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The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE:

SUMMER-FALL 1981

- * "Good Morning, Eugene," a poem by Norman Andrew Kirk p. 2
- * Patrick J. Nolan on Jungian elements in *Desire Under the Elms* p. 5
- * Susan Tuck on O'Neill's *Dynamo* and D. H. Lawrence p. 10
- * FOCUS ON *WELDED* IN NEW YORK CITY p. 15
 - *Review by Michael Hinden p. 17
 - *Review by Marshall Brooks p. 18
 - *Stephanie Greene discusses the play with an actress p. 19
- * *MORE STATELY MANSIONS* IN MADISON: TWO REPORTS
 - *Esther M. Jackson on the concept and conclusions p. 21
 - *Ronald R. Miller on the organization and staging p. 26
- * The Eugene O'Neill Society Section p. 33
- * News, notes and queries p. 35
- * Persons represented in this issue p. 39

At right: Philip Anglim and Ellen Tobie as Michael and Eleanor Cape in the José Quintero-directed production of *Welded* at Columbia University. Photo by James Radiches. See reports and reviews on pp. 15-21.



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GOOD MORNING, EUGENE

a poem by Norman Andrew Kirk

with an introduction by Marshall Brooks

Long before the current revival of interest in Eugene O'Neill and things O'Neillian, poet Norman Andrew Kirk found that O'Neill and his work were extraordinarily special. More than that, Norman discovered, in the very face of death after a near-fatal car accident, that O'Neill helped him to establish the courage to live--courage to live a life of meaning.

It occurred to me that some may be surprised to hear that O'Neill could, and can, be so inspirational and life-giving to anyone as shattered and close to death as Norman Andrew Kirk had been. But the following poem is an extraordinary testimony to the fact that he was.

What is also remarkable about Norman's poem is the presence of Griffey, an alcoholic Irish porter who kept his (and Norman's) booze submerged in his mop bucket (to elude the authorities) at the hospital where Norman recovered. Griffey revealed to Norman that he was one of "a handful" who saw O'Neill buried at Boston's Forest Hills Cemetery, which the aforementioned hospital borders. (O'Neill was buried in virtually total secrecy. According to one account, there were only three mourners at the grave site.) Griffey's presence at the burial is by no means a trivial thing. On the contrary, it is quite telling. As Norman points out in the poem, Griffey was the necessary representative "from the legions/of humanity who stood common ground/ with O'Neill...."

Both Norman and Griffey called upon O'Neill as a companion, which makes their relationship to him, and his impact on them in turn, special. Clearly, O'Neill's greatness lies in the fact that his influence is felt, not just in the theatre but--and, perhaps, most important--outside of it as well, in everyday life. --M.B.

Too many times at resort hotels on porches
at 3 a.m. with quivering virgins I loved.
Too bruised and old I'd soak in scotch since
they gave their love but could not take mine
and the side effects of lust love and hate
with remorse speeding into alcohol insanity.
My lust denied, my love affirmed, I was alone
in my white car through the black night road,
determined to rid myself from years of pain.
I was too alive or too dead. Take your pick
(if you're in it now). Something within or
without wanted me deadened and put away
from my self contained writing room where
pleasure was the measure and purity the pain.
Something wanted me reduced and smashed into
a gasp, a grasp so feeble that it held
no matter until courage took its place and
spat at that something, avoiding God,
standing by as an easily imagined target.
There's SOMETHING easier so I spit at it
and call it THE BLUE BALL EXPRESS that

flattened me, tossed away and laid out
beside the super highway like a sack thrown
from a speeding car by a carefree child.
THE BLUE BALL EXPRESS split into two
shattered fragments, the car on asphalt
and me in the brush, attended to later,
but first I took the ten-count that night
that led to years of not winning yet.

(Good morning, Eugene.)
Keep jamming, keep jamming.
I have got to keep jamming.
But even to reveal myself
would give that SOMETHING the win.
(Should I have let them know that?)
To admit to the facts
(the things I only know)
would be a defeat.
(But they didn't even ask.)
Who asked?
(I ask "Why?")

Nobody asked.

(I DID! I DID! But I thought
I was asking for someone else...)
Why?

Wheeling ahead from highway to room
I know where time stopped for the ICEMAN
and THE END OF THE WORLD SALOON but
my rooms had no slop, sawdust, or whores.
Everything was scrubbed like nineteenth
century ship-decks, including me. A mate
couldn't call for cleaner cornered rooms.
The venetian blinds were shocked rustlers
beamed white by flashlights aimed by night
nurses without faces. The walls of pale
green to calm did not work for me and
glared along the floors of hard tile
smash your brains black topped off by
a no color ceiling to be stared at, from
the bed where I lay unable to move with
tongs in my skull, circular to regular
bed in time; headboard, white; bedrails
up, like THE END OF THE WORLD SALOON,
my rooms were crowded cells of hell
alone in countless hospitals where
I had no choice but to linger and
dangle while awaiting their help, kinds
which never had a name before, came
sneering and smile, with full recognition
of my helplessness, smiling. I held my spit.
For there was no time in a time of years.
Why?

Look out the window to Forest Hills
(Cemetery) in Jamaica Plain
(Boston) and say to O'Neill
in a fake Irish act, false in sound
but true in meaning when saying:
"Good morning, Eugene.
You were a fine one at that."

Why?

There is time to ask.
Don't throw the punch line
of broken bones before
a proper audience has assembled
and the confusion over "Why?"
will be academic.
(Don't scare them away. Quiet.
Beware of boredom from fear.

Be aware like a Minuteman and
"the Red-Coats are coming."
Or Massasoit, father to King Philip.
The Indians. Shush!) And (anything
I say will sound like defeat
when courage was the tone)

well,

There's one way to get it out:
when in need

look to the check book of homilies,
old wives' tales, sermonettes,
clichés and slogans.

The appropriate play found--
lay it down:

I'VE LOST ALL THE BATTLES

BUT I HAVEN'T LOST THE WAR.

ACCEPT THE LIE THEN FIND THE TRUTH

AND JUSTICE (should I say?)

AND JUSTICE WILL BALANCE THE BAR.

(Or come before it, out of control.

Eugene, everything is getting out

of control, even though you're put down.

Put down beneath the ground. SEE?

Eugene, that's what I mean. SEE?)

This is it, buddy, the bones.

So here goes prosaically

what was once earth poetry.

I flattened it to the floor unglued
by a virgin's claim of love, our love,
yet denying me and giggling at my stupor
that sped away with a wine jug swiped
from the Gloucester Hotel, nowhere, nothing
but blind speed and wine driving away
the love images, the lie and screaming truth
of dogma dominating love into insanity.
The innocence. Our innocence.
One died. One lives?

(She fainted when she heard
and held my limp hand for years
until her dogma and my truth
killed us painfully forever.

If there was peace for such honesty...)

3 a.m., the rain, super highway, the skids
slamming into unconsciousness my body
under the stars.

Alone.

I was laid
with a broken neck

on my back like a stiff bird,
 alive enough only to wonder of death,
 (Eugene was waiting a few months ahead)
 knowing I was only a beat away
 from swinging out of
 THE END OF THE WORLD SALOON
 into the big dance of oblivion.
 And I smiled when voices came through
 the brush to aim me to the rooms of
 help where hands held me to life.
 It wasn't time. (Eugene?)
 I passed by a dead still night.

Then came the sirens, darkness,
 words, arms, a stretcher, commands,
 darkness, rooms, suction, blood, tapping,
 testing, pain, people struggling
 with my life, to keep it.
 Light, noises, awakening, needles,
 catheters, skull drilling, talk,
 courage, laughter, death of a child,
 hidden sadness with the machine shut off.
 A priest dying, swearing at the machine
 that kept him alive and released the kid.
 One dumb doctor called my tune
 of paralysis from too much of my alcohol,
 degrading my claims on poetry and
 tossing me into the junkie bin.
 They pinned him with my broken neck
 and labeled him "the stupid hick."
 Why?
 Couldn't move.
 Couldn't feel.
 Stupid hick.
 Others flooded me with care.
 Tired, I took it all,
 while the dead bird of myself
 relaxed, encouraged,
 unable to applaud the show.

Months passed before the meeting day
 with my room where time was erased,
 the measure of it condensed, elongated
 into other rooms of surgery, therapy,
 good news, bad news and real life
 games with liquor, nurses, laughter,
 and doctors becoming more than friends.
 And it was there I first knew Eugene,
 bowing each morning from my bed

out the window with puzzled respect
 and a "Good morning, Eugene."

There was no "good morning" until
 Griffey, an Irishman, mopped my floor
 through the years, two, three, or four,
 with his porter's mop bucket lined with
 nips in filthy water, the cover for the toast
 which came from Griffey's wet mind for
 all time, only a handful of humans
 saw Eugene O'Neill take his place on earth.
 Griffey saw and shared the secret with me,
 the drunkest porter at the hospital saw
 O'Neill go down in earth as he stood firm
 by the tree with a pint in hand to withstand
 the lonesome sight of a handful of humans
 at the last stop for the poet and it burned
 its mark into his wet brain; Griffey, the sentinel
 for the IRA, who had slipped away from Ireland
 and his mop-bucket job, fully loaded in time
 with the movements at the cemetery site where
 he was the only one with a blurry eyed view
 from the proper rot to taste the whiskey and
 give the toast "Farewell," from the legions
 of humanity who stood common ground
 with O'Neill by the bar by the sea at
 THE END OF THE WORLD SALOON.

I had the window view from the seventh floor
 to the cemetery and with my friend Griffey,
 his bucket in my private room, we shared
 the nips and pints, stopping short of pills
 for pain, and drinking to immortality
 in order to defy our lonely memories and
 the fact of Eugene and so many alone. So
 the toast, whether wet or dry, each day,
 was tossed away out the window of that room
 as we firmed ourselves with the secret salute:
 "GOOD MORNING, EUGENE.
 IT'S A FINE DAY AT THAT!"

-- Norman Andrew Kirk

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS: CHARACTERS BY JUNG

Polarities lie at the heart of Eugene O'Neill's dramas. For a dramatist whose primary concern was the quest to establish a unity, emotionally and psychically, in his characters, a concentration upon polarities focussed attention on whether the polarities could or could not be harmonized. A brief review of O'Neill's plays brings a whole catalog of polar opposites to mind, defining in each case a set of particular spiritual or psychic tensions that, for O'Neill, had to be balanced before twentieth century man could "belong." O'Neill deals with belonging, in ancient terms, that cannot be implemented, spiritually, in the modern context. Like Yank, Brutus Jones seeks consciously to find faithful expression of those yearnings after transpersonal meaning which are unconscious. Jim Harris and Ella Downey record the racial rift between black and white. Dion Anthony represents the personality split between Dionysiac and Apollonian man. In *Mourning Becomes Electra*, the Freudian Pleasure Principle is set against the repressive Puritan ethic. Con Melody is faced with the double images of himself. And the Tyrones are torn between the symbolic contents of day and night. Yet, the most important polarity of all may be that of the Anima-Animus archetypes, particularly the Anima, as they work themselves out in *Desire Under the Elms*.

Contrary to Oscar Cargill's note dealing with Carl Jung's influence in *The Emperor Jones*, where he holds that, "From the artistic point of view, how far O'Neill subscribed to the Jungian thesis is immaterial,"¹ the fact remains that one sees more of the artistic process in operation as one sees O'Neill's dramatic art conform itself to the depth psychology of Jung. How far O'Neill follows Jung's paradigms may shed light on how thoroughly the Jungian psychological model may have set the direction for the playwright's artistic and, even, spiritual vision. Ann Belford Ulanov is quite suggestive for any consideration of O'Neill's general practice with Jungian polarities when she holds that, "The psyche is composed of various opposites, such as: conscious-unconscious, reason-instinct, active-passive, etc.; the symbolism of the masculine-feminine represents all of these polar opposites."² Remembering that O'Neill made continuous reference, pejoratively, to God the father, and longingly, to God the mother, one can at least suspect that the Jungian archetypes of Anima-Animus, of soft and hard, may also supply clues toward a pattern in O'Neill's use of polarities.

To begin with, O'Neill was probably very aware of Jung's view of the Collective Unconscious. His constant interest in the Behind Life force would almost assure that he was sensitive to the psychologist's distinction between a personal unconscious, the residue of personal experience that has drifted out of the authority of conscious exercise, and a collective unconscious, a legacy of needs, responses, and instincts so common to man through the millennia that they constitute a body of archetypal experiences implanted in all mankind independent of any individual experience. This body of unconscious life would constitute the Behind Life energy drawing man on to his destiny. It does not derive from subjective experience; it is purely objective to each individual--a body of psychic luggage having everything to do with the formation of men while man, as he receives it, has nothing to do with the formation of it. Access must be had into this objective dimension of the psyche so that the release of its energy at the conscious level of experience be a positive one. As archetypes of the collective unconscious, the anima and animus mediate to the ego this deeper, collective, objective dimension of the psyche. Access to this objective body is given to the conscious, masculine ego through the anima and to the feminine ego through the animus.

¹ Oscar Cargill, "Fusion Point of Jung and Nietzsche," in *O'Neill and His Plays*, ed. Oscar Cargill, N. Bryllion Fagin, and William J. Fisher. (New York: New York University Press, 1963), p. 408, n. 1.

² Ann Belford Ulanov, *The Feminine in Jungian Psychology and in Christian Theology* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 291.

The archetypal opposites dictate how, at the level of image, O'Neill structured the play's setting. The elms and the rock walls establish, at the subliminal level, the polar contents of the anima and animus. The rocks which enclose the farm within its boundaries symbolize the masculine elements contained in the animus. The spirit that makes for hardness is the spirit that embraces and controls the farm and the Cabots. It serves to wall in the militant, aggressive animus instincts, while walling out, as best it can, any presence that would temper the harsh obsession with masculinity. But, at the same time, the elms brood over the entire setting, trying to descend and envelop the house with the affects and emotional contents of the anima. The spirit of Woman hangs over the house. At the level of image alone, we are aware that the conflicting energies of these archetypes, by the end of the play, will either be harmonized or be mutually destructive. The issue is, will the spirit of the elms descend to fuse with the spirit of the rocks?

Given their universality and their absolute need to be reconciled, the archetypes constitute the tragic tension between opposites that drives on all individuals to their own form of resolution. In his employment of them, O'Neill found a tragic force that propelled his characters to action, a secular equivalent to the force of the Gods in Sophoclean tragedy. The anima-animus opposition constitutes the Behind Life force which, independent of conscious will, drives the Cabots and Abbie on to tragic consequences with a pressure nearly as absolute as that of the Gods on Oedipus. Finding such an equivalent in modern drama is quite difficult because of the age's aversion to absolutes. But what is wanting by way of viable Gods, O'Neill substituted for from the realm of psychology. Acceptable because sublunary and secular, these forces of the archetypal instincts, as well as the Freudian Pleasure Principle, were seen to operate as universally throughout mankind as once the Gods prevailed. Psychological forces, at the secular level, approximated as closely as possible to the absolute presence that spiritual forces once exercised on man at the religious level. O'Neill was ready to tap Freud and Jung for these equivalents as set pieces in his Behind Life force; and these forces, be they Freudian or Jungian, constitute imperatives upon all being. Man "must" belong, consciously, in the same sense that he once belonged, unconsciously, as animal. Man, consciously, "must" possess transpersonal meaning in the exercise of surviving religious instincts, be the God crocodile or money. Man, merely by being mortal, "must" experience the claims of the pleasure principle which, however, has to accommodate itself to Puritanism. Melody "must" love self before he caters to being loved by others. An imperative set by Nature must be harmonized to another imperative, generally determined by conscious choice. To yield to the anima is the natural imperative in *Desire Under the Elms*; to regulate the animus is the struggle imposed by the anima on Eben's conscious will.

While parallels between drama and its influences are important, the parallels alone would mean little if they were to do nothing more than slavishly incorporate recent psychological theories. What is germane is to show how O'Neill incorporated these theories, and pressed them to their limits within the play, while simultaneously preserving the integrity of his own artistic viewpoint. Contrary to Jung, O'Neill never saw his polarities working to resolution. The original stamp, however, that O'Neill imposes on the polarities is his equating of the feminine archetype to the quality of love, and of the masculine archetype to man's greed for possessions. Even as Jung insists that the archetypes must be harmonized, O'Neill insists that the unregulated passion for possession must be brought under control by other human needs--in this case, love. Everyone "must" love; yet, everyone must possess some goods. Both must be fulfilled if human needs are to be happily satisfied. The elimination of one (love) by the other (possessiveness) marks the failure of man to attain psychic wholeness as well as, for O'Neill, spiritual unity.

Desire Under the Elms opens with the animus--hardness and possessiveness--exerting the dominant energy in the Cabot household. As the rocks encompass, contain, and gird

the property, so the consciousness of the men is held in bondage by the hard, loveless ethic of possessiveness. Eben, Sim and Peter, in thrall to their father's hard nature and greed, make a virtue out of hardness and ownership--and yet they reveal the emptiness of that "virtue" in their dreams of tomorrow and retreats into nostalgia. Visions of possession and dispossession alternately preoccupy them, and from the opening line of "God! Purty!" (a curious juxtaposition of the anima to the divine), through Sim's wistful recollection of his dead wife, Jenn, through the brothers' crude debate over Min, to Eben's lamentation about his Ma, the anima's feminine energy challenges the monolithic authority of masculine hardness. The energy of love seeks expression equal to the energy the Cabots pledge to owning land, money and women. Because the feminine spirit has never been integrated into the Cabot home as an object of dignity and equality, the anima broods as an atmosphere about the house. Though hardly endorsing Jung's views, Dr. Phillip Weissman's psychoanalytic reading of *Desire Under the Elms* does seem to underline the fact that it is the enigmatic feminine presence which insists on a balanced polarity with the masculine spirit: "In *Desire Under the Elms*, as in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, the character of the woman (Abbie and his mother) remains an unconscious enigma to the author, in sharp contrast to the realistic portrayals of the father."³

The Jungian particulars proceed in this fashion. The anima archetype lies quietly suppressed until the entry of Abbie, when sex agitates the anima contents of Eben's psyche and brings them into more violent antagonism with the animus. With Abbie's entrance, springing Sim and Peter loose to California and serving also to intensify more exclusively the opposition of Eben to Ephraim, Sex, prefiguring love, is about to challenge the possessive compulsions of the Cabots. Eben becomes the character in whom the anima energies will be most violently in contest with the animus archetype.

With the death of his mother, Eben had lost, at too early a stage, that object that mediates between the unconscious and the ego. The anima force, love, did not get fully liberated, and Eben's energies came under the aegis of Ephraim's masculine drive to own the farm. Like every individual, Eben must structure a harmony between the feminine and masculine components of his own nature. In O'Neill's terms, Eben's Unity of Being--his belonging--was denied him at his mother's death; and in the ensuing years, his anima, his need for love, has never been able to establish a psychic equality with his need to possess the farm. The whole environment of masculine hardness has forbidden him the means to relate to his feminine archetypal energy as energy that stands in relation to masculine energy as an equal "other." Psychically, for all the sons the patriarchal values of greed cannot be modified, complemented or disciplined by the anima energies of love. Thus it is that while Eben is emotionally bound to his mother and love, he is intellectually bound to his father's possessive greed.

Jung perceives Eben's paradox as the result of his ego being identified to the anima, making no conscious separation between the ego and the compulsive, automatic energy of the anima. The feminine energies in Eben, never maturing, hold on to him, controlling him emotionally until such time as he can create a mature communication with his anima. Eben suffers from the psychic split of wanting love but never admitting that need to a status equal to wanting the farm. Needing to be soft, he cannot be such because his family ethic opposes it. In his environment, softness has been a term of disdain. But until he admits, consciously, the "other," the need to love, to an equality with the need for property, he will never possess an ego in control of the anima, nor will his psyche be a smooth, self-regulating system of balanced polarities. In short, his unity of being will be forfeited. Jung's description of the emotional patterns that identify such an anima immaturity could have served O'Neill as apt descriptive terms for his characterization of Eben. Speaking of the emotional affects of the troubled anima on man, Jung holds that the anima "intensifies, exaggerates, falsifies, and mythologizes

³ Phillip Weissman, "Conscious and Unconscious Autobiographical Dramas of Eugene O'Neill," *American Psychoanalytic Association Journal*, 5 (July, 1957), 458.

all emotional relations with his work and with other people of both sexes.... When the anima is strongly constellated, she softens a man's character and makes him touchy, irritable, moody, jealous, vain, and unadjusted. He is in a state of discontent and spreads discontent all around him. Sometimes the man's relationship to the woman who has caught his anima [in this case, Abbie] accounts for the existence of this syndrome."⁴

Given Eben's incomplete and agitated anima energies, Abbie's appearance on the farm establishes the conditions for another Jungian phase of anima experience, projection. With his anima image initially established by his mother, Eben's anima is now caught by Abbie, who almost immediately fulfills several of the archetypal images of the anima, the spiritual guide in the role of mother, the beloved one, and the harlot. The confusion of Eben about the anima's balance with the animus is reflected in his inability to separate his nostalgic love of his mother from the hard desire to revenge himself on Ephraim in her name. But the confusion, slowly, will be resolved. O'Neill accepts Jung's lead when he allows the mother's presence to recede from her room after Eben and Abbie's first sexual ceremony, giving evidence thereby that Eben's psyche is moving toward maturity and wholeness. For Eben, love very quickly becomes an imperative nearly equal to possession. Unfortunately, the imperatives exercise themselves by turns. The desire for love is not yet integrated with but, rather, is *followed by* the desire to own the farm. But the anima-animus polarities cannot be resolved by taking turns at dominance; they cannot both be equal but separate, operating at detached moments in time. They must be made to coexist, to operate as mutual complements, one enhancing the other, not cancelling the other out. So, too, with love and possessiveness; they must be mutual assets to each other. But as long as Abbie and Eben try to have the farm and each other, at the same time, without letting love qualify their greed, the psychic split of the anima-animus energies, pretending to be psychically merged, creates a self-destructive contradiction. Unqualified materialism pretending to coexist with love--which "must" qualify materialism--is mere illusion preceding the breakdown of relationships both individual and societal. (The self-destructive split, more pronounced in Ephraim than anyone else, must lead to his wild, chaotic, dervish dance that symbolizes, visually, the inability of hard, masculine, possessive energies to maintain, any longer, control over the Cabot fate. The dance, in short, represents the inability of the psyche to maintain the lies any longer.)

In the infant child, the mutual but separate claims of the anima-animus, of love and possession, find incarnation. It is the child of cross purposes, and because the illusion cannot continue, the child must die. But it will die in the name of the anima, in the name of love as a repudiation of unqualified materialism. The patriarchal values, which to now Eben and Abbie support, must be diminished, consciously, so that the claim of love, of the anima, can be given complete respect and be allowed to become as complete and powerful a force as its psychic energy demands. As woman, as love, the anima must be conceived as equal to man, to possessiveness, to the animus. Abbie, making this correction first, attains to the spiritual totality when she kills the child, disavowing herself from greed in her love for Eben. Eben, then, parallels this disavowal, freeing the anima from the control of the unconscious. He now controls the anima; it does not control him. (This Jungian implication contradicts Dr. Weissman's contention that Eben "is unable to grow beyond his sexual feelings for his mother and his death wishes for his father. Thus he is destined to an inability to resolve his Oedipal striving."⁵) The patriarchal values, now modified by the feminine spirit, come under the discipline of love. This sets a great precedent for American society, but one that O'Neill could not accept.

⁴ Carl Jung, "Concerning the Archetypes With Special Reference to the Anima Concept," in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, v. 9, pt. 1, ed. Sir Herbert Read, et al., trans. by R. F. C. Hill (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 70-71.

⁵ Weissman, p. 456.

Eben and Abbie have their tragic victory, but O'Neill does not permit the play to end on that note. To do so would contradict his view of history as cyclical. Even as Yank starts in the caged atmosphere of the berthing compartment and ends in the gorilla's cage; even as Jones's flight proceeds in one great circle to return to where he started; even as Jim Harris and Ella start as children playing Painty Face and end in the psychic retreat to the same game; so, too, in *Desire Under the Elms*, possessiveness must return to dominate the closing of the play. Eben and Abbie's tragic wisdom must be undercut. The sheriff's wish to own the farm negates the possibility that Eben's and Abbie's spiritual maturity will become precedent for any larger section of society. Herein, O'Neill once again denies the view of history as linear process in an indictment of American society's similar denial of the humanizing force of love.

What remains to contemporary, materialist societies is the alternate solution to the archetypal polarities revealed by Ephraim. As the animus-dominated man who fails to detach his ego from the unconscious, Ephraim is nevertheless driven to satisfy the anima's demands with Abbie, who is chosen, not in love but, rather, in lust. And for Ephraim, she cannot be seen for herself but is seen, also, as the farm. "Sometimes ye air the farm an' sometimes the farm be yew," he says.⁶ Unable to separate the two drives, Ephraim cannot see love and possessiveness as separate entities to be dealt with, consciously, as equals. Forbidding the equal inclusion of the anima, Ephraim remands his being to an incompleteness, psychically and spiritually. For Ephraim, the anima has been suppressed and attached to the ego for so long that it causes love to be transmuted into mere sex. When this identification of the anima to the ego continues past middle age, as it obviously has for Ephraim, the consequences for that individual are delineated in a personality profile of Jung's which, but for one exception, could stand as a point for point description of Ephraim's character. "After the middle of life, ... a permanent loss of the Anima means a diminution of vitality, of flexibility, and of human kindness. The result, as a rule, is premature rigidity, crustiness, fanatical onesidedness, obstinacy, pedantry."⁷ Rendered incapable, therefore, of learning from Eben's experience, Ephraim has no alternative within the parameters of his psyche but to seek a furtive solution to his anima needs in his pathetic decision to collect the freed cows and continue his prospects of sleeping with them.

The overview to be drawn from this application of Jung's theory derives from the emphasis which Jung and O'Neill gave to the successful resolution of the anima-animus polarity. Jung implied that it was a decisive step in the reconciliation of all opposites, such as consciousness-unconsciousness, spirit-nature, fate-free will. As they depart for jail, Abbie and Eben have harmonized the polarity; each has earned that unity of being which, for Eben, had been lost since his mother's death. With the integration of the anima, they come out of their struggle truly possessed of tragic wisdom and victory. Their strength now is superior to masculine hardness. Each has discovered that quality of self worthy of being perpetuated eternally. And since O'Neill, so often, was willing to have his characters posit the existence of God when they possessed the object of their ideal longing, the spiritual portent of Eben's union with Abbie is somewhat obvious. A God made possible through the incarnation of the feminine spirit--a God in the form of God the mother--comes into being, taking the measure of the incompleteness latent in any devotion to a hardgod, God the father, Ephraim's deity. Ann Belford Ulanov reveals this religious dimension of the Jungian feminine: "The feminine ... is a factor which must be recognized as essential for the full exercise of the religious function. Thus, if the feminine is neglected, undervalued, or misconstrued, the result, psychologically, is a diminishing of one's growth to wholeness, and the result, theologically, is that the Imago Dei does not achieve its full stature."⁸ Unique among O'Neill's plays, *Desire Under the Elms* dramatizes

⁶ Eugene O'Neill, *Desire Under the Elms*, in *Nine Plays by Eugene O'Neill* (New York: The Modern Library, 1941), p. 171.

⁷ Jung, p. 71.

⁸ Ulanov, p. 292.

two characters coming into possession of this real unity and spirituality--a tragic victory made possible by O'Neill's steady application of Jung's vision of the anima.

The play's resolution, however, turning as it does upon the sheriff's concluding remark which dismisses the lesson made available by Abbie and Eben's fate, is exclusively O'Neill's construction. Unlike Jung, there will be no resolution of the polarities for him. O'Neill projects, then, an American society devoted to the hard Gods of masculine greed and possession plunging again and again into the competition for ownership. The Imago Dei will exist only in infantile terms. Americans will never find the spirituality they need, but they will never stop trying to find it in and through the possession of things.

--Patrick J. Nolan

"ELECTRICITY IS GOD NOW": D. H. LAWRENCE AND O'NEILL

In most critical discussions of *Dynamo*, *The Education of Henry Adams* is cited as the probable source for O'Neill's play. Travis Bogard, Edwin Engel, John Henry Raleigh, and Louis Sheaffer all suggest that O'Neill was indebted to Adams.¹ A more searching look for influences is an early newspaper article by Richard Watts, Jr., "Literary Ancestors of *Dynamo*." Watts discusses the ubiquitous Henry Adams, but also speculates that the Capeks' *R.U.R.* and John Howard Lawson's *Processional* were influential predecessors of O'Neill's play.² As recounted by the Gelbs, O'Neill himself said that the idea for his play came from a visit to a hydroelectric plant in Connecticut: "He had stopped to visit the plant and had retained a vivid image of the dynamo, 'huge and black, with something of the massive female idol about it, the exciter set on the main structure like a head with blank, oblong eyes above a gross, rounded torso,' which he used in the setting of the last part of the play."³ I suggest, however, that a hitherto unexamined influence on *Dynamo* is D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*, particularly the chapter entitled "The Industrial Magnate."

That O'Neill read Lawrence's novel cannot be proved. *Women in Love* is not among the playwright's personal holdings in the Beinecke at Yale University or at C. W. Post Centre of Long Island University, but Mr. David Shoonover, Curator of Yale's Collection of American Literature, informed me that Carlotta owned a copy.⁴ Although O'Neill began "making notes" for *Dynamo* as early as 1924,⁵ he did not start to work in earnest on the play until after he and Carlotta sailed for Europe in 1928. It is quite possible that his future wife introduced him to Lawrence's book, although the dramatist would surely have had access to the volume because it was published in New York City

¹ Travis Bogard, *Contour in Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 319; Edwin Engel, *The Haunted Heroes of Eugene O'Neill* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 232-234; John Henry Raleigh, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), pp. 246-248; Louis Sheaffer, *O'Neill: Son and Artist* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973), pp. 306-307.

² *New York Herald Tribune*, 24 February 1929, VII, 5.

³ Arthur and Barbara Gelb, *O'Neill* (1962; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 675-676.

⁴ Personal letter from David Shoonover to Susan Tuck, 23 October 1980. The volume is inscribed: "Carlotta Monterey, Dec. 28th 1921."

⁵ Sheaffer, p. 147.

in 1920.⁶

O'Neill is rarely linked with D. H. Lawrence, although the English critic and playwright St. John Ervine does just that in a wryly pejorative fashion: "Mr. O'Neill is, in drama, very much what D. H. Lawrence is in the novel: force without direction. He lets off an immense amount of steam, but the train does not move: it still stands in the station from which it is supposed to be removing at the rate of seventy or eighty miles an hour."⁷ Eric Bentley also connects the two writers: "O'Neill is an acute case of what Lawrence called 'sex in the head.'"⁸

Whether O'Neill and Lawrence ever met has not, to my knowledge, been documented, although Sheaffer quotes from a letter that Bobby Jones sent to Mabel Dodge in Taos, New Mexico: "I hear you are planning to have the O'Neills and D. H. Lawrence and me all together. I warn you that won't work."⁹ Jones added that Agnes and Eugene "loathe the idea of Lawrence," although--tantalizingly--Jones does not go into any detail. O'Neill's name is not even mentioned in Lawrence's letters, nor is any meeting between the two writers recorded in Joseph Foster's *D. H. Lawrence in Taos*.¹⁰ Presumably, then, O'Neill and Lawrence never met. Neither is there any indication of Lawrence's opinion of O'Neill's work; the closest we come to what he *might* have thought is found in the novelist's statement that he didn't want to write like Ibsen or Strindberg.¹¹ Since, however, Lawrence "hated" so many writers--he said Goethe, Kant, Rousseau, Byron, Baudelaire, Wilde and Proust were "all on the wrong track"¹²--we should not attach too much importance to his singling out for censure the two dramatists most important to O'Neill.

One wonders, though, why O'Neill would "loathe the idea of Lawrence" because both writers shared many of the same concerns, especially the belief that the modern world--be it England or America--was a vast, decaying wasteland. In a letter to Constance Garnett, Lawrence wrote: "I think there is no future for England, only a decline and fall. That is the dreadful and unbearable part of it: to have been born into a decadent era, a decline of life, a collapsing civilization."¹³ O'Neill's oft-quoted letter to George Jean Nathan about the genesis of *Dynamo* is quite similar: "It is a symbolical and factual biography of what is happening in a large section of the American

⁶ Lawrence had had considerable problems with censorship when he published *The Rainbow* and was faced with opposition when he tried to publish *Women in Love*: "[I]t seems the book will not find a publisher in England at all. Indeed, nobody will print me nowadays, the public taste is averse from me. It is a nasty quandary. The books I have don't sell, so it's a bad look-out" (*The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Aldous Huxley [New York: Viking Press, 1936], p. 395). Lawrence chose to bring out the volume in the United States because the censors were less rigorous.

⁷ St. John Ervine, "At the Play," *The Observer*, 13 June 1937.

⁸ Eric Bentley, "Trying to Like O'Neill," in *O'Neill and His Plays: Four Decades of Criticism*, ed. Oscar Cargill, N. Bryllion Fagin and William J. Fisher (New York: New York University Press, 1961), p. 344.

⁹ Sheaffer, pp. 96-97.

¹⁰ Joseph Foster, *D. H. Lawrence in Taos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972).

¹¹ Foster, p. 185.

¹² Foster, p. 185.

¹³ *The Collected Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Harry T. Moore, 2 vols. (New York: Viking Press, 1962), I, 383.

(and not only American) soul right now. It is really the first play of a trilogy that will dig at the roots of the sickness of today as I feel 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, and to comfort its fears of death with."¹⁴

What, then, was to give meaning to life? What could man do to find his place, to belong? If God is dead--as Nietzsche said--what will fill the void? In the oldest religions, wrote Lawrence, "the whole life-effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos...to come into immediate *felt* contact... sheer naked contact, *without an intermediary or mediator*."¹⁵ In their writings, both O'Neill and Lawrence try to convey this "elemental life" and attempt to give meaning to an otherwise meaningless universe. In this sense, both are religious writers. Lawrence declared, "[I am] a passionately religious man, and my novels must be written from the depths of my religious experience."¹⁶ And we must not forget O'Neill's comparable statement to Joseph Wood Krutch: "Most modern plays are concerned with the relation between man and man, but that does not interest me at all. I am interested only in the relation between man and God."¹⁷

In *Dynamo* and "The Industrial Magnate" chapter of *Women in Love*, Reuben Light and Gerald Crich attempt to understand this Godless world through the display of power found in electricity. Both embrace science in defiance of their fathers' beliefs. A wealthy mine owner, Thomas Crich had always tried to run his coalmines by Christian precepts:

He was a large employer of labour, he was a great mine-owner. And he had never lost this from his heart, that in Christ he was one with his workmen. Nay, he had felt inferior to them, as if they through poverty and labour were nearer to God than he. He had always the unacknowledged belief that it was his workmen, the miners, who held in their hands the means of salvation. To move nearer to God, he must move towards his miners, his life must gravitate towards theirs. They were, unconsciously, his idol, his God made manifest. In them he worshipped the highest, the great, sympathetic, mindless Godhead of humanity.¹⁸

Gerald was always antagonistic to his father--"[He] had feared and despised his father, and to a great extent had avoided him all through boyhood and young manhood" (210)--and was much closer to the mother who, in turn, worshipped him: "Only Gerald, the gleaming, had some existence for her" (210). Mrs. Crich is as non-Christian and pragmatic as her husband is humanitarian and idealistic. Theirs is an unhappy marriage of opposites, as is the Lights' union.

Like Gerald, Reuben rejects the beliefs of his father, a monomaniacally religious minister "who is the victim of an inner uncertainty that compensates itself by being

¹⁴ *The American Mercury*, 16 (1929), 119.

¹⁵ "New Mexico," *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Edward D. McDonald (New York: Viking Press, 1936), pp. 146-147.

¹⁶ *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Huxley, p. 192.

¹⁷ Joseph Wood Krutch, "Introduction," *Nine Plays by Eugene O'Neill* (New York: The Modern Library [Random House], 1954), p. xvii.

¹⁸ D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (1920; rpt. New York: Viking Press, 1974), p. 207. Subsequent references will be included parenthetically within the text.

boomingly over-assertive."¹⁹ His God is Ephraim Cabot's eye-for-an-eye, vengeful God of the Old Testament whose awesome strength is displayed in the crackling lightning which so terrifies Reverend Light. Rebelling against this tyrannical conception, Reuben--again like Gerald--feels much closer to his mother, whose "expression is one of virtuous resignation" and whose mouth is "rebellious ... determined and stubborn" (422). Reuben embraces science--electricity--after his mother "betrays" him to his father. He leaves home, berating Reverend Light's fundamentalist beliefs and focusing all his attention on the maternal, crooning figure of the dynamo. O'Neill endows his dynamo with feminine qualities in an attempt to show that man, bereft of God, has turned to science as a child turns to its mother: "It's like a great dark idol...like the old stone statues of gods people prayed to...only it's living and they were dead...that part on top is like a head...with eyes that see you without seeing you...and below it is like a body...not a man's...round like a woman's...as if it had breasts...but not like a girl...not like Ada...no, like a woman...like her mother...or mine...a great, dark mother!...that's what the dynamo is...that's what life is!..." (474)

Gerald is able to express *his* scorn for conventional Christianity when his father's illness puts him in charge of the mines. No Christian charity for Gerald: "Suddenly he had conceived the pure instrumentality of mankind. There had been so much humanitarianism, so much talk of sufferings and feelings. It was ridiculous. The sufferings and feelings of individuals did not matter in the least. They were mere conditions, like the weather. What mattered was the pure instrumentality of the individual. As a man as of a knife: does it cut well? Nothing else mattered" (215). No longer would the mines be run with a thought for the men, since, to Gerald, "[t]he whole Christian attitude of love and self-sacrifice was old hat" (219). He saw that "one must have perfect instruments in perfect organisation, a mechanism so subtle and harmonious in its workings that it represents the single mind of man, and by its relentless repetition of given movement will accomplish a purpose irresistibly, inhumanly. It was this inhuman principle in the mechanism that he wanted to construct that inspired Gerald with an almost religious exaltation" (220). Like Reuben's dynamo--whose "song is the hymn of eternal generation" (482)--Gerald's "great and perfect machine" (220) represents perfection to him, "one pure, complex, infinitely repeated motion, like the spinning of a wheel..." (220). And, as it does for Reuben, electricity becomes Gerald's new religion: "An enormous electric plant was installed, both for lighting and for haulage underground, and for power. The electricity was carried into every mine.... Gerald was [the workers'] high priest, he represented the religion they really felt" (223). Gerald thinks he can subjugate and dominate man and nature, but Lawrence clearly shows that he is worshipping, like Reuben, a false idol.

Substituting science for religion brings both Gerald and Reuben to insanity. Gerald thinks, "What he was doing seemed supreme, he was almost like a divinity. He was a pure and exalted activity" (224). But with the success at the mines, he realizes his *own* superfluousness: "He was afraid, in mortal dry fear, but he knew not what of. He looked at his own face. There it was, shapely and healthy and the same as ever, yet somehow, it was not real, it was a mask. He dared not touch it, for fear it should prove to be only a composition mask.... He was afraid that one day he would break down and be a purely meaningless bubble lapping round a darkness" (224-225). Reuben, too, is radically changed when he trades God the Father for Dynamo the Mother: "In contrast to his diffident, timid attitude of before, his manner is now consciously hard-boiled. The look on his face emphasizes the change in him. It is much older than his years, and it is apparent that he has not grown its defensive callousness without a desperate struggle to kill the shrinking boy in him. But it is in his eyes that the greatest change has come. Their soft gray-blue has become chilled and frozen, and yet they burn in their depths with a queer devouring intensity" (457). Embracing science brings destruction and self-loathing to both men.

¹⁹ Eugene O'Neill, *Plays* (New York: Random House, 1954), p. 422. Subsequent references will be included parenthetically within the text.

Although "The Industrial Magnate" contains the most explicit expression of Gerald's obsession with science, Lawrence uses electricity as a metaphor throughout the novel to describe sexual attraction. For example, when Gerald is about to make a conquest: "He felt full of strength, able to give off a sort of electric power.... The electricity was turgid and voluptuously rich.... He would be able to destroy her utterly in the strength of his discharge" (57-58). And a few pages later: "Minette sat near to Gerald, and she seemed to become soft, subtly to infuse herself into his bones, as if she were passing into him in a black, electric flow. Her being suffused into his veins like a magnetic darkness.... And as she swung her head, her fine mane of hair just swept his face, and all his nerves were on fire, as with a subtle friction of electricity" (65-66). O'Neill does not use the language of electricity, but he does show that Reuben's conception of love changes radically after he rejects God:

Reuben: "What we did was just plain sex--an act of nature--and that's all there is to it!"

Ada: "Is that all--it means to you?"

Reuben: "That's all it means to any one! What people call love is just sex--and there's no sin about it!" (469)

Thus, both authors show that conceiving of male/female relationships in terms of science is destructive, inhuman; "love" becomes a mere manifestation of sexual currents, of animal attractions.

One of the problems with O'Neill's play is that Reuben is searching both for Belief and for Mother. He tries to shun his sexual feeling for Ada because he feels that it is a betrayal of his mother's pure love. After he sleeps with Ada, the only expiation he can offer is suicidal immolation: "There is a flash of bluish light about him and all the lights in the plant dim down until they are almost out and the noise of the dynamo dies until it is the faintest purring hum. Simultaneously Reuben's voice rises in a moan that is a mingling of pain and loving consummation, and this cry dies into a sound that is like the crooning of a baby and merges and is lost in the dynamo's hum" (488).

What is striking in both novel and play is the authors' suggestion that a mother figure is somehow the "answer" to the sterile perfection of the modern world which is symbolized by electricity. Lawrence does not emphasize--as O'Neill certainly does--the Oedipal relationship between Gerald and his mother, but it is significant that, after his father's death, Gerald sneaks into Gudrun's bedroom and finds a peculiarly *maternal* comfort in her bed: "Like a child at the breast, he cleaved intensely to her, and she could not put him away.... He was infinitely grateful, as to God, or as an infant is at its mother's breast" (338). "And she, she was the great bath of life, he worshipped her. Mother and substance of all life she was" (337). Unable to find fulfillment either in the perfectly run mines or in his relationship with Gudrun, Gerald--like Reuben--commits suicide, curling up (foetus-like) in the freezing snow.

The conclusion of *Dynamo* is not successful, as Travis Bogard and others have pointed out: "No view, Reuben's or that of any other character, has supremacy at the play's end. The confusion was fatal and the play ends in an unresolved suspension: does Reuben find God? or does his death demonstrate 'the general spiritual futility of the substitute-God search'?"²⁰ Like Yank's fervent embrace of the gorilla at the end of *The Hairy Ape*, Reuben's convulsive grasping of the dynamo surely indicates defeat, a sense which is underlined by the accusations which the Earth Mother/ Mrs. Fife hurls at the throbbing--and quite impervious--machine: "What are you singing for? And I thought you was nice and loved us! You hateful old thing, you!" (489) Just as Yank's death is barely noticed, so Reuben's suicide is an infinitesimally small event in an uncaring universe:

²⁰ Bogard, p. 321.

"The dynamo's purr has regained its accustomed pitch now. The lights in the plant are again at their full brightness. *Everything is as before*" (489; my italics). Reuben's ecstatic prophecy that the dynamo's "power houses are the new churches" (477) fails to be realized.

Early in *Women in Love*, Gerald is shaken by the views of a friend:

"The old ideas are dead as nails--nothing there. It seems to me there remains only this perfect union with a woman--sort of ultimate marriage--and there isn't anything else."

"And you mean if there isn't the woman, there's nothing?" said Gerald.

"Pretty well that--seeing there's no God."

"Then we're hard put to it," said Gerald. (51)

Realizing that there is no God, Gerald is *indeed* "hard put to it," and turns first to science and then to love, but neither offers him solace. How to "belong" in the modern world is the question posed by Gerald and Reuben at the onset of their quests, and it remains unanswered at the conclusion of the novel as well as the play.

--Susan Tuck

FOCUS ON *WELDED*: A SPECIAL SECTION.

The quick demise of the Columbia University production of *Welded*, which failed to complete even its modest originally-scheduled run, must have been even more disappointing to director José Quintero and his cast than it was to this would-be viewer, who had reservations to see it two days after his return from England, only to discover that that return coincided exactly with its farewell performance. Nothing new, of course. *Welded*, which O'Neill described as his "attempt at the *last word* in intensity in the truth about love and marriage" (italics mine), had lasted only 24 performances when it was first presented in 1924, and it had been produced in New York City only once between then and its short-lived revival this June. And one might surmise with double dismay that another production will be a long time coming.

Unfortunately the *real* "last word" is that of the critics, and the bottom line is box office receipts. So, when Mel Gussow (*New York Times*, June 18, 1981, p. C22) berated Mr. Quintero for "heavy-handed direction" and "unwarranted exhumation" of "one of O'Neill's most dreadful plays," in which "we simply see O'Neill drowning in a Sargasso Sea of symbolism, in overwrought language that might have sunk a lesser reputation"--receipts, not surprisingly, dropped to nil and the corpse was precipitously reburied. Which is sad for those who were eager to see it but couldn't: even if its fate was justified, better a bad production than none at all. And that is the first, more personal half of the double dismay I spoke of above.

What's far worse--a potential tragedy--is that many other enterprising directors, who might have been thinking of similar worthy exhumations, will heed the fate of *Welded*, prudently scrap their plans, and opt for yet another sure-fire *Ah, Wilderness!* Not that one can blame such directors: critics wield power, playgoers have limited funds for ticket buying, and an unsubsidized theater can't risk, "for art's sake," the former's scorn or the latter's defection and play to near-empty houses. Nor would I blame Mr. Gussow, whose sympathy for the untraditional is well-established and whose candor was probably just--though if the justice had been tempered with a touch more mercy, the director, designer and cast might have had longer to tinker with their composite product. No, the problem lies in theatrical conditions in America. Where *can* one exhume, experiment, and take risks? Not on Broadway, certainly; seldom anymore either Off or Off-off; and not

even in university theaters, if Columbia is characteristic. The increasing absence of such opportunities will make theatre in America a diminished thing.

If we are to know our greatest playwright truly and fully, we must confront his minor works as well as his major ones, and on the stage as well as the page--"Else a great prince in prison lies." We need fewer *Long Day's Journeys* and more *Straws*. And what we need above all is an organization formed for the specific purpose of mounting, in a variety of forms and modes, all of O'Neill's oeuvre. Mr. Quintero said so himself, without any hints of ironic prescience, in a pre-production interview in the *New York Times* that is abstracted below: "I think someday there will be a theater in America dedicated to doing the O'Neill works. The whole output should be investigated. We should do *all* of them." Amen.

This special post-mortem on *Welded* comprises an abstract of the aforementioned *Times* article, reviews of the June 1981 production by Michael Hinden and Marshall Brooks, and the transcript of an interview that Stephanie Greene conducted with an actress who auditioned for the role of Eleanor Cape and, though she didn't get the part, has valuable insights to offer about the play. *Welded*, by the way, is available in the Vintage paperback, *Six Short Plays of Eugene O'Neill*. -- Ed.

I. Jennifer Dunning, "Quintero Takes On An Early O'Neill," *New York Times* (June 7, 1981), Section II, pp. 5, 28: An Abstract.

Ms. Dunning's report on the then-imminent production of *Welded*, directed by José Quintero with Philip Anglim as Michael Cape and Ellen Tobie as his wife Eleanor, should be of interest to anyone new to the play and the playwright's life. She points out the play's autobiographical content--the emotional and even physical similarities between the Capes and the 1922 O'Neills (Eugene and his second wife, Agnes Boulton). She quotes friends' reactions to the newly completed manuscript: H. L. Mencken "found it banal and implausible," and George Jean Nathan, hurriedly consulted for a second opinion, labeled it "very third-rate Strindberg." Ms. Dunning offers a cryptic summary of scholarly opinion: "most O'Neill scholars and critics consider *Welded* ... to be unwieldy, melodramatic and possibly unplayable in its stylized construction." And she notes Alexander Woollcott's negative but perceptive review of the first production:

The scenes have been written with a true understanding of the curious kinship between love and hate. They have been set down by one who knows not only that no one in all the world can hate a woman as bitterly as her husband, but that his capacity to hate her is exactly measured by the depth and completeness of his love for her.

But the article's greatest interest is in the comments of Mr. Quintero, whom Ms. Dunning interviewed during a rehearsal. The director acknowledged both the dangers and the importance of his undertaking: "It's a flawed play. It is purple-hued. But it is shining in its relentless honesty." And it was the play's emphasis on honesty, on what Quintero later calls "commitment," that moved him to choose it for production--because such commitment is rare in contemporary human relations: "We have grown accustomed to compromises. And through those compromises we lose the core, the reason for a relationship." He said he tried to be faithful to the stylized, ritualistic element in the play's staging, but that the limited technical facilities at Columbia University's Horace Mann Theater prevented him from obeying the playwright's lighting instructions. One of the greatest values he had found in working on the play (an example of the value of doing the lesser works as often as possible) was the light that this early work shed on the later, greater dramas:

With the opportunity to do an early play, I really understand where the seed comes from for the later ones. The clay is the same, just less refined. ...

For instance, the prostitute and Michael's coming for revenge and ultimately finding forgiveness reminds me of *Moon for the Misbegotten*. There are shades there, too, of *Ah, Wilderness!*, where a boy who has lost his dreams tries to forget them with a prostitute but can't carry it through. Well, there it is. The understanding of life comes through the struggle rather than the attainment. That is the theme of *Welded*, and what makes it so fascinating. And there are patches of *Strange Interlude* here, where the character speaks his thoughts, though this is ordinary dialogue without the stylization of the later play.

The interview ends on a note that seems ironic in retrospect. "It's wonderful," says Mr. Quintero, "to have a chance now to do this, free from all the fears of a commercial production." Such freedom, unfortunately, was illusory. --Ed.

II. *Welded*, directed by José Quintero: A Review.

There were only twelve of us scattered throughout the theater on a Saturday afternoon to see the José Quintero/Columbia University revival of *Welded*: enough to make up a jury, perhaps, but not truly an audience. Word was out (as Mel Gussow of the *New York Times* put it) that the play did not warrant exhumation, and true enough, the performance was a dispiriting event. *Welded* is one of O'Neill's unpolished efforts, but the failure of this production must be attributed as well to the director. We in the scholarly community stand in Quintero's debt for his powerful productions of such important O'Neill plays as *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *Strange Interlude*, *Anna Christie*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *A Touch of the Poet* and *More Stately Mansions*. Through these landmark productions Quintero helped to spark the O'Neill revival of the last three decades. But here it must be said that he has taken one of O'Neill's least imaginative plays and mounted it with deadening fidelity.

Welded ought to seem more than a lover's quarrel between hysterics. In common with his other work of the 1920s, O'Neill was trying here to break the bonds of naturalism, trying to suggest something of the mysterious "behind life" forces urging human beings who are caught in the grip of life's intensities. In this respect Michael and Eleanor Cape are forerunners of Abbie and Eben in *Desire Under the Elms*. What welds them as lovers is a force beyond verbalization, an impersonal passion that lifts and buffets them, a bond in which they participate despite their petty egotism, jealousy, and self-absorption.

Yet in *Welded* O'Neill fails to dramatize this bond; instead he talks around it. In Act III the stage directions insist that Michael and Eleanor "act for a moment like two persons of different races, deeply in love but separated by a barrier of language." After an intense embrace, Michael grimly muses: "Thinking explains. It eliminates the unexplainable--by which we live." Paradoxically, *Welded* is one of O'Neill's most talky plays, and therein lies the challenge for a director. *Welded* is almost entirely a verbal contraption written at a stage in O'Neill's career when the playwright still had not mastered the intricacies of terseness. That the play is autobiographical is obvious, too, and it is clear that O'Neill was unable to write in a straightforward manner about his own personality until much later in life. But the real issue of the play is passion, and the problem for the director is how to drive across the footlights a sense of "the unexplainable by which we live."

O'Neill made a stab at solving this dilemma through his use of lighting in the play, stipulating that "two circles of light, like auras of egoism, emphasize and intensify Eleanor and Michael throughout the play. There is no other lighting." The overlapping of these beams must have been intended as a visual metaphor. But Mr. Quintero chooses not to avail himself of this device. Instead he sets a barren stage illuminated by an unwavering light bulb fixed to a bar across the ceiling. As a result, Quintero stresses

the naturalism of the play, but in doing so, he sinks it utterly in melodrama. The acting is flatfooted and tiresome, the characters petulant rather than grand. They should be tormented, but they only make a fuss.

Philip Anglim, retaining the glow of injured pride that worked so well for him in *The Elephant Man*, gives an elephantine performance as Michael, O'Neill's earnest and intense persona. His interpretation lacks modulation--something Quintero ought to have corrected. Anglim actually seemed more comfortable as the elephant man, twisted physically in Pomerance's play, than he does as Michael, twisted emotionally in O'Neill's. In fairness to the actor, the part does call for a self-dramatizing young man.

Ellen Tobie (Eleanor) brought a narcissistic glimmer to her part. Dolefully the actress's eyes would wander to the empty seats, stopping at the spectators to inquire who we were, why we had come, and whether we now regretted it. Court Miller as John, Eleanor's old flame, turned in a nicely understated performance, and Laura Gardner as the prostitute was exceptionally strong in a role written with feeling but without much depth.

Yes, *Welded* has the O'Neill passion, but it cannot be made to flow if the actors simply stand and speak the lines. Perhaps the play might be done as a period piece, but a better suggestion would be to turn away from naturalism altogether and to perform some wild experiment on the text. To José Quintero, one of our great directors, we must say: this time--and maybe this time only--less matter and more art.

--Michael Hinden

III. *Welded*: A Review.

Really, one must love Eugene O'Neill in order to watch a play such as *Welded*. Not so much because the play is a bad or painful experience, but because it's quite obviously the man's sincere but unsuccessful attempt at dealing with love, truth and that which is unexplainable in life.¹ Such a play, no matter how wide of the mark, deserves a sincere, understanding response; and to make that response requires an important sort of love in the breast of the viewer.

The Columbia University production of *Welded* surprised me by being as watchable as it was. To be sure, there were embarrassing moments--especially in Eleanor and John's Act II scene, which elicited much laughter from the nearly full house--but it was, on the whole, a painless evening. Every member of the cast gave a sincere and professional performance. Had they not, the play would more than likely have been as excruciating as some have made it out to be.

Even so, Philip Anglim as Michael Cape was simply miscast for the role. A fellow viewer commented that Anglim brought to *Welded* all the mannerisms he had employed in *The Elephant Man*, which she had seen three years ago. His speech struck me as being extraordinarily affected--a sort of Oxford-on-high, which refused to come down to earth one wit in grubby Uptown Manhattan. In the scene with the prostitute, Anglim moved around the stage as if he were wearing those lead training shoes athletes sometimes use. This slow, drugged movement, combined with the ever-lofty tone of voice, was indeed hard to take. Nonetheless, however inappropriate his behavior, Anglim seemed to be trying hard to do right. It was just the wrong sort of right.

¹ Ludwig Lewisohn expressed a similar view in his review of the original New York City production. Lewisohn's balanced and insightful review is available in *O'Neill and His Plays*, ed. Oscar Cargill, N. Bryllion Fagin and William J. Fisher (New York University Press, 1961), pp. 163-165.

Ellen Tobie as Eleanor was much more believable. My friend found her performance trying because this Eleanor seemed too clear-headed to be caught up in such a ridiculous marriage mess with Anglim's Cape. But still, Tobie produced more than once that cold look of genuine exasperation which comes in real life only as a result of love and anger. And her lines were very often delivered with a high emotional intensity which was effective, to say the least.

Laura Gardner as the befuddled prostitute and Court Miller as befuddled John were flawless. One so wished that Miller had had an opportunity to say a page or two of decent lines; he did so honest and decent a job with the crumbs that O'Neill provided. Miller's was the work of a trooper, and so was Gardner's--they must love O'Neill.

José Quintero said in a *New York Times* interview that he felt *Welded* was an important O'Neill play, and that it contained many elements that O'Neill would later develop more fully. I think that this is quite true--a fact that no O'Neill fan or scholar can really afford to ignore. What I find particularly fascinating about *Welded* is the specifically "welded" character of Michael Cape. Embodied in him are elements of both James Tyrone, Jr., of *Moon for the Misbegotten*, and Edmund Tyrone of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. On the one hand, Cape is a base fellow, emotionally out of control, who leaps at the opportunity to humiliate self and family with a prostitute--not unlike James Tyrone, Jr.'s behavior on his mother's funeral train. And, on the other hand, Cape is a poet without words, a stutterer. ("Oh, Nelly, Nelly," he says in Act III. "I want to say so much that I feel, but I can only stutter like an idiot.") Edmund Tyrone, of course, makes a point out of being a stutterer also, a sensitive man in awe of the universe.

In no way are these coincidences or trivial points. It seems that when *Welded* was written, O'Neill had yet to sort things out emotionally about who he was or what he believed in. Perhaps he knew intellectually what he should believe in but he hadn't embraced it completely. "To learn to love the truth of life--to accept it and be exalted--that's the faith left to us!" Cape asserts in Act III. But it would be many years before O'Neill could deliver on the stage convincing evidence of this faith.

Welded is remarkably similar to *Days Without End* in many ways; people's criticisms of it sound similar, too. ("Mr. O'Neill's fundamental error, dramatically, lies in the notion that Faith is an intellectual process to be touched through words," wrote John Anderson of the latter play in 1934. "Its very point, I take it, is that it lies beyond reason.") Curiously, though, I think the separation of James Tyrone, Jr. and Edmund Tyrone in O'Neill's creative mind begins in this play. Even more curiously, both *Days Without End* and *Welded* end with the principal character, or characters in the latter instance, embracing a cross (*Days*) or forming one bodily (*Welded*). Without real faith, at least in O'Neill's case, there's but one end: crucifixion.

It seems to me all that sorts of people--aspiring playwrights, O'Neillians, and psychologists among them--should find at least the reading of *Welded* worthwhile. The Columbia University production did nothing to diminish my interest in the play or my respect for O'Neill's work as a whole. If anything, it increased it, and I would like to thank my New York City hosts, Joshua Friedman and Barbara Pearl, whose kindness insured that this review would be written.

--Marshall Brooks

IV. An Actress Talks About *Welded*.

We'll call her Catherine Sinclair--a pseudonym she requests for personal reasons. Miss Sinclair has worked extensively Off-Broadway, Off-Off-Broadway, and in television in New York. She auditioned for the part of Eleanor in the José Quintero production of *Welded* at Columbia.

SG: Why did you audition for *Welded*?

CS: If someone said, "Pick a play," I wouldn't choose *Welded*, but the chance to work with Quintero on an O'Neill was too good to pass up. The play is not a very good one--but it is fascinating, because you can see so much of what would become typical O'Neill, and it's a tremendous challenge to see if you can make the thing work.

SG: Why is it a bad play?

CS: Better to say it is undeveloped, in the light of what O'Neill later produced. The leads are very talky and theoretical, you hear the playwright's voice postulating this and that, and so it's very hard to make it ring true. But the play reminds me somewhat of Chekhov's *Wood Demon*, which preceded *Uncle Vanya* by six years and contained its major themes. Looking back, you can see the tremendous potential in both these early pieces.

SG: How would you play Eleanor?

CS: The problem with Eleanor is to make the emotions ring true. She can't be played as sensible or philosophical, even if her part is full of philosophical talk, because the talk is stilted and doesn't make sense when read as logic. But if she is played as being in the grip of an overwhelming passion that she can't understand, you can capture that half-raving quality of her speeches.

You have to play her as so self-involved that the audience might laugh at her, but she should never be aware of what's funny. The character is quite Chekhovian in that way. In the first scene of the second act, she stomps all over John without meaning to; she just isn't paying any attention to *him*. If, in any way, she could seem to know what she is doing to him, she would be horrible. There is no emotional justification in the play for her to be humiliating John consciously; that knowingness would add another dimension to the play which doesn't exist, so you have to be careful.

SG: Aren't all the drastic mood changes a problem to act?

CS: Not really. We all go from one emotion to another quite rapidly. Emotional progression doesn't have to be spelled out, but the inner logic has to be there.

SG: How do you act something that doesn't ring true on paper?

CS: Try it different ways, to see what works. Envision someone you know who might act that way, or a situation you've had in your life that is similar, to fill out the inner logic.

SG: What is your favorite scene in the play?

CS: The scene between John and Eleanor at his house. He is the best written character in the play, the most believable because there isn't that labored quality to his speech. I understand him the best and sympathize with him. And in turn, he makes her scene more interesting because she is playing off someone real. The entire effect is quite moving.

SG: Which scene do you think is the most difficult to believe in the play?

CS: The scene between Michael and the prostitute is almost impossible. The set-up is such that you know Michael is going to be made to see some truth, and you know it's going to happen in that scene. Michael's lines are artificial, grandiose and incoherent. You combine the woodenness of the situation and the poor character being struck by lightning bolts of Truth--the effect is embarrassing.

SG: Why stage a play that is so uneven?

CS: The challenge and the lure of it are that it contains so many of O'Neill's basic themes. The potential is so obviously there--there are some wonderful exchanges in the play, and whole scenes that work. The hope is that, even though it's uneven, by understanding the vision he later clarified, you will be able to all work like mad and pull the thing together, illuminate it so the genius will shine through.

SG: What is it like auditioning for Quintero?

CS: I trusted him immediately, and felt I could do anything for him. At the initial interview, I felt he was interested in the play, and in what the actors had to say about it--how each character could be envisioned; this is after a long day of auditions. He listened carefully, he watched. He never seemed to get tired, didn't hurry people through their readings, but took the time to develop each one. A remarkable director and a very warm presence.

* * *

At the time I talked to Miss Sinclair, she had not seen the play. Her comments reflect thoughts about the character and the play as a whole in their early stages of formulation. It is, in many ways, a luxurious vantage point, before the actor has to adapt her character to the work of other actors or to the overview of the director.

Yet I found Sinclair's approach convincing as Ellen Tobie's and Philip Anglim's never were. The play is admittedly very difficult to act, but Tobie's rather sensible complement to Anglim's foppish torment is an unbelievable and unworkable balance. I didn't feel Tobie's Eleanor caught in passion, helpless; and it is passion on which the play turns. The anguish and fascination of the play lie in its attempts to "explain the unexplainable--by which we live."

--Stephanie Greene

EUGENE O'NEILL'S *MORE STATELY MANSIONS*: STUDIES IN DRAMATIC FORM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

In the fall semester of 1980, a research seminar on dramatic form in Eugene O'Neill's *More Stately Mansions* was conducted at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. The seminar was one of a series of studies of form in the American drama conducted by Professors Esther M. Jackson and John D. Ezell, with the assistance of Professor Edward A. Amor.¹ These studies have involved graduate students and, in a few cases, advanced undergraduates, in various areas of specialization in the Department of Theatre and Drama. Through these research seminars, Jackson, Ezell and their colleagues have sought to identify significant alterations in traditional forms of Western theatre by major American playwrights, alterations which have been dictated not only by the individual imaginations of the playwrights, but also by the social, political, economic and moral realities which they have undertaken to interpret.

The methods of study involved in these seminars have included: a) analyses of texts; b) study of background materials relating selected plays to American life and culture; c) study of the production requirements of these texts; d) translation of such texts into "minimal" production forms; e) presentation of productions before selected audiences; f) evaluations of the results by the production teams; and g) preparation of papers, reports, designs, models, drawings, production plans and other documents and artifacts.

Earlier surveys of the evolution of form in the dramas of O'Neill served as background for the *More Stately Mansions* project. They allowed members of the research team to

¹ The *More Stately Mansions* seminar was the fourth in this series to be devoted to the study of a single work by an American playwright, following Tennessee Williams' *Out Cry* and *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore*, and O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*.

1) place the work in the progression which characterized O'Neill's changing ideas about form; 2) recognize recurrent themes, methods of exposition, and settings; 3) compare his treatment of character and action in this work with those used in dramas written in earlier periods; and 4) make a preliminary assessment of the difficulties which challenge production teams seeking to translate this difficult work into performances for popular audiences.

A

*More Stately Mansions*² was chosen for intensive study for a number of reasons. Among these is its production history in the United States. Since its initial production in Stockholm³ in 1962, the play has been performed in Western Europe and has had at least one production in Eastern Europe.⁴ Today, there is evidence of growing interest in this work on the part of professional companies in the international community. Despite this evidence of international interest, *More Stately Mansions* has had a very limited production history in the United States. Produced in the late sixties in Los Angeles and New York, the play had a brief run as a studio production in New York during the 1980-81 season. Thus far, it has failed to gain wide acceptance from American audiences or American critics.

Several reasons for this failure have been suggested. Dr. Tom Olsson, Curator of the Archives at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, and, at one time, an assistant to Erwin Piscator, has written of the difficulties confronted by Karl Ragnar Gierow in his efforts to develop an acceptable Swedish stage-version of the play from O'Neill's 1939 draft.⁵ Study of the available texts of the work suggests a factor which may be of major importance in assessing the theatrical potential of this and others of O'Neill's most innovative dramas. The formidable production requirements of this unique work may be the primary source of the problems which have affected its production history in the United States.

More Stately Mansions is a work whose form differs substantially from those of earlier dramas written by O'Neill. It is one of the most innovative of his works, in terms of its treatment of character, action, dialogue, and setting. However, its unique quality derives from the playwright's treatment of a fifth element of dramatic form--thought. What distinguishes this work from those of other American playwrights, and indeed from earlier plays by O'Neill himself, is its subject. *More Stately Mansions* represents O'Neill's most serious effort to create a form itself expressive of the dynamic character of American history. The "epic form" he created--like that of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*--was unorthodox.

There is reason to believe that the playwright regarded the version of the play left among his papers as unfinished. Certainly, it remained, in his lifetime, untested, a fact which is important in assessing the potential of the work as a piece for the popular American theatre. For a factor of unusual importance in the determination of the success or failure of all of O'Neill's plays is their dependence on a secondary language, a *mise-en-scène* consistent with the essentially poetic character of his texts.

² The text used for this production was that shortened from the author's partly-revised script by Karl Ragnar Gierow, edited by Donald Gallup, and published by Yale University Press in 1964.

³ See Tom Olsson, "O'Neill and the Royal Dramatic," in *O'Neill: A World View*, ed. Virginia Floyd (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1979), pp. 34-60.

⁴ See Josef Jafab, "The Lasting Challenge of Eugene O'Neill: A Czechoslovak View," in *O'Neill: A World View*, pp. 84-100. See also András Benedek, "O'Neill Productions in Hungary: 1928 to 1978," in *O'Neill: A World View*, pp. 142-144.

⁵ Tom Olsson, op. cit., pp. 53-60. Olsson discusses aspects of the style as it affected interpretations of O'Neill's plays at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm.

Preliminary study of *More Stately Mansions* suggests that this unique work requires a production language qualitatively different from those used to interpret others of O'Neill's plays, including *A Touch of the Poet*. The published text of the play offers a mature, if not a final version of a highly original work, one whose unorthodox treatment of character, action, dialogue, setting, and theme anticipated more general changes in the idea of dramatic form in Western theatre, changes which would become more evident in the works of writers of the sixties, seventies, and eighties.

B

Jackson, Ezell, and their colleagues elected to approach *More Stately Mansions* not as an immature version of a conventional form of drama, but rather as a near-final version of a new kind of history play, one substantially different in form and content from earlier examples of the genre, including some of O'Neill's own works. In *More Stately Mansions*, O'Neill sought to free the idea of the history play from the constraints of the models of European playwrights, including those of Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Schiller, and to set it within a "New World" context; that is, to view American history from the eye-point of a modern American.

John H. Raleigh has observed that O'Neill's view of history has strong affinities to those of other writers in the American literary tradition; that despite the playwright's interest in the innovations of European writers such as Nietzsche and Strindberg, he retained strong ties to the major figures of the "American Renaissance" of the nineteenth century.⁶

More Stately Mansions can be described as a drama about what Ralph Waldo Emerson called "the identity of history."⁷ The identity of history, Emerson observed, is to be found in the experience of individuals. "If the whole of history is in one man," he continued, "it is all to be explained from individual experience"⁸ . . . A man is a bundle of relations, a knot of roots, whose flower and fruitage is the world."⁹

American dramatists, including O'Neill, have shared with other writers within the American literary tradition the tendency to view history subjectively; that is, not so much in terms of great events as in terms of changes in human character and consciousness.

The notion of individual character as the measure of history has not, however, been restricted to American writers. It is a tenet of European romanticism. One of the factors which distinguishes the perspectives about history which have shaped the works of the major American playwrights of the twentieth century from those appearing in the works of major European dramatists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been the American preoccupation with the historical significance of those men and women whom Walt Whitman called "average." In his own observations on the significance of such individuals *in* and *for* American history, Whitman wrote, "The average man of a land at last only is important. He, in these states, remains immortal owner and boss...."¹⁰

⁶ See John H. Raleigh, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), pp. 242-266.

⁷ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "History," in *Essays: First Series*, in *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson, Modern Library Edition (New York: Random House, 1950), p. 129.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

¹⁰ Walt Whitman, *Democratic Vistas*, in *Prose Works*, 1892, 2 vols., ed. Floyd Stovall (New York: New York University Press, 1963-64), II, 387.

But *More Stately Mansions* represents a modification of O'Neill's earlier treatment of the history play. Although the play shares with *Mourning Becomes Electra* -- and even with *A Touch of the Poet* -- interest in American history of the nineteenth century, its form differs significantly from those of earlier works. In *More Stately Mansions*, O'Neill has created individuals who are fully at home in the twentieth century; that is, characters whose personalities, ambitions, desires, conflicts, and modes of reconciliation are highly contemporary in feeling. In this work, O'Neill attempted to free his characters from the constraints of conventional concepts of time, substituting instead moments of insight in which past, present, and future converge. *More Stately Mansions* can be described as a "dream play," a vision of American history which borrows from the past in order to create images of the present and future. But if its form seems dreamlike in quality, its contents are highly realistic. Study of the political, social, economic and cultural history of the period interpreted in this drama shows that O'Neill had done his homework with great thoroughness.

The innovative nature of the play--particularly 1) its multifaceted view of character; 2) its complex and often simultaneous patterns of development; 3) its manipulation of time; and 4) its concern with the role of "average" individuals in the shaping of history--suggests that O'Neill may have had in mind a production form which would make use of techniques of exposition similar to those being developed by film makers, as well as by stage directors such as Erwin Piscator, during the thirties and early forties.

C

The radical departures in form which characterize *More Stately Mansions* pose production problems which require the kinds of systematic study given the innovative works of other major playwrights in Western theatre. It is a drama which stands effectively outside of the interpretative range of the styles of acting, directing, and design used for the staging of earlier works, including *A Touch of the Poet*. The development of an appropriate production form--or forms--requires the kinds of study, experimentation, and technical augmentation¹¹ applied to the works of European innovators such as Strindberg and Bertolt Brecht. Such experimentation should be conducted by teams capable of 1) adopting a single vision of the work, 2) integrating all elements of performance within a coherent theatrical language, and 3) rendering the text in terms which are both consistent with its author's intent and accessible to popular audiences.

A primary goal of this study was the establishment of a basis for cooperation between scholars in various areas of the arts and humanities and artists and technicians working in the theatre, in order to consider the problems affecting the theatrical alignment of form and content in performances of this challenging work. A related goal was to provide opportunities for students preparing for scholarly careers and those preparing for careers in directing, design, and technical production, to work together in the solution of problems affecting the transposition of a dramatic text of great complexity into the language of the popular theatre.

Study of the play at Madison proceeded in three phases. The first phase involved preliminary readings which included all members of the research team. These readings allowed members of the team--including designers and technicians--to enact various characters in the drama, a procedure which was to be important in assisting the production staff in discerning the complex patterns which comprise the action of the drama.

The second phase of study also involved all members of the team. This important phase brought experts from other departments in the University--including specialists in history, literature, philosophy, psychology, physics, and television production--to

¹¹The term "technical augmentation" is intended to suggest the use of stage technology as an element of the expository language of the modern theatre. It can perhaps be used to describe aspects of the use of technology in the creation of stage imagery by artists such as Erwin Piscator.

discuss the form and content of the work and to comment on the playwright's uses of an impressive body of information. One of the most interesting of these lectures involved a physicist who explored with the seminar a number of questions relating to O'Neill's treatment of time, matter, and movement in this unique work.

The consensus of all of the experts who participated in this phase of the study was that *More Stately Mansions* demonstrates the playwright's mastery of his complex subject matter. Indeed, specialists who had not previously given close attention to the play expressed surprise at the accuracy of O'Neill's representations of both the lives of his characters and the period of American history against which he set the drama's action. Most agreed that his treatment of character was the major achievement; that his views about the "identity" of human character extend beyond those of Freud, reflecting other developments in the fields of psychology and psychiatry as well as in other areas of the humanities and social sciences.

Rehearsals for the reading were directed by a graduate student in American Theatre and Drama. Actors, drawn from the seminar, included graduate students majoring in acting and directing, as well as in the history, literature, and criticism of the drama.

The primary interest of the design unit established for this study was to give concrete form to the environment of the action, an environment characterized not only by political realities, but by an intricate pattern of social relationships, and, in this drama, by economic factors which are both a background for action and a motivating force in the lives of members of this family.

As the staged reading moved toward the date of performance, the dynamic form of this drama became increasingly clear. But what was more important was that the work appeared, increasingly, valid as a history play. The form of the play was shaped by O'Neill's preoccupation with a motif recurrent in his work: the human condition in the "New World." In *More Stately Mansions*, he sought to become what Walt Whitman declared himself to be -- "an historian of the future."¹² In the exceedingly complex form which he devised, the playwright sought to bring together the American past, present, and future; that is, to interpret the continuity of history. In this staged reading, his methods of exposition proved to be well suited to the interpretation of the moment of insight which the play represents.

D

The challenge of this work as a theatre piece for popular audiences is substantial. There are three problems of exceptional difficulty: creating a production form which can subsume historical data; composing a theatrical imagery which can interpret the intricate pattern of actions; and interpreting faithfully not only the dense contents of the work, but also its form, style, and, insofar as can be determined, what the playwright hoped would be its effect on an audience.

These problems indicate something of the exceptional qualifications needed by theatrical interpreters of *More Stately Mansions*; that is, by directors, designers, composers, technicians, and most of all, by actors. The primary challenge can be summarized in the term "style." Because the challenge of production style for this work is so formidable, the Madison team concluded that the text requires controlled experimentation by a professional company, under optimal conditions, for a substantial period of time, before the play is put into full production.

The members of the Madison team acknowledge that the methods of study and experimentation described in their reports are not new. They are used and have been used by artists

¹²Walt Whitman, "To a Historian," from "Inscriptions," in *Leaves of Grass*, Comprehensive Reader's Edition, eds. Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York: New York University Press, 1964), p. 4.

and scholars of many periods of history and in many parts of the world, when preparing works of similar complexity for production. They were popular in the United States during much of the first half of the twentieth century, being employed during that period by art theatres, film production units, and television workshops, as well as by many university theatres.

The Madison team hopes that its attempts to recover aspects of this vital research function will accelerate the possibilities of cooperation between university programs, professional theatres, and theatre industries, to the end that difficult works such as *More Stately Mansions* may reach larger audiences and may do so, in each case, in a form that is consistent with the intent of the dramatist.

--Esther M. Jackson

HISTORY AS IMAGE: APPROACHES TO THE STAGING OF EUGENE O'NEILL'S *MORE STATELY MANSIONS*

The principal challenge for the production team which undertook the development of a plan for the staging of *More Stately Mansions* was to translate O'Neill's vision of a critical period in nineteenth century American history into the language of the theatre. *More Stately Mansions* is concerned not so much with clearly defined events as with processes; that is, with developmental patterns affecting the shaping of American characters. O'Neill has set such developing characters--drawn from a "representative American family"--against the background of events taking place in the 1830s and early 1840s. Moreover, he has attempted to create a myth about the Harfords of Massachusetts, one which recalls their individual pasts, informs their collective present, and anticipates their futures and those of their progeny.

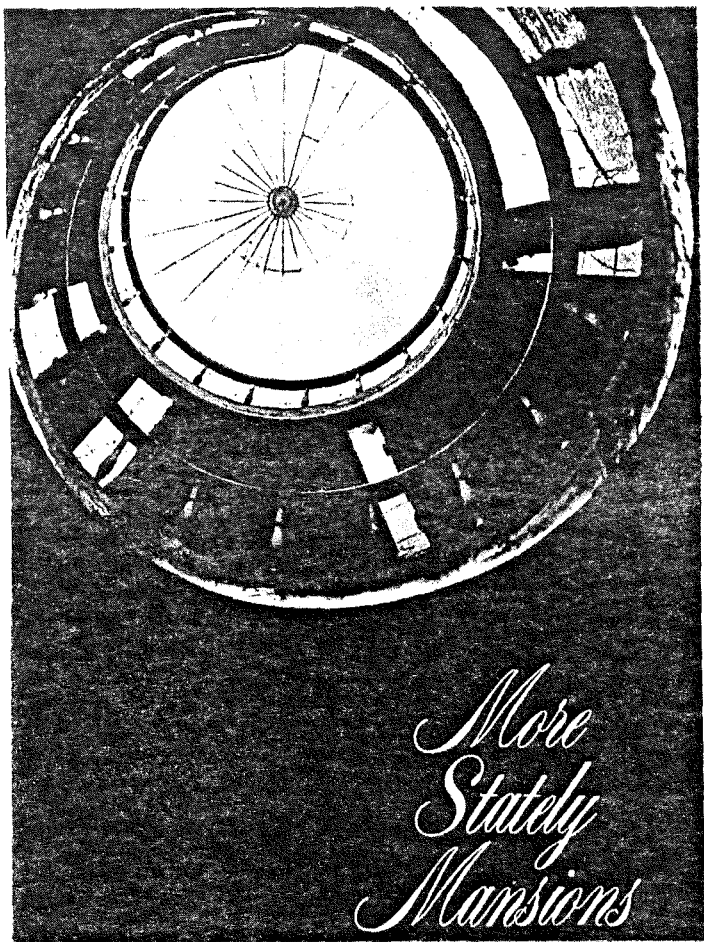
In *More Stately Mansions*, O'Neill treats character as both the cause and the effect of American history. He undertakes to show stages in the development of patterns he thought representative of the processes at work in the creation of that history.

The principal task of the team which staged this research production was to give theatrical expression to this vision of American history. The research method used in this case was the preparation of a staged reading; that is, a costumed performance with "books in hand." As the emphasis of this exploratory production was to be given to "the text as blueprint," a decision was made to limit the use of scenery, costumes, and properties to what seemed essential for the translation of the script into an appropriate theatrical imagery.

The decision to limit the use of scenic elements was an important one in establishing a stylistic approach to the play--an approach which the research team described as "minimal." The team undertook to compose a theatrical "grammar"; that is, a production language derived from several stylistic vocabularies, including those associated with theatrical realism, romanticism, and expressionism. The factor giving unity to the styles required by this long and complex text is the perspective of the playwright. *More Stately Mansions* is a view of history seen from the eyepoint of the playwright. Its form is the form of poetic consciousness.

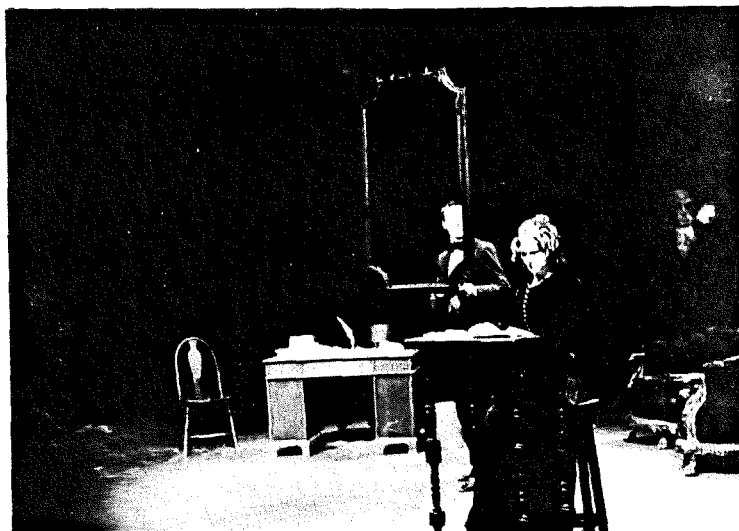
The director for this staged reading was a graduate student in American Theatre and Drama. He was assisted by other graduate students in acting and directing, as well as in the history, literature and criticism of the American theatre.

The principal actors were drawn from graduate programs in acting and directing; secondary roles were performed by students in literature, history, and criticism. These actors included Deborah Holmes as Sara Harford, Anne Drymalski as Deborah Harford, Paul Nelson as Simon Harford, Thomas Pscheidt as Gadsby, Patrick Schmitt as Joel Harford, and Ronald Miller as Tenard.



The photographs on this page were taken at the final rehearsals for the staged reading of *More Stately Mansions*, presented in the Experimental Theatre at the University of Wisconsin December 15, 1980. This reading was produced by students in a joint seminar on dramatic form in the cycle plays of Eugene O'Neill conducted by Professors Esther M. Jackson, John D. Ezell, and Edward A. Amor. The production was directed by Ronald R. Miller, a graduate student in American Theatre and Drama.

Photographs by Peter Beudert. Program graphics by Eve Cauley.



Simon Harford (Paul Nelson) and Sara (Deborah Holmes) in III, i: Simon quotes "The Chambered Nautilus" to the day-dreaming Sara.



Deborah Harford (Anne Drymalski, at left) and Sara make an affectionate peace while Simon sits reading: from the parlor scene, II, iii.

Having prevented Deborah (right) from once again locking herself inside the summer-house, Sara attempts to persuade her to "stop her mad schemes.": III, ii.



The parlor scene: Sara studies Deborah's face (out of picture to left) as Simon reads.

Action into Imagery: Rehearsal Photographs for More Stately Mansions

The three series of photographs on this page have been selected from sequences prepared for use as "storyboards," such as are developed in the preliminary stages of film and television productions. These "storyboards" permitted the production staff of More Stately Mansions to clarify lines of action by reducing complex patterns of response to images.



Progression 1. A preliminary study of the techniques required for the interpretation of internal levels of action: Simon struggles to separate the two women in his mind.



Progression 2. A study of the use of stage movement as an indication of change in the dramatic situation: Simon's exit draws the women apart.



Progression 3. A study of techniques needed to interpret changes in family relationships: The isolation of Simon in the family scene.

The design and production staff, composed of students majoring in theatrical design, included several units which corresponded to the production areas involving setting, costume, light, properties, and sound. Another unit was assigned to the photographic documentation of rehearsal and production processes. Design students were involved in the process of rehearsal, observing at regular intervals, but also participating in the readings of the play, and serving as understudies. Similarly, actors, directors and dramaturgical assistants participated in all phases of the design and production processes.

This staged reading was supervised by Professors John D. Ezell and Esther M. Jackson with the assistance of Professor Edward Amor. Consultants were drawn from the Department of Theatre and Drama and from other departments in the University of Wisconsin.

An important development in the preparation of the project involved opportunities to consult with Dr. Donald Gallup, the editor of the text used for the staged reading,¹ and with Professor John H. Raleigh, whose important study of O'Neill's plays explores aspects of the playwright's approach to the interpretation of American history.²

A

The first problem addressed by the director and his associates was that of establishing the nature of the dramatic action in this innovative work. Background studies involving specialists in American history, literature and philosophy seemed to support the view that O'Neill sought in his play to interpret events which shaped a critical period of American history; that is, to interpret factors contributing to the social, political, economic and intellectual climate of the United States in the years between 1832 and 1841. His characters are illustrative of this climate. They represent different responses to the dilemmas posed by contemporary events, both personal and societal in nature.

Simon Harford, an intellectual and a businessman, seeks, in his response to these events, to reconcile idealism with pragmatism. Sara, his wife, illustrates a second pattern of response; her reactions to changing circumstances have been shaped in large measure by a fear of poverty motivated by the disparity between the life of her family in America and her father's memory of a more prosperous past in the Old World. Of the three major figures in the play, Deborah--Simon's mother--is perhaps the most complex, subsuming in her character memories of a past which is in large part fantasy. Her retreat into daydreams of an aristocratic France are prompted by the pressure of events in the New World.

In the first phase of the rehearsal period, attention was given to the specific crises which engage the attention of the Harfords. Significantly, the central crisis is socio-economic in emphasis. This emphasis became evident as the director and company sought to trace the intricate pattern of crises and conflicts which comprise the action of O'Neill's extended drama.

The crisis which sets in motion this pattern of action is the death of the head of the Harford family. It is followed by 1) the disposition of the Harford estate and transfer of the Harford Company to Simon, 2) the deeding of the Harford mansion to Sara, 3) the transformation and further expansion of the corporate structure under the directorship of Simon, 4) the ostracism of Deborah from the family circle, 5) the rise of Sara to a position of power within the Harford Company, and 6) the play's culminating crisis in a final confrontation between the three Harfords. The director and the acting company sought, in this first phase of rehearsal, to interpret the roles of the characters in the

¹ The text used was shortened from the O'Neill's partly revised script by Karl Ragnar Gierow and edited by Donald Gallup (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964).

² John H. Raleigh, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965).

very specific terms suggested by this socio-economic sequence of developments.

A second phase of the rehearsals focused on the psychological patterns in the drama, patterns which are denser and less coherent than other layers of action, and even more difficult to interpret. In rehearsals, the director and the acting company found that psychological responses do not appear to constitute the primary level of action in this drama. The action is motivated, rather, by an historical progression, which provides for each character both a context for action and a set of choices. In *More Stately Mansions*, then, personal fate may be seen as an effect of history, will as a manifestation of societal values. The psychological subtext of the drama is secondary, serving to personalize the characters. The primary patterns of action, however, are motivated by the characters' needs to establish coherent approaches to living within their specific historical context. A major challenge for the director and the actors was therefore to relate internal (psychological) and external (social) lines of response in ways which appeared realistic.

A third stage of rehearsal was devoted to the articulation of the play's philosophical content. Whereas the motivating factor in the interrelated pattern of crises seems to be largely socio-economic--and many of its evident effects psychological--a major problem which absorbs the attention of all three principal characters is philosophical. O'Neill appeared to think that the essence of the dilemma which confronts the principals throughout the drama is posited in Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem, "The Chambered Nautilus," from which the play's title is taken. The central problem which engages all three can be stated in these terms: What is the truth of human nature? And how does one reconcile that truth to the goal of happiness? Sara seeks to resolve this problem through immersion in life itself. Deborah, by contrast, attempts to resolve the apparent conflict by substituting dreams of an idealized European past for the realities of an American present. Simon chooses an even more difficult approach: he seeks to make the world of practical experience conform to moral ideas. As his life situation changes, he is forced to modify his philosophy and undergoes a radical transformation from romantic idealism to an unrestrained nihilism. Both Simon and Deborah fail finally to mediate between mind and life; it is Sara who emerges triumphant.

While O'Neill posed questions of value regarding the lives of the drama's principals, there is no doubt that he saw the problem engaging them as in some senses representative of a persistent motif in American history. Relating the personal crises of these characters to the larger context of historical meaning proved to be a major challenge for the actors. It required interpretations which possessed both highly particularized and highly universal planes of meaning.

B

Acting style is an important determinant in the interpretation of levels of action and interaction in this play. It must be a unifying factor, capable of relating actions of heroic dimension to shifting patterns of thought and altering psychological states. Above all, the style of acting chosen for this drama must be capable of interpreting the social, political, and cultural data required for the spectator to understand the play. Two factors may be said to have defined the style of acting which was chosen for this staged reading: 1) the need to attend to carefully selected details regarding character, setting, language, and historical context; and 2) the need for modes of gesture and diction which could be, on occasion, intense, vibrant, and flamboyant, and at other times economical, controlled, specific, and highly realistic.

The attention to realistic detail was especially important in interpreting the play's historical context. On the other hand, the play was well served when the actors performed with pace and verve, and gave stature to the text by enlarging essentially realistic diction and gesture. This stylistic approach was unified by the notion of action as the projection of a single poetic consciousness, whose changing aspects take the form of romantic realism.

Members of both the directorial and dramaturgical units were responsible for resolving special problems related to acting style. Thomas Pscheidt, a graduate student in directing, was concerned with problems in style related to staging. Betty Jean Jones, a graduate student in American dramatic literature, history, and criticism, was responsible for articulating difficult transitions in terms of character development. A member of the dramaturgical staff, Deborah Wood, assisted by Scott Hedbloom of the production staff, sought to clarify difficult transitions through the use of music, a technique which was valuable in articulating transitions in style.

As the directorial unit and the acting company sought to identify the play's levels of meaning and to translate these levels by means of a coherent style, the production team began work on yet another problem, the creation of an appropriate setting. Work on this problem was supervised by Professor John D. Ezell. The production was planned for the Vilas Experimental Theatre, a "black box" which permits considerable flexibility in staging.

Setting is a particularly important factor in this drama. Not only does it define the "spaces" in which the action is projected; it provides a context for the action, locating the play in historical time and place. It also suggests visual symbols which clarify the play's metaphysical structure.

The creation of the setting proceeded in several phases. After the initial periods of study and rehearsal, the design unit, together with members of the dramaturgical unit, compiled a "dictionary" of visual images, including architectural forms, landscapes, garden scenes, portraits, furniture, interior scenes, costumes, and patterns of light. Coordination of this work with the acting-directing unit was provided by dramaturgical assistants. One of these assistants, Adrienne Hacker, assembled many of the materials for the use of the research team. A second, Patrick Schmitt, provided materials relevant to the interpretation of the historical context of each scene.

The design team sought to relate the imagery created by the acting--that is, through language, blocking and gesture--to the imagery of the *mise-en-scène*. The scene designers, James Burbeck and Brian Lorbiecki, in consultation with members of the directing unit, devised a setting which was both pictorial and architectonic, one capable of both containing and defining the play's complex action. Only three architectural units were used to define the stage space: two permanent door-frames, one in each of the two side corners of the triangular stage; and in the back corner a simple platform, which became the base for the the summer house in the scenes taking place in Deborah Harford's garden. The forestage functioned as a flexible *platea*--that is, as a neutral space which could be used in each of the play's scenes. In this flexible space, it was possible to indicate the play's five locations--the cabin, the garden, Sara's sitting-room, Simon's company offices, and the parlor of the Harford mansion. It was decided to employ only those architectural elements which were necessary to suggest these specific environments.

A discrete constellation of properties was chosen for each scene, properties which were related to the specific action of the scene, and which enhanced its meaning. For example, for the scene in Simon's office, the properties consisted of Simon's desk and desk chair, a second chair beside the desk, and a scrivener's desk and high stool, with a mirror hanging above this second desk. For the second office scene, a sofa was added. The pieces of furniture for this and other scenes were selected and modified by Eve Cauley, head of the properties unit, assisted by Peter Beudert.

In order to give continuity to the changing scenes, slides were projected on a single large screen, located behind and to the right of center stage. Five images were selected--one for each scene--from the visual materials assembled by the design and dramaturgical staffs. Because much of the action was played against these images, an effect of visual layering was created, as if the actors were set in relief against a two-dimensional background. Moreover, the use of slides gave emotional texture to the scenes. Slides and scenic properties functioned as elements of a changing composition which might constitute a coherent image at one moment and, at another time, two antithetical images, creating,

through their juxtaposition, an entirely different pattern of meaning.

Finally it was determined that the lighting, designed by Dana Kenn, assisted by Kathy Haaga, should be used to isolate stage areas, confining specific scenes within pools of reality set against an opaque background. This treatment allowed each scene to retain its specific character, while endowing significant elements of action with greater value. The scenery, in its mixture of scenic modes, and in its juxtaposition of noncontiguous elements, endowed a single stage space with the capacity to assume many identities, without the loss of a sense of continuity.

The *mise-en-scène* developed by the production team was a critical factor in shaping an appropriate acting style. The properties helped to ground the action in physical reality. The units of furniture served as the basis for blocking the psychological movement of a scene. The openness of the setting encouraged the actors to take stage, in moments of reflection and in moments of passion, in ways which enhanced the meaning of the play and which provided effective solutions to many of O'Neill's long and difficult speeches.

The approach taken to the *mise-en-scène* placed great importance upon the costumes designed by Mary Anne Aston and Kurt Sharp, and on certain elements of the stage décor, selected by Eve Cauley. These elements of the design clarified progress of character, and colored a visually austere setting (the predominant color of the setting was black), thus highlighting both the actors and certain critical properties.

C

More Stately Mansions emerged in production as a poetic work. This poetic quality was evident not only in the play's language, but also in the mixture of scenic modes, the rhythms and tempi of action and, above all, in the shifting configurations of character. In this play, O'Neill's characters both define their world and are defined by it. The dynamic tension which results was articulated in performance by both the style of acting and the scenic imagery. While the actors utilized the tension between the play's realistic context and its romantic texture, the setting juxtaposed imposing projections with the discrete three-dimensional figures on the forestage. The effect was to give the members of the audience invited to attend the reading staged on December 15, 1980 not only a sense of the events, but also of the moment of transition in American history which O'Neill sought to interpret.

--Ronald R. Miller

[EDITORIAL AFTERWORD. The editor is most grateful to Professor Jackson and Mr. Miller for providing such detailed and illuminating reports of the *More Stately Mansions* project at Madison. They restore him in the faith--which had noticeably wavered during his harangue on pages 11 and 12 of this issue--that at least in college and university theatres significant experimental research can still take place without commercial restraints.

It might be added, for the record, that the Harvard Dramatic Club presented eight performances of *More Stately Mansions* in October, 1974. I remember that production as an engrossing evening of only partially opaque melodrama, but reviewer Peter Borowitz, calling it "one of the strangest interludes in the recent history of the Loeb Drama Center," began his attack in the *Harvard Independent* (October 24, 1974, p. 7) with a near-apology to Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Had he but known how Eugene O'Neill would later mangle his poem, he might well have forbidden its original publication."

No one can yet predict what the ultimate results of the Madison study will be; indeed, it sounds as if a great deal of work (not to mention funds) will be required before a comparable professional production could be effected. But this pioneering venture deserves the applause of all O'Neillians who long to see his neglected masterworks vindicated and established as part of the regular theatrical repertory. Congratulations to all concerned! --Ed.]

THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SECTION

I. CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: a Report from Jordan Y. Miller, Secretary.

The by-laws of the Eugene O'Neill Society state that six months before the next election, members of the Society may submit nominations for expiring offices, to be received by the Secretary within two months. Names of candidates nominated by five or more members will be included on the ballot, along with such nominees as the Board of Directors may choose. The next election will be held during our Annual Meeting in New York in December 1981. Nominations must be received by the Secretary no later than September 1, 1981.

This OFFICIAL CALL for nominations was sent, on July 1st, to all 1981 members and to all who were members during our 1980 charter year. If you have not paid your 1981 dues and wish to participate, please send me your check together with any nominations. (Address: Department of English, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881. Tel. 401-792-5931.)

As the following roster's first and third sections show, the terms of two Officers and five Directors expire at the end of the current calendar year. We therefore solicit your nominations for President, Vice-President, and five Directors.

* Officers whose two-year terms expire December 31, 1981:

(NOTE: Neither officer wishes to be renominated.)

Horst Frenz, Indiana University, President
Winifred Frazer, University of Florida, Vice-president

Officers currently serving four-year terms, expiring December 31, 1983:

Virginia Floyd, Bryant College, Treasurer
Jordan Y. Miller, University of Rhode Island, Secretary
Timo Tiusanen, University of Helsinki, International Secretary

* Directors whose two-year terms expire December 31, 1981:

(NOTE: The by-laws do not restrict re-election of Directors.)

Travis Bogard, University of California, Berkeley; Eugene K. Hanson, College of the Desert; Adele R. Heller, Provicetown Playhouse; Esther M. Jackson, University of Wisconsin; Tom J. A. Olsson, Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm.

Directors whose four-year terms expire December 31, 1983:

(NOTE: By-laws do not restrict a Director from receiving a nomination for Officer.)

Frederic I. Carpenter, Walnut Creek, California; Doris V. Falk, Califon, New Jersey; Sally Thomas Pavetti, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center; John Henry Raleigh, University of California, Berkeley; Frederick C. Wilkins, Suffolk University, Boston.

Members of Committees, in addition to many of those above, include:

Jacob Adler, Purdue University; Michael Hinden, University of Wisconsin; Vera Jiji, Brooklyn College; Thomas Marshall, Upperco, Maryland; Debora Kellar Pattin, Tacoma, Washington; Dennis Rich, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle; Paul Voelker, University of Wisconsin; Albert Wertheim, Indiana University; and Robert Wilkinson, Villanova University.

II. INVITATION TO NON-MEMBERS.

[The following is a slightly edited version of the information and invitation that appear in the Society's new membership-application brochure. If you are an individual subscriber but not a member of the Society, a copy of that brochure should be included in the envelope that contained this issue of the Newsletter. If it is not there, or if you need additional copies for friends and colleagues, write to Secretary Miller. --Ed.]

On December 30, 1978, a group of some 30 O'Neill enthusiasts from the United States and abroad--theatre professionals, academics, and lovers of theatre and drama in general--met in the New York Hilton to organize the Eugene O'Neill Society. The following year, on December 29, 1979, in the beautiful surroundings of Tao House, O'Neill's mountain home outside San Francisco, a larger and equally enthusiastic group met to adopt by-laws and to elect permanent officers and a board of directors.

You are invited to become a member of this important new international organization. Its purpose is to promote and maintain world-wide study of O'Neill's life and works by

*keeping his work alive in performances on stage, film, television, radio, and recordings;

*encouraging historical and critical writing and amassing historical documentation; and

*sponsoring publications devoted to O'Neill and his plays.

Meetings are presently held each year at the time of the Modern Language Association national conventions; but as we grow, other gatherings will be undertaken, both in the United States and in other countries.

Membership is open to anyone, anywhere, with an interest in O'Neill as an artist, in the American theatre, and in the purposes of the Society. As a member you will receive the thrice-yearly *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*, which carries notes on productions of O'Neill's plays throughout the world, as well as scholarly articles on every phase of O'Neill's life and works. Submission of items for publication, especially from members, is earnestly solicited.

Your membership dues, which are tax deductible, are determined by your choice from among seven categories: Regular (\$20), Student (\$10), Emeritus (\$10 for members 65 or over), Family (\$30 for husband and wife), Sponsor (\$50), Life (\$500, payable in one sum), and Institutional (\$30). Make checks payable to The Eugene O'Neill Society, and send them, along with your address and telephone number, to Secretary Miller.

III. 1981 ANNUAL MEETING.

The Society's next annual meeting, at which the aforementioned elections will take place, is scheduled for late December in New York City, during the MLA convention. A date, hour and location will be announced in an imminent Society mailing and in the next issue of the Newsletter. It is hoped that the meeting will occur in close proximity to the MLA special session on O'Neill, described elsewhere in this issue, that will take place from noon to 1:15 p.m. on Monday, December 28.

* * * * *

NEW BOOK WILL SHOW O'NEILL AT WORK! The Frederick Ungar Publishing Company of New York City projects an October 1981 publication date for *EUGENE O'NEILL AT WORK: NEWLY RELEASED IDEAS FOR PLAYS*, edited and annotated by Professor Virginia Floyd of Bryant College in Rhode Island. The volume will make available for the first time materials by O'Neill--notes, scenarios, drawings, records--that have been restricted since before the playwright's death in 1953. Fuller information will follow in the next issue. Watch for the book!

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

1. MLA '81 O'NEILL SESSION. "O'Neill and His Theatrical Children: The Split Character and the Extended Monologue in O'Neill and Others," a Special Session directed by Professor Vera Jiji of Brooklyn College, will be the major O'Neill event at the 1981 Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association in New York City at the end of December. The 75-minute session, from noon to 1:15 p.m. on December 28th, will have a discussion format and will feature panelists from both theatre and academe. Professor Michael Hinden will speak on O'Neill's and more recent playwrights' use of the extended monologue, and Professor Albert Wertheim will do the same for the split character, making specific reference to *Days Without End*, *The Great God Brown* and *A Touch of the Poet*, as well as plays by Adrienne Kennedy and Marsha Norman. Commentators will include playwright Romulus Linney (*Holy Ghost*, *The Sorrows of Frederick*, *Childe Byron*), who has utilized both devices in his work; actress Julie Nesbitt, who played a split character in the New York production of Marsha Norman's *Getting Out*; and Professor Virginia Floyd. The session, naturally, is open to all members of MLA, and all will be able to participate since Professor Jiji has proscribed the reading of long papers. She also hopes to provide a cash bar so that the assembled O'Neill enthusiasts can mingle and chat.
2. O'NEILL AT ATA. Two papers on O'Neill were delivered by their authors at the 1981 Annual Convention of the American Theatre Association in Dallas on Monday, August 10. "Mysticism and Noh in O'Neill," by Lai Sheng-chuan, was one of the three winners in the ATA's "annual competition for papers in theory and criticism of drama and performance." "O'Neill and the Hebraic Theme of Sacrifice," by Shelly Regenbaum, was featured in a session devoted to "the impact of the Bible on modern drama." The editor hopes to provide abstracts of both papers in the next issue of the Newsletter.
3. MICHAEL HINDEN, whose review of *Welded* appears in this issue, will represent O'Neill at the Conference on Myth and American Culture that the Canadian Association for American Studies is hosting at the University of Montreal on October 22-24. His subject is, "The Myth of a Lost Eden in the Early Plays of Eugene O'Neill."
4. RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Chioles, John. "Aeschylus and O'Neill: A Phenomenological View." *Comparative Drama*, 14 (1980), 159-187.

Gatta, John. "The American Subject: Moral History as Tragedy in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill." *Essays in Literature* (Western Illinois U.), 6 (1979), 227-239.

Pradhan, Narindar S. *Modern American Drama: A Study in Myth and Tradition*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1978, 138 pp.

Reiss, Walter. "Die weltliterarische Leistung Gor'kijs bei der Schaffung einer Dramenepopöe (M. Gor'kijs ... i drugie-Zyklus im Vergleich zu M. Krležas *Glembajevi* und O'Neills *Mourning Becomes Electra*)." *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reiche*, 28 (1979), 347-351.

Szilassy, Zoltán. "The Stanislavsky Heritage in the American Theatre." *St. in Eng. & Amer.*, 4 (1978), 201-212. (O'Neill-Provincetown compared to Chekhov-Moscow Art Theatre.)

Törnqvist, Egil. "De Bewerking van de Realiteit: Het Historie-Drama." *Scenarium*, 4 (1980), 9-20. (Includes examples from Ibsen, Strindberg, Brecht and O'Neill.)

Wertheim, Albert. "Gaspard the Miser in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night*." *American Notes and Queries*, 18 (1979), 39-42.

Wiles, Timothy J. "Tammanyite, Progressive, and Anarchist: Political Communities in *The Iceman Cometh*." *Clio*, 9 (1980), 179-196.

Wilson, Robert N. "Eugene O'Neill: The Web of Family." *The Writer as Social Seer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 72-88. (on *Long Day's Journey*.)

Wittenberg, Judith B. "Faulkner and Eugene O'Neill." *Mississippi Quarterly*, 33 (1980), 327-341.

5. NEW BOOK ON O'NEILL IMMINENT. At the time of his illness last year, O'Neill Society President Horst Frenz was nearing the completion of an anthology and study of European O'Neill criticism based on years of research and a vast collection of reviews and critical articles from all over the European continent. Thanks to Professor Frenz's assistant on the project, Susan Tuck, who is now editing and completing the manuscript and writing an introduction, this much-needed volume will soon be published by Southern Illinois University Press. Entitled *Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad*, it represents seventeen countries and spans the years 1922-1980.

6. RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS.

Chris Christopherson. The Goodman Theatre, Chicago. For information about the production, which is scheduled for 1982, call the Goodman: 312-443-3802.

Hughie, starring Jason Robards. Hyde Park Festival Theater, Hyde Park, NY, June 17-21.

A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. Ginger Valone. Germinal Stage, Denver, CO, July 9 - August 2.

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Woodstock Playhouse, Woodstock, NY, July 15-19, 21-26.

A Touch of the Poet, dir. Roland Jaquarello, designed by Jan Cholawo & Paul Lanham, and presented by Green Fields and Far Away, a company formed by Mr. Jaquarello in 1977 "to present Irish and Irish related work in the U.K." Among the English cities visited during a Summer 1981 tour were Manchester (Library Theatre, St. Peter's Square, 1-6 June) and Liverpool (Neptune Theatre, 8-13 June). The production was financially assisted by Arts Council Touring and was organized in collaboration with the Central School of Art and Design.

7. THE O'NEILLS ON STAGE. *Ah, Men*, subtitled "An Entertainment on the Male Experience (With Music)," had a brief run at the South Street Theater in New York City last May. The work of author-director Paul Shyre and composer-lyricist Will Holt, it met with generally negative critical reactions and deserves mention here only because one of the 23 famous men impersonated by the three males in the cast was Eugene O'Neill, and the Eugene-Carlotta scene, performed by Jack Betts and Jane White, was one of the few to elicit much praise. It was, according to Mel Gussow (*New York Times*, May 12), "a brief, epistolary distillation of their tortured relationship," and Kevin Kelly (*Boston Globe*, May 27, p. 31) found it "oddly harrowing."

The fullest description of the scene was provided by Edith Oliver (*The New Yorker*, May 25, p. 116): "Miss White becomes the anguished Carlotta O'Neill, reading Eugene O'Neill's dedications to her of one play after another through the years, and somehow embodying the whole story of that racking marriage, as O'Neill ... stands silent, head bowed." Following the O'Neill segment, Miss White sang "Illusions," praised by Mr. Gussow as "a bittersweet song that ... could almost be an extract from a potential musical version of *The Iceman Cometh*."

It seems to have been Miss White's skills and the presence in the collection of O'Neill and Sean O'Casey (a scene from *Pictures in the Hallway*) that earned *Ah, Men* the limited praise it received.

8. *DESIRE DANCED--SORT OF. Facets of Desire*, a ballet by John Butler, which had its first performance at the Pepsico Summerfare '81 arts festival at the State University of New York-Purchase on Saturday, July 25, was "inspired" by O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms*. Jennifer Dunning, reviewing the premiere in the *New York Times* (July 28, p. C10), expressed no displeasure at the "urgent, anxious score for woodwinds and strings" of composer Alun Hoddinott, but she had little respect for the Butler choreography and its ostensibly O'Neillian connections:

Well, there was a young man, and a youngish older man and a woman with whom both were in love in Mr. Butler's trio. But they could have been any three human beings acting under the most generalized of passions. For Mr. Butler has reduced the O'Neill play to a naïve abstraction of jealousy, revealed in a balleto-modern-dance style that gives its three dancers little to do but stretch yearningly toward one another, strain back in repulsion and push one another away, all of it mildly and at inordinate length. Three good dancers--Kevin McKenzie, Martine van Hamel and Gary Chryst--were wasted, though Mr. Chryst's intensity of presence did add some measure of real theater to this bland melodrama.

9. MONTE CRISTO COTTAGE REDUX. In the May 1981 issue of *The O'Neill*, a quarterly publication of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, the traumas involved in the restoration of Monte Cristo Cottage, as well as some interesting plans for the future, were described by the Cottage's curator, Sally Thomas Pavetti, and its associate curator, Lois Erickson McDonald:

When the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center took over the Monte Cristo Cottage, it could be said truthfully that we had a derelict house of no particular architectural style that was deteriorating rapidly. At that time such epithets were thrown at the Cottage as "mausoleum" or "elephant (white) supported by toothpicks." We have in the general restoration process sometimes lost our vision of the Landmark's destiny in a maze of frozen pipes, perimeter drains, storm sewers, and denatured alcohol. A minimum of fifteen contractors have worked their individual crafts or trades, and we have had a plethora of engineers, architects, building officials and even an archeologist give us their hypothesis or prognosis of the situation. We owe the City of New London and three different City Councils our gratitude for the major funding of this historic project through the Community Development Program (HUD) and supplementary funding from the Department of the Interior through the Connecticut Historical Commission. Connecticut's Department of Commerce made the replastering and air conditioning of the entire structure possible, and we are now actively seeking funding for final interior decoration and period furnishing.

The Frank Loomis Palmer Fund and the Connecticut Humanities Council are underwriting the costs of a permanently installed multi-media presentation that every visitor to the Cottage will see. This documentary introduces Eugene O'Neill, his New London environs, and the Monte Cristo Cottage to the public. In addition, we have just received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to expand the national visibility of America's greatest dramatist in a documented biography for television, tentatively entitled, "Eugene O'Neill: The Man and the Masks." Thus, our vision has been restored and we look forward to a long, triumphant run as one of our nation's most successful National Landmarks.

10. A LETTER FROM THALIA BREWER, June 3, 1981.

As Historian and acting librarian of The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, I have since 1978 been cataloging books and other materials for the library and museum. It

has been absorbing--a labor of dedication and love. In the categories, in addition to books, are articles and reports, correspondence, manuscripts, theatrical programs and reviews, audio-visual, and--newsletters. Among the last group are issues of your excellent and comprehensive, as well as beautifully edited *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*.

It may be of interest to you and your readers that the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site Association was organized in 1969. I was President of this group from 1969 to 1974. During those years we succeeded, through our initiating efforts, in having Tao House placed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1971. Also, during these years there were repeated bills in the House of Representatives and in the Senate calling for the establishment of The Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site. National Historic Site status finally came in 1976, two years after the formation of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, of which I was the first President.

Having lived almost in the shadow of Tao House for thirty years, the unfolding of the preservation program has great meaning for me. As for the problems--has there ever been anything less than complex about O'Neill?

11. WHO SAID IT, I & II. No winner, alas, in the little contest featured in the last issue of the Newsletter. Most guessers, logically but inaccurately, picked Tennessee Williams. The writer who *did* say, "When someone asks me who has influenced my work, I point to O'Neill, the Russians, Faulkner, Flaubert," was Carson McCullers. ("The Flowering Dream," *Esquire*, December 1959.)

Since the contest aroused such a flurry of interest and nail-biting insomnia among readers, the editor offers a *second* "who said it" competition. He will dust the miniscule prize and send it to the first reader to identify the young American writer who admired O'Neill--considered him, in fact, "the beacon light in our own drama today"--but was worried by advance reports of the soon-to-be-produced *Hairy Ape*:

I see the subject is to be a stoker on an ocean liner. During the successive stages we will see him go back steadily to the primitive man. I hope O'Neill won't let this tendency run away with him. You see, he was "looking backward" in "The Emperor Jones" and, to a degree, we find this in other plays. Tragedy if continued in this vein, will become sordid and brutal. Surely this does not represent his outlook on life. Great tragedy, I think, must look ahead....

The writer whose correct answer is the first received will be the winner and will receive public congratulation in the next issue.

12. ERRATUM. Through an editorial oversight, the reprint in the last issue of Eric Pace's *New York Times* article on current O'Neill activities ("Preserving the Homes Where Eugene O'Neill Lived and Worked," pp. 25-26) was not accompanied by the requisite attribution. With apologies, we print the latter herewith: "© 1981 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted by Permission."
13. FITZGERALD FETED. The Outer Critics Circle has awarded its 1981 Lucille Lortel award for "the most noteworthy new director" to Geraldine Fitzgerald, whose direction of *Mass Appeal* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night* earned her the \$500 prize.
14. OF GIFTS AND GEWGAWS. If you've been dreaming of sporting a necktie, tiepin, scarf or t-shirt featuring Eugene O'Neill's face, or signature, or both--awake! Two organizations have permitted your dream to become a reality. The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center will sell you a navy club tie adorned with multiple gold copies of its O'Neill logo (shown at the top of p. 39); an 18" quiana scarf or a cotton sweatshirt on which the logo is combined with a replica of O'Neill's autograph; a gold tiepin (or lapel pin) in the shape of the logo, and many other items of similar ilk. (Prices range from \$3 for the tiepin to \$13 for the scarf.)

In addition, O'Neill has at last joined the roster of over a hundred artists whose likenesses grace "literate t-shirts" (and sweatshirts) produced by Historical Products of Cambridge, Mass. The t-shirts (in white, light blue or red) sell for \$10 (\$36 for four), and sweatshirts (grey only) are \$16 (\$28 for two). The addresses, for those interested in further information:

Eugene O'Neill Theater Center
305 Great Neck Road
Waterford, CT 06385



Historical Products
Box 220XB
Cambridge, MA 02238

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN THIS ISSUE

MARSHALL BROOKS, essayist and printer, is the editor of *Nostoc* and associate editor of the *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*. *Nostoc* #10, recently published, comprises eight short stories and sketches by James T. Farrell, two of which are there published for the first time. For price information, write to Mr. Brooks, Arts End Books, Box 162, Newton, MA 02168.

STEPHANIE GREENE, a native Vermonter now living in the Boston area, is presently at work on a novel. When she is not writing, she can often be found playing Scarlatti on her Gabler parlor grand or sipping retsina while planning a Mexican dinner.

MICHAEL HINDEN, Associate Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is a regular contributor to the Newsletter's pages. Chairman of the Publications Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society, Professor Hinden will lecture on O'Neill and Myth at the Canadian Association for American Studies conference on "Myth and American Culture" in Montreal next October.

ESTHER M. JACKSON, Professor of Theatre and Drama at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the author of *The Broken World of Tennessee Williams* and numerous articles on Williams, O'Neill and other dramatists. Her essay on "O'Neill the Humanist" appeared in the September 1977 issue of the Newsletter. Professor Jackson is a member of the Executive Committee of the MLA Drama Division.

NORMAN ANDREW KIRK is a poet whose work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *Poet Lore* and *The Smith* as well as other publications. A member of the editorial board of *Bitterroot*, a poetry journal, he lives with his wife, Carolina, in Wayland, Mass.

RONALD R. MILLER is a graduate student in American Theatre and Drama at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was the director of the staged reading of *More Stately Mansions* that is discussed in his article.

PATRICK J. NOLAN is Professor of English at Villanova University. His essay on Jungian elements in *The Emperor Jones*, an interesting complement to the study in this issue, appeared in the May-September 1980 Newsletter (pp. 6-9). Professor Nolan was the author, with Michael Mann, of the 1979 Emmy-winning ABC Movie of the Week, *The Jericho Mile*, starring Peter Strauss.

SUSAN TUCK, a graduate student in comparative literature at Indiana University, is completing a dissertation on O'Neill and Faulkner (see Winter 1980 Newsletter, pp. 19-20), and will co-edit, with Horst Frenz, *Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad*, to be published by Southern Illinois University Press.

