examined, with special attention devoted to Deborah, Sara, and the unseen Simon.
The above-mentioned sessions brought the cast a clearer understanding of the script, which was further aided by discussions of the structure of Greek tragedy. While most of the cast were unfamiliar with this structure, many did know several of the plays, such as Oedipus and the Oresteia. By discussing the plays with which they were knowledgeable, I was able to point out the various structural elements that were also apparent in A Touch of the Poet. We located and discussed the Aristotelian unities, Melody's tragic flaw, the chorus, Deborah's reference to Cassandra, the catastrophe, and the catharsis. Once these elements were understood, the actors were better able to grasp their characters and mold the production into a strong and dynamic performance.

A good deal of my time was also spent working individually with cast members, coaching them in their role development, working on the brogue and on the songs that Patch Riley sings. In any college situation, some actors will be far more experienced than others, and additional time for individual work must be allocated.

The second major problem concerned the set. O'Neill's meticulous description of the setting could not be overlooked, although the restrictive budget allocated for materials threatened to prevail. I was concerned that major concessions would have to be made to keep the set within the $375 budget. So

I was greatly relieved when the staff scene designer, Joseph C. Wills, showed me his design concepts. By reducing the number of walls to two from the three or more typically associated with a box set, and by shifting the axis of the room from a position parallel with the proscenium to an extreme diagonal position, he felt that he would be able to preserve O'Neill's concept, break the monotony of a box set, and stay within the budget. Accordingly, the major walls were reduced from three to two, the windows from four to two and the tables from four to two; and the number of doorways was reduced to the street door (stage right) and an archway (stage left) that stepped onto a platform with the bar door straight ahead, the kitchen off-left, and the stairway leading off-right. Levels were provided by a platform in front of the street door, a platform through the archway, and three steps leading from it to an upper landing (see figure 3).

The only significant problem in the reduction in doorways was Sara's exit in Act III, when Melody stops to apologize, not realizing that she has left the room. This was overcome by placing Melody in the upstage chair at the round table directly in front of the archway. When Melody states that he is going to join Cregan in the bar, Sara, who has been standing by the archway, turns and quietly exits off-left into the kitchen. Melody, instead of delivering his lines of apology at the bar door with his
back to the room, rises from his chair, still facing front, and begins to speak. Not hearing a response from Sara, he turns upstage to find her gone.

Also, to clarify the traffic up and down the stairway, a slam door was placed backstage. Each time actors entered or exited by way of the stairs, the door would be opened and closed, providing the sound of their entering or exiting another room upstairs.

The setting was true to the period, with dark wood walls, massive beams, and a wide plank floor. Wills designed and built authentic furniture: the schoolmaster's desk, the hutch, the table chair (effectively used by Maloy, at the start of Act I, when he sat reading the paper as in an armchair), the mirror, and the bench (used for several Sara/Nora scenes far down-center). The realistic wood treatment was achieved by applying aniline dyes in a shellac and alcohol base over wet Swiftflex flexible glue. The floor planks were 12"-wide strips of ¼" masonite painted with latex and glazed with clear latex. The woodgraining was achieved by using a tool constructed by the designer from ¼" cork board grooved with a linoleum tool, applied to a curved wood frame. The massive beams were constructed of styrofoam over a plywood frame, textured with methol ethyl ketone and painted with aniline dye in a shellac base.

The reservations I had about directing an O'Neill play in a community college situation were resolved during the production period. The performances were well received and proved to be very educational for all of the students involved in the production. The set received praise from the audiences and the press, and was quite striking, atmospheric and functional. From a director's point of view, the diagonal axis facilitated a variety of dynamic blocking patterns. The darkness of the wood and the massiveness of the beams greatly contributed to the somber mood of the play.

I am pleased that Centralia College presented an O'Neill play. The students deserved the opportunity to portray the excellent roles that A Touch of the Poet provides, and the experience was very beneficial to me. I am looking forward to another opportunity to collaborate with O'Neill.

--Deborah Kellar

A WEALTH OF RICHES AND A CHALLENGE: A REVIEW

[Because of its great importance to all personal and library collections of O'Neilliana, Eugene O'Neill: A World View, ed. Virginia Floyd (New York: Ungar, 1979, ix + 309 pp., $14.50), deserves to be reviewed "up front" and at length, and not be relegated to a brief mention in the "Reviews and Abstracts" section. Hence the autonomy and placement of the following review-article by Professor Paul Voelker. --Ed.]

The newest collection of essays on Eugene O'Neill and his plays, Eugene O'Neill: A World View, edited by Professor Virginia Floyd of Bryant College, will be welcomed by all dedicated O'Neillians. The collection is a most positive contribution to O'Neill studies. It is to be hoped, however, that the book will reach a larger audience, for this collection is much more than the sum of its parts. It is, indeed, a challenge to the American cultural establishment to give O'Neill and his drama their due and to give both the American theatre they deserve.

The volume contains nineteen contributions, divided into three sections, each comprehensively introduced by the editor. The first of the three, entitled "A European Perspective," is itself worth the price of the volume. It is here that the cultural challenge is most strongly made—explicitly in Floyd's introduction and in an essay by Timo Tiisanen of Finland, and implicitly by the other eight essays. One thing immediately clear is the geographical breadth of O'Neill's appeal. Here we have contributions from Sweden, Finland, England, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the Soviet Union. (At that, one must regret that there are no contributions from the Orient; perhaps this exclusively Western world view can be expanded in later editions.)
More important than the range of the contributors' backgrounds, however, is the substance of their essays. The first, by Dr. Tom Olsson, "O'Neill and the Royal Dramatic," is a meticulous piece of theatre history, a valuable documentation of O'Neill on the Swedish stage, and an informative overview of the events which led to the world premières in Sweden of O'Neill's late plays. It is followed by Tiusanen's invigorating essay, "O'Neill's Significance: A Scandinavian and European View." Those few who were fortunate enough to hear him deliver this address at the 1977 MLA convention in Chicago (where Dr. Olsson's paper was also delivered) will be glad of the chance to finally have their own copy. It is a remarkable and stirring testament to O'Neill's importance as a playwright and artist. In it, Professor Tiusanen reiterates his proposal for the establishment of an O'Neill theatre and institute for the recurrent, experimental production of all of O'Neill's plays. For Tiusanen, it is a commonplace that O'Neill established an original stage language and made significant statements in that language about the condition of modern man. Tiusanen also contends that such recurrent production will eventually destroy the canard about the weakness of O'Neill's dialogue.

Tiusanen's forward-looking observations are followed by the unfinished reminiscence of the late Clifford Leech, who recalls the initial impact O'Neill made in some quarters of England as a Naturalist in the tradition of Zola, Flaubert, and Ibsen, with remarkable insight into "how human beings behaved in relation to their ancestry, to each other, and to their immediate environment." As a result, says Leech, "we worshipped him."

In the next essay, Egil Törnqvist makes a persuasive case for Plato's Symposium as a major thematic source for Weldon, a source which far outweighs the influence of Strindberg, who is usually mentioned. Törnqvist's case is strengthened by citations from both the dialogue and the stage directions, showing once again the power of this critical approach to O'Neill's plays. (The case is further strengthened by the presence of the Symposium in the portion of O'Neill's library at C. W. Post College.) Yet what is finally important about this essay is that it takes seriously an O'Neill play which is generally regarded as a failure and, in the process, finds critical gold which testifies to the broader significance of the play and reconfirms the belief that all that is needed for more than one of O'Neill's "misbegotten" scripts is the right, intelligent director.

The role of the director in building O'Neill's reputation is further treated in the next essay, Josefa Jafab's "The Lasting Challenge of Eugene O'Neill: A Czechoslovak View," which points out that largely through the efforts of one man, Karl Hugo Hilari of the National Theatre, O'Neill has been considered a "major world dramatist" there since the 1920s. Jafab notes (among other telling observations) how important it is when producing an O'Neill play to allow it to expand to its full range of implications. If the characters are mistakenly conceived as stereotypes, the result is the restriction and confinement of the play's manifold richness of meaning.

The weakness of the alternative is brought out in the next essay, Marta Sienicka's "O'Neill in Poland," which notes that O'Neill is not yet fully appreciated or influential in that country largely as a result of inept translations delivered to imperceptive producing organizations. Improvement may yet take place, however, for as one Polish critic cited by Professor Sienicka has said, "There is in [O'Neill] the same kind of unruly greatness which the people of the French Enlightenment, with all their negation, had to acknowledge in Shakespeare." To some, coupling O'Neill with Shakespeare will seem literary heresy, but time after time the Europeans in this collection, uncontaminated by the Anglophilia which has constricted our national literature from the beginning, move easily from the plays of O'Neill to virtually all the masters of Western drama, both ancient and modern.

By way of illustration, the Hungarian scholar, Peter Egri, in the next essay (also read at the 1977 MLA Convention) makes a meticulous comparison of O'Neill and Chekhov as dramatists who blurred the generic boundaries of the drama and the fictional forms of novel and short story. Professor Egri thereby provides a corrective to the theoretical views of György Lukács and, in the process, makes some perceptive observations about Warnings and Blihto and presents a comprehensive treatment of O'Neill's relation to the short story and the novel, including the work of Joseph Conrad.
The following essay, "One Hundred Percent American Tragedy: A Soviet View" by Maya Koreneva, underlines, as one might expect, O'Neill's social criticism but, in addition, reminds us of O'Neill's important contributions to the maturation of American literature. Further, Koreneva records O'Neill's impact on the Russian theatre. Of greatest interest, however, is her tracing of O'Neill's development as a tragic playwright. Her genetic approach must be studied by all who are concerned about O'Neill and the tragic. All in all, Koreneva's is perhaps the richest single essay in the collection and an excellent starting place for the reader who is just dipping in.

Ironically (and dramatically), this portion of the collection closes with an essay by Horst Frenz of Indiana University, who proceeds to bring the section full circle with a convincing study of Georg Kaiser's influence on O'Neill, thereby reminding us once again that O'Neill's comments on influences are usually not to be taken at face value.

As the foregoing should suggest, the first and largest portion of Eugene O'Neill: A World View is almost an embarrassment of riches. These nine essays testify in a multiplicity of ways to Eugene O'Neill's importance as a major world dramatist and as a major American author; and, as the essays in Section Two ("An American Perspective") collectively demonstrate, much of O'Neill's greatness is the result of his breadth and inclusiveness. Like Whitman, O'Neill is large and contains multitudes. The six essays in this group (the 1976 MLA O'Neill session comprised four of them) range across as many different facets of O'Neill's vision—his Catholicism, his Irishness, his critique of puritanism, his mysticism, his humanism, and, in the last plays, his affinity to the absurdists.

In a marvel of scholarship, John Henry Raleigh, in the lead essay, traces the history of the Catholic confessional, which arose in the early Celtic church to displace the Roman form and which found its secular, dramatic culmination, as Raleigh persuasively argues, in A Moon for the Misbegotten. In the process, he dramatically recreates for us the emotional impact of the Catholic confessional on the young O'Neill. In the next essay, Raleigh finds a source for Josie Hogan in the Irish myth of the Celtic warrior woman. From O'Neill's Irishness, it is a natural step to his critique of the Yankee puritanism in American culture which, as Professor Frederick Wilkins shows in his essay, "The Pressure of Puritanism in O'Neill's New England Plays," is not a critique of the original Puritan ideals, but of the desiccated legacy they left behind (and which we have yet to be rid of). In the following essay, Professor Albert Bermel recalls the mystic-poet O'Neill and suggests that O'Neill's plays have been done a disservice by too literal attention to his realism and that, in consequence, more imaginative productions of O'Neill must be undertaken. Presumably Bermel welcomes Tiusanen's call for an O'Neill institute; but one cannot help but wonder whether the employment of masks, in the mode of Mourning Becomes Electra, would genuinely improve Long Day's Journey Into Night. (Granted that what is needed is production of all O'Neill's plays, but what is to be hoped for initially are directors who will allow O'Neill's genius to operate unadulterated in those plays which have questionable status.)

In the following essay, Esther Jackson relates O'Neill's thematic concerns to the philosophical explorations, during the early decades of this century, of the New Humanists, Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, a comparison which leads to the placement of O'Neill directly in the mainstream of Western tragedy. This placement is further clarified in J. Dennis Rich's new essay on the absurd in O'Neill's late plays. Section Two of the collection also comes full circle in Rich's skillful tracing of the parallels between O'Neill's vision in his last plays and the existentialism of Albert Camus.

The third and final section, "Performers on O'Neill," contains four pieces, three by Americans and one by a European; three by actresses and one by a director. Both American actresses—Florence Eldridge and Geraldine Fitzgerald—discuss their research on the character of Mary Tyrone. Both stress consultation with medical specialists and experts on drug addiction, and both conclude that Mary Tyrone must take a good deal of the blame for her wasted life. Of broader significance is Florence Eldridge's conclusion that O'Neill's repetitions in dialogue are part of his artistry and that to cut the play is therefore akin to leaving measures out of a symphony. In between, director Arvin Brown makes the important
observation that O'Neill was more than a tortured hero; he was also a lover of fun and comedy, and a director should not foreclose on the possibilities for humor, especially in the late plays.

And it is here, with O'Neill the man, that the very last contribution becomes so valuable—a personal reminiscence by Ingrid Bergman (first heard at the 1978 MLA O'Neill session, as were the statements by Fitzgerald and Brown and Raleigh's second essay). Miss Bergman's account provides a first-hand description of O'Neill himself, glimpsed during an afternoon in 1941 at Tao House, still looking forward to the completion and eventual production of the Cycle and asking Miss Bergman for a three-year commitment to the production project.

It is indeed fitting, after the comprehensive commentaries on and criticisms of the plays, that O'Neill himself appear on stage at the close of the volume. And it is emphatically appropriate that, at the close of this marvelous collection, we are reminded of O'Neill's life-long desire for a theatre which would truly and effectively present his plays.

Professor Floyd (with Frederick Ungar) has performed a valuable service for all O'Neillians. Although many of these selections were first delivered as papers at various MLA sessions devoted to O'Neill in recent years, this is the first time full texts have been made generally available; and there are, of course, seven new essays. More important, however, is the potential impact of the entire collection. If the vision contained in this volume and the testimony found in the various essays are valid, then there can be no more important item on the American cultural agenda than the establishment of just the sort of theatre which Eugene O'Neill always hoped for, but never really found.

--Paul D. Voelker

HARRY KEMP: LEST WE FORGET

When a man's reputation has been pretty much left in the hands of those who turn out rather undistinguished attempts at feature story journalism for local Sunday supplements, it is time to stop and ask two questions. Is this fellow worth saving? Or do we leave him to those with the uncanny ability to subtract from human knowledge no matter the circumstance? No one deserves to be set upon by a gang of amateurs. So, nine times out of ten, the answer to the first question ought to be yes. In the case of Harry Kemp (pictured at the right)—hell, yes.

Harry Kemp was his own worst enemy, as probably most poets are. A lecherous and lazy man, he committed as many wrongful acts as a man can safely commit. Yet, in spite of all this, Kemp will be remembered, if only for one reason: he knew, abused and bored the right people at the right time. And one of those people was Eugene O'Neill.

O'Neill rated highly in Harry Kemp's mind. But it is questionable whether the playwright ever regarded the infamous boxcar poet as anything more than a nuisance. Despite the fact that apparently Kemp alone valued their acquaintanceship (the importance of which he did not hesitate to play up in his later years), Kemp did, literally, play an important role in the early part of O'Neill's career in Provincetown. Kemp played one of the seamen in the Wharf Theatre's production of Bound East for Cardiff in the summer of 1916. John Reed played another seaman, and O'Neill himself played the Mate in the same production. Even Kemp's wife, the red-haired Mary Pyne, acted in some of the early plays, her performance
in Before Breakfast reportedly being her best.

But Kemp's bohemian achievements were certainly not limited to the stage of the Wharf Theatre or the sandy confines of Provincetown. He penned many a poem, a substantial number of which appeared in such publications as Colliers, McClure's, Munsey's, The Masses, The Saturday Evening Post and The Smart Set. Unfortunately, the majority of these poems were everything Harry Kemp was not: they were defiantly traditional, and mortally so. The fruit of a twentieth century man desperately trying to poach on nineteenth century turf. Specifically, the turf of Keats, Shelley and Byron.

Kemp also owned a not inconsiderable reputation as a womanizer and home wrecker. He ran off with Upton Sinclair's wife when still in his twenties and documented this and other similar adventures in his two "rough hewn"--as Louis Kronenberger once put it--autobiographical novels, Tramping on Life (1922) and More Miles (1926). These books, hard as it is to imagine now, bolstered publisher Boni & Liveright's fiscal well-being as well as the author's notoriety if not his purse. To this day, copies of Tramping on Life are relatively easy to come by in any decent used book shop.

Other of Kemp's achievements and exploits included stowing away on ships; arranging for anarchist Emma Goldman to speak at the University of Kansas when he was a student there; and participating in all-night poetry recitation marathons with the likes of Sinclair Lewis (each man had committed so many lyric poems to memory that their contest ended in a draw).

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1 A sample, entitled "In Debt," and included in Kemp's The Cry of Youth (1914):

Each man a general debt to mankind owes
For all he is, all he enjoys, and knows,—
And he who dares the least of men to ban
Is just so many stages less a man.

2 Ms. Goldman recalled the area and the incident in Living My Life: "Lack of interest in ideas, smugness, and self-complacency characterized most of the cities of the state of Kansas. The exception was Lawrence, the university seat. Here it was largely a group of advanced students that put life into an otherwise sleepy town. The most active of them was Harry Kemp. He prevailed upon the Good Government Club, a body of law students, to invite the dangerous anarchist to address them on 'Why Laws Fail.'"
But to Kemp's real credit, and ultimately to O'Neill's too, there's something more which ought to be added to the picture. Harry Kemp was a shack person.

Kemp lived a good number of his 77 or so years in shacks or like places. He died in one. A grand, temple-like affair, located in the middle of Provincetown on property owned by a friend, that beachcomber friends built for him one year as a birthday present. It's quite obvious to anyone who visits Kemp's last rambling driftwood home (Figure 2), which has changed little in the 20 years since his death, that no ordinary person could have inhabited it—that the person it was built for must have been a bit gamy, wild and intractable. You also realize that it's a shame the "Unkempt" Harry Kemp himself isn't about.

Oh yes, Harry Kemp was a shack person. When an abscessed tooth nagged him, he removed it himself with a screwdriver. He scratched out his verses with a seagull feather, wore beach rose garlands in his light colored hair, and fancied wearing capes. He knew Greek and Latin (self-taught, of course) and was a serious student of the Bible. Handouts from friends kept him alive.

Kemp's kind have died off, though. The poet of the dunes may have been nothing more than a nuisance to someone like O'Neill. But it must be admitted that Kemp was a special breed of nuisance whose pesky, immodest, Byronic imposition one would simply be hard put to meet up with today. In his own fashion Harry Kemp contributed to the pungent smoky flavor of his times. And Kemp's presence, remarkably enough, is still easily detected today in Provincetown, especially on the dunes out at Race Point overlooking the Atlantic—Peaked Hill Bar, specifically—where shacks still dot the landscape up and down the coastline, many of them inhabited. Inhabited by who-knows-whom?

Kemp elicited such varied responses from among his acquaintances that the true nature of the man may always remain elusive. When Flossie Williams, wife of William Carlos Williams, was asked about him, she replied, "You mean the tramp? Oh, he was a nice man, I liked him." Poet Emanuel Carnevali's reaction was decidedly less affectionate: "I always despised the man and the writer. There isn't a page that can be called even lovely. He trampled on life with too careless a foot." It may have been E. E. Cummings, never a scouter of the footloose and carefree, who, in a letter to Edmund Wilson, captured best the nature of his fellow poet:

In the name of Harry the Hamlet, Harry the Kemp, and Harry the Rogers Bruce dingaling
A BAS LES BARRELPIPPILS
VIVE LA VIE
shantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshantyshanty
hoavelhutcakeinhouseaboderesidencedemesnemanorcastlepalace—farmshack

ah, (wo)
men.

That seems as close as one can come. As Sonny Tasha, a Provincetown friend of Kemp's, told the author over a cup of coffee, "No one knows the real Harry Kemp story." But, mystery or not, Kemp should be remembered, even if only as a shadowy addendum to the biography of Eugene O'Neill.

—Marshall Brooks

3 Louis Sheaffer recounts one Kemp-O'Neill altercation in O'Neill, Son and Playwright: "He was determined, as he freely admitted, to become 'The greatest living poet in the world,' and was constantly descending on people to announce excitedly that he had just written 'the finest sonnet since Shakespeare.' Late one night he began hammering on O'Neill's and Terry [Carlin's] shack, 'Gene, Gene, I want you to hear my new poem!' only to get the sleepy response, 'Go to hell.'"

4 Quoted in Reed Whittemore's William Carlos Williams.

5 From The Autobiography of Emanuel Carnevali.

6 From Selected Letters of E. E. Cummings.
THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SECTION: NEWS, REPORTS, DOCUMENTS

[One immediate benefit of the affiliation between the Newsletter and the Society is the opportunity the former affords—twice this year and thrice in succeeding years—for officers and members of the latter to communicate with one another and air their views in a special "society section" of every issue. The first such section, which follows, comprises two reports on the Society's first annual meeting last December (an official one by Secretary Jordan Miller, and an unofficial one by Erin Hallissy, staff writer of the Contra Costa Times); a copy of the Society's by-laws as amended and adopted by the membership at that meeting; an announcement of a Society meeting next December; and news of President Horst Frenz's recent O'Neill-related activities and the possible future meeting overseas to which they may give rise. Contributors of items for inclusion in future issues of the section should mark them "Society Section" and send them to any officer or to the editor. --Ed.]


The Eugene O'Neill Society held its first Annual Meeting at Tao House on December 29, 1979, in conjunction with the MLA convention in San Francisco. Over 30 members attended. Members of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, arranged for a tasty box lunch, and a detailed guided tour of the premises by Travis Bogard was the high point of the day. The tour also included a showing of the only known motion picture of O'Neill (plus Carlotta and Blemie), an 8 mm sequence of only a few seconds, but of course of great interest to all O'Neillians.

The Society's by-laws were amended and unanimously adopted (a miniprint copy follows as item 4); Sophus Keith Winther was elected, by acclamation, as an honorary director of the Society; and a permanent slate of officers and board of directors was elected. President Horst Frenz (Indiana University) and Vice-President Winifred Frazer (University of Florida) will serve for two years. Secretary Jordan Miller (University of Rhode Island) and Treasurer Virginia Floyd (Bryant College) will serve for four years, as will Timo Tiusanen (University of Helsinki), who was elected International Secretary.

Because the Board of Directors will have staggered terms, the following will serve for four years: Frederic Carpenter, Walnut Creek, CA; Doris Falk, Califon, NJ; Sally Thomas Pavetti, Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center in Waterford, CT; John Henry Raleigh, University of California, Berkeley; and Frederick C. Wilkins, Suffolk University, Boston. Those serving two-year terms will be Travis Bogard, University of California, Berkeley; Eugene Hanson, College of the Desert; Adele R. Heller, Provincetown Playhouse in Provincetown, MA; Esther M. Jackson, University of Wisconsin; and Tom J. A. Olsson, Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm.

Four standing committees have been formed. Membership, chaired by Fred Wilkins, will seek to enlarge the Society's rolls; Program, chaired by Thomas Marshall, is making plans for future meetings, especially in Houston next December; and Publications, chaired by Michael Hinden, has already accomplished its most pressing task—assimilating the Newsletter, formerly an independent publication, into the Society. The Public Relations Committee, with Travis Bogard and Doris Falk presently sharing the tasks, will look into the development of the Society's artistic, professional, and general public. Current members of the aforementioned committees are Virginia Floyd, Deborah Kellar and Jordan Miller (Membership); Winifred Frazer, J. Dennis Rich and Albert Wertheim (Program); and Jacob Adler, Horst Frenz, Paul Voelker and Fred Wilkins (Publications).

The Eugene O'Neill Society is dedicated to the promotion of the study of the life and works of Eugene O'Neill and the drama and theatre for which his work was in large part the instigator and the model. It will be listed in the next edition of Gale's Encyclopedia of Associations, and we are also working toward official recognition by the MLA so that we may have closer cooperation during convention time, especially as regards securing meeting space and notices of Society activities.
Membership is open to anyone with an interest in O'Neill and the American theatre, and all readers are cordially invited to join. For further information and a membership application, write to me at the Department of English, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881.

--Jordan Y. Miller, Secretary


The peacefulness and solitude of the Corduroy Hills was interrupted recently when scholars from across the nation converged on Tao House to pay homage to Eugene O'Neill and form a society in his honor. It was the first time many of the scholars had set foot on the historic site where O'Neill lived for seven years and created some of the greatest masterpieces of the American theater, including A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Iceman Cometh and Long Day's Journey Into Night.

The O'Neill aficionados eagerly toured the house, hanging on their guide's every word. They oohed and aahed over a short home movie of O'Neill and his family. One man exclaimed afterward, "That's the first time I've ever seen O'Neill move." They took photos of the study with its commanding view of Mt. Diablo, where O'Neill worked for hours every day, immersing himself in his writing. They strolled around the grounds of the home, scurrying after pine cones that are supposed to bring good luck to those who carry them, and plucking oranges off trees that O'Neill himself planted, joking to each other that they would go home and laminate them.

After the tour, the scholars assembled in the spacious living room to approve the by-laws of the new Eugene O'Neill Society, pledging to "promote the study of the life and work of Eugene O'Neill and the drama and theater for which his work was in large part the instigator and model." The organization is starting with 71 members from universities across the United States and five institutions abroad.

Most of the scholars were excited at seeing the home of the Nobel prize-winning playwright. "I'm eager to tell my students about coming here," said Vivian Caspar, modern drama professor at the Texas Woman's University. Caspar said she was a little disappointed that Tao house hasn't been renovated. "It's important to get the house restored and make it available to scholars. I look forward to returning when it's restored."

Fred Wilkins, chairman of the English department at Suffolk University, Boston, and editor of the Eugene O'Neill Newsletter, was enthusiastic about his day at Tao House. "It's been a very exciting, very moving day," he said. "It's a great experience to see the home where so many masterpieces of American drama were created." Wilkins said his newsletter was the first step toward the formation of the Eugene O'Neill Society. The paper comes out three times a year and has a circulation of more than 300, reaching individuals and major universities throughout the country and overseas, including the Sorbonne in France. "There has been a renaissance of enthusiasm for O'Neill as we approach the centennial of his birth in 1988," Wilkins said.

Seeing the house where O'Neill lived put Paul Voelker from the University of Wisconsin "in closer touch with the man. It gives you a feeling for the author that it's very hard to get from reading about him," he remarked while relaxing on a sofa next to the fireplace in the Tao House living room. Voelker described O'Neill as a complex man and outstanding playwright. "There's a depth of characterization and a concern for reflecting the culture and society in which he lived in his work, and he explored the problems of life with a clear gaze and honest eye," he said. "Also, he's a man you have to admire for his devotion to his craft."

Eugene Hanson, English professor at the College of the Desert in Palm Desert, Calif., said he has had a "30-year love affair" with O'Neill's works. "The gloomy realism and the power of his drama attract me," Hanson said. "In the early 60's I saw one of the earliest student productions of Long Day's Journey Into Night, and for three days after I walked
around in a kind of dream world. O'Neill has always had the power to do that to the audience," Hanson stated.

Michael Hinden, associate professor of English and teacher of modern drama at the University of Wisconsin, expressed enthusiasm about O'Neill as he browsed through some first editions and collections of O'Neill's plays in the study. "His writing is the closest thing to Greek tragedy in American theater," he said. "You can feel the force and passion of the characters in his works. There is also a subtle dealing with the problems of the American family in his plays, and that is always interesting to undergraduates." Hinden remarked that it was difficult for him to get a feeling for O'Neill as he toured the house because it was empty and unrestored. "But I can get a sense of how the mood here would have affected him," he said, looking out the window at the view of Mt. Diablo and the surrounding hills. "I'd like to come back here by myself--I think O'Neill was the type who didn't like a lot of people in his house."

Travis Bogard, vice president and director of programs of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, which oversees Tao House, called O'Neill the "most important of American playwrights." Bogard said the formation of the Eugene O'Neill Society was important to the prominence of O'Neill. The Society hopes to foster the development of new historical and critical writing about O'Neill as well new stage, film, and television productions of his works.

Tao House, an early California-style home built by O'Neill in 1936, became a national historical site in 1976. O'Neill and his wife, Carlotta, lived in the house for seven years before moving to San Francisco. The house is being preserved by the National Park Service and the Eugene O'Neill Foundation.


a. The EOS is not yet eligible to arrange an official program in connection with the annual convention of the Modern Language Association in Houston next December. Therefore, Thomas F. Marshall and President Horst Frenz have applied, as individual MLA members, to hold a special MLA session on "O'Neill and Music." Their application has been approved, and members of the Society are cordially invited to attend the symposium, which will be chaired by Professor Marshall and will include as panelists Professors Travis Bogard, Winifred Frazer, Horst Frenz, J. Dennis Rich, Albert Wertheim and Frederick Wilkins. (Immediate information on the session may be obtained from Professor Marshall, 1540 Emory Road, Upperco, MD 21155.) It is expected that the 1980 annual meeting of the Society will also be held in Houston. Details will be given in the next issue of the Newsletter.

b. During April and May, 1980, President Frenz lectured on various phases of the "international" O'Neill at the Universities of Stockholm, Helsinki, Tampere, and Warsaw. He conferred with Tom Olsson (EOS Director) and Timo Tiusanen (International Secretary) about ways of inviting foreign colleagues to join our organization and about activities the EOS may carry on in Europe. He is very pleased with the results of his discussions, not only with the two foreign members of our Board but also with officials of the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, of the Nobel Foundation, and of the University of Stockholm. Frenz expects to be able to provide further information on future plans later in the year. And they may include a Society meeting in Sweden!

ARTICLE I: PURPOSES

Section I.1: Statement of Purpose

The specific and primary purpose for which this corporation, The Eugene O'Neill Society (hereinafter referred to as the "Society"), is formed is to promote the study of the life and works of Eugene O'Neill and the drama and theatre for which his work was in large part the instigator and the model.

The particular purposes of the Society are to form an international organization whose members will join in the exploration of O'Neill's life and works by means of historical and critical writing, artistic performances on stage, film, television, radio and recordings, by the amassing of historical documentation, and by publications devoted to O'Neill and his plays. The subjects of study shall include not only Eugene O'Neill and his works, but all related aspects of the American and world theatres.

The Society is formed for the purposes of performing all things incidental or appropriate to the achievement of the foregoing objectives, and shall have such other charitable, literary and educational purposes as the Executive Officers (hereinafter "Officers") and the Directors (hereinafter "Directors") may authorize or approve from time to time. The Society shall hold and may exercise such powers as may be conferred upon a non-profit corporation by the laws of the State of Rhode Island and as may be necessary or expedient for the administration of its purposes; provided, however, that in no event shall the corporation engage in any activities which are not charitable, artistic or educational in nature.

ARTICLE II: PRINCIPAL OFFICE

Section II.1: Location

The principal office for the transaction of the business of the corporation shall be that of the elected Secretary of the Society, or such other place as the Officers may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section III.1: Terms of Membership

Membership in the Society shall be open to all interested persons upon payment of annual dues in the amount determined by the Officers and Directors.

Section III.2: Classes of Membership

Membership shall be divided into the following categories without distinction as to rights and privileges except as noted in III.3 and III.4 below:

a) Student Members: enrolled students actively pursuing a course of study in a recognized school, college, university, conservatory or private school of theatre, art or dance.

b) General Members

c) Emeritus General Members (age 65 or over)

d) Family (husband and wife)

e) Sponsors

f) Life Members

g) Honorary Directors

h) Institutional Members

Section III.3: Classification of Members Eligible for Election

Officers and Directors shall be elected from categories d), e) and f) above.

Section III.4: Privileges of Members

Membership in the Society shall carry the following rights and privileges:

a) With the exception of Institutional Members, all Members shall have the right to vote for Officers and Directors of the Society as hereinafter provided.

b) Members shall be privileged to attend regularly scheduled meetings of the Society.

c) Members shall receive regular announcements of the Society's activities, elections and other matters germane to the business of the Society.

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNING BOARD

Section IV.1: Definition of the Governing Board

Except as otherwise noted, the governing board of the Society shall be the Directors of the Society acting in concert with the Executive Officers to determine the policies and establish the Society's programs.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Section V.1: Authority of Officers

Except as otherwise provided by these by-laws, by the articles of incorporation or by the laws of the State of Rhode Island now or hereafter in force, all corporate powers of the Society shall be vested in and exercised by, or under the authority of, and the business and affairs of the Society shall be controlled by the Executive Officers.

Section V.2: Number of Officers

The number of the Society's Officers shall be five (5) unless and until changed by amendment of this section, consisting of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, an International Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section V.3: Remuneration of Officers

Officers shall receive no compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for reasonable personal expenditures incurred on behalf of the Society.

a) Expenditures that exceed $100.00 per annum must be approved by the Directors.

Section V.4: Terms of Office and Election of Officers

a) Executive Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Society voting in any given election.

b) Term of office for the President and Vice-President shall be for two (2) years, with the possibility of re-election to one, but not more, consecutive term of office.

c) Other Officers shall serve for a term of four (4) years with the possibility of re-election for one, but not more, consecutive term of office.

d) Officers who served as Officers prior to the formation of the Society may be eligible for election to a regular term of office.

e) The first election of Officers shall be held by written ballot distributed to those attending and paying or having paid dues at the time of the first official meeting of the Society in December, 1979. Thereafter, all balloting will be by mail, as prescribed in Article VII below.
Section V.5: Powers of Officers

The Executive Officers of the Society shall exercise the powers of the corporation, control its property and conduct its affairs. Without in any way limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Officers shall have full power to

a) Enter into any and all contracts, leases and other agreements which in their judgement may be beneficial to the interests and purposes of the corporation, or necessary and desirable in the conduct of the affairs of the Society.

b) Receive property by devise or bequest, subject to the laws regulating the transfer of property or by will, and otherwise acquire and hold all property, real or personal, including shares of stock, bonds, and securities from other corporations.

c) Convey, exchange, sell, lease, mortgage, encumber, transfer upon trust or otherwise dispose of all property of the corporation, real or personal.

d) Act as trustees under any trust incidental to the principal objects of the Society, and receive, hold, administer, and expend funds and property subject to such trust.

e) Borrow money, contract debts, and issue bonds, notes and debentures, and secure the payment or performance of its obligations.

f) Receive membership dues and other incoming funds essential to the operation of the Society.

g) Solicit funds from private and public sectors for the carrying-out of the Society's purposes.

h) Land or grant money for reasons consistent with the Society's scholarly and artistic purposes and accept conditional or unconditional promissory notes therefor, interest-bearing or non-interest-bearing, secured or unsecured.

i) Appoint standing committees of the Society as needed.

j) Do all other acts necessary or expedient for the administration of the affairs and attainment of the purposes of the Society.

Section V.6: Duties of the Individual Officers

The duties of the individual officers are as follows:

a) President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Society. The President’s duties shall include exercising general supervision over and management of the business and affairs of the Society. In addition, the President shall

i) preside at all meetings of the Society and those of its Officers and Directors.

ii) execute either personally or by designate(s) such programs as the Society may wish to initiate.

b) Vice-President. The Vice-President shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the President, including those described above in the event of the President’s absence or disability.

c) Secretary. The Secretary shall perform the following duties:

1) Keep the Minutes of all meetings of the Society and of its Officers and/or Directors.

ii) Keep a roster of active members and their addresses, in which shall be recorded the termination of any membership and the date on which said membership ceased, and to publish annually a list of active members.

iii) Ensure the mailing of the Society’s informational announcements.

iv) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the President from time to time.

d) International Secretary. The International Secretary shall assume responsibilities identical with the Secretary for that portion of the Society’s membership outside the United States. In addition, the International Secretary shall

i) ensure that the Secretary has essential information with reference to non-United States members.

ii) shall collect and forward or otherwise account for dues paid in foreign currency to the Treasurer of the Society.

iii) shall actively encourage a network of memberships in all non-United States countries.

a) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall perform the following duties:

1) Collect the dues and cause to be kept regular, true and full accounts of all property of whatever description owned by the Society and of all business transacted by the Society.

ii) Make detailed reports of the same to the Officers and/or the Directors when called upon.

iii) File or cause to be filed all tax returns, information returns or other reports of the Society’s income, receipts, expenditures and assets required by federal, state or local governmental or other authorities.

iv) Perform, in addition, such other duties as may be delegated by the President from time to time.

ARTICLE VI: DIRECTORS

Section VII.1: Number and Structure of Board of Directors

a) There shall be ten (10) Directors.

b) Directors shall be chosen from the membership by election, but representation must in part derive from the following categories:

i) The scholarly communities in the United States

ii) The scholarly communities outside the United States

iii) The performing arts

iv) Representatives of such organizations as The Provincetown Playhouse on the Wharf, Inc.; Monte Cristo Cottage of The Eugene O’Neill Theater Center; and The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House.

c) In the event that nominees cannot be found to serve in all of the above categories, the incumbent Officers shall be empowered to alter the composition, but not the number, of the Board of Directors without recourse to a change in the by-laws of the Society, it being understood that whenever candidates are available, the prescribed structure shall be adhered to.
Directors shall have the following powers:

a) To approve by majority vote claims of over $100 per annum for reimbursement to Officers for personal expenses incurred in carrying out the Society's business.

b) To name by majority vote replacements for Officers who are unable to complete a term of office.

c) To approve by two-thirds (2/3) vote all proposed changes in these By-Laws as may be recommended by the Officers of the Society and to initiate such changes in the By-Laws as appear necessary and proper.

d) To approve by majority vote recommendations of the Officers for changes in the structure of dues.

e) To initiate by unanimous vote recall elections for the removal of any Officer whose performance of official duties is characterized by neglect or malfeasance.

f) To approve by majority vote the issuing of special publications as recommended by the Officers and/or Membership.

1) The term "special publications" shall not include informational announcements, routine program material or advertisements concerning the Society's meetings or membership drives. It shall include feature articles written in the name of the Society for newspapers and magazines or for dissemination through other media, and all books or journals incorporating material prepared by or for the Society, such as papers read at the Society's annual meetings or at special seminars sponsored by the Society.

Section VII.4: Duties of the Directors

Directors shall have the following duties:

a) To work in concert with the Officers in order to develop appropriate programs for the Society.

b) To advise Officers as to desirable changes in the Society's policies which may or may not necessitate changes in these By-Laws.

c) To conduct the Society's elections as hereinafter prescribed.

d) To appoint persons to fill out terms left vacant by resignation, disability or death of incumbent Officers or Directors.

e) To carry out such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Officers.

Section VII.6: Honorary Directors

a) Upon the recommendation of any member of the Society, the Directors and Officers of the Society, through the Society's President, may invite distinguished persons who were associated personally with Eugene O'Neill or with the scholarship or performance of his plays or with the sponsorship of the Society's programs to become Honorary Directors of the Society.

b) Honorary Directors shall have all rights and privileges of the Members of the Society.

c) Honorary Directors shall be invited to attend and participate in all meetings of the Directors, but shall not be considered as voting members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

Section VII.1: Meetings of the General Membership

a) There shall be a minimum of one (1) meeting of the General Membership annually at such place as determined by the Officers.

b) A quorum of Members shall be considered to be those present and eligible to vote.

c) Additional meetings or group activities may be scheduled with the consent of the Officers and Directors.

d) The membership may call a meeting of the Society at any time by petition to the Officers and Board. The number of petitioners shall be determined by the Officers and Board at their first meeting during 1980 and that number shall be inserted here as part of these by-laws.

Section VII.2: Meetings of Officers

a) Officers shall meet at least once annually. Additional meetings may be arranged as necessary and convenient.

i) A quorum of officers shall be considered to be the President or Vice-President, the Secretary and one other Officer.

b) Officers shall meet at least once annually with the Directors.

i) The annual meetings of Officers under a) above and of Officers and Directors may be combined into a single session.

ii) At meetings of Directors and Officers, a quorum shall consist of the President or Vice-President, the Secretary and a minimum of five (5) Directors.

iii) At combined meetings, the President shall preside.

Section VII.3: Meetings of Directors

a) Directors shall meet at least once annually.

i) A quorum shall consist of a minimum of (5) Directors.

ii) A chairperson of the Directors, to serve in that capacity for one (1) year, shall be named by majority vote of the Directors at the first annual meeting, or earlier by mail ballot.

b) The annual meeting of the Directors may be combined with the meeting with the Officers under Section VII.2.b above.

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS

Section VIII.1: Election of Officers and Directors

a) Six (6) months prior to the expiration of the terms of office of any Officers or Directors the Secretary shall mail to Members a call for nominations to fill the anticipated vacancies.
b) If, singly or jointly, five (5) members in good standing nominate a candidate for an office, the name of that person shall be included on the ballot.

c) Nominations from Members shall be considered to be closed two (2) months after the call for nominations is mailed to the membership.

d) The Directors, acting as a nominating committee, may prepare an additional slate of names.

e) Three (3) months prior to the expiration of the terms of office, the Secretary shall mail ballots containing the names of all nominees for each position to the Members.

f) One (1) month prior to the expiration of the terms of office in question, balloting shall be considered closed.

g) The Secretary and one or more Officer or Director will tabulate ballots and announce the results to Members by mail or through such informational bulletin as may at that time be in existence.

ARTICLE IX: DUES

Section IX.1: Structure of Dues

Unless altered by action of the Officers as approved by the Directors, the following schedule of annual membership dues shall be in effect as of January, 1980:

- a) Student Membership: $10.00
- b) General Membership: 20.00
- c) Emeritus General Membership: 10.00
- d) Family (husband and wife): 30.00
- e) Sponsors: 50.00
- f) Life Members (one payment): 500.00
- g) Institutional Membership: 30.00

Section IX.2: Previously Paid Monies

All payments for dues made in advance of the Society's first meeting in December, 1979, shall be considered to extend from January 1, 1980 until December 31, 1980.

ARTICLE X: APPROPRIATIONS

Section X.1: Power to Make Appropriations

Officers shall have power to make appropriations of the funds of the Society for any of the purposes referred to in Article I of these By-Laws, subject to those controls set forth in Article V Section V.3 above.

ARTICLE XI: MISCELLANEOUS

Section XI.1: Instruments in Writing

All checks, drafts, demands for money and notes of the Society and all written contracts of the Society shall be signed by such Officer or Officers, Agent or Agents as the Officers may from time to time by resolution designate.

Section XI.2: Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year of the Society shall begin on the first day of January of each year and end on the last day of December of each year.

Section XI.3: Annual Reports

Not later than the annual meeting of Members, every Member shall be furnished a report in writing of the business transacted by the Society during the preceding fiscal year and a statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Society during such year and of its financial condition at the end of the year.

Section XI.4: Rules of Order

All meetings of the Directors or Officers or Members of the Society shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, except for instances in which the Articles or By-Laws or applicable statutes provide otherwise.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENT OR REPEAL OF BY-LAWS

Section XII.1: Procedure for Alteration of By-Laws

a) By-Laws may be amended or repealed by a 2/3 vote of the Membership at the annual meeting with the exception noted in b) below.

b) Any By-Law or By-Law amendment changing the authorized number of Officers and/or Directors may only be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the general voting Membership of the Society, taken either by mail ballot or by written ballot at the annual general meeting.

ATTENTION, ALL MEMBERS OF THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY: IMPORTANT NEWS!!

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS


   Last February, in the intimate, three-quarter-round Warner Bentley Theater at Dartmouth College's Hopkins Center, the Dartmouth Players presented a spirited and moving all-student production of Desire Under the Elms, under the skilled and inventive direction of Robert Berlinger, a Senior Fellow, whose Fellowship project, "O'Neill's Vision of Poetic Realism"--and, specifically, the means by which it is artistically manipulated in Desire--culminated in this production. (Mr. Berlinger will report on the conclusions of his project in the next issue of the Newsletter.)

   Christopher Wilson's effective set was on two levels. From the middle of the lower level--with kitchen at stage-right, parlor at stage-left, the suggestion of a porch in front of the latter, overhanging boughs of elm (artificial) at both sides, and a layer of dirt (real) in front of the whole--a flight of stairs led up to the second floor, with Eben's and his brothers' room at stage-right and Ephraim's across the hall from it at stage-left. (This hall division between bedrooms may have clashed with readers' memories of how, in Part 2, Scene 2, Abbie's and Eben's "hot glances seem to meet through the wall." Wilson's set required that the glances travel farther; but the suggestion of an electrical connection between stepmother and stepson, which was retained, was the more effective because of the greater distance between the two.)

   The farmhouse looked lived in, and the actors were well trained in inhabiting it naturally--just one of Mr. Berlinger's successes. Another was the dance in the kitchen in Part 3, Scene 1 (see picture 4 on p. 27), with swirling skirts, tabletop fiddler, and a wild, stompin', jumpin', chest-thumpin' dance to "Turkey in the Straw" by Ephraim, as Eben sits, sihouetted in near darkness, on his bed in the room above, and Abbie sits, still and sad, in a chair on the porch. Contrapuntally perfect.

   Through the skeletal back-wall boards and roof beams behind and above the two-level farmhouse, lighting designer James Gage provided a varying array of colors--a hot, red glow at the start; a dark, dusky blue in Scene 2; a pale pink-violet at the time of the father's arrival with his bride in Scene 4; etc.--that contributed greatly to the emotional effect of the production, as did the music for solo cello, composed by Brian Witter, that served as transition between scenes. Another lighting device--the use of candles in the parlor scene that gave a ghostly look to the room and its inhabitants--was similarly evocative. O'Neill's lighting directions for that scene were superbly executed.

   The opening scene, which began with Eben's bearded, soil-etched brothers leaning lethargically on hoes, was the most comic realization of the fraternal dialogue that this reviewer has ever heard, as was their cut-ups' taunting of Ephraim in Scene 4. Robert Southworth and Edward Morgan made Simeon and Peter a team of comic hayseeds (Peter sounded like Festus on the television series, Gunsmoke), and the rhythm of delivery of the lines in their scenes with Eben was effective--both as a laugh-arousing device and as a suggestion that such scenes had been frequent in the past.

   The three principals conveyed with brilliance all the triangular tensions of the Cabot family feud--surprising brilliance, considering their extreme youth, which made the task of Peter Morse, as Ephraim, the most difficult of the three. He had clearly studied and practiced the mannerisms of age, but they looked as cosmetic as the white in his hair. Nor did he seem hard enough in his first scene, when his older sons' taunts should arouse more ire. But he gained real force when he most needed it, as in the wildness of his dance, the confrontations with his acquisitive bride (picture 3), and the contempt with which he pushes Eben to the ground when he learns that the boy has been to the Sheriff (picture 5).

   Heather McCartney and Scott Coronis, not burdened by imminent senility, had an easier time of it as Abbie and Eben. Coronis showed Eben's growth from stiff, marching boy in his
opening scenes—all gruff, rasping brusqueness—to the newly-softened man of the last scene, when he kneels before Abbie, his hand on her breast and her hands on his shoulders. The change begins in the fourth scene when (shortly after the moment in picture 2) Abbie touches his cheek and says, "Let's yew 'n' me be frens, Eben," and an odd, unexpected smile appears on his face. Not that the tensions between the two are omitted: all the temperatures from fire to ice are called into play. Though Eben seemed a bit too casual in reacting to his first realization of Abbie as a rival (picture 1), his torment in the parlor scene was fully realized.

McCartney's Abbie was a believable blend of arrogance (in Part 1), earthy seductiveness (in Part 2; though her invitation to the parlor—"Won't ye come courtin' me in the best parlor, Mister Cabot?" was so chill that I was surprised Eben accepted!), and genuine anguish in the kitchen scene following the strangely underplayed murder. Perhaps the lovers' most memorable scene was the one preceding their upstairs union in Part 2, Scene 2, after Ephraim has left to join the cows in the barn. Eben sits on his bed, looking, in profile, toward Abbie across the hall. She sits on her bed, facing forward. Then she rises, turns towards him—drawn by a current that she cannot control and that has nothing to do with greed—advances slowly toward the wall (the nearer of the two walls!) separating them, and then impulsively rushes to the door at the back, through the narrow hall, and into Eben's room, initiating an attack to which he soon willingly responds.

Aside from a feeling that the production was a blend of spurts—of highs and lows with no fully sustained emotional arcs except those of individual characterization—I have nothing but admiration for the performers, the designers, and Robert Berlinger—a director whom we should see much of in the future. I hope that future will include abundant affiliation with Eugene O'Neill.


In the oft-maligned if not misbegotten city of Worcester, Massachusetts—once proudly touted as a city of "diversified industry"—the New England Repertory Theatre's 1980 winter-season production of A Moon for the Misbegotten incontestably provided its patrons with an imaginative and full-bodied rendition of O'Neill's play of lunar redemption. Strong performances by Susan McGinley (Josie), Bill McCann (Phil Hogan) and James Cooke (James Tyrone) made the Rep's version of the play especially memorable—so much so that one came away with the feeling that this had been the definitive performance of the play, Susan McGinley's Josie (at center in figure 2 on p. 28) was sublimely earthy, crude and frolicking throughout. As even the most casual reading of the play reveals, there are two women, at the least, contained within the character of Josie, and none too subtly. One tough and vulgar, with a bod to match. ("She is so oversize for a woman that she is almost a freak," O'Neill wrote in the stage directions.) The other compassionate, loving and virginal with, again, the appropriate physical attributes: "She has long smooth arms, immensely strong, although no muscles show. The same is true of her legs."

Ugliness and beauty. Harshness and tenderness. Lust and love. All of these seemingly irreconcilable differences must be contended with by the three main characters, but by Josie especially, as she is the obvious embodiment of all these opposites. McGinley's Josie was admirable, and whenever parts of her performance seemed unconvincing—and there were a few such moments toward the end of the play—one is tempted to blame the playwright rather than the actress. Like the absurdly contradictory description of Josie's physical features, O'Neill's presentation of her as a person seems, at times, not a little awkward.

Bill McCann as Josie's father, Phil Hogan (at left in figures 2 and 3), was a joy. Full of blarney and downright mischievous to the ends of the grey hairs on his chinny chin chin, he was a most believable character. Never for a moment did the audience doubt that this rambunctious little man was truly of the old sod or that his hatred for his
DESIRE UNDER DARTMOUTH ELMS

1. Eben confronts Hausfrau Abbie.

2. "Let's yew 'n' me be frens, Eben" (Part 1, Scene 4): warmth develops between son and stepmother.

3. Conflict between Abbie and Ephraim.

4. The kitchen dance in Part 3, Scene 1.

5. Ephraim denounces Eben in the last scene.
millionaire neighbor, T. Stedman Harder, was anything but from the heart. At the same time it was quite obvious that, despite the revels in blarney, Phil Hogan was more than capable of compassion when the moon was just right.

James Cooke's portrayal of that living dead man, James Tyrone, (at right in figures 2 and 3), was stunning. One felt that Cooke knew as much about how the part should be played as O'Neill obviously knew about how it should be put down on paper. Not only does the wise-ass--and quite lyrically wise-ass--sot move one within the context of the play, but also outside of it. Of all of the characters, James Tyrone is the genuine American product. Phil Hogan is, after all, of the Old World. And Josie is--well, other worldly; more a product of O'Neill's imagination than honest-to-God flesh and blood. James's face is a scary one. To look into it--God forbid having to look out of it--is to look into the eyes of a man of our own time and place. Cooke caught all of what O'Neill had to offer.

The set (figure 1), designed by Jon Knowles, was beautiful and inspiring—a considerable improvement over the monstrosity that O'Neill outlined in the script. Quite simply, there were, at stage-center, a set of porch steps; a screen door above them; rough-hewn fencing, befitting the Hogan residence, on either side; and arboreal greenery at far-left and right. The steps had the look and feel of an altar; all the more so when caught in the blue-white orb of moonlight included in Alan Goodwin's excellent lighting design. The sound of birds chirping brightly before the start of the show, with the verdant and rustic set in plain view, certainly had a soothing effect. One of intimacy, no less.

The New England Rep's theater, a former Quaker meeting house designed by an Episcopalian architect, seats only 99. One hopes that, for this production, a hundredth seat was reserved somewhere in the heavens for the playwright. Had he seen this production of *Moon*, O'Neill would have been a proud man indeed.

—Marshall Brooks
Boston's Lyric Stage company uses with consistent ingenuity its oddly shaped auditorium: a large playing area surrounded on three sides by spectators--two rows across the wide front, and six and seven shorter, tiered rows to left and right. In a February-March production of *A Touch of the Poet*, effectively directed and designed by Polly Hogan, the setting featured a fireplace, an upholstered chair, a dark-wood bar with shelves behind it, and three tables (two cloth-covered, the third plain and surrounded by wooden chairs), in a room with three doors and two windows, the latter appropriately lace-curtained. A small, inelegant chandelier hung above the stage near the front-center; and the mirror, so necessary to Con Melody's poetic preening, was cleverly placed on the wall behind the two center rows.

Not just in setting but in costume, song and dialects, Ms. Hogan had paid scrupulous attention to period detail, and the result was a piece of early-nineteenth-century Americana that smacked of authenticity. For the spectator, believing in the mise en scène was a helpful first step toward believing in the array of disparate characters who occupy it.

As much care was lavished on the minor as on the major roles. Peter Haydu's Mickey Maloy had a genial smile, a winning garrulousness and a mischievous optical twinkle, especially when, in the first scene, he plied information from Jamie Cregan with abundant "on the house" nips. Deena Mazer's Deborah Harford, floating goddess-like in a white gown with pink trim and short, puffed sleeves, was the essence of ethereal grace until her eyes flared with anger at Con's "blarney" and "absurd performance." Later, in a particularly comic realization of her scene with Sara, she showed herself to be more than a little eccentric--clearly the Deborah we come to know more fully in *More Stately Mansions*. As Gadsby, Charles Carr was appropriately stiff, genteel and legalistic--a sharp contrast to the barroom riff-raff who hold him ironically aloft by the hands and feet and toss him out of the tavern.

Ron Ritchell was curiously subdued as Con Melody, but, while his tight-mouthed, often pianissimo performance was disturbing at first, he ultimately proved capable of considerable force within a limited dynamic range. Actually, his quietest lines were frequently the most cutting, as in his third-act duels with Sara, when we clearly saw the guilt Con felt at the things he had said (and had not said) to his daughter. Ritchell showed that a Major Melody stripped of the vocal fustian and braggadocio that such predecessors as Portman and Robards had draped him in can be just as moving. Perhaps even more so. Not that we can forgive Con's excessive retaliation after Sara's sharpest taunts in Act Three (one of the production's most effective scenes); but we understand, largely because of the quiet delivery, the deep hurt and shame he feels.

True, Mr. Ritchell's was not a perfect performance. He captured, for instance, too little of the comedy in the earlier acts. As for the pain that his rage masks when Sara accuses him of madness in Act One, and the conscious, deliberate brogue he adopts in his last scene: these too were underdone. But he did convey the essence of the character: the pride in a castled past, the self-pity, the studied formality, the love he feels for Nora but hates to admit to, and the deadness at the center of the defeated man who returns from the street brawl in Act Four, ironically calling himself "new born." His hands shaking, his face bruised, his gallant uniform now a tattered, dirt- and blood-stained wreck, and his delivery alternating between mad laughter (after his third-person references to "the Major") and unfeigned tears (especially at his recollection of the dying mare's eyes), Ritchell's Melody, though still knotted with inner conflict, had clearly become a hollow and pitiable husk.

But the production's highest acting honors go to Joan Gale as Nora and Ann Murphy as Sara, not only because they looked like a mother and daughter (see picture on first page of this issue), but because they accentuated the essential elements of their characters' natures best of all. Ms. Gale used movements, looks and a richly expressive voice to mold Nora's combination of strength, worry, warmth and undauntable pride into a moving and believable whole. And Ms. Murphy embodied, with equal verisimilitude, Sara's transition from (1) unnatural uptightness and obstreperous adolescence in the first act (her hair severely caught up in a bun, her feet defiantly bare, and her real feelings carefully hidden--except the love for Simon, which her prestissimo enthusiasm in discussing him
with Nora made obvious), to (2) radiant and mature fulfillment in the fourth act (her hair now unloosed; her face now glowing; and her feet now bare again, but no longer with any thought of defiance). Like Eben Cabot in *Desire Under the Elms*, Sara grows up in the course of her play, and Ms. Murphy's performance traced that development touchingly and persuasively. It was perhaps the finest achievement in a rich and satisfying production.

--Frederick Wilkins


Noting that, in London's 1979-1980 theatre season, "almost everything good has been American, musical or a revival," Mr. Billington asks, "why this sudden passion for American plays?" He cites "the collapse of the gentleman-code of English drama" in the late 1950's as the turning point when British critics began to look at classic American plays with unjaundiced eyes and realize that they have "a fierce, unironic emotion often lacking in British drama" and frequently surpass the latter in "giving the local a mythic feel."

But it was the result of two productions by the National Theater in the early 1970's--*Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *The Front Page*--that "the steady trickle of American plays ... turned into a flood." And much of that flood, last season, was the work of Eugene O'Neil--thanks, again, to the National Theater, which scored great successes with productions of *The Iaemen Cometh* (starring Robert Stephens); *Hughie* (with an American, Stacy Keach, as "the soiled, sweaty, street-wise Hughie, a Runyonesque hustler portrayed without romance"); and the S. S. Glencairn quartet, collectively titled *The Long Voyage Home*, whose "rare atmospheric poetry" Billington praises, singling out for special commendation the way that *The Moon of the Caribbees* "leaves behind an indelible image of a gently rocking ship, a star-speckled sky and the distant sound of carnival singing."

Billington reports that Bill Bryden, who directed all three evenings of O'Neill, "wants to move on to *A Touch of the Poet* and *More Stately Mansions*, though both, he argues, need textual revision." Cuts notwithstanding--and in the case of the latter play they are unquestionably necessary--it's good to hear that "the cultural barriers are crumbling," and that we need not reissue George Jean Nathan's 1932 defense of O'Neill and his U. S. brethren, "On British Condescension Toward American Letters." Bravo, Messrs. Bryden and Billington. We like your plays too! --Ed.


O'Neill loomed large in Mr. Clurman's attempt to answer the question posed by his title. His first thought was the 1919-20 season, "for it was on Feb. 2, 1920, that Eugene O'Neill's first full-length play, *Beyond the Horizon*, opened at the Morosco Theater. . . . Today such a play as *Beyond the Horizon* might be held too gloomy for most commercial managements. Even in 1920, its producer hesitated a long while before he risked putting it on. American plays with unhappy endings were virtual anathema on Broadway before the 20's.

"What is peculiar in all this is that while the decade . . . was one of exuberant optimism, the reaction to *Beyond the Horizon*, in which all the characters come to a sorry end, was one of elation. The play 'humanized' us. We were learning to confront tragedy in the theater and to give sober thought to our own life experience. We were growing up: reality was at last permitted free entry onto our stage."

But Clurman's final choice is the 1924-25 season, largely because it included *Desire Under the Elms*, a play which "made us look at our national past with new eyes. Certain city officials dubbed it 'obscene' and tried to ban it. Others made too much of its Freudian insights. But at its very core were the contrast and conflict of a pre-Civil War generation that had grown tough in the building of the country and the generations that followed, bent on amassing ever greater profit and power from their inheritance only to discover--too late--the blessing of love. Thus the possessors become dispossessed. This was a theme which O'Neill was to develop much more fully in his later work."
Another factor that kept that play's first production in his memory was the performance of its "still little known" star. "When Walter Huston appeared as Ephraim Cabot in Desire Under the Elms, he was a much younger man than the role called for. There was an intensity of concentration, an unwavering grip which might almost serve as a model for the American Puritan character—a quality which in its more gentlemanly aspect informed his acting in Dodsworth and in Knickerbocker Holiday. I saw Desire Under the Elms three times and his Cabot took on added stature and inner dimension at each performance." --Ed.


In a most valuable comparative study of the dramatic techniques of Chekhov and O'Neill that demonstrates persuasively the "inspiration" that the former provided the latter, Professor Egri discusses the connections, "both generic and genetic," between the short story and the drama. The "generic affinity between the epic turn of a short story and the dramatic zenith of a short play" (p. 4) is shown in the O'Neill one-acts that began as short stories (e.g., Warnings, The Dreamy Kid, Where the Cross Is Made and The Hairy Ape). The more complex "cascade-connection of short story-oriented dramatic units [frequently employing different types of conflict] in multiple-act plays" (p. 5) is revealed in full and detailed studies of Servitude (pp. 11-14) and A Moon for the Misbegotten (pp. 15-24). And A Touch of the Poet is cited as an example of the type of full-length play that features "a short story-like turn at the dramatic zenith." In showing the influence of Chekhov, Professor Egri seeks, "not to accuse [O'Neill] of imitation," but to point out the American playwright's "Chekhovian affinities" (p. 25). That goal is admirably achieved, and the essay is a worthy complement to the one by the same author in Eugene O'Neill: A World View, that is mentioned in Professor Voelker's review on page 13 of this issue. The analyses of Servitude and Moon for the Misbegotten are particularly outstanding, and the editor will share his copy with any interested subscriber lacking access to ALASH. (Requests should include $1.50 for xerographic reproduction and postage.) --Ed.


A review of the National Theater production that opened at the Cottesloe Theater, London, on January 22, 1980, directed by Bill Bryden, designed by Hayden Griffin, and featuring Stacy Keach as Erie and Howard Gorney as the night clerk. Mr. Gow had praise for all concerned—especially Griffin, whose "naturalistic set ... included just a hint of the blackness and dread outside, punctuated by gaudy points of light ... visible beyond the window"; and Keach, a "considerable presence," whose performance as Erie "catches exactly the truth and the pity at the heart of him." The aforementioned window, one of the production's "valid embellishments on O'Neill," had a double value: not only did it reveal a red neon sign, "HOTEL," outside, but it served as the target of a number of nervous glances by Keach, who, as soon as he entered, "darted to the window to peer furtively out, as if fearful that he might have been followed by some night creature whose intent would indubitably be malign." --Ed.


A review of the Royal Shakespeare Company production that opened at The Other Place in Stratford on September 18, 1979, directed by Jonathan Lynn, designed by Saul Radomsky, and featuring Susan Tracy as Anna, Fulton MacKay as Chris, and Gareth Thomas as Matt. Mayer admired the production, especially the "luminous acting" of Tracy and MacKay and the cinematic fluidity of Radomsky's "versatile" set; but his respect for the play itself was grudging at best, since his greatest praise was for the way director and performers brought life to the "caricature," "stereotype roles" and "naïveté and patent artificiality" of the "ungainly" text, and successfully fought and resisted O'Neill's invitation "to pull out the stops and to play for the Big Effect" (p. 31). A misprint adds to the review's piquancy, and leads one to wonder if the playwright were striking back: "Tracy and MacKay emphasize the kinship of Anna and Christ through the same mixture of sensitivity, coarse fibred toughness, and unexpected streaks of self-pity." --Ed.

Mr. McDonald's premise is that "Long Day's Journey Into Night is a structure of watchers-being-watched in which all of the observers are trapped in a play of glances--glances of death--that mutually intersect and abstract the presence of the characters, leaving only a trace of their being as a sign of their essential absence" (p. 343). This premise gives rise to what must be the most exhaustive study of glances, glancers and glancees ever devoted to a literary or dramatic work. Its style is frequently convoluted, but the intricacy of the subject precludes mellifluousness. Beginning with an explanation of the Sartrean sources for his terminology and approach (especially Being and Nothingness), McDonald then establishes (p. 344) "four descriptive phases of a developing sequence for the unveiling of absence" in the play, and relates them, consecutively, to one or more of its five scenes--Presence (Act 1), Appearance (Act 2, Scene 1), Transference (Act 2, Scene 2 and Act 3), and Absence (Act 4)--noting, though, that the four phases "interplay throughout the text" in an "interlacing flow," the study of which "contributes to our understanding both of the play's meaning and of its effect" (p. 345). He traces the "sequence of positional changes between observers and beings-observed" (p. 344); provides a particularly penetrating study of the last-act Mary Tyrone as deliberate performer; and offers a detailed explication of so many stage directions and pieces of dialogue, while pointing out "the intricate visual interplay" in a drama usually noted for its "verbal density" (p. 356, italics mine), that no abstract can do it justice. The essay admirably elucidates "the dynamic, and even tragic, effect of perception--of seeing and being seen--on the identity and fate of the characters" (p. 356), and deserves the careful attention of anyone confronting the play, whether in study, classroom, or playhouse. --Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1. From Jay E. Raphael, Department of Drama, University of Virginia, January 7, 1980:

Mine is a note of appreciation. Although the address and the degrees bespeak an academician, I'm essentially an actor and a director who, some thirteen years ago, tripped over the Gelb biography and developed an intense interest in and admiration for Eugene O'Neill. While I have managed to read everything between covers in English on O'Neill's life and writings, I long ago gave up on staying current with the periodical literature. Therefore, I am grateful for your bibliographical listings, reprints and abstracts. And as someone concerned primarily with the live theatre I also wish to encourage the continued listing of productions (both commercial and academic), film showings, and special theatrical events.

Having subscribed since your first edition, I can express admiration for the growth and increasing scope of the project but I would like to urge you to maintain the "homey" aspects of the newsletter such as Bill Costley's "Spithead Revisited, 1979" [January 1980, pp. 5-6. --Ed.]. The little scholarly pickings, notes and queries, anecdotes, and personal reports of the "devoted" give a special flavor to the newsletter and put me in contact with the readership in a way that gives your enterprise a special identity.

As for requests and suggestions, I would be interested in (1) a bibliographical/collector's article providing some expert advice and perhaps a report on the current market re collecting first editions of O'Neill's plays; (2) a listing of the films made from or based on O'Neill's plays complete with names and addresses for obtaining rental information; and (3) special projects, seminar descriptions, syllabi, etc., pertaining to unique approaches to teaching O'Neill on the college level in literature and theatre departments.

Again, my thanks for your labor and the quality of the product. Continued success in the new year.

[The commendation is greatly appreciated; I will try to continue balancing the short and the long, the light and the lofty, and will share all production information that comes my way. Mr. McKenna's letter, which follows, is the start of an answer to the bibliographic
2. From John H. McKenna, New York City, March 17, 1980:

I am a collector of books by and about Eugene O'Neill. Recently, I have come across references to several books, each unique in its own way, which may be of interest to you and your readers.

Sotheby's at Chancery Lane, London, offered for sale on December 7, 1979 a presentation copy of the first edition of "The Iceman Cometh," inscribed by the author to Dudley Digges, who starred in the first production of the play, accompanied by a letter from Carlotta Monterey O'Neill. The inscription reads: "To Dudley Digges - with much affectionate friendship and my deepest gratitude for your splendid acting which did so much to make The Iceman Cometh a success!" Regrettably, I was an unsuccessful bidder on this book. It sold for 750 pounds.

At the California Antiquarian Book Fair (February 7, 8, and 9, 1980) in Los Angeles, a West Coast dealer offered an advance uncorrected proof copy of "Days without End" with O'Neill's inscription on the flyleaf reading: "To Bob Sisk - with all friendship and grateful appreciation! Eugene O'Neill Dec. 1933." It is also inscribed on the front cover: "To Bob Sisk, all friendship! Gene, Dec. 1933." O'Neill has also written "uncorrected proof 'Days without End'" in the corner. The copy bears a later inscription from Sisk to a third party, not identified.

I own a copy of "Mourning Becomes Electra," first edition, sixth printing with an inscription that reads: "To James Boshell - 'Bordon' with grateful appreciation! Eugene O'Neill Christmas, 1931." The book is also signed by 18 members of the original cast.

I have a catalogue of the Engel Collection presented to Columbia University which includes "Bound East for Cardiff," New York, Frank Shay, 1916 (Provincetown Plays First Series) and inscribed: "To the 'Cap' with the best wishes of the least worthy of his crew. Gene O'Neill."

I try to keep track of presentation copies as they come on the market as well as copies of his plays that have been owned by actors. I have a copy of "Strange Interlude" signed by several members of a cast that included Gale Sondergaard in the role of Nina Leeds.

I thought I would pass this information on as it may be of interest to some of your readers. Perhaps some of them know of additional material not included in the major O'Neill collections. I hope you find it of some interest. [It is of great interest indeed. I will include in the next issue any additions that other readers submit. Many thanks for starting the series. --Ed.]
congratulates Mr. Vyzga and is proud to have shared the designs with Newsletter readers.

3. **O'NEILL ON MEXICAN TV.** Last spring, a Mexican film crew was in the United States to construct a 60-minute documentary on O'Neill for showing on Mexican television in conjunction with an O'Neill Festival in Mexico City next September. Their two-week, March-April itinerary included interviews with Jason Robards, Colleen Dewhurst, Barbara Gelb and Louis Sheaffer; a session of Virginia Floyd's O'Neill seminar at Smithfield College; and shots of O'Neill haunts in Provincetown, Connecticut and New York City. (The site of the legendary "Hell Hole" in Greenwich Village—now a parking lot—was visited but rejected as empty of O'Neillian echoes.) Frederic von Stange, of the federal International Communication Agency, was U. S. coordinator for the film, which may not be aired or screened in this country because, according to Mr. von Stange, the ICA is prohibited by law from showing its films in the United States.

4. Anent that imminent Mexican festival, José Quintero left in early June for Mexico City, where he will direct a Spanish-language production of *Ah, Wilderness!*

5. Eugene O'Neill was among the "writers particularly related to Provincetown" whose lives and works were discussed during the James Joyce Symposium, co-chaired by Joyce Society President Zack Bowen, in that city on 11-16 June. According to Michael Knight, who reported on the event for the *New York Times* (June 17, 1980, p. C7), "a panel ... compared Joyce and his work and Eugene O'Neill ... and his work. The panel concluded that there were many similarities and many contrasts." Any questions?

6. **JAMES O'NEILL, SR., 1900.** Michael Hinden, browsing in an old bookstore in San Francisco last December, found a gem—a January, 1900 copy of *The Dramatic Magazine* (Vol. IX, No. 3) which records contemporary reactions to James O'Neill's performance as D'Artagnan in *The Musketeers*, Sydney Grundy's dramatization of the Dumas novel ("Mr. O'Neill has everywhere been hailed as the beau ideal of the role, which he plays with all the fire of youth, yet the finish acquired by his long experience as the leading romantic actor of America"), and in *Monte Cristo*. "The double Dumas dramas have been so popular that much of his time has been occupied in playing return dates, so great has been the demand." A "special irony" is the inclusion, in the same issue, of the following ad:

OPIUM
MORPHINE habit cured in 30 days, 30,000 cases cured. NO PAY TILL CURED, Address Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. T5, Lebanon, Ohio.

"Apparently," Professor Hinden notes, "the condition was not that rare in the 'better families' to which most of the ads are addressed."

7. **DONALD GALLUP, RETIRING, REMINISCES.** In the April 24 issue of the *New York Times* ("'Thursday's Child' and His Memories," p. C20), Richard Eder printed an excellent profile of Donald Gallup, who will retire this summer as curator of the American Literature Collection in the Beinecke Library at Yale. (It was Gertrude Stein who called him Thursday's Child, for a reason explained in the profile.) Among the facts there recalled were Dr. Gallup's editing of O'Neill manuscripts, his involvement in the posthumous productions, and his "rare ability to get along with O'Neill's stormy widow, Carlotta." The following is an extract from the article:

With Yale holding the manuscripts of O'Neill's later years—the Museum of the City of New York received the early O'Neill and Princeton the middle period—Dr. Gallup found himself considerably involved in the efforts to make use of the material; among other things, for the production of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. Mrs. O'Neill was a zealous and often changeable guardian of her husband's literary reputation, and the task was not easy.
"I first met her in 1954," Dr. Gallup recalled. "Jim Babb, the head of the Yale Library, said he found it a little taxing to answer all her telephone calls and asked me to take over. I went down to Boston, where she was staying, and I thought of taking with me Xeroxes of the dedications to her that he had put at the beginning of his plays. She didn't have them—we had the manuscripts, you see—and afterward she told me that from then on she always referred to them as her rosary."

8. NEW O'NEILL OPERA. Among the four new productions in the New York City Opera's 1980-81 season at the New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center, will be An American Trilogy. Included in the one-act premieres on the triple-bill, opening on October 9, will be Before Breakfast, with music by Thomas Pasatieri and a libretto adapted by Frank Corsaro from the O'Neill monodrama. Mr. Corsaro will direct, and Marilyn Zschau will sing the role of the nagging wife.

9. Jason Robards is at work on an autobiography whose title, A Curious Friendship, refers to the near-mystical currents that the actor always felt toward O'Neill, although the two never met. "I am trying to understand and reveal," Mr. Robards writes (in the "People" section of the Boston Globe Magazine, May 18, p. 42), "what happened to me psychologically during that period when I came to identify so self-destructively with the O'Neill characters I was playing. It's a hard book to write, but I'm struggling on."

10. Last March, the New York Friends of the O'Neill Theater Center hosted a wine and hors d'oeuvres party at which David Hays, vice-president of the O'Neill Center, gave a presentation on the visual aspects of the first production of Long Day's Journey Into Night, for which he designed the set.

11. Travis Bogard will chair an 8:30 a.m. business meeting of the American Theatre Association's Eugene O'Neill Committee at the ATA Convention in San Diego on Monday, August 11.

12. NEW LIGHT ON O'NEILL & CO. Edward Shaughnessy, whose work has appeared frequently in these pages, is working on an illuminating magnum opus called "Strindberg and O'Neill: The Sunshine Boys"! The Newsletter is eager to print an abstract—or at least a refraction.

13. DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS ON O'NEILL.


14. PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE.

[A review by Dennis Welland, "The dodge-question of dialect," appeared in the April 4 issue of TLS, p. 399. Welland praises Ms. Chothia for her valuable contribution to the undernourished study of language in drama, and specifically for choosing as her subject "the major American dramatist about the inadequacies of whose use of language there has hitherto been the highest degree of consensus on both sides of the Atlantic." Chothia does not champion every O'Neillian mot nor label every one bon, but her study may, one hopes, weaken Mr. Welland's "consensus." More in the next issue. --Ed.]


[What a pleasure it is to welcome back a venerable publishing house that lost its autonomy just 100 years ago and now returns, headed by Chester Kerr, as a subsidiary of Houghton Mifflin. (See Herbert Mitgang, "An Old House Made New," *New York Times Book Review,* January 13, 1980, p. 39.) Such phoœnixes are far too infrequent! And to have O'Neill's 72 poems between two covers makes the house's re-emergence doubly delightful. The collection will be reviewed in the next issue of the Newsletter. --Ed.]


[Published in both cloth and paperback editions @ $15 and $4.95 respectively, the 1980 enlargement includes *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (pp. 161-174) as one of two additions to the eight works discussed in the 1959 edition. A review of the *Long Day's Journey* chapter will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter. --Ed.]

15. RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS.

*Ah, Wilderness!* Dunster House, Harvard College, March 6-15, 1980. (Performed in the Dining Hall by members of the Dunster Drama Society.)


*Desire Under the Elms,* dir. George Keathley. Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, MN. Opens on Aug. 23, 1980. (To be reviewed in a future issue.)


*Hughie.* Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival, Lakewood Civic Auditorium, Cleveland, OH, Aug. 7, 9-10, 15, 20, Sept. 4, 7, 1980. (On double bill with *The Boor.*)


The Long Voyage Home (the S. S. Glencairn Quartet), dir. Bill Bryden. National Theater (Cottesloe), London. Opened on Jan. 10, 1980. Closed in April. (James Fenton, reviewing the production in the London Sunday Times --"O'Neill and the art of melodrama," Jan. 13, 1980--, found the plays "pure corn" but worth seeing on both historical and critical grounds. "Each impossible task set by the author is performed by the company with an almost unbearable seriousness and skill." "Think," he writes, "of the least good prentice work by Joseph Conrad--there is nothing in it to compare with these scenes for bullshit artistry.")


A Touch of the Poet, dir. Polly Hogan. Lyric Stage, Boston, MA, Feb 20 - March 22, 1980. (See review by Frederick Wilkins in this issue.)


16. FAINT-PRAISE AWARD-WINNER FOR 1979. The winner of the editor's first annual prize for the most grudging compliment to O'Neill, just edging out James Fenton, whose remarks about The Long Voyage Home (quoted above) made him a serious contender, was David Mayer, whose review of Anna Christie in Plays and Players (December 1979, pp. 30-31) began with the paragraph quoted below. With friends like this ...!

When it came to writing dialogue, Eugene O'Neill had a tin ear. His characters, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian pagan or man, speak torrents of a language compounded of long-obsolete slang, inaccurate phonetic stabs at regional dialect, and sudden bursts of baroque rhetoric pulled from the spectrum somewhere between blush pink and deep violet. Even in the plays which reflect this playwright's fleeting admiration for naturalism, his Americans not only appear alien to their boundaries but to this planet. Such criticism of O'Neill hold true so long as his plays remain between the covers of a book. Translated to the stage, even hampered by such clumsy devices as asides and soliloquies and weighted [to] the earth by leaden philosophising, the dramas have a crude vitality and disturbing turbulence, much like an angry wino prodded from a Skid Row gutter.

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN THIS ISSUE

MARSHALL BROOKS, essayist and printer, is the editor of Nostoc and associate editor of the Eugene O'Neill Newsletter. Persons interested in information about Nostoc, an adventurous little magazine, and its editor's other avant-garde publications may obtain it from Mr. Brooks at 101 Nehoiden Road, Waban, MA 02168.
MICHAEL HINDEN, Associate Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is chairman of the Publications Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society. His previous appearances in the Newsletter have included essays on The Hairy Ape (January 1978, pp. 2-4), Richard Middleton (January 1979, pp. 13-16), and The Emperor Jones (January 1980, pp. 2-4).

DEBORAH KELLAR, a member of the Membership Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society, is spending the summer as Faculty Costume Designer for a four-show season at Central Washington University in Ellensburg. The recipient of an M.A. in Directing from the University of California at Santa Barbara, she served as guest artistic director at Centralia College in Washington during academic year 1979-1980, when she directed and designed the costumes for the production of A Touch of the Poet that she discusses in this issue.

PATRICK J. NOLAN, Professor of English at Villanova University, has "been teaching O'Neill in seminar for better than twelve years and found the state of scholarship somewhat spotty." The essay in this issue points out "one spot I believe should be filled." A playwright, Professor Nolan won an Emmy award for the ABC Movie of the Week, Jericho Mile.

PAUL D. VOELKER, Associate Professor of Drama at the University of Wisconsin Center in Marshfield, served as literary consultant to the Milwaukee Rep's 1977-78 productions of Ah, Wilderness! and Long Day's Journey Into Night. His previous appearances in the Newsletter were in September 1977 (pp. 4-6), January 1978 (pp. 15-17), September 1978 (pp. 14-15) and January 1980 (pp. 20-21). His review of the forthcoming Guthrie Theater production of Desire Under the Elms will, if time permits, appear in the next issue.

FREDERICK C. WILKINS, Chairman of the Department of English at Suffolk University in Boston, is editor of the Eugene O'Neill Newsletter and a Director and chairman of the Membership Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society. He is currently euphoric about the Newsletter-Society merger, and plans to take a group of students to the Stratford (Ontario) Festival production of Long Day's Journey Into Night in the fall—a performance that he will review in a future issue of the Newsletter.