IN THIS ISSUE:

* Joseph Petite on the paradox of power in More Stately Mansions  
  p. 2

* Peter Egri on European antecedents of The Iceman Cometh (Part One)  
  p. 5

* Susan Tuck on Faulkner's influence on Long Day's Journey into Night  
  p. 10

* Winifred Frazer on Virginia Floyd's new book, Eugene O'Neill at Work  
  p. 16

* Reviews and abstracts
  * Marshall Brooks on Anna Christie in Worcester, MA  
    p. 18
  * Deborah Kellar Pattin on A Touch of the Poet in Seattle, WA  
    p. 20
  * Abstracts of six essays published (or read) elsewhere  
    p. 22

* The Eugene O'Neill Society section  
  p. 28

* News, notes and queries  
  p. 31

* Persons represented in this issue  
  p. 39

* Index to Volume V  
  p. 40

Roseann Concannon (Anna) and William Farrier (Matt) in Anna Christie, reviewed in this issue, pp. 18-19.
THE PARADOX OF POWER IN MORE STATELY MANSIONS

Since its publication in 1964, More Stately Mansions has received little critical attention, and those who have discussed it have not given it high marks. Murry Hartman finds the play in its "totality a drama manqué," and says O'Neill "strains unsuccessfully to connect the Oedipal strife with the pitfalls of capitalism."¹ Jere Real concurs with Robert Brustein's remark that the loss would be negligible if the play were destroyed. "The drama," says Real, "has glaring inadequacies, in characterization, dialogue, and motivation...."² While I would agree that some ideas in the play are not satisfactorily resolved, I would argue that it is not as unfinished as has been claimed. Though the play is generally regarded as a criticism of an acquisitive society, no one has noticed that O'Neill was interested in more than mere covetousness. He was using the desire to possess as a symptom of a deeper psychological problem—the obsessive need for security. In More Stately Mansions, possession, whether sexual or financial, is a way of establishing control over others before being controlled by them, and the purpose of this control is to alleviate feelings of powerlessness and insecurity. But the paradox of power is that the more one dominates, the less he is secure.

Interpreted deductively as part of a historical cycle entitled "A Tale of Possessors Self-Dispossessed," More Stately Mansions has been taken as the depiction of American greed leading to alienation from the land. However, if we work inductively from the text of the play itself, we find that a psychological interpretation is in order. The play is about people whose need for protection drives them to build walls around themselves. Yet the walls don't provide safety. In fact, they guarantee only destructive isolation. Constant defensiveness so alienates the individual that he reaches a point of despair where madness seems to offer tempting relief. The title of the play is ironic, for it refers, not to souls who attempt to widen their horizons, as is the case in Holmes's poem, "The Chambered Nautilus," but to characters who, engaging in one power play after another, create ever tighter defensive perimeters until they eventually retreat into themselves. The paradox of power is that the obsession with protection of the self leads not to security, but to loss of the self to constant and unbearable anxiety.

Though greed is rampant in the play, O'Neill makes it clear that money is not the real issue. Money is merely a means to an end. The goal is power, for power is control, of all that might pose a threat to the individual, namely, the world. To control others is to be free, or as Simon phrases it, "The possession of power is the only freedom...."³ Simon is not interested in wealth for its own sake. If he were, he would hoard what he has. Instead, he risks whatever he has, not to gain more money, but to gain more control of the market, to be more dominant. For Simon, empire building is a metaphor for a psychological necessity: control. And Simon's overwhelming desire to rule the economic scene is directly related to his feelings about his mother. It must be emphasized here that though the sexual aspect of the Oedipal situation appears in the play, O'Neill is interested in more than the obvious. Simon's desire for economic power is designed to compensate for feelings of helplessness caused by a mother who rejected him. Finding he had no secure home in the emotional world, he tried to find security by dominating the business world.

³Eugene O'Neill, More Stately Mansions, ed., Donald Gallup (New Haven, 1964), p. 74. All future references will be in parentheses.
One of the most tormenting problems Eugene O'Neill found himself confronted with during and after World War II was the experience of ideals becoming illusions. For this reason, the relationship between ideal and truth, illusion and reality, proved to be of crucial importance for him. A number of factors explain his predicament.

1. The world-wide cataclysm and the threat of fascism filled him with dread and revulsion, calling into doubt, with its unbridled barbarity, the validity of human and humane ideals. In his as yet unpublished Work Diary (1924-1943) a great many entries describe his war obsession, anti-Hitler exasperation, spiritual disintegration and attempts at intellectual regeneration. In a letter of July 17, 1940, O'Neill wrote to Lawrence Langner: "To tell the truth, like anyone else with any imagination, I have been absolutely sunk by this damned world debacle. The Cycle is on the shelf, and God knows if I can ever take it up again because I cannot foresee any future in this country or anywhere else to which I could spiritually belong."

2. Even after the war, O'Neill retained his grim outlook. In his famous interview with J. S. Wilson on September 2, 1946, amidst the general euphoria celebrating the end of the war and the victory over fascism, O'Neill appalled his countrymen with a challenging statement:

I'm going on the theory that the United States, instead of being the most successful country in the world, is the greatest failure ... because it was given everything, more than any other country. Through moving as rapidly as it has, it hasn't acquired any real roots. Its main idea is that everlasting game of trying to possess your own soul by the possession of something outside of it, thereby losing your own soul and the thing outside of it, too. America is the prime example of this because it happened so quickly and with such immense resources. This was really said in the Bible much better. We are the greatest example of "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" We had so much and could have gone either way.

This concise and bitter view may be one of the most important insights into the chief cause for the rise of modern American drama, into the birth of American tragedy as seen and presented by its greatest representative. It contains a clear delineation of alienation brought about by monopolistic developments. Pointing out the rapidity of the process, it also provides a key to understanding the relationship between the dramatic methods of O'Neill's European predecessors (including Ibsen, Chekhov and Gorky) and the dramaturgy of O'Neill himself. O'Neill's view also explains the title and conflict of his comprehensive cycle, "A Tale of Possessors Self-Dispossessed"; and last but not least, it throws an explanatory light on O'Neill's assessment of contemporary American social and historical trends, casting a veil of doubt on the feasibility of the American dream.

---

1See, e.g., entries for August 31, September 3, 21, 1939; May 10-16, 18-31, June 1-25, July 19, 1940; March 2, May 12, June 21-22, 27-29, September 29, December 7-10, 23, 26, 1941; January 20, August 3, 18, October 15, November 13, 1942; March 1, 1943. The typescript (call-marked Za, O'Neill, 126 X), made by Donald Gallup in 1968-69 from the four volumes of the autograph manuscript, is available at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. I am indebted to Mr. Gallup, Curator of the Collection of American Literature at the Beinecke, for his permission to consult the Work Diary in May 1977.


3Raleigh, p. 22; cf. Louis Sheaffer, O'Neill: Son and Artist (Boston, Toronto, 1973), pp. 577-578.
led her into this situation. Sara, like Deborah and Simon, has sought power to achieve security; and she too has discovered that domination results, not in control, but in isolation, in the possessor being self-dispossessed.

Until the end, the play is unified; it is about characters who act out their compulsions. But the final action, Sara's decision to renounce her ambitions and destroy the business out of love for Simon, seems out of place. I believe, however, that while it may not be justified, it can be explained. We can account for Sara's act if we see it in a pattern of details, all of which are carry-overs from the earlier play in the cycle, A Touch of the Poet: the Byron poem, Sara's peasant looks and aristocratic ambitions, and Deborah's haughtiness. Sara's sacrifice is a direct imitation of the sacrifice her mother had made in the earlier play, dedicating her life to Con Melody. Her mother made a great point of telling her of the duties love entails, and here Sara is being her mother's daughter. The problem is that O'Neill had altered Sara's character to be appropriate to the action of More Stately Mansions, a tale of possessors self-dispossessed, and at the end he has Sara revert to behavior suitable to A Touch of the Poet.

To conclude, I would say that while I have gone outside the play to account for the way it ends, the rest of the action is integrated. It is unnecessary to discuss the play piecemeal, the usual approach, as if it were an O'Neill miscellany, a grab bag filled with typical concerns--the Oedipus conflict, the themes of madness and illusion, the use of the door. This approach ignores the whole simply because the reader happens to recognize a few of the parts. The play also need not be discussed almost apologetically, need not be justified on the grounds that it was to be part of a cycle. Each of these approaches fails to consider the play on its own terms because it reminds the critic of something else. I believe it has been this habit of using the play to support other pre-conceived ideas which has led to the incomplete interpretations of More Stately Mansions.

--Joseph Petite

THE ICEMAN COMETH: EUROPEAN ORIGINS AND AMERICAN ORIGINALITY

[We are pleased to initiate herewith the Newsletter's first serialization of a scholarly work. Frequently we come upon or receive studies too long to fit into one issue (even in the miniprint format we sometimes reluctantly adopt) but so important and deserving of a broad readership that we would not be fulfilling our function if we did not share them with subscribers. Dr. Peter Egri's monograph--whose full title is "European Origins and American Originality: The Adoption, Adaptation and Reinterpretation of Some European Models in Eugene O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh"--was originally published in Budapest: in the Modern Philology section of Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestinensis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae, XI (1980), 83-107. It will appear, slightly revised but unabridged, in this and the next two issues of the Newsletter.

Dr. Egri is without question the major O'Neill scholar in Hungary today, and the editors are delighted to make his seminal study available to readers whose distance from major research libraries would prevent them from reading it in the publication that first printed it. The editor has made a few changes--mostly matters of idiom--and has incorporated many originally footnoted page citations into the text of the essay itself. (This last may make for periodic confusion in the second and third installments, when two works are being compared and page references alternate fast and furiously between the two; and we apologize, should such occur.) But the editor has striven to retain the exact meaning of the original throughout, even reprinting verbatim a few passages that he felt were ambiguous, rather than risking an inaccurate alteration.

The first "episode" considers the influence of Ibsen and Gorky. Succeeding installments will concern Chekhov and especially Joseph Conrad. --Ed.]
his company take over his father's is further proof that Simon's actions are a reaction to his mother. By controlling his father's company, he is, symbolically, in a position to dominate his mother. Again, I would stress that the issue here is emotional, not sexual.

But just as Deborah's grasp for power boomeranged, so does Simon's. Having conquered his rivals, he finds himself alone: "I concentrate all my mind and energy to get a thing done. ... And then suddenly one day it is accomplished--finished, dead!--and I become empty, but at the same time restless and aimless, as if I had lost my meaning to myself" (p. 72). The "complete independence and freedom within itself" that Simon desires so desperately for his company is an economic equivalent of his personality isolating itself from a dangerous world (p. 101). Yet this is the self feeding on itself, a kind of possession that will lead to alienation, a self-inflicted dispossession.

Another situation in the play where power is important is the battle of Male and Female, but O'Neill confused his presentation of this idea. Throughout the play he stresses two themes that get in the way of one another. On one hand, and I believe it was a mistake, he develops the battle between mother and daughter-in-law for control of Simon. On the other hand, he regularly indicates that the two women are also to be seen as Expressionistic representations of the two roles of Woman that attract Simon: mother and lover. Had O'Neill either eliminated or undercut the first idea, and stressed the attraction of both roles from Simon's point of view, the play would have been strengthened. That O'Neill intended the Expressionistic device is clear from Simon's reaction: at one point he says his wife and mother have merged to "become one woman." It is Woman whom he has grown to fear, feeling she is ready to dispossess him. He describes himself as a "domestic slave" who is only used for support: "I was never anything more than a necessary adjunct of a means to motherhood--a son in one case, a husband in the other--but now no longer needed ..." (p. 73). As it turns out, Simon's fears are justified. Deborah and Sara have joined forces, agreeing that though he needs them, they "don't have to need him" (p. 125).

Simon's response to this threat is to use sex as a weapon by treating it as lust. He will treat Woman as a whore, keeping her under control by making her earn her keep "piece by piece" (p. 90). He advises Joel not to marry, but to "keep a whore instead": "Keep your love a mistress with no right to ownership except what she earns day by day ..." (p. 72). He actually takes his wife as his mistress, and she buys the business by selling her body. But this plan backfires too. Speaking both of business and love, he explains how, paradoxically, power results in vulnerability and loneliness: "A fascinating game [business]--resembling love. ... A game of secret, cunning strategems, in which only the fools who are fated to lose reveal their true aims or motives--even to themselves. You have to become a gambler whose face is a mask. But one grows lonely and haunted. One finally gets a sense of confusion in the meaning of the game, so that one's winnings have the semblance of losses" (pp. 91-92).

Sara is another who uses sex to achieve power. In A Touch of the Poet she seduced Simon in order to marry into a wealthy family. Now, though Simon is trying to escape the burdens of commerce and offers to let her buy his business from him with her sexual favors, she again believes she is capitalizing on his lust. Just as Deborah played the whore in her fantasies, so Sara, though she denies it, does the same thing. At one point she blurts out, "I am a wicked, lustful, wanton creature and making you a slave to my beauty" (p. 90). Again, the idea of having a slave. When Sara finally takes charge of a business transaction, she adopts Simon's philosophy of power, breaking Tenard, the banker, unmercifully. "I am good because I am strong," she tells him. "You are evil because you are weak" (p. 152). But her grasp for power is also self-destructive: "It's being here so long, with no life except his greed--He's made me think that life means selling yourself, and that love is lust--It's only lust he wants--and he's made me feel it's all I want ..." (p. 144). She blames Simon for their present business arrangement and what it has done to their love; yet she is responsible, for her greed and her lust for power have
A character sketch of Simon's mother, Deborah, will easily explain his feeling of vulnerability. Deborah is afraid of life and tries to compensate by controlling the world around her. Simon tells us she was "always so independent of others" (p. 11). One way to keep the world in its place is to ignore it, and this she does by means of her aristocratic haughtiness. She rejects all that is common, and she considers most things around her common. Her favorite poem, and the favorite of the aspiring aristocrat, Con Melody, in *A Touah of the Poet*, is one by Byron, and the key line that Con loves to repeat is, "I stood/Among them, but not of them" (pp. 107-108). Rejecting the world isolates her from it and keeps her safe.

Deborah also escapes from the world through illusion, spending her time in a garden that is so tailored as to be unnatural. Her fantasy life in the garden is also symbolic of her need to control others. She dreams of herself as King Louis' royal mistress, "greedy for lust and power" (p. 3). After she uses the lust of her lovers as a means of satisfying her "ambition," they are "discarded" (p. 4). She characterizes herself in this role as a "greedy adventuress ... who uses love but who only loves herself." She intends to use the king's "passion" to make him "her slave." Though her "final goal" is "power," she is content "to be the secret power behind the Throne" (p. 13). Her interest in sex is obviously not based on pleasure. In fact, she sees men as a danger: "A woman," she says, "must become resigned to wait upon every man's pleasure, even her son's" (p. 3). In her fantasy, it is clear, she attempts to dominate those who she fears will dominate her. And she regards Simon as one potential danger.

Deborah's need for power alienated her from Simon when he was a child. Because she felt a "compulsion to love him after he was born," she saw him as a threat to her independence (p. 122). She resented sharing her "private" self with anyone, and tells him, "I could feel your grasping fingers groping toward every secret, private corner of my soul" (p. 184). She denied him her love, she says, "So that I might be free" (p. 99). To communicate this rejection she invented a fairy tale concerning a king who, because of the magic of an enchantress, had been banished from his kingdom, "to wander over the world, a homeless, unhappy outcast" (p. 110). Though Simon pleaded with his mother to revise the tale, to end it happily by letting the king reenter the door to his kingdom, Deborah refused to do so. Even at the beginning of the play we see that Deborah's attempts to protect herself have isolated her, have led her to the edge of madness, a line she finally crosses at the end of the play.

It's not hard to see why Simon would feel insecure. He knows that Deborah rejected her love for him, for he tells her she created the fairy tale "to make me realize you hated your love for me because it possessed you and you wanted to be free" (p. 183). His world then became one with no "security": "I have never forgotten the anguished sense of being suddenly betrayed ... and left alone in a life in which there was no security or faith or love ..." (p. 184). He feels that because she dispossessed him they have both been "condemned to an insatiable greed for substitutes" (p. 183). While he insists she forced him into the business world, it is there that he has tried to find security. Capitalism is his "substitute." His use of the key words "security" and "self-sufficiency," when he refers to feelings about his mother and his motives for expanding his business, shows that O'Neill is trying to link the Oedipal situation to Simon's capitalist enterprises. Simon's goal in commerce has been "to make the Company entirely self-sufficient. It must attain the all-embracing security of complete self-possession—the might which is the sole right not to be a slave" (p. 101). He even wishes he could own his own "consumer slaves" who would be forced to buy his product (p. 158). Both Simon and Deborah use the word slave. It is clear that they want to make other slaves so that they themselves might not end up in that position.

As Simon's business becomes more successful, it becomes more predatory. When his brother Joel criticizes him for being ruthless, Simon rationalizes his needs into a philosophy of power which fits his personality as I have described it. "Your right has no power," he tells Joel. "So you have no right" (p. 70). Simon's insistence on having
3. O'Neill's fear and experience that greed is not missing from the Left Movement either, shows his awareness of sectarian, dogmatic, totalitarian dangers and distortions as well.  

4. There is evidence that the dramatist was concerned with the present plight and future perspectives of all mankind:

If the human race is so damned stupid that in 2000 years it hasn't had brains enough to appreciate that the secret of happiness is contained in one simple sentence which you'd think any grammar school kid could understand and apply, then it's time we dumped it down the nearest drain and let the ants have a chance. That simple sentence is: "what shall it profit a man."  

In this passage the viability of human values would seem to be called into doubt.

5. O'Neill's rapidly deteriorating state of health obviously contributed to his painful propensity for gloom and helps to explain his vision of the failure of human aspirations.

6. Nevertheless, in spite of all these social, moral, spiritual and personal threats, O'Neill was no more able to be reconciled to the death of human ideals than was Larry Slade, his one-time Syndicalist-Anarchist protagonist in *The Iceman Cometh* (1939). As Hickey, the hardware salesman, correctly observes: "That's another lie you tell yourself, Larry, that the good old cause means nothing to you any more" (643). Parritt quotes his mother as saying, "Larry can't kill in himself a faith he's given his life to, not without killing himself" (647). One might interpret these utterances as the opinions of the characters in question, and not necessarily the views of the author. A late stage direction, however, obviously expressing the dramatist's attitude, describes a long-forgotten faith returning to Larry for a moment when he has heard the muffled, crunching thud indicating Parritt's suicide (726). As long as people can make a sacrifice for a cause, the cause is not dead.  

Under these circumstances it is understandable that *The Iceman Cometh* shows several points of contact with such works by European masters (Ibsen, Gorky, Chekhov and Conrad) as are also deeply concerned with the problem of illusion and reality.

II

A number of parallels indicate the extent to which O'Neill was influenced by Ibsen.  
The conflicts of both *The Wild Duck* and *The Iceman Cometh* pivot upon the collision between illusion and reality. In *The Wild Duck* Dr. Relling points out to Gregers Werle that he should not substitute the foreign term *idea* for the native equivalent, *lie.* The validity and feasibility of the ideal are also considered a lie in *The Iceman Cometh*: Hickey kills his ideal, Evelyn, and lures the inmates to kill theirs to get rid of the remorse that living up to the ideal is only an illusion. Parritt's betrayal of his mother implus a comparable attitude.

---


6Rateigh, p. 23.

Another point of contact is the great dramatic emphasis on the consequence of losing illusions. In Ibsen's play, Relling explains to Gregers Werle that if the average person is deprived of his self-deception, he becomes unhappy. In O'Neill's drama, the same can be experienced in Harry Hope's complaint that Hickey has removed the kick from the booze, and in the whole company becoming quarrelsome and morose and falling victim to stupor and cynicism, interested only in what they are unable to do--pass out.

Both Ibsen and O'Neill strive to affirm the ideal that the majority of their characters have failed to put into practice. In The Wild Duck Ibsen's qualified sympathies are obviously with Gregers Werle. Hedvig's suicide partly denies, partly proves the righteousness of Gregers' ideal claims. It denies them, because these claims were what led to her death. But it also proves them, because it demonstrates the validity of the ideals by the greatest possible sacrifice one can make to them. In The Iceman Cometh Parritt's suicide is characterized by the same two facets.

Both Ibsen and O'Neill use a central symbol as a leitmotif. The symbols are poetic in juxtaposing two layers of significance. In accordance with the structure of the symbols adopted by the Symbolist Movement, neither the wild duck nor the iceman are primarily signs of the things they are the pictures of, although they are the pictures of the things they are the signs of. Thus the wild duck soon ceases to be a simple bird and becomes the expression of illusion, lie and even of ethical values and beauty as it is associated with various characters in the play. Similarly, the iceman at first seems only to be a comic character in a joke of Hickey's--telling his pals his wife is safe because he has left her in the hay with the iceman. But quite soon, the iceman becomes a redeemer who cannot redeem, and develops into the embodiment of death. The confrontation of the two levels of meaning and significance gives the poetic symbols a dramatic function, and the intricate manner in which the symbols are woven into the fabric of the drama provides them with an epic quality. These poetic, epic and dramatic aspects bear out Hegel's view of the drama. In the German philosopher's opinion, the drama is a synthesis of epic and poetic elements which combine in an inseparable unity.

The genre of tragi-comedy is a further link between The Wild Duck and The Iceman Cometh. In the former, Hedvig's fate is tragic: she gives her life for the ideal. But Relling also sees that in less than a year her death will only be an occasion for sentimental rhetoric, and life will return to normal with all its petty and comic compromises. Colonel Ekdal, Hjalmar Ekdal and Gina are essentially comic characters. Gregers Werle, however, is a veritable tragi-comic figure. In his predicament it is not possible to separate the tragic from the comic. The man who follows his noble ideals and constantly overstrains them is the same person.

The general movement in The Iceman Cometh is from the comic to the tragic, but even the tragic denouement of the play does not lack grimly grotesque and desperately comic elements. The fact that the inmates relapse into their former illusions and accept as well as misunderstand Hickey's plea of insanity is neither clearly a comic compromise, nor solely a tragic failure, but a bitterly grotesque mingling of both aspects in a dark tragi-comedy, even if Hickey's plight is closer to the tragic and Harry's closer to the comic.

Besides these similarities, a number of dissimilarities can also be observed in the two plays.

---

9 Cf. O'Neill's view: "The first act is hilarious comedy ... but then some people may not even laugh. At any rate, the comedy breaks up and the tragedy comes on...." Quoted in Raleigh, p. 18.
Whereas Ibsen approaches the problem of the relationship between illusion and reality, ideal and truth, from the side of the illusion and ideal, testing their relevance for reality, O'Neill looks at the problem from the viewpoint of reality, showing the simultaneous inevitability of seeking illusion and reality.

Ibsen's truth-seeking hero, Gregers Werle, tries to relieve the tension between illusion and reality by asserting an absolute demand, an ideal claim in the face of a reality and practice which live by a lying compromise. To dispel illusion means, for Gregers, to live according to the ideal. O'Neill's reformer, Hickey, however, resolves the tension between ideal and truth by disowning and annihilating the ideal. While Gregers endeavors to raise reality to the level of the ideal, Hickey tries to lower the ideal to the zero-level of reality, a miserable existence. Whereas Gregers scorns Hjalmar Ekdal because he had sunk to the bottom of the sea and, like an injured wild duck, would never come up, Hickey praises the stupor of reconciliation (625): "Let yourself sink down to the bottom of the sea... There is no farther you have to go."

Gregers' is no split personality. His deeds correspond to his ideals and are prompted by them. His only illusion is that he can make people happy by dispelling their illusions. Hickey, however, is a guilt-ridden character. His attempt to bring peace to his mates was partly—if unconsciously—motivated by his own uneasiness over trying to find peace by killing his wife, and he even made himself believe that he did it out of love for her.

III

The parallels between The Iceman Cometh and Gorky's The Lower Depths are no less striking. The problem of illusion and reality obviously links the two plays, with Luka, the pilgrim, giving the deceptive solace of consolation.

A number of motifs are also similar in O'Neill's and Gorky's dramas. Harry Hope's saloon is not unlike Kostiljov's lodging, gathering down and out people who keep quarreling, drinking and dreaming of past and future happiness. Both plays end with a suicide (Parritt's and the Actor's) constituting a tragic dissonance to a drunken celebration. (Nora's desperate tarantella dance in Ibsen's A Doll's House, and the news of Lopakhin's purchase of Ranyevskaya's estate penetrating the seemingly merry mood of her dance-of-death party in Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard, build up comparable—though not identical—impressions of a painfully incongruous grotesqueness.)

A visitor acts as a catalyst in both The Iceman Cometh (Hickey) and The Lower Depths (Luka); he comes from a different world and stays but temporarily with the denizens of the lodging, whom he tries to reform and ultimately leaves. The absence of an immediate perspective of human liberation creates a favorable climate for the adoption of a mosaic design not only in the construction of The Iceman Cometh but also in the structure of The Lower Depths, which uses the Chekhovian pattern with a plebeian passion and an integrating impulse.

The divergences are no less marked. Luka favors telling a deliberate lie to people if it gives solace to those who could not otherwise be helped. Hickey, on the contrary, strives to drive away the inmates' illusions. He thinks he does them a service in showing truth and bringing peace; he is not aware of the fact that his way of peace is death. It is only at the end, when he realizes how much the roomers are dependent on their illusions, that he lets them resort to their earlier dreams by telling the deliberate lie of having been insane all the time.

Gorky does not look at the problem in a generalized manner. His question is not what the relationship between illusion and reality is or should be in general, but rather how people in a given situation can be helped. This explains why the most positive figure in the play, Satin, partly condemns, partly praises Luka. He knows that the lie is the creed of slaves, but he also understands that under the given circumstances the pilgrim did encourage people with hope and even assisted them with actual and immediate advice, support and help. In Gorky's play there is a greater possibility to fight for, and not only to dream of: real, reasonable human action which occasionally brings those in the lower depths together in solidarity in their struggle against the ruthless proprietors of the night's lodging.

In *The Iceman Cometh* the Movement aimed at liberating mankind appears sunk in the past; in *The Lower Depths* it lurks in the revolutionary future. The theme of Gorky's play is not and cannot be the revolution, but the play's world is open to the future, and this plebeian variety and closer version of a Chekhovian distant perspective is responsible for a different treatment of illusion and reality.

[Continued in next issue.]

--Peter Egri

---

**HOUSE OF COMPSON, HOUSE OF TYRONE: FAULKNER'S INFLUENCE ON O'NEILL**

Judith Bryant Wittenberg's article, "Faulkner and Eugene O'Neill" (*Mississippi Quarterly*, Summer 1980, pp. 327-341), is a thought-provoking discussion of the influence that the dramatist may have had on the novelist. What Professor Wittenberg describes, however, is a one-way street: "Thus Faulkner's life, both personal and professional, gave him access to the work and ideas of the playwright who, though only nine years older than Faulkner, seemed almost to be from a previous literary generation..." (p. 329). While I certainly agree that O'Neill influenced Faulkner, my study of the two writers has suggested that the novelist is overlooked as a shaping force on several of the dramatist's plays. It is curious that *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1940; 1956) has not been juxtaposed with *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), because the similarities are quite striking. To my knowledge, only Stephen Whicher's 1956 review of *Long Day's Journey* notes this kinship: "A book that comes close to O'Neill's play in theme and mood [is] Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury.*"² Whicher does not develop this comparison any further, but I should like to do so now.

Little has been written about O'Neill's indebtedness to anyone with regard to *Long Day's Journey into Night*--largely, I suspect, because the autobiographical nature of that play is emphasized to the exclusion of everything else. Even its dedication to the dramatist's wife underlines the "real life" content:

> I give you the original script of this play of old sorrow, written in tears and blood. A sadly inappropriate gift, it would seem, for a day celebrating happiness. But you will understand. I mean it as a tribute to your love and tenderness which gave me the faith in love that enabled me to face my dead at last and write this play--write it with deep pity and understanding and forgiveness for all the four haunted Tyrones.

---


Add to this Carlotta Monterey O'Neill's oft-quoted description of her husband's anguish as he was writing the play: "He would come out of his study at the end of a day gaunt and sometimes weeping. His eyes would be all red and he looked ten years older than when he went in in the morning."  

Reviews of *Long Day's Journey* focused almost universally on the drama's autobiographical content and stressed that it was based on the playwright's own family and experiences. Moreover, most reviewers felt that the element of autobiography enhanced its impact. For example, Harold Clurman wrote (*The Nation*, March 3, 1956, p. 182) that the play "is a precious gift to us," but his emphasis was on O'Neill's life. Similarly, when Henry Hewes reviewed *Long Day's Journey* for the *Saturday Review* (November 24, 1956, p. 30), he, too, drew attention to this aspect: "The late Eugene O'Neill has shown himself, his elder brother, his father, and his mother as they slip back and forth from one plane to another in a grim dance of life." Brooks Atkinson's review was featured on the front page of *The New York Times Book Review* (February 19, 1956), and, once again, "real life" triumphed over art:  

Among the papers Eugene O'Neill left when he died in 1953 was the manuscript of an autobiography. Not an autobiography in the usual sense, however. For *Long Day's Journey into Night* is in the form of a play—"a true O'Neill tragedy.... In the play he gives the family the fictitious name of Tyrone. But it is obvious that the head of the family stands for O'Neill's father, James O'Neill, a fine actor trapped by his immense success in *The Count of Monte Cristo*. And the other characters represent the other members of the O'Neill family: the mother, a sweet woman lost in the oblivion of drug-taking; the dissolute older brother and the younger son, an unhappy, resentful youth who devours pessimistic European literature and writes poetry.

Atkinson praises the play, insisting that its grounding in fact adds to its worth: "The story of *Long Day's Journey into Night* is no more devastating than others he told. But it seems more devastating because it is personal and as literal as a drama can be. This was the environment, respectably middle class on the surface, obsessed and tortured inside, out of which our most gigantic writer of tragedy emerged."  

Common to nearly all the reviews is the absence of speculations about literary debts. In evaluating his earlier plays, critics had found that O'Neill was invariably reminiscent of someone: maybe *Before Breakfast* suggested Strindberg, perhaps *The Iceman Cometh* looked back to Gorky, surely O'Neill's pipe dreams were Ibsenesque. But the category "autobiography" seemed to eradicate the desire to find echoes of anyone else. Recently, the playwright Hugh Leonard—author of two autobiographical dramas, *Da* and *A Life*—wrote an article entitled "Can a Playwright Truly Depict Himself?" Quoting the British historian Philip Guedella—"Autobiography is an unrivaled vehicle for telling the truth about other people"—Leonard adds, "and for telling lies about oneself." He singles out *Long Day's Journey into Night* as "undoubtedly the best autobiographical play ever written, and ironically ... one of the least factually reliable." The Irish dramatist goes on to single out two "liberties" that O'Neill took with the truth: we find no clue in the play that Mary Tyrone will cure herself of morphine addiction, as Ella O'Neill was to do; and Jamie O'Neill was nowhere near his brother when tuberculosis was diagnosed.

---


4 Marya Mannes, in "A Dissenting Opinion on the O'Neill Play," was one of the very few who thought that the autobiographical content of the play lessened its universality—and hence its impact: "To me, the Tyrone family remained O'Neill's family throughout, torn piece by piece from his guts; and it was in this very specialness that the play's shortcomings as tragedy stood revealed" (*Reporter*, Dec. 13, 1956, p. 38).

Actually, O'Neill was even more free with himself, in the character of Edmund Tyrone: he
omits entirely his early marriage to Kathleen Jenkins and the birth of Eugene O'Neill, Jr.

Since recent theoretical work in autobiography-as-genre has suggested that the trans­
formation of people, places, and things into aesthetic artifacts is considerably more
complex than we once thought, we should expect such major revisions of actuality. None­
theless, the fact remains that Long Day's Journey has been unnecessarily inviolable to
analyses of influence. Juxtaposition with The Sound and the Fury suggests that there
may have been a source for the play other than the dramatist's own life.

Irving Howe has said that Faulkner's novel shows a "family's history in all its
vulnerability, and the result is not an account but a picture of experience, a series of
stripped exposures." Long Day's Journey is also a series of stripped exposures in
which each character voices his own version of reality. Although technically very
different--Faulkner is at his most experimental, O'Neill at his least--both authors have
the identical goal: to tell the same story from multiple viewpoints. The Sound and the
Fury and Long Day's Journey are both quadripartite in structure, but they move in
reverse order, the novel from chaos (Benjy) to order (Dilsey), the play from daylight
(order) to night (chaos). Narration becomes justification as the characters offer
"evidence" to prove their "innocence." This same-but-different repetition (what Cleanth
Brooks calls "traversing the same territory in circling movements") contributes to the
feelings of exhaustion and entrapment which both works convey. Novel and play are
intensely claustrophobic. As O'Neill had said earlier, "Life is for each man a
solitary cell whose walls are mirrors."

Perhaps the most obvious similarity between the two works is the focus on a family
which is destroying (has destroyed?) itself. The failure of love and the presentness
of the past dominate the novel as they do the play. Accusation and attack, recrimination
and retreat: that is the pattern both follow. Parents have failed their children long
ago and continue to fail them. "None of us can help the things life has done to us,
Mary Tyrone mourns,, voicing the victimization which characterizes the Compsons as well.
Each family must blame someone or something; only one's self is exempt from censure.
Mary can blame her morphine addiction on James's stage life, on Edmund's birth, on the
quack doctor who treated her; James, The Count of Monte Cristo for his failure to
become a great Shakespearean actor; Jamie, his mother's dope habit for his own dissipa­
tion and aimless life; and Edmund, his delicate health for his inability to have a life
on the sea. All are active participants in the blame game.

The Compsons, too, have their escapes and excuses. Caroline Compson retreats into
her imaginary illnesses just as Mary Tyrone hides behind her fog of morphine. Her
husband chooses neither dope nor hypochondria but, like Jamie Tyrone, immerses himself
in alcohol in order to obliterate past and present. Jason, consumed by martyrdom and
paranoia, blames Quentin's Harvard, Caddy's wedding, and Benjy's idiocy for his seem­
ingly ceaseless woes. Quentin attributes his impotence--sexual and otherwise--to his
forbidden love for his unattainable sister.

What has happened to create the familial tragedies? Who is responsible for the end­
less dissonance? Faulkner and O'Neill both place a great deal of blame on the mother;
in neither novel nor play is there a mother in any real sense of the word. Caroline
Compson, who is drawn very harshly, and Mary Tyrone, who is portrayed more sympathetically,

6Irving Howe, William Faulkner: A Critical Study, 2nd ed. (New York: Random House,
7Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963; rpt. New Haven:
8Eugene O'Neill, Lazarus Laughed, in The Plays of Eugene O'Neill (New York: Random
9Eugene O'Neill, Long Day's Journey into Night (New Haven: Yale University Press,
1956), p. 61. Subsequent references will be included parenthetically in the text.
are nonetheless quite similar in the devastating influences they have on their families. Caroline never feels that she is a Compson and remains obsessed with her identity as a Bascomb long after her marriage. She is tormented by her sense of inferiority because the Bascombs were considered socially less respectable than the Compsons. Denying her love to all but Jason, she declares that he is a true Bascomb and "the only one of them who isn't a reproach to me." For her other children, Caroline has no love. Quentin thinks, "if I'd just had a mother so I could say Mother Mother" (p. 190). On the final day of his life, Quentin thinks of her as a "dungeon" and "us lost somewhere below.... Finished. Finished. Then we were all poisoned" (p. 121).

Like Caroline, Mary Tyrone is obsessed with the memory of her life before her marriage. However, her situation is the opposite of Caroline's; the Quinlans were socially superior to the Tyrones, and Mary feels that she married beneath her former station in life. She returns again and again to thoughts of her revered father and the contrast between him and her actor-drinker husband, James. That he has failed to provide adequately for her resounds throughout the play: "And for me it's always been as lonely as a dirty room in a one-night stand hotel. In a real home one is never lonely. You forget I know from experience what a home is like. I gave up one to marry you--my father's home" (p. 72). Clutching about desperately for a reason for her addiction to morphine, she tells James, "You should have remained a bachelor and lived in second-rate hotels and entertained your friends in barrooms! Then nothing would ever have happened" (p. 67). Memories of her girlish beauty, her refined piano-playing, and her schooling with the Sisters are counterpointed with her grey hair, her gnarled fingers, and her loss of faith.

Although the portrayal of Mrs. Compson is unmitigatedly severe, the treatment of her husband is somewhat ambivalent and therefore problematic, especially for the reader who remembers Mr. Compson as the sympathetic father in "That Evening Sun." In The Sound and the Fury, Compson has taken refuge behind cynicism and alcohol; he has simply given up. His advice to Quentin is that of a man who is bereft of all hope:

[The watch] was Grandfather's and when Father gave it to me he said, Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciatingly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. (p. 95)

Faulkner does not assign causes to Compson's alcoholism, but his relationship--rather, his lack of one--with his wife is surely a major factor. The damage has been done by the time The Sound and the Fury opens; he has only to drink himself to death.

Although his inclinations toward alcohol are not of suicidal proportions, James Tyrone nevertheless shares with Mr. Compson the use of drink as refuge. Faced with his wife's

---


11 Cleanth Brooks is one of the most outspoken critics of Caroline Compson: "The curse upon Quentin and the rest of the Compsons is the presence of their hypochondriac, whining mother..... The basic cause of the breakup of the Compson family--let the more general cultural causes be what they may--is the cold and self-centered mother who is sensitive about the social status of her own family, the Bascombs, who feels the birth of an idiot son as a kind of personal affront, who spoils and corrupts her favorite son, and who withholds any real love and affection from her other children and her husband. Caroline Compson is not so much an actively wicked and evil person as a cold weight of negativity which paralyzes the normal family relationships" (Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 333-4).
fluttering fingers and dilated eyes, James resignedly heads for the bottle. When Mary talks, the lack of a stable family life seems to be James's fault. But when he explains, we hear a different story. He tells Edmund (pp. 137 ff.) that Mary's own beloved father drank to excess, that she was never talented enough to be the concert pianist she talks about endlessly, that she wasn't devout enough to be a nun because she was a rogue and a coquette. James tells Edmund that he knew nothing about morphine, that it was years before he realized what was wrong with his wife. Edmund accuses James just as Mary does: "You've dragged her around on the road, season after season, on one-night stands, with no one she could talk to, waiting night after night in dirty hotel rooms for you to come back with a bun on after the bars closed! Christ, is it any wonder she didn't want to be cured. Jesus, when I think of it I hate your guts!" (p. 141). But James asserts his innocence yet again: "Will you stop repeating your mother's crazy accusations, which she never makes unless it's the poison talking? I never dragged her on the road against her will. Naturally, I wanted her with me. I loved her. And she came because she loved me and wanted to be with me" (p. 142).

The resemblances between the senior Compsons and Tyrones are readily discernible, but the characters of Quentin and Edmund evince even stronger similarities. Both are obsessed with the past, unwilling to live in the present, and incapable of thinking about the future. A generous appraisal of them would include "sensitive," "poetic," and "idealistic"; a less tolerant view, "narcissistic," "maudlin," and "solipsistic." Critics have been far more negative about Quentin than Edmund, perhaps because the former is not seen as a portrait of Faulkner, while the latter is pinpointed immediately as O'Neill.

Paralyzed by the realization of his own mortality, Quentin is obsessed with time. Clocks chime throughout his section of the novel, echoing in his mind long after their sound has ceased. Pulling off the hands of his watch does not annihilate time but only heightens his consciousness of it: "I could hear my watch ticking away in my pocket and after a while I had all the other sounds shut away, leaving only the watch in my pocket" (p. 102). Similarly, Edmund hears "the fog drip from the eaves like the uneven tick of a rundown, crazy clock" (p. 152). Both Quentin and Edmund feel that their time is, literally, running out. O'Neill has underlined the passage of time in the very title of his play, and it is further emphasized in his specifications of the hours for the various scenes: Act I, 8:30 a.m.; II, 12:45 p.m.; III, 6:30 p.m.; IV, midnight. Time creeps on inexorably in both novel and play.

Quentin often mentions gulls in his wandering reveries, presumably because they symbolize that oxymoronic motionless movement which is so characteristic of Faulkner. For example, he relates, "I could smell water, and in a break in the wall I saw a glint of water and two masts, and a gull motionless in midair, like on an invisible wire between the masts..." (p. 108). Quentin is similarly fascinated by the never-to-be-caught trout which, like the gull, hangs "delicate and motionless" (p. 136), suspended in the water as the bird is in the air. Trout and gull are somehow out of time, eternally poised just on the brink of action. Perhaps, too, Quentin envies the "sense of place" that the gull and fish possess; they are sure of their elements, while Quentin is sure of nothing. Edmund shares Quentin's feeling of displacement: "It was a great mistake, my being born a man, I would have been much more successful as a sea gull or a fish. As it is, I will always be a stranger who never feels at home, who does not really want and is not really wanted, who can never belong, who must always be a little in love with death!" (pp. 153-4) Just as Quentin finds timelessness in the arrested motion of gull and trout, Edmund finds a sense of eternity on the sea: "I became drunk with the beauty and singing rhythm of it, and for a moment I lost myself--actually lost my life. I was set free! I dissolved in the sea .... I belonged, without past or future ..." (p. 153).

Both men (or should they be called boys?) are all thought and no action. They are hyperaesthetic and intuitive to the extent that the sensations of the world impinge upon them to an unbearable degree. They possess in an extreme way what Keats--one of
Faulkner's and O'Neill's favorite poets--called negative capability, that state of entering into another's being so completely that one's own individuality is annihilated in the process. Quentin is able to identify with people, animals, and even inanimate things to such an extreme degree that his own being is called into question. He literally seems to overflow the confines of his self. It is no surprise, then, that he returns again and again to thoughts of water, that element which suggests dissolution, timelessness, and--most of all--oblivion. All those sensations characterize Edmund's experiences on the sea; the self simply dissolves. Quentin's death by drowning is paralleled by Edmund's attempted suicide, which James tries to explain away: "You weren't in your right mind. No son of mine would ever--You were drunk." Edmund's reply voices the yearning for oblivion which Quentin courts as well: "I was stone cold sober. That was the trouble. I'd stopped to think too long" (p. 147).

After the morbidity and intense introspection of Quentin and Edmund, the harsh wit and angry violence of Jason Compson and Jamie Tyrone provide a welcome release through black humor. Both men prefer not to gloss over "the facts"; they "tell it like it is," covering themselves with thick layers of cynicism and self-deprecating sarcasm. No solipsism for them.

Jamie's acerbity and drunken ramblings highlight the fact that for him the only woman in the world is his mother. Taking to drink (or so he would have us believe) because he discovered Mary's morphine habit--"Christ, I'd never dreamed before that any women but whores took dope" (p. 163)--Jamie has, in his father's words, "wanted to believe every man was a knave with his soul for sale, and every woman who wasn't a whore was a fool" (p. 34). But Jamie has "seen a lot more of this game" than Edmund: "You never knew what was really wrong until you were in prep school. Papa and I kept it from you. But I was wise ten years or more before we had to tell you" (p. 57). It is clear that Mary's condition changed Jamie's life and, although he phrases his mother's condition crudely--"Where's the hophead?" (p. 161)--it is he who, more than Edmund or James, has real knowledge of what Mary endures. Jamie clearly identifies with her: "I'd begun to hope, if she'd beaten the game, I could, too" (p. 162). Mary's relapse propels Jamie into heavier drinking than usual, and into Fat Violet's arms. His choice of Violet is easy to understand; she is fat and she plays the piano, just as Mary has "gotten too fat" (p. 14) and still attempts to play. Jamie is the outsider, bereft of his father's admiration and his mother's love. It is Edmund--"Mama's baby, Papa's pet!" (p. 165)--who has what he wants.

Jason, too, is an outsider, a mordantly realistic observer of his family's actions. Just as Jamie refuses to keep silent about his mother's condition, so Jason's phrases are brutally direct. Language is his mask. Benjy is "the Great American Gelding" (p. 280) rather than a pathetic, retarded brother; Caddy is a whore, and her daughter, as Jason periodically reminds us, is no better: "Once a bitch always a bitch, what I say." For his alcoholic father Jason has no pity--"We'd all been a damn sight better off if he'd sold that sideboard and bought himself a one-armed strait jacket with part of the money" (p. 215)--and, although his mother often tells him that he is her only hope, he is as scornful of her as he is of the rest of his family. To hear Jason tell it, Quentin's suicide is hardly an event worthy of pathos: "I says no I never had university advantages because at Harvard they teach you how to go for a swim at night without knowing how to swim and at Sewanee they dont even teach you what water is" (pp. 213-214). Life's experiences have taught Jason to suspect everyone. Women are not exempt from his suspicion, although Jason, like Jamie, is most comfortable with prostitutes: "I've got every respect for a good honest whore" (p. 251). Exhibiting the same kind of insight which Jamie showed for Fat Violet, Jason remarks, "I'd like to see the good, church-going woman that's half as square as Lorraine, whore or no whore" (p. 263). He is determined not to get married: "I have all the women I can take care of now if I married a wife she'd probably turn out to be a hophead or something. That's all we lack in this family, I says" (p. 264).
The Compsons and Tyrones are bound together not by love but a common past of hurt, betrayal, and resentment. Each person in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Long Day's Journey into Night* has his own special set of grievances and his equally unique response to them, whether it be cynicism, hypochondria, alcohol, drugs, or suicide. What is remarkable is that, in spite of this uniqueness, the characters in novel and play are so alike. A decaying mansion in Mississippi, a waterfront cottage in New England—quite different locales for very similar families whose love is inextricably mixed with hate and whose present is determined by the past.

---Susan H. Tuck

**EUGENE O'NEILL AT WORK: A REVIEW**

It is difficult to estimate the number of hours which must have gone into Virginia Floyd's work of transcribing, editing, analyzing and evaluating O'Neill's notes on work in progress and in prospect. To the problem of his tiny, cramped handwriting are added the difficulties of comparing the various versions in O'Neill's notes and scenarios with final, published plays, and reducing the descriptions of his developing ideas to a manageable succinctness. It is no mean task in itself to be familiar with the dialog and the exact plot sequences of all of O'Neill's work. How much more in the way of mental calculus is required to describe the differences in various versions of each play!

O'Neill himself, as he sought for many years to write play cycles encompassing generations of family histories, became bewildered by the task of fitting the plays together and of creating accurate characters and backgrounds of earlier eras. Although Floyd is not specifically concerned with the *Possessors* cycle (which Donald Gallup is working on), she is confronted with many of the complicated ideas for extensive treatment of characters and scenarios found in the notebooks in which O'Neill recorded his plans and accomplishments during the years 1918-1938. Granted the privilege by Curator Gallop in 1978 (twenty-five years after O'Neill's death) of viewing and editing the notebooks in the O'Neill collection of Yale University's Beinecke Library, Floyd accomplished a monumental task in getting the work in print this year.

The volume throws new light, especially, on O'Neill's never-completed plays; second, on the origination and revisions of his published work; and third—of biographical interest—on his political and social proclivities through twenty-five productive years.

One example of the many plays O'Neill never completed is "Career of Shih Huang Ti," concerning a despotic Chinese emperor of the second century B.C. who destroyed all books and records so that history might begin with him. Through nearly a decade (1925-1934), the playwright took notes and read historical accounts, planning to dramatize not only the public career of the emperor but the conflicts within his family, particularly with his mother, whom he banishes but is forced to have returned to the capital. An incestuous love for his mother makes him force his rival, his younger brother, to commit suicide. His aims of domination of China are opposed by scholars and local authorities, who represent a view of right conduct as taught by the sages through the centuries. Even so brief a summary gives evidence of both autobiographical and political-philosophical ideas which the scholar will recognize as O'Neill's.

Another, "The Life of Don Sturgo Nacimbin," begun after *Days Without End*, portrays a Christ-like figure in the wilderness of Lower California, who leaves wife and children to serve the isolated peoples of the area, fearing only snakes and loving the Lord above all. Others, suggested by books the playwright was reading, are "Germinal," his only attempt to dramatize a novel; "Runaway Slave Play," suggested by an incident in Thoreau's *Journal*; and "Robespierre," for which he read biographical and historical studies of the French Revolution.

---

Others, more autobiographical in origin, include "Silence," 1919, in which a man, having gone to the wilderness for five years to make his fortune, finds he cannot bear the noise of wife and child when he returns; "The Calms of Capricorn," one of the cycle plays planned to take place on a clipper ship bound for California; and "Love Play," in which a middle-aged couple must recognize that their youth is past. These and innumerable other starts indicate how constantly O'Neill was at some step of the task of playwriting during his productive years.

As one example illustrating the genesis and progress toward production of a completed play, the notes for Strange Interlude seem typical. O'Neill's first notes for the play, in 1923, were based on a story told him by a former aviator of the Lafayette Escadrille. In this version the heroine has been married to the downed aviator and in the first draft had had a child born dead. The general plot is similar to the final version, although a neurologist, Dr. Amos Aimsworth, eliminated from the cast in the final version, is the father of Nina Bayne's child, instead of doctor-scientist Ned Darrell, who fathers the son of Nina Leeds. Mrs. Amos Evans, Nina's mother-in-law, is added in the final version.

"Down in Flames," "Brought Down in Flames," "The Haunted and Hunted," and "This Strange Interlude": all of these titles appear at the beginning of the scenario. In the first version, Nina has several children by the doctor, all of whom hate him but love their "father." Consequently, after the death of Phil Adams (Sam Evans), when Nina and the doctor marry, the result is complete estrangement from the children and grandchildren. Originally in six acts, then in nine scenes, before the final version of nine acts, the play's characters, as described, are markedly different from those in the final version; and Charles Marsden, although listed in the cast, does not appear in any scene of the first scenario. In the 1925 scenario, O'Neill makes no mention of the stream-of-consciousness technique, but he adds a section labeled "Method" in 1926: "Start with soliloquy--perhaps have the whole thing nothing but a thinking aloud...." In the 1926 scenario, "New novelist character" Marsden is made to appear in each scene, a shift in emphasis which perhaps helped the playwright work out his subconscious-thought plan for the dialog. Floyd's book thus provides many details as to how O'Neill's plays grew from inception to completion--information which, for this play and others, she helpfully relates to his personal situation and location at the time of writing.

What also emerges from O'Neill's notes, Eric Bentley notwithstanding, is a picture of the playwright as thinker. The history plays--those already mentioned and others--are filled with the problems of man as evil and as good, as greedy and belligerent but also heroically altruistic, even though frustrated in good aims by the selfish. Politically and socially, the downtrodden have O'Neill's sympathy, even though he has no faith in panaceas. The belief that he was more interested in the esthetic than the moral and social purposes of drama is not borne out by the notes for his many plays.

A late one, for example, "The Visit of Malatesta," concerns the flight from Fascist Italy of the great anarchist Enrico (called Cesare by O'Neill) Malatesta to America, where he chides his old Italian friends, the jolly Daniello family, for their materialism. Furthermore, à la Hickey, he tries to reform them, detailing the evils of drink and moneymaking. Although the play is in the comic, almost farcical mode (Floyd thinks it might have been the great American comedy), it takes a serious look at questions of morality and politics.

From the time of "The Second Engineer" and The Hairy Ape, O'Neill speculated about anarchism and revolution. World War II made him ponder deeply the evils of Nazism and start a number of plays on related subjects. After the war he worked for many years on "The Last Conquest," questioning whether man would progress or be annihilated. In short, O'Neill's notes through the years reveal a man obsessed with social concerns.

To note a few criticisms of the book is not to deny its tremendous value to all students of O'Neill. The short bibliography consists of only twenty-eight items--
eleven works cited by O'Neill, ranging from Thoreau's *Journals* to Josephson's *The Robber Barons*; and seventeen cited by Floyd, ranging from John Toland's *Adolf Hitler* to O'Neill's poem, "Fratricide." Although one might be wrong to expect a traditional O'Neill bibliography in what is essentially a work of transcription and description, this one seems rather incomplete and haphazard.

The title of the book is apt, but its subtitle, *Newly Released Ideas for Plays*, is less fortuitous, conveying as it does the publicity agent's hot-off-the-press hard sell. Although devising a better one is not easy, I would suggest that "From Notes to Printed Plays" or "Ideas for Plays from Formerly Restricted Notes" would be more accurate. It may go without saying that scholars will want to examine the available work diaries, notes, and scenarios for themselves, not expecting to get from Floyd's summaries all that is in the originals. I can offer a personal example. Out of interest in O'Neill's relationship to Emma Goldman, I hoped to find verification of what had been reported to me—that in a manuscript version of *Ioeman*, anarchist Rosa Parritt is named Emma Parritt. Although she provides a helpful chart of actual persons and their various fictional names in *Ioeman*, and provides a long footnote on O'Neill and Goldman, Floyd omits the name of Rosa Parritt from her chart of characters.

One wonders if the twenty-five-page introduction might not have been shortened, since some of the information is repeated in the later analyses of the plays. A glaring example is the repetition in the Introduction (p. xxxviii) and in the text (pp. 279-80) of a hundred-word reply to Lawrence Langner, which O'Neill made after recording on the Sound Scribe Larry Slade's "Let me live a little longer" speech. In both cases the citation is used to prove that O'Neill could not create through dictation and that he exorcised "ghosts" of people he had known in his lifetime by his playwriting. Once is really enough.

Since it is difficult to know just what details any scholar needs, or needs to be reminded of, in connection with any work, it is no doubt better for Floyd to have erred on the side of repetition rather than omitting pertinent data concerning the times, places and situations in which the playwright worked. All in all the faults are minor compared to the virtues of the book, which also includes a great many of the playwright's line drawings for his stage sets. O'Neill scholars must be grateful to Floyd for her careful and extensive editing of O'Neill's working notes in a volume which reveals new views of the man and his methods of creating plays.

--Winifred Frazer

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS


"Fog, fog, fog all bloody time. You can't see where you vas going, no." So says Chris Christopherson at the close of *Anna Christie*. One might say the same of the New England Repertory Theatre's recent production of the play in Worcester, MA (October 23 - November 15). The Rep's fog machine was, literally, in top gear throughout most of the evening, prodigiously fuming, while the players had little or no idea where they were going with the play—something that no fog machine could hide, no matter how much you cranked it up.

From the first scene to the last, the Rep's production was cloddish and careless. Director Jon Knowles, who played Chris Christopherson, opted to rework the opening scene and axed the first six pages or so of the text. The scene was artistically butterfingered and embarrassingly amateur, featuring two incoherent drunks sloshed in their suds. One drunk is so far gone that his partner has to drag him off the stage before too long, and I don't know quite how the fellow managed it but he dragged his pal off in an irritatingly phony manner thoroughly
unbecoming a respectably dingy saloon. One felt the whole spirit of the play being dragged off as well. And while we're on barroom etiquette, it should be noted that Johnny-the-Priest—whom O'Neill described in the stage directions as "cynical, callous, hard as nails," indeed, "a personage of the waterfront"—was wearing saddle shoes during this particular performance. Blimey!

Ironically, even though two characters were cut from Act One (Larry the Bar­
tender and the Postman) and Jon Knowles' Chris blitzed the stage as if he were on casters and his ankles jelly—again, that phony drunk stuff, God stiffen it—Lucille Coz as Chris's barge mate Marthy Owen (or "Marty," if you go by the Rep's program) gave by far the best performance of the evening during this strange first act. Marthy was most believable and witty, eccentric and street-wise (or, rather, wharf-wise) as well. All done up in her bag lady duds, Miss Coz could have left the theatre and easily blended into any dark dockside scene you'd care to conjure up.

Roseann Concannon as Anna did not look particularly painted or tainted to me. She rolled her own smokes but that was about as seamy as she ever got. Next to Miss Coz's Marthy, this Anna was a tenderfoot. And I sensed that with this character, as well as with the rest of the main characters, there was a lack of purpose and direction.

In Act Two, after a confusing and ridiculously melodramatic rescue of the shipwrecked sailors (which consisted of an actor, in undershorts with an army blanket over his head, being carried/dragged on and then off the stage twice—I fear that it was the same actor who'd been so ineptly dragged across Johnny-the-Priest's floor in Act One), Matt Burke crawls over the side of the barge, his clothes in tatters but nonetheless completely dry despite the stalwart fog machine and rough seas.

What is confusing and certainly distracting about the Rep's Matt Burke, in the context of the play, is that he is played by William Farrier, who is black. And yet the question of race never once came up in the performance. Are we to believe that in 1900, when the play takes place, race would not have been a question, if not the question, when a white woman and a black man in love were considering marriage? To be honest about it, to cast Mr. Farrier as Matt Burke is to make Anna Christie into another play—one, in fact, with truly volatile ingredients and not a little dramatic potential—yet director Knowles changed nothing else in the play. (Nothing else having to do with Matt Burke, that is.) What did Mr. Knowles want us to believe? That Matt Burke was truly a black Irish Catholic and that his race was of absolutely no interest to the Christophersons? Or were we supposed to pretend that Mr. Farrier was white? He delivered his lines with gusto and punctuated them with great bellows of laughter; but he, too, was non-directed, as well as miscast, and was ultimately lost in the fog of the evening's performance.

In Act Three, when Anna brings the boys up to date on her recent ugly past, the performance reached its nadir. Cowering, trembling and blubbering on the floor, Matt and Chris wrapped their arms protectively about their eyes and ears as if they were about to be beheaded; Anna, hard by, looked more like a frowsy Gibson girl than a funky seen-it-all strumpet who'd just lowered the boom on two thick skulled sailor fellas. Surely, even James O'Neill, Sr., would have winced at this sort of unbridled melodrama, which made Eugene O'Neill's dated notions about sexual morality and love seem not only foolish but positively retarded.

O'Neill had ambivalent feelings about Anna Christie, we are told; and well he should have. But whatever the play's faults, it did not deserve the treatment it received at the New England Rep. The Rep, which only a short while ago put on such a swell Moon for the Misbegotten, stiffed Anna. In this play about fog people, everybody was left groping about directionlessly—most especially the audience.

—Marshall Brooks
Seattle's Intiman Theatre Company, renowned for their performances of classical theatre, recently presented an impressive production of *A Touch of the Poet*. The final show of the season, it played to enthusiastic audiences and was held over by popular demand.

Outstanding performances were given by Eve Roberts as Nora and Catherine O'Connell as Sara. Ms. Roberts, well known in the Seattle professional and academic theatre community, gave a powerful and moving performance. Ms. O'Connell, who appeared in four Intiman productions during the season, portrayed an honest and tough Sara, hateful of her father's behavior and totally devoted to her mother. O'Connell and Roberts combined to create some of the finest moments in the production. A particularly effective scene occurred between them in Act 4 while mother and daughter waited for Con's return. Their obvious cross purposes brought gales of laughter from the audience, especially when Nora finally realized what Sara had been trying to tell her about her success with Simon.

Glenn Mazen, a well known Seattle actor, portrayed Con with a viciousness that was unnerving. His rabid remarks to both Nora and Sara, coupled with his consuming arrogance towards virtually everyone he must deal with, helped to create an awesome figure. However, his lack of charm and wit made him unsympathetic and rendered his attempted seduction of Deborah Harford unconvincing. Mazen was at his best, however, in the final act, when the "crazy dead look in his eyes," which Nora speaks of, was strikingly real. And his transition after the shooting of the horse was chilling.

Malcolm Hillgarter created a warm, charming and witty Mickey Maloy. His scene with Nora at the start of Act 4 was one of the best moments in the production. Hillgarter conveyed the sort of Irish wit and charm that would have enhanced Mazen's portrayal of Con.

Julia Odegard managed successfully the difficult role of Deborah Harford, and William terKuile created a distastefully proper Nicholas Gadsby. Michael Santo as Patch Riley, Will Huddleston as Paddy O'Dowd, and Laurence Ballard as Dan Roche were thoroughly entertaining as rabble whom Melody supplies with liquor. Their chorus of "Modideroo" created a rare moment of warmth in the tavern.

One flaw in the production's verisimilitude was that the skillfully constructed set, designed by University of Washington professor Robert A. Dahlstrom, was just too attractive. It did not appear to be worn or weathered; on the contrary, it looked too fine and finished to be over one hundred years old. However, a spectacular effect was created by a fish-eye mirror hung over...
the fireplace, which provided the audience with a distorted full length view of Con as he recited Lord Byron.

The costumes, designed by Andrew Yelusich, Resident Costume Designer at the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts in Santa Maria, CA, were impressive and appropriate. The only exception was Sara's Sunday dress, which was too new and rich for the current economic deprivation of the Melody family. Lovely Irish music, arranged and played by Malcomb Hillgartner on a tin whistle, contributed to the mood.

Having myself directed A Touch of the Poet, I was especially pleased to see this production at Intiman play to such enthusiastic audiences. And I am happy to report yet another professional production of O'Neill's work here in the Northwest. In February the Tacoma Actors Guild will present Desire Under the Elms, which I will report on in the Spring issue of the Newsletter.

--Deborah Kellar Pattin


Through a chronological study of O'Neill's works, an attempt is made to trace the development of his thought and style to the point where, in his final plays, he succeeded in achieving his self-stated artistic ambition: to portray, or at least to "faintly shadow," the "impelling, inscrutable forces behind life." Classifying this ambition as "mystical" under the definition that the mystical experience involves the apprehension of an ultimate nonsensuous unity in all things, entirely transcending sensory-intellectual consciousness, O'Neill's final product, after long years of experimentation, is a marriage of perception and form that bears striking resemblance to the structure and effects of many plays of the Japanese Noh repertoire.

Light On the Path is discussed, in connection with O'Neill's early development, largely for its negative influences on his thought and art. Light's lack of total mystic insight, disguised by poetic excess, is reflected directly in such works as The Fountain and Marco Millions. O'Neill's lavish experiments of the 20's, with their verbalization of mystic concepts, were doomed to fail as expressions of mystic experience because of the inherent nature of such experience: that it cannot be communicated verbally.

It was only after O'Neill turned away from the exotic, and from determined efforts at verbal and scenic depiction of mystic insight, back to realistic settings and into himself and people close to him for subject matter, that he succeeded in his goal.

His dramatic structure in the late plays is closely connected to that of the Ghost or Woman Noh play. Narrative, or progression of events, becomes secondary, a means to set the stage for the characters to reminisce on tragic events of the past. Narrative becomes suspended as time becomes suspended, and it is not what the characters do, but what they say about the past that is important. Tragedy is not enacted; it is recollected.

The Iceman Cometh, Long Day's Journey into Night, and A Moon for the Misbegotten are offered as illustrations of this structure. In these plays, major dramatic movement comes through the telling of stories that are in the deepest recesses of the characters' consciousnesses. The main figures are not unlike the haunted ghosts of the Noh, who are driven to explain poetically the reasons for their previous "deaths" and why they are haunted.

Past mystical experience lingers at the bottom of the thoughts of Hickey and the Tyrones; yet it is in Edmund Tyrone's denial of the possibility of conveying verbally his mystical experiences at sea that O'Neill opens up the possibility to manifest, through the plays, forces that run behind life. As in many Noh plays, the strangely beautiful mood evoked by these late works becomes more important than the events that occur, as movement becomes static and time suspended.

Jamie and Josie in Moon fit the Noh shite-waki relationship well—Jamie as tortured ghost, Josie as listening Priestess. Like Edmund Tyrone, and like the audiences of both the late O'Neill and the Noh, they are given a glimpse of "the veil as seen drawn by an unseen hand," a glimpse that they, or we, may never be able to grasp or regain completely. "The past is the present," as Mary Tyrone says, in the suspended moments in these plays, wherein O'Neill achieved a maturity in perception toward the mystic forces he had merely detected earlier in his career, coupled with a maturity in artistic form. (S.L.)

4. Shelly Regenbaum, "O'Neill and the Hebraic Theme of Sacrifice." [Abstract of a paper delivered at the American Theatre Association in Dallas, Texas, August, 1981. The editor is grateful to Professor Regenbaum for providing this summary of her presentation. --Ed.]
O'Neill is one of the prominent American playwrights who have been attracted to myth and religion as avenues of artistic expression. He turned, via Nietzsche, to Greek tragedy and ritual and the New Testament. He also exploited Old Testament archetypal events and characters, though his use of Old Testament stories has generally escaped the attention of the critics. The main reason for this oversight is rooted in the fact that the latter archetypes are never fully or openly dramatized in the plays. And yet Old Testament figures and concepts do exist in O'Neill's work, and they are used mainly to render conflicts in the family.

Tensions between fathers and sons were of special interest and urgency to O'Neill. His recurrent preoccupation with the father who threatens the life or spirit of his son brings the story of the sacrifice of Isaac to mind. The Old Testament concepts of family inheritance, blood-ties and birthright, which are exemplified in the story of Abraham, often shape O'Neill's generational conflicts. Like the archetypal patriarch, O'Neill's fathers are often authoritarian and obsessed with a grand dream and a sense of mission. The sons, like the Biblical heir, are often dependent on their fathers and crave to inherit their patrimony. In several plays, the conflict between father and son is associated with the father's inheritance and the son's status as the heir. The father deeply resents his son and struggles to deprive him of the legacy. The son, like the Biblical Isaac, feels a compulsion to follow his father's footsteps, for good or ill. In some of the plays this conflict ends in the destruction of the family. In others, however, father and son may reach a reconciliation. In the Biblical story of the sacrifice of Isaac (known as the Akedah), Isaac is spared. The story thus holds in precarious balance hatred and love, strife and reconciliation, between father and son. And it is precisely this two-fold vision—of harshness and mercy, of father and son as enemies and yet potential friends—that informs O'Neill's dramatization of fathers and sons.

Both *Desire Under the Elms* and *Long Day's Journey into Night* depict generational conflicts. In the earlier play, the harshness of the puritanical father prevails; while the later play ends with the feeling that the sacrifice may be averted and the son may live on to become a poet.

In the character of Ephraim Cabot, a fierce 19th century Puritan, O'Neill captures the distorted figure of the archetypal patriarch. Ephraim is associated with Abraham through his leadership, his pioneering vision of "the promised land," his passionate desire for an heir and his rejection of his son. Yet unlike Abraham, he never achieves reconciliation with his son and he also loses his heir. As Ephraim embodies only the harsh aspects in the figure of Abraham, his God is similarly a distorted Hebraic God, the desert God of vengeance who is incapable of forgiveness.

Although he is seventy-five, Ephraim behaves as if he is going to live forever. He wants it all: the farm, the woman, a defeated son and an imaginary heir. He wants to be both the father and the son and enjoy the benefits of being both the patriarch and the young, "sonless" father. When he marries the young Abbie and hopes that she will give him an heir, he attempts to erase the past and the existence of his legitimate sons.

Ephraim's arrogance is most succinctly expressed in his attitude toward his heirs. He is bitterly resentful of his sons' desire for the farm, although they are his lawful heirs. And yet he also adopts the Hebraic concept of genealogy according to which the father's spirit and possessions live on through the blood-heir. Survival in the Old Testament sense, namely through the son, is constantly on Ephraim's mind. He asks Abbie to pray for a son, as the Biblical Rachel had done; the true son who will inherit the farm. In spite of the fact that he craves for an heir with religious fervor, Ephraim hates his sons from his former wives, treats them harshly and disinherits them at will. Unlike Abraham, who finally curbs his patriarchal pride, Ephraim recognizes no laws. He feels that he can always elect a new heir and banish the others. The punishment which he receives corresponds directly to his hubris. He is
cuckolded by his wife, who bears a son to Eben rather than to him; and he is left, at the end of the play, in full possession of the farm, but without wife, sons and future.

In *Desire Under the Elms* the Biblical story of the sacrifice is used to show the way in which a religious revenge code (imputed to Hebraism) leads to strife and deception, and divides the family against itself. It is only in *Long Day's Journey into Night* that O'Neill attempts to mould an actual reconciliation between father and son. The relations of the Tyrones, like those of the Cabots, are presented in the imaginative structure of the sacrifice. The father's miserliness and the way in which it threatens the life of his consumptive son, Edmund, becomes one of the major themes in the play, and the Akedah motif is thus introduced. And yet the wrath of the desert God, the God to whom Ephraim so often prays, has subsided.

In the fourth act of the play, the father gives up his paternal arrogance while the son overcomes his habitual passivity. The doctor's report of Edmund's consumption sends Mary to the oblivion of morphine and Jamie to the forgetfulness of alcohol. James and Edmund, in contrast, seem to be able to confront the problem together, with unexpected courage. Edmund, who usually hides behind self-pitying apathy, now challenges his father. Tyrone, no longer armed with denials and rationalizations, answers the challenge.

James's confession of his artistic failure is, perhaps, a harbinger of future friendship between father and son. He could have become a Shakespearean actor of reputation but, driven by the fear of the poorhouse, he sacrificed his artistic integrity for a flashy success at the box office. Edmund is the first to know about this bitter failure. Tyrone had never confessed his shame to anyone; but now, on this night, he shares it with his son. The confession is thus a singular act of moral courage—the father's courage of exposing his guilt and his limitations to his son and thus meeting him as an equal and risking being despised by him. Momentarily, Tyrone even alters his sanatorium verdict. The possibility certainly exists that James will once more harden his position, and that Edmund will relapse into suicidal gloom. And yet the other possibility, that the father's love for his son will overcome his impulse to betray him, has been clearly established.

In *Desire Under the Elms* the biblical story of the Akedah articulates the ancient hatred between father and son. In *Long Day's Journey into Night* the archetypal story expresses the ancient longing for a reconciliation between the two. The Tyrones constantly betray each other; and yet they are also passionately devoted to each other. The father wants to destroy his son, and yet he also wants to save him. This swaying between hate and love truly captures the archetypal essence of the Akedah story. (S.R.)


Andrew Harris, producer of the José Quintero-directed production of *Welded* at Columbia University's Center for Theatre Studies last June (see Summer-Fall 1981 issue, pp. 15-21), provides enlightening background information about the project's aims and methods, hoping to "contribute to a more balanced appraisal" of the event than that provided by the critics, whose response was "hardly favorable" and "not one [of whom] was able to put the work of either O'Neill or Quintero into perspective."

Wanting to try one of the early plays, and finding that his first choice, *The Hairy Ape,* had been staged in New York by another Columbia directing teacher, George Ferencz, just five years before, Quintero chose *Welded* after Harris suggested that he read it. And the suggester infers the reasons for the director's immediate excitement:

I thought I saw what attracted Quintero to the script: the characters of Michael and Eleanor Cape were locked in mortal combat, each for the possession of the other's soul. The ferocity of this combat was reminiscent of many of the more mature O'Neill's works, although usually those scenes were not
between lovers, but between father and son, or daughter and mother, or brother and brother. In *Welded*, the scenes were robust, romantic and erotic.

Quintero's approach was to treat the text as unfinished—as the "script of a contemporary experimental playwright"—and to rehearse it "in a way that suggested that the playwright himself was watching [and] might appear from time to time and change lines or reorder the speeches." Such an approach offered more possibilities for creative invention than "the great masterpiece approach that stymies the imagination." And Quintero eschewed a realistic treatment, preferring "to go beyond the realm of realism to explore the psychic implications of what O'Neill meant by the idea of 'welded.' Specifically, was it possible for two highly individualistic souls to unite, not simply through sex, to form a single spirited being under the banner of art?"

Frequently, during the four weeks of rehearsal, as actors and director "thrashed and burrowed ... deeper and deeper to find the meaning of the skeletal script," the results were "pure gold," as in the "seminal" scene between Michael and the prostitute. At least as often, however, "the script escaped the actors, who couldn't find the internalization for all of O'Neill's quixotic changes of mood." But the excitement remained constant, and the quest was in itself "exciting and rewarding."

The report, which mentions the multiple activities that surrounded the project—the workshops (led by George Ferencz, and covering *Dynamo, Gold, Great God Brown* and *Marco Millions* as well as *Welded*), viewing sessions (videotapes of *Iceman* and *Moon for the Misbegotten* from the Museum of Broadcasting), and other ventures including lectures by Quintero on his other O'Neill productions and a trip to the Monte Cristo Cottage—makes valuable reading for anyone contemplating a comparable project. Mr. Harris offers a valuable complement to the nays of critics who evaluated the performance in terms of professionally packaged glitter—which was, he says, the wrong way to approach the performance. "Those who came with an open mind, ready to see an early work by America's greatest playwright, came away with a rare insight into the creative process. Those who came expecting to find Eldorado, left unenlightened and angry. ... On the whole, the O'Neill project was successful in meeting the aims of the Center"—especially the aim of "exposing the students to a tangible confrontation with the O'Neillian experience." (Ed.)


Ms. Ben-Zvi begins by citing the "striking similarities" between the lives of James Joyce and Eugene O'Neill, similarities "that can be attributed in part to their commonly shared Irish roots ... and in part to their shared desire to escape those roots and become self-begetting in their person and in their art." She then notes the long-acknowledged evidences of Joycean influence on O'Neill's work: stream of consciousness in *Ulysses*, which O'Neill read in 1922, begetting a comparable device in *Strange Interlude, Portrait of the Artist* inspiring a similar, and similarly personal, study of a young writer's emergence in *The Straw*; and *Bread and Butter*, O'Neill's first full-length play (1914), while not demonstrating direct influence, nevertheless resembling Joyce in its tone and its subject, "the artist's struggle."

But all of this is mere prologue to a splendidly detailed study of Joyce's play, *Exiles*, which O'Neill was instantly excited about when he first learned of it from Padraic Colum in the summer of 1924; and its parallels with, if not influences on, *The Great God Brown*, for which O'Neill wrote a detailed scenario that very summer. "[I]t is significant," she writes, "that, after ten years, O'Neill once more began a play whose roots were connected with material he had earlier associated [in *Bread and Butter*] with the writing of Joyce." In addition, "there is present throughout [Exiles] the clear impress of the philosopher whom O'Neill most admired: Friedrich Nietzsche." Nietzsche, she claims, "cast his shadow over both works."
The parallels that Ms. Ben-Zvi reveals between the two plays involve "personae, female figures, secondary male figures, plot, and resolution." She points out the strong resemblances between Richard Rowan and Dion Anthony—both "tormented souls" and "spiritual exiles"; both masked (Anthony literally; Rowan metaphorically); both seeking solace in "surrogate mothers" to make up for their "primal exile from the mother." She notes the correspondences between the pairs of women associated with the two protagonists: the wives, Bertha and Margaret; and the confidantes, Beatrice and Cybel. Both secondary male figures—Robert Hand and Billy Brown—are childhood friends of the heroes, both look up to their more talented friends, both profess loyalty to them, and both desire and plot to take from them that which the heroes prize most—their women," doing the last largely as "a means of possessing those qualities which the protagonists have and the friends lack." The friends are, in addition to being "shadows [and "direct mirror opposites"] of their mentors," "successful purveyors of the values of the society they represent," mouthing its clichés and epitomizing its tawdry values in their "success."

Since both plays portray "the hero as mystic, the woman as earth mother, the friend as betrayer and as spokesman for society," parallelism is unquestionable. Add to all this the Nietzschean connection—specifically the influence of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, whose concepts of "overman" (Richard and Dion) and "last man" (Robert and Billy) Ms. Ben-Zvi clears of the barnacles of misinterpretation—and the case for Joycean influence is still stronger. She also relates the plays' protagonists to the three metamorphoses that comprise, in Zarathustra, the spiritual evolution of the overman—camel (self-exile), lion (aggressive self-assertion) and child (innocence, affirmation, and a new beginning)—noting that in both plays the third stage "is transferred from the struggling males ... to the women they love." Each playwright "presents a defeated hero, not able to move to the final stage of the 'overman.' And [each] also has his women [Bertha in Exiles; in Brown, Billy's mother, Dion's mother, Margaret, and especially Cybel, whose famous speech near the end ("Always spring comes again bearing life!...") "seems almost pure undigested Nietzsche"] voice the call for hope and love, an ever constant memory of innocence that overshadows even the defeats of the present."

In short, despite autobiographical and stylistic differences, Exiles and The Great God Brown provide "one of the clearest examples in modern drama of two playwrights charting the same path for their personae to follow: the path toward self-fulfillment as artists." (Ed.)


The effusive subtitle—if two sentences in italics can be called a subtitle—is itself an abstract: "The summer of 1926 found America's greatest playwright vacationing with his family on the Belgrade Lakes. Hard at work on Strange Interlude, he sought diversion in a liaison that would mark a major turning point in his life." As Mr. Phillips describes it, in an article more anecdotal than insightful, O'Neill's summer at Loon Lodge (July 1 - October 10, 1926) reminds me of the three movements of a sonata—appassionata or other.

The first movement (Allegro vivace—through the end of July) is filled with optimistic bustle as O'Neill—having fled the alcoholic temptations of Provincetown, and surrounded by his second wife, Agnes, their two children, Shane and Oona, his son Eugene, Jr., and Agnes's daughter Barbara—managed, in a hastily constructed shack near the house, to work every day on his uncompleted draft of Strange Interlude, follow that with a vigorous mile-long swim, and rejoin the family at mid- or late-afternoon, "refreshed, relaxed, and ready to resume his role as pater familias." Aside from a severe chest cold shortly after their arrival, O'Neill was effervescent. And well he should have been: just awarded a Doctor of Literature degree from Yale ("Old Doc O'Neill," he called himself that summer), with two Pulitzer Prizes to his credit and five new plays produced on Broadway in the previous two seasons, and having established
at last a warm relationship with Eugene, Jr., the son of his first marriage—even Eugene O'Neill couldn't resist at least temporary euphoria. Unfortunately it was only temporary.

The second movement (Molto agitato--through mid-August) provides ample contrast to the frolicsome first: "by the first week in August there were signs of a growing malaise." Progress on Strange Interlude was worse than slow (all he'd produced were "three unsatisfactory revisions of the second scene"); the omnipresent children had strained his patience to the breaking point (Eugene and Barbara "were sent packing several weeks earlier than planned"); and abstinence from alcohol had left what he called a "void" that rustication and claustrophobic domesticity could not fill. What could and did fill it was the diverting "liaison" mentioned in the second sentence of Mr. Phillips' subtitle—though to say that O'Neill sought it does not jibe with the story he tells.

The liaison, initiating the third movement (Poco a poco animando--mid-August through September), was with Carlotta Monterey, whom he had not seen since a chilly encounter in 1922, when she'd played in The Hairy Ape at the Plymouth Theatre. She too had come to Maine to reassemble her life—her third marriage had ended in divorce a few months before—and she was staying with a friend of the O'Neills, the formidable Elizabeth Marbury, at the latter's summer home two miles from Loon Lodge. Meeting O'Neill when he and Agnes dropped by for tea, and discovering that he was not the ungracious bear he'd seemed in New York four years before, Carlotta set her cap for him and began what Phillips describes as an aggressive campaign to capture him. ("The old forgotten-scarf trick was the most subtle stratagem [she] employed ... to get close to O'Neill.") She also set her bathing attire—appearing regularly at Loon Lodge "in a boyish, white, wool-knit swimsuit, daringly devoid of the then-common overskirt...." And the result was a revitalized O'Neill: "by early September [his] creative juices were flowing again," and even the continued failure to find a New York producer for Lazarus Laughed, that had aroused his fury earlier in the summer, now had a more positive effect: it inspired the dream, described in a letter to Kenneth Macgowan, of founding an "O'Neill repertory company." (A dream that many of us still share.) By sonata's end—on October 10, when the O'Neills left Maine forever and returned to New York City—Eugene either had, or soon would have, Carlotta's Manhattan address.

The rest, as they say, is history. In fact, almost all of the Phillips story had already been admirably chronicled by Louis Sheaffer (O'Neill, Son and Artist, pp. 211-230, to which pages Mr. Phillips owes a considerable and unacknowledged debt) and by the Gelbs (O'Neill, pp. 609-618). No one who has those books—as every authentic O'Neillian must—need seek out the article, though I should note that the six accompanying photographs (O'Neill rowing a canoe with Carlotta and Shane; Agnes, Shane and O'Neill in Bermuda a few months earlier; Loon Lodge today, etc.) are excellent, and none is among the three included in the Sheaffer volume. (Ed.)


In a report of his summer visit to the ghost-riddled Monte Cristo Cottage in New London and the vibrant, bustling Eugene O'Neill Theater Center in Waterford, Frank Rich describes these "neighboring Connecticut towns" as the "geographical point where the past and the future of the American theater intersect." The past is enshrined at Monte Cristo Cottage, where Mr. Rich felt the awe many of us have shared when entering the environs of two of O'Neill's most personal plays—both great, but each so tonally different from the other:

to stand poised between the radiant New London beach and the claustrophobic, haunted O'Neill cottage on Pequot Avenue is to feel the romantic longings of Ah, Wilderness! and the remorseful tragedy of Long Day's Journey simultaneously. It's as if both plays were not only being performed in repertory but
on the same stage at the same moment. So palpable is the tension—the tension of both a landscape and an artist's soul—that a visitor can't occupy that stage for long without giving in to a shudder. This is one National Historic Landmark where the past truly lives.

The "future" is of course the domain of the O'Neill Theater Center, "where our theater's fledgling O'Neills come to shape their plays away from the commercial hustle of New York." (Ed.)

THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SECTION

1. O'NEILL SESSION AT MLA '81. "O'Neill and His Theatrical Children" is the topic for a Special Session, organized and directed by Vera Jiji of Brooklyn College, CUNY, at the Modern Language Association Convention in New York City after Christmas. It will take place from noon to 1:15 p.m. on Monday, December 28, in Nassau A, a room on the second floor of the New York Hilton. (The session is item 166 in the convention program published in the November issue of *PMLA.*)

Academic papers will be presented by Professors Albert Wertheim (on the split character) and Michael Hinden (on the extended monologue in O'Neill and in Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus*). Theatrical respondents will be playwright Romulus Linney, who has used both devices in his work; and actor Nicholas Kepros, who is presently playing the Emperor Joseph in *Amadeus* on Broadway. Professor Virginia Floyd, whose *Eugene O'Neill at Work* is the most exciting O'Neill book of the year, will serve as scholarly discussant. 'Tis an event that no O'Neill enthusiast will want to miss!

2. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY. The Eugene O'Neill Society's 1981 business meeting will take place on the same day (Monday, December 28), from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Museum of Broadcasting, 1 East 53rd Street, between 5th and 6th Avenues and very near the Hilton. Unless there is prior balloting by mail, elections will be held for the Officers (President and Vice President) and Board members whose terms of office conclude at the end of 1981. (See slate in item 3.)

In addition to the business meeting, which Acting President Winifred Frazer says will be brief, members and their guests will learn about a number of exciting events at O'Neill centers across the country, and will have a chance to learn about the Museum's extensive videotape collection of O'Neill performances, including last summer's production of *Welded* and the Robards performances in *A Touch of the Poet, The Iceman Cometh* and *Hughie.* (It was not certain at press time whether time will permit us to view some clips from the collection that evening, but members will be able to learn of the Museum's holdings and arrange for longer viewing sessions on subsequent days.) The Society is extremely grateful to Professor Vera Jiji for arranging for the Museum to open its doors especially for our visit: a splendid opportunity to investigate a valuable archival resource.

Secretary Jordan Miller mentions that memberships, both new and renewal, will be accepted at both the noon MLA session and the 5:30 meeting, so no one need miss either of these exciting events. And the early meeting hour will give all participants time to take in some theatre as well, should they so choose.

3. SLATE OF NOMINEES FOR DECEMBER 28 ELECTION. Since the Society's Board of Directors has not met since the last annual meeting, President Frazer canvassed its members for nominees and will present the following slate at the 5:30 p.m. meeting at the Museum of Broadcasting on December 28. The President and Vice President will serve for two years; the Board members, of whom six will be elected, will have four-year terms.
4. O'NEILL ELSEWHERE AT MLA '81. Professor Michael Manheim of the University of Toledo will be delivering a paper on Chekhov and O'Neill at MLA Session 389 ("Chekhov and Twentieth-Century Drama Outside Russia") at 10:15-11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 29. Members won't want to miss this O'Neillian "extra," which will take place in Room 529 of the New York Hilton.

5. PRESIDENTIAL REPORT FOR 1981.

After a preliminary meeting at the New York Hilton in December, 1978, the Society was launched at Tao House, O'Neill's mountain home outside San Francisco, in December, 1979. Internationally known O'Neill scholar Horst Frenz was elected President along with an enthusiastic slate of other Officers and Board of Directors. Sadly, while Horst was in New York a few months later, arranging final revisions with his publisher for his book on O'Neill's international reputation, he suffered an incapacitating stroke. The Society has therefore lacked his valuable leadership during the past two years, but with the cooperation of Vice President Winifred Frazer, Secretary Jordan Miller, Treasurer Virginia Floyd, and the Board of Directors and International Secretary Timo Tiusanen, the Society has made progress in its aim of promoting interest in Eugene O'Neill's life and works.

Special mention must be made of Travis Bogard in leading the Society during its formation and in the presentation of the by-laws which were adopted at Tao House in 1979. Jordan Miller has spent innumerable hours getting out mailings to the membership, as has Virginia Floyd in receiving dues and keeping the books. Both have also put in Herculean efforts in getting the Society incorporated as a non-profit organization through the Secretary of State of Rhode Island.

One of the happy relationships within the Society has been that between the scholarly community and those in charge of the O'Neill centers in Provincetown, New London, and San Francisco. Undoubtedly the most important event of the year was making a subscription to The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter automatic with the payment of a year's dues to the Society--thus incorporating Fred Wilkins' excellent publication more closely into the Society. Timo Tiusanen and Tom Olsson have kept us in touch with the international progress of O'Neill studies and productions, and many other members have worked on committees and made valuable suggestions for the improvement of the Society.

One of the aims of the Society has been to increase its visibility and its membership. Jordan Miller has now created a very attractive flyer which members may hand to anyone interested, and which is being sent to the mailing list of the American Society for Theatre Research, as well as to others who have indicated an interest in the Society or the Newsletter. Since MLA is continuing its ban on recognition of new organizations, we cannot obtain a room or receive notice on the MLA program of the Society meeting. With this avenue closed, individual members should do as much as possible to encourage interested people at MLA to attend the meeting at the Museum of Broadcasting near the Hilton. [See announcement on previous page, item 2. --Ed.] In future years the Society may meet at the time of the American Theatre Association's annual convention or at one of the O'Neill centers at some other time of year.
Society members will be planning through the next years for the commemoration of the centennial year of O'Neill's birth in 1988. Travis Bogard has approached Random House (which has allowed the three volume O'Neill to go out of print) and Yale University Press about a centennial edition of the plays, to which they agree if money is available. Al Wertheim has plans for a centennial collection of essays on O'Neill to be co-edited by Professor Hedwig Bock of the Universität Hamburg, published by Max Heuber in Europe, and distributed by Adler Foreign Books in New York. The essays in English may be dedicated to Horst Frenz, who, like Al, was a professor at Indiana University. Other projects which may be incorporated under the aegis of the Society will be welcome.

Due to considerable restriction of travel money last year, the meeting of the Society during the MLA convention in Houston in December, 1980, was not very well attended, but functioned admirably with the aid of J. Dennis Rich and Paul Voelker. Held following the O'Neill session on "O'Neill and Music" planned by Thomas Marshall, it included discussions of a number of the already mentioned concerns, as well as plans for the 1981 MLA session and Annual Meeting in New York.

As Acting President, I can testify to the vigor of our growing Society due to the active, united support of numerous groups of O'Neillians who thoroughly believe that the life and works of Eugene O'Neill are worth promoting.

--Winifred Frazer

6. NOW IS THE HOUR -- when we must say "renew"! Why wait until the last minute and have to stand in line on December 28 to renew your Society membership for 1982? Or, if you're windowshopping at present, when better to take the felicitous plunge into fellowship with the many other admirers of America's foremost dramatist! Send in the following form now, with a check for the appropriate sum, and on December 28th you can saunter leisurely into the Annual Meeting, casting an indulgent smile on the line of beleaguered O'Neillians who lacked your canny foresight. (If you wish to keep your copy of the Newsletter intact, send in a xerox copy of the form, or provide the requested information in a note to Secretary Miller.) Remember that a year of the Newsletter is yours for the joining!

-- Jordan Y. Miller, Secretary, The Eugene O'Neill Society
    Department of English, University of Rhode Island
    Kingston, Rhode Island 02881

Please record my membership for 1982. I enclose a check made out to The Eugene O'Neill Society in accordance with membership preference checked below:

- $20 General  - $10 Emeritus  - $10 Student  - $30 Family
- $50 Sponsor  - $500 Life (one payment)  - $30 Institutional

I am (check one) [ ] a new member [ ] a renewing member.

Name(s) __________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________

ZIP ________________________________

(Include Institutional name if pertinent)

Telephone: Area Code_____ Number_____________________

Your membership now includes an annual subscription to The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter.
NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

1. ROBARDS WOWS 'EM AT O'NEILL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. On Monday evening, October 19, 600 friends and admirers of O'Neill gathered at New York's Circle in the Square to celebrate his memory and legacy at the third annual birthday celebration arranged by the Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill. The following information comes both from personal interviews and from Carol Lawson's report on the event in the New York Times ("Broadway Celebrates Eugene O'Neill's Birthday," October 20, 1981, p. C9).

Like the previous two celebrations, it was a smashing—and moving—success, thanks to the organizing genius of co-chairmen Barbara Gelb and George C. White and a dazzling roster of stars. Scenes from O'Neill's plays, staged by José Quintero, were read by Colleen Dewhurst, Jason Robards, Philip Bosco, Swoosie Kurtz and Richard Thomas. Joanne Woodward delivered O'Neill's last will and testament for his dog Blemie. Patricia Brooks, formerly of the New York City Opera, sang sea chanties. And Armina Marshall, co-founder of the Theatre Guild with her late husband, Lawrence Langner, reminisced about the Guild's long relationship with O'Neill—especially their difficulties with the law in 1947, when A Moon for the Misbegotten was closed by the Detroit police because of its language. "I went down to the police station, and the police chief said, 'You can use a sentence right up to the obscene word, and after that you can use a gesture.' I asked, 'What kind of gesture?' He said, 'An obscene gesture.'"

Barbara Gelb presented the Committee's second annual Birthday Medal ("for enriching the universal understanding" of O'Neill's work) to Mr. Quintero, who said he felt "deeply, deeply grateful. ... I have spent at least a third of my grown-up life living with Mr. O'Neill—not just my life in the theater, but my life outside, as well. ... He has made me look at my own past. Take Jamie in Long Day's Journey into Night, for instance. He was branded a failure early in his life. The same with me. I was disowned by my entire family when I decided to go into the theater. My father didn't write to me for seven years." He recalled his first encounter with The Iceman Cometh at Circle in the Square in 1956, when he "fell passionately in love with Mr. O'Neill" and directed a production of the play that established his own reputation and made a star of Jason Robards. The Birthday Medal was designed by Al Hirschfeld and features Hirschfeld's drawing of O'Neill on one side and a statement by the playwright on the reverse: "It is only the dream that keeps man fighting, willing to live." It couldn't have gone to a more appropriate recipient.

Jason Robards ended the program with Hickey's climactic monologue from the fourth act of Iceman. Many had heard him do it before—on stage, television and records—but this clearly soared above all his previous readings of the scene. Adele Heller, Producing Director of the Provincetown Playhouse, described it to the editor as riveting, stunning, fantastic: "I was just—I can't tell you—no performance I've ever seen has matched it or affected me so much. It got into the marrow."

There will be seven more O'Neill birthday tributes, culminating in a nationwide celebration in 1988, the year of the O'Neill centenary. One wonders how those yet to come can top this year's tribute. A tough act to follow! --Ed.

2. ROBARDS TO RETURN TO ICEMAN. The following news—an exciting result of the aforementioned celebration—appeared in Carol Lawson's "Broadway" column in the New York Times (October 23, 1981), p. C2:

Circle in the Square is talking to Jason Robards about a revival of O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh, which he starred in Off Broadway in 1956. He did the final soliloquy from the play triumphantly on Monday night at the O'Neill
birthday celebration there. But before Iaeman, Mr. Robards is likely to return to Broadway next season in *Booth Is Back in Town*, a new musical with book by Austin Pendleton, music by Arthur Rubinstein and lyrics by Gretchen Cryer.

3. **OF TRUNK AND THE GIVER(S).** When George White, Barbara Gelb and the other members of the Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill visited Brooks Atkinson in November 1980 to present him with their first commemorative medal (see item 10 on p. 33 of the Spring 1981 issue), the Atkinsons revealed their plan to present Eugene O'Neill's custom-made Louis Vuitton trunk to the Monte Cristo Cottage. "Now, there," writes Cottage Curator Sally Pavetti, "was an offer no one could refuse." (Quoted in *The O'Neill*, July 1981, p. 1.) Would it were stuffed with new plays! But at least it still has the gold key, with O'Neill's name on it (misspelled!), that it sported when Carlotta had the trunk made.

4. **ATA PLANS FOR O'NEILL CENTENARY.**

A special committee of the American Theatre Association, under the general chairmanship of Travis Bogard, is directing its attention toward plans for the centennial observances of the birth of Eugene O'Neill in 1988.

Four subcommittees are concerned with planning specific segments of the celebration, which should begin to move, depending on the availability of funding, in 1985-86, heading toward a culmination on O'Neill's birthday, October 16, 1988.

**Subcommittee on Exhibitions:** Chairman, Kenneth Spritz, Director of External Relations, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

This committee is charged with developing two exhibitions, the first a major exhibition concentrating on O'Neill's impact on the art of the scene designer in the United States and abroad. Of museum quality, it will assemble original sketches for O'Neill's plays by important scenic artists.

The second exhibition, prepared in four "editions," and designed for easy, inexpensive touring, will carry, in photographs and xerox copies of letters and manuscripts, a visual redaction of O'Neill's life and the staging of his work. Audiences will be sought in theatres, student unions, libraries and small municipal galleries. One exhibit for each time zone will be developed.

**Subcommittee on Education:** Chairman, William Reardon, Department of Dramatic Art, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA.

This committee will develop plans for educational supplements to performances of O'Neill's work. It will prepare and offer for distribution packets on O'Neill's most important plays; make available, where possible and desired, dramaturgs to aid schools and resident companies in the production of O'Neill's less well-known plays; and prepare and tour a Chautauqua-style circuit of lecturers and panel discussions of O'Neill's work. Concentration will be directed toward high-school and junior college students.

**Subcommittee on Production:** Chairman, Ron Willis, University Theatre, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

This committee will undertake to encourage the production of the entire canon of O'Neill's plays in professional, semi-professional or non-professional productions. Using the matrix of the American College Theatre Festival and seeking the active collaboration of other groups, the committee will undertake to make audio or video tapes of the plays for library purposes.
Subcommittee on Special Events: Committee not yet appointed.

This committee will take as its charge the organization of aspects of a special national event, celebrating O'Neill, perhaps from the Kennedy Center. A second charge will be to develop an international symposium of scholars and critics to meet and discuss the dramatist in a world context. A publication of the discussion of the symposium will be sought.

The Central Committee will attempt to maintain liaison with other groups concerned with the O'Neill centennial, including the New York-based Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill, the Provincetown Playhouse, the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Center and Monte Cristo Cottage, the Eugene O'Neill Foundation/Tao House, the Eugene O'Neill Society, ITI, and the Theatre Communications Group.

5. RECENT PUBLICATIONS: from O'Neill listings in 1980 MLA Bibliography.


6. MLA RECORDS EON'S CONTRIBUTION TO O'NEILL STUDIES. Admittedly, tootling one's own cornet is vain and reprehensible. But it was heartening to the editors to note that, of the 61 works about O'Neill cited in the 1980 MLA International Bibliography, 38 had been published in the Newsletter. Actually, the credit and praise should go to the Newsletter's conscientious contributors, without whose dedication it would precipitously wither. Our congratulations and gratitude to them all.

7. ARTICLES SOUGHT FOR SPECIAL ISSUE. The editors have tried to elicit material for special issues before, but never with sufficient success to build more than a
"Focus" section. Undaunted, we try again. In response to several subscribers' requests, we would like to assemble a special Newsletter issue devoted to the subject of "O'Neill's Women," both fictional and real. Accordingly, we solicit articles, long and short, on one or more women characters in O'Neill's plays, on women in his life, and on the general subjects of his debt to, treatment of, and attitudes toward women. If sufficient material on these and related subjects is forthcoming by April 1, 1982, we hope to make the Summer-Fall 1982 Newsletter our "O'Neill's Women" issue.

8. MORE RECENT PUBLICATIONS: works reviewed, abstracted or cited in this issue.


Floyd, Virginia, ed. Eugene O'Neill at Work: Newly Released Ideas for Plays. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981. 448 pp. (A carefully annotated collection of the most important passages from the notebooks of O'Neill that, at the time of his death, "his widow gave ... to Yale University with instructions that they be kept from public viewing for twenty-five years." The book is a must for O'Neill devotees as it "presents, chronologically, every creative idea by O'Neill between 1918 and 1943, the year he ceased to write." Of course, only the ideas he recorded can be presented, but they constitute such a wealth of insights that the book jacket's hyperbole is thoroughly excusable!)


9. O'NEILL DISCUSSED IN NEW BOOK ON TRAGEDY. Normand Berlin's The Secret Cause: A Discussion of Tragedy, published in October by the University of Massachusetts Press (224 pp., hardcover $17.50), includes Desire Under the Elms along with Euripides' Hippolytus and Racine's Phaedra in a chapter on "Passion." In his study, whose O'Neill portion will be reviewed in a future issue, Mr. Berlin "attempts to isolate and discuss the enduring substance of tragedy—the 'secret cause' that James Joyce believed lies at the heart of tragic terror."

10. NEW BOOK ON O'NEILL TO ARRIVE NEXT SPRING. A note from Michael Manheim, Chairman of the Department of English at the University of Toledo:

"It may be of interest to readers of the Newsletter that my manuscript, 'Eugene O'Neill's New Language of Kinship,' is to be published by the Syracuse University Press in the spring of 1982. In it, I place major emphasis on O'Neill's last plays, finding in those plays a transcending of purely autobiographical concerns. I explore the earlier works by means of motifs suggested in the lines and situations of Long Day's
Journey into Night, showing how O'Neill disguised or distorted the compelling facts of his great confessional work throughout his career. And I show how in coming closer and closer in his plays to confrontation with the truths of his life, he was also forging a new understanding of the nature of close human relationships. O'Neill once said he heard in the plays of August Strindberg a 'new language of kinship.' My study traces the development of such a 'new language' in the plays of O'Neill.

11. RECENT DISSERTATIONS ON O'NEILL: citations from Dissertation Abstracts International in the 1980 MLA Bibliography.

- Swanson, Margaret Millen. "Irony in Selected Neo-Hellenic Plays." DAI 40:2995A.

12. O'NEILL FIRST EDITIONS FOR SALE. John Von Foeppel has four first editions of O'Neill plays--Days Without End, Ah, Wilderness!, The Iceman Cometh, and Long Day's Journey into Night--that he wishes to sell, singly or together, to any bidder (or bidders) offering an appropriate price. He reports that all four are in "absolute mint condition" with their original dust covers: "They have never been read." Inquiries and offers should be sent to Mr. Von Foeppel at 20 W. Lucerne Circle, Orlando, Florida 32801. A rare opportunity for O'Neill bibliophiles!

13. QUERY OF A BOOK-HUNTING EDITOR. When I was in London in the summer of 1975, I ordered, via Samuel French's Theatrical Bookshop, all the hardcover volumes of O'Neill plays published by Jonathan Cape. (It's more than a bit ironic that, to obtain a current set of O'Neill, one must acquire it from an English publisher.) When the package arrived, it contained 15 volumes of the expected 16--Strange Interlude, alas, having gone out of print. The series is handsome--blue-bound with silver lettering--and I've wished ever since to complete the set with that sixteenth volume. If anyone has a copy in top condition and would be willing to part with it, please write, describing its state and suggesting a price. --F.W.

14. O'NEILL DISCUSSED ON TAPE. The "Cassette Curriculum" series produced and sold by Everett/Edwards, Inc. includes fifteen taped lectures, approximately thirty minutes each, on plays by Eugene O'Neill. Five (#313-317) are delivered by Jordan Miller of the University of Rhode Island and Secretary of the Eugene O'Neill Society: The Hairy Ape, Emperor Jones, Mourning Becomes Electra, Iceman Cometh, and Long Day's Journey into Night--that he wishes to sell, singly or together, to any bidder (or bidders) offering an appropriate price. He reports that all four are in "absolute mint condition" with their original dust covers: "They have never been read." Inquiries and offers should be sent to Mr. Von Foeppel at 20 W. Lucerne Circle, Orlando, Florida 32801. A rare opportunity for O'Neill bibliophiles!

15. RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS.

Ah, Wilderness!, dir. Martin Benson. South Coast Repertory, Costa Mesa, CA. Closed on October 18.


Desire Under the Elms, dir. William Becvar. Tacoma Actors Guild, Tacoma, WA, February 4-27, 1982. (To be reviewed in next issue.)


Hughie, dir. Gino Giglio. South St. Theater, 424 West 42nd St., New York City, November 4 - December 6, 1981. In double bill with Strindberg's The Stronger.


A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. Frank Wittow. Academy Theatre, Atlanta, GA. (Tour of the southeast ended on October 31.)


A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. John E. Fogle. Barton Square Playhouse, Salem, MA, n.d. ("Tentatively selected" as part of the repertory company's five-play first season at 8 Barton Square.)


Servitude, dir. Paul Voelker. Coppertop Theatre, U. of Wisconsin Center-Richland, November 14-16, 1981. (An illustrated report on the production will be featured in the next issue.)


16. Paul Voelker has been searching the theatrical records to find whether the production of Servitude he directed at the University of Wisconsin Center-Richland on November 14-16 was the first ever. If you have information of any previous productions, please send it in for forwarding to Professor Voelker. A full and illustrated report on the November production, whether it be the first or not, will be featured in the next issue of the Newsletter.

17. HUGHIE ON CABLE TV. Since 27.3 percent of U.S. homes--that's 22 million--now have cable television reception, it's big news when an O'Neill play goes cable, as Hughie did recently on the Showtime Cable Service. Directed by José Quintero, with television direction by Terry Hughes, and starring Jason Robards and Jack Dodson in a recreation of their stage performances, the production received glowing notices. John J. O'Connor was particularly impressed by Robards' Erie Smith (New York Times, September 20, 1983, Section II, p. 37):

Erie demands a virtuosic performance and that is what the role gets from Mr. Robards. His bravado is defeated by his mirthless laugh. He whines, cajoles, implores with a mixture of fear and contempt. He is a once-disarming con man reduced to the last roll of the dice. Mr. Robards is almost chillingly on target. This record of his performance is invaluable.

Mr. Robards, interviewed by UPI's Kenneth R. Clark (Boston Globe, Sept. 3, 1981, p. 39), describes Hughie as a play about cages:
There's a lot of symbolism there. You see the two cages—the cage the clerk is in... and Erie's cage, which is the elevator. If they both go in their cages, they die. There is no life. But Erie eventually gets this guy out and they begin a new life. He becomes the idea of Hughie again... and they feed each other and make life bearable. It's a beautiful piece of writing... it's an upper, that play, because they gain their dream again.

May an O'Neill fan also gain his dream—that this will be but the first of many O'Neill productions on the cultural cable networks.

18. ONE-MAN O'NEILL SHOW CAPTURES PLAYWRIGHT'S SPIRIT. Here Before You... Eugene O'Neill, a one-act monodrama by playwright-sculptor David Wheeler, had its first performance at the Provincetown Art Association and Museum last May 23, with the author as O'Neill. More recently, Mr. Wheeler gave two performances of his work at Boston's Helen Schlien Gallery on October 31 and November 1. Eschewing indoor theatricality on Halloween, Associate Editor Brooks and I chose to attend the second performance. (Somehow, All Saints' Day seemed more appropriate.) The scene is the dining room of the Provincetown home of George Cram "Jig" Cook and Susan Glaspell in the summer of 1916. Anxiously awaiting the verdict of the Provincetown Players, who are in the kitchen deciding whether to perform Bound East for Cardiff, O'Neill passes the time by responding to the questions of an imagined interviewer. Through an hour of mordant wit and lacerating reminiscence, the viewer gains an intimate glimpse of the young playwright and the experiences he has amassed by his twenty-eighth year. So impressed were we by the play, that we will print it in full in the next issue of the Newsletter, at which time we will offer a fuller introduction to Mr. Wheeler and his idiosyncratic but insightful play. --F.W.

19. COLLEEN AS CARLOTTA IN 1982. Colleen Dewhurst plans a tour next year in Carlotta, a new one-woman play based on the life of Carlotta Monterey O'Neill, written by Barbara Gelb, co-author with Arthur Gelb of the celebrated biography, O'Neill. The play will be directed by José Quintero, the quintessential O'Neill director. Carol Lawson reported on the plan and the play in the New York Times (September 4, 1981), p. C2:

Miss Dewhurst expects to tour the college circuit, where she will perform Carlotta and hold seminars on O'Neill. Carlotta grew out of Mrs. Gelb's earlier play, O'Neill and Carlotta, which had a staged reading, with Jason Robards and Miss Dewhurst in the title roles, at the Public Theater in October 1979. Mrs. Gelb has received permission from the O'Neill estate to include excerpts from O'Neill's plays. She describes Carlotta as "a portrait of the playwright through the great love of his life."

The editor hopes to print information in the next issue on what the tour dates will be and where interested institutions can line up to request a visit. He hopes, indeed, to be near the front of the line!

20. A LAMENTABLE PARALLEL BETWEEN WILLIAMS AND O'NEILL. Critics and public have not been kind to the recent work of Tennessee Williams, who sees himself suffering the same fate that Eugene O'Neill did in his late years. In an interview with Michiko Kakutani in the New York Times ("Tennessee Williams: 'I Keep Writing. Sometimes I Am Pleased,'" August 13, 1981, p. C17), he commented on the connection: "I'm very conscious of my decline in popularity, but I don't permit it to stop me because I have the example of so many playwrights before me. I know the dreadful notices Ibsen got. And O'Neill--he had to die to make Moon successful."

When Martha finally agrees to try to live a life without illusion and falteringly admits that she is afraid of what she can't call the big bad wolf of reality, Who's Afraid buys its resolution at a high thematic price. It is difficult to conceive that after the silver jubilee of their illusion George and Martha will be able to live happily without it forever after. This sentimental close comes from Albee's conscious response to O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh, in which Hickey kills his off-stage wife Evelyn because he can't bear her support of his illusions. O'Neill's fourth act "Truth" requires Hickey's happy acceptance of a future in the electric chair and Parritt's suicide. Albee's murders are verbal, like his creations, externally killable and presumably externally renewable. George and Martha have no off-stage life but if, as Albee suddenly proposes, they have a future after this Walpurgisnacht, what will they talk about at breakfast? To conclude his play Albee has reverted to O'Neill's formula of inarticulate but endless talk, punctured by the naive poetry of sincerity.

22. THANK YOU, CHARLES KAISER! In his negative review of Ethan Mordden's The American Theater (New York: Oxford University Press) in the New York Times Book Review (October 25, 1981, pp. 18, 20), Mr. Kaiser was gratifyingly positive in his defense of O'Neill's language against a derogatory comment by Mordden:

while he reports that Eugene O'Neill was born at Broadway and 43rd Street, which is true, he also says that "no one, in life, ever talked like an O'Neill character," which is false. As the youngest of three sons, I challenge Mr. Mordden to distinguish between the words spoken by Jamie (Edmund's older brother in Long Day's Journey into Night) and those spoken by real older brothers, including my own, whom I have listened to "in life" since birth.

23. AND THE WINNER IS--. Congratulations to Susan Tuck for winning the second "Who Said It" contest (see Summer-Fall 1981 issue, p. 38). As the first--indeed, the only--respondent to identify the quoted American writer as Thomas Wolfe, Ms. Tuck received a copy of The Mortgaged Heart, a collection of writings by Carson McCullers. Why so inappropriate an award? 'Twas left over from the first contest, which nobody won, when the words were by Ms. McCullers. Thomas Wolfe's comments, included in a February 1922 letter to Margaret Roberts, appear on p. 26 of The Letters of Thomas Wolfe, ed. Elizabeth Nowell (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956). Next time, a new contest--and a more fitting reward!

24. Anent contests, the editor offers a one-year Newsletter subscription--or a one-year extension of a current subscription--to every contributor of a Eugene O'Neill crossword puzzle whose submission is accepted for printing in a future issue. Lest the editor's expertise be too severely tested, please be sure to enclose the solution as well!


26. OOPS! A REPORT FROM THE SIC DEPARTMENT (Strangely Inaccurate Citations). In the September 1981 issue of Theatrebill, a program booklet used by a number of Boston-area theatres, Susan Bonchi's "Banned in Boston" column, an anecdotal history of Beantown theatre, jolted the O'Neillian eye with the following bit of ideal but anachronistic casting: "Boston audiences loved James O'Neill in The Count of Monte Cristo and Long Day's Journey into Night, his best-known roles."
27. A LETTER FROM T. J. D., November 9, 1981.

I read in the "New York Times" last week that a professor Virginia Floyd claims to have "completed a version" of "Malatesta Seeks Surcease," a show that O'Neill gave up on in 1941. He said he had "lost grip on it." As an old fan who trusts the late master's drama instincts, I tend to think that he knew what he was talking about. And that any professor who thinks his/her grip surpasses O'Neill's has likely lost—well, let's just say his/her grip on reality. So I look with "completed aversion" on the venture and am shocked that Yale is allegedly in cahoots on it. I hope no atrocities will be committed as a result of O'Neill's not destroying what he should have. God help his reputation if they are. We should let sleeping geniuses rest in peace and do the same for their discards. I know you won't print my letter. It's not positive enough. I also know that I am condemning in advance. But just wait and see.

[We are happy to refute your expectations, though we prefer names to initials. No journal would be worth printing if it were to restrict itself to eulogistic encomia. Indeed, you seem quite "positive" in your affection for O'Neill, and we will be happy to publish any future views you wish to contribute. But as for "Malatesta Seeks Surcease," we prefer to do just what you suggest—wait and see. --Ed.]

28. DATES TO REMEMBER—a review for overhasty skimmers of this issue's Eugene O'Neill Society Section. New York City will be abuzz with O'Neill activities during two days at the end of December. The skeletal facts follow. Fuller details are included in items 1-4 of the Society Section.

*Monday, December 28, 12:00-1:15 p.m.: Special Session on "O'Neill and His Theatrical Children" (the devices of the split character and extended monologue in the plays of O'Neill and his successors). Participants: Vera Jiij, Michael Hinden, Albert Wertheim, Virginia Floyd, Romulus Linney and Nicholas Kepros. An MLA Convention event in Nassau A, New York Hilton.

*Monday, December 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m.: Annual Meeting of the Eugene O'Neill Society, Acting President Winifred Frazer presiding, at the Museum of Broadcasting, 1 East 53rd Street.

*Tuesday, December 29, 10:15-11:30 a.m.: Michael Manheim will read a paper on Chekhov and O'Neill during a special session on "Chekhov and Twentieth-Century Drama Outside Russia." An MLA Convention event in Room 529, New York Hilton.

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN THIS ISSUE

MARMOTT BROOKS, essayist and printer, is the editor of Nostoa and associate editor of the Eugene O'Neill Newsletter. Nostoa #10, published last summer, comprises eight short short stories and sketches by James T. Farrell, two of which were there published for the first time. For information about the issue, which has won critical accolades, and about Mr. Brooks' other publishing activities, write him at Arts End Books, Box 162, Newton, MA 02168.

PETER EGRI, Professor and Chairman of the Department of English at L. Étudés University, Budapest, Hungary, was previously represented in the Newsletter's May 1977, September 1978, and September 1979 issues. It is a pleasure to welcome him back to its pages, even in the form of serialized reprint, after a year's lapse. His book, Chekhov and O'Neill: The Uses of the Short Story in Chekhov's and O'Neill's Plays, will soon be published.

WINIFRED FRAZER, Professor of English, Emeritus, University of Florida, is Acting President of the Eugene O'Neill Society and a regular contributor to the Newsletter's pages. She has published numerous articles on O'Neill and is the author of Love As Death in "The Iceman Cometh": A Modern Treatment of an Ancient Theme (1967). Her last essay in the Newsletter was a review of the Donald Gallup edition of O'Neill's Poems: 1912-1944 (Winter 1980, pp. 5-9).

SHENG-CHUAN LAI is pursuing a doctoral degree in drama at the University of California-Berkeley. He expects to complete his dissertation—on Eastern and Western stage shapes and conventions—in 1983. The essay abstracted in this issue will appear in full in a forthcoming issue of Theatre Journal.

DEBORAH KELLER PATTIN, the Newsletter's intrepid reviewer-correspondent from the northwest United States, is currently teaching high school in Olympia, Washington. She is a member of the Membership Committee of the Eugene O'Neill Society and of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House. In past issues, she has reported on her own production of A Touch of the Poet (May-September, 1980) and reviewed a Seattle production of Ah, Wilderness! (Spring 1981). She will report on a Tacoma production of Desire Under the Elms in the next issue.
I. ARTICLES AND REVIEW-ARTICLES.

Butler, Peter. "Artifice and Art: Words in The Iceman Cometh and Hughts." (NYT) p. 25


Jackson, Esther. "History as Image: Approaches to the Staginff of Strange Interlude; and a ms. which examines the influence on O'Neill of several modern novelists including Dostoyevsky (Crime and Punishment), Strindberg (The Son of a Servant), Lawrence (Women in Love), Joyce (Ulysses), and Faulkner (The Sound and the Fury)."

SULLER's American Theatre Association convention in Columbus, Georgia. He delivered the paper herein printed at a special session on O'Neill at the 1976 MLA Convention in New York City. It is printed at last because the editor received a request for the paper (from a subscriber in India who had read of it in the September 1977 issue, p. 7), and, seeing it, decided it merited a wider readership.

SHELLY REGENBAUM is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech (Theatre Program) at Kansas State University. Her paper on "O'Neill and the Hebraic Theme of Sacrifice," for which she provided the abstract printed herein, was delivered at last summer's American Theatre Association convention in Dallas, Texas.

SUSAN TUCK is co-editor with Horst Frenz of Eugene O'Neill's Critics: Voices from Abroad, soon to be published by Indiana University Press. A doctoral candidate in English at Indiana University, where she has served as editorial associate of the Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature, Ms. Tuck is completing a dissertation on O'Neill and Faulkner. She is also readying an article on Wedekind and O'Neill which examines the influence of Spring's Awakening on Ah, Wilderness! and of the Lulu plays on Strange Interlude; and a ms. which examines the influence on O'Neill of several modern novelists including Dostoyevsky (Crime and Punishment), Strindberg (The Son of a Servant), Lawrence (Women in Love), Joyce (Ulysses), and Faulkner (The Sound and the Fury).

INDEX TO VOLUME V

I. ARTICLES AND REVIEW-ARTICLES.

Butler, Peter. "Artifice and Art: Words in The Iceman Cometh and Hughts." (NYT) p. 3


II. ABSTRACTS, REPRINTS AND REPORTS OF BOOKS, ARTICLES AND PAPERS PUBLISHED OR DELIVERED ELSEWHERE.


Chothia, Jean. Forging a Language: A Study of the Plays of Eugene O'Neill. (rev. F. Wilkins) p. 20

Dunning, Jennifer. "Quintero Takes On an Early O'Neill." (NYT) p. 16


Hinden, Michael. "Desire and Forgiveness: O'Neill's Diptych." (comp. drama) p. 23


Lawson, Carol. "Broadway Celebrates Eugene O'Neill's Birthday." (NYT) p. 31


Pace, Eric. "Preserving the Homes Where O'Neill Lived and Worked." (NYT) p. 25


Rich, Frank. "A Short Day's Journey to Eugene O'Neill's Childhood Home." (NYT) p. 27

Sewall, Richard B. The Vision of Tragedy. (rev. F. Wilkins) p. 22

III. PRODUCTIONS REPORTED ON OR REVIEWED.

Ah, Wilderness! (Seattle, WA, 1980; rev. Deborah Pattin) p. 17


Here Before You ... Eugene O'Neill (play by David Wheeler, 1981) p. 37

Hugsie (cable television production, 1981) p. 36

The Iceman Cometh (Providence, RI, 1981; rev. Frederick Wilkins) p. 15

Long Day's Journey Into Night (Stratford, Ont., 1980) p. 13

Long Day's Journey Into Night (Charlottesville, VA, 1980; report by Howard Hinden) p. 7


More Stately Mansions (Madison, WI, 1981; report by Esther Jackson and Ronald Miller) p. 21

A Touch of the Poet (Seattle, WA, 1981; rev. Deborah Pattin) p. 20

Welded (New York City, 1981; revs. by Marshall Brooks and Michael Hinden) p. 17

IV. MISCELLANEOUS.

ATA plans for O'Neill centenary p. 32

Doctoral dissertations on O'Neill p. 35

"Eugene O'Neill" portrait sculpture by Jerome Radin p. 1

"Good Morning, Eugene," a poem by Norman Andrew Kirk p. 2

Lists of recent and forthcoming productions p. 33

Lists of recent and forthcoming publications p. 34

Report by Paul Voelker of 1980 MLA Convention special session on O'Neill p. 27
Virginia Floyd, Editor

Eugene O’Neill at Work
Newly Released Ideas for Plays

A major event in publishing and theater history — the release of long-suppressed material in Yale University’s Eugene O’Neill Collection, giving a new and comprehensive portrait of America’s greatest dramatist at work. Available here for the first time are ideas, scenarios, and drafts for plays, restricted both before and since the playwright’s death in 1953.

Virginia Floyd, the first O’Neill scholar to be given total access to the Yale material, has annotated the O’Neill notebooks dating from 1918 to 1943. In their totality this newly released material shows O’Neill’s development from amateur to craftsman to creative artist. From one-acters to multi-act plays and the unfinished Cycle, we see O’Neill always striving to incorporate experimental techniques, building his plays out of his own remembrances of family and friends and out of the terrors of a world on the threshold of war. This hitherto unpublished material includes:

- Over one hundred ideas for plays.
- Notes and scenarios for completed plays and for unfinished plays, among them a sequel to Ah, Wilderness!
- Notes and scenarios for three unfinished but well-developed plays conceived in the early 1940s.
- Over forty O’Neill drawings for sets.

No one seriously interested in the American theater will want to miss this extraordinary “inside” look at the mind of a master dramatist. The book makes possible greater insight into the plays for which O’Neill is celebrated.

VIRGINIA FLOYD, editor of Eugene O’Neill: A World View, has written many essays on the playwright. A professor of English at Bryant College, she has participated in O’Neill symposiums both here and abroad.

ISBN 0-8044-2205-2 · 448 pages · $25.00