



NEWSLETTER

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Fall 1991

POE Studies Association Newsletter
Published at Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Nineteenth Annual Meeting Poe Studies Association

The annual meeting of the Poe Studies Association, held in conjunction with the 1991 convention of the Modern Language Association in San Francisco (27-30 December), comprises two sessions on the topic "Texts and Intertexts." The first session, chaired by Liliane Weissberg (University of Pennsylvania), will take place on 27 December from 5:15 to 6:30 p. m. in the Continental Ballroom, Parlor 8, of the San Francisco Hilton. Speakers include: Ortwin de Graef (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), "Dead Herrings: You Must Have Mistaken the Author"; James Hicks (University of Pennsylvania), "The Us of Usher: Intertext and Context in Poe's Foundational Tale"; Meredith L. McGill (Johns Hopkins University), "To Plagiarize the Plagiarist: Repetition and

Authority in the Poe-Longfellow War"; and Thomas Cohen (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), "Poe, Pragmatism, and Postmodernism." The second session, chaired by J. Gerald Kennedy (Louisiana State University), is scheduled from 12:00 noon to 1:15 p. m. on 29 December (Sonoma, Hilton). Speakers will include: Patricia Merivale (University of British Columbia), "The Man of the Crowd' and the Metaphysical Detective Story"; James Winchell (Stanford University), "Mutatio in pejus: Poe's MS. Found in France *Fin de Siecle*"; Rae Beth Gordon (University of Connecticut, Storrs), "Poe: Optics, Hysteria, and Interior Decoration"; and Michael Levine (Yale University), "Poe, Freud, and Tell-Tale Temporality."

PSA Newsletter Published at WPI

Just as Poe's career was marked by changes in editorial offices and responsibilities, the PSA Newsletter has received the support of a number of editors and institutional sponsors since the organization's founding. With this issue, the newsletter is published with the financial and logistical support of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The thanks of the new editors, the PSA Executive Committee, and the membership go to Diran Apelian, WPI Vice President and Provost, and to Carol Garofoli, Assistant to the Provost, for their time and assistance.

The editor wishes to thank outgoing editor Richard Kopley (Pennsylvania State University, DuBois) for helping to make the transition to WPI a smooth one.

As usual, PSA members are invited to send to the editors information on published and forthcoming research; queries and requests for information; notes and newsworthy items of interest.

News of the Association

The Poe Studies Association will continue to sponsor a session at the annual meeting of the American Literature Association, a coalition of American author societies and other literary organizations. As a result of the vote of the membership to leave the choice of the American Literature Program Chair to the PSA Executive Committee, Dana D. Nelson (Louisiana State University) has been chosen to chair this spring's Poe session at ALA. The convention will be held in San Diego, 28-31 May 1992. Professor Nelson invites papers that emphasize race and / or post-colonial socio-materialist / or new historicist theories. Papers may deal with any work or combination of works in the Poe *oeuvre*. Send 500 word abstracts, no later than 15 January 1992, to Professor Nelson, Department of English, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-5001.

A nominating committee was formed for the purpose of filling the office of PSA Secretary-Treasurer, whose current term of service elapses at the end of 1992. This nominating

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committee, consisting of members of the PSA Executive Committee, has renominated Dennis W. Eddings (Western Oregon State College) as Secretary-Treasurer. Additional nominations may be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer, English Department, Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, OR 97361.

"New Facts in the Case of M. Poe: Biographical Revelations, Textual Implications" will be the topic of the 1992 PSA program, held in conjunction with the convention of the Modern Language Association in New York City. PSA Vice President J. Gerald Kennedy (Louisiana State University) invites papers that deal with new chapters in Poe biography or studies that compare or contrast biographical versions of Poe's life. Professor Kennedy notes that 1992 is a propitious time to evaluate the status of Poe biography in the light of new materials in *The Poe Log* (1987), Kenneth Silverman's *Edgar A. Poe: Mournful and Never-Ending Remembrance* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991, 564 pp., \$27.50), and Jeffrey Meyers' biography (scheduled for publication in 1992). Send abstracts or papers, no later than 1 April 1992, to Professor Kennedy, Department of English, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-5001.

The Spring, 1991 voting for PSA officers resulted in the election of Liliane Weissberg (Univ. of Pennsylvania), President; J. Gerald Kennedy (Louisiana State University), Vice-President; Joan Dayan (Queen's College and The Graduate Center, CUNY) and Richard Kopley (Pennsylvania State University/Dubois), members at large. Their term of office will be January 1992 through December, 1994.

The year in parentheses after your name on the mailing label indicates your current membership status. 91 is for the current year. 90 reflects that your membership is past due. The PSA greatly appreciates the support of its members, and we hope that those who are past due will continue with us by sending in their dues with the membership form included in the Newsletter.

The amendment to the by-laws regarding non-discriminatory language passed 44 yes, 20 no, 4 abstentions.

POE STUDIES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

The newsletter of the Poe Studies Association, Inc.
Published at Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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The *Poe Studies Association Newsletter* is published twice a year. Subscriptions, which come with membership in the Poe Studies Association, are \$8 per year. Send checks, payable to "Poe Studies Association," to Dennis Eddings, English Department, Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, Oregon 97361. The *PSA Newsletter* is published independently of *Poe Studies*, published at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99163, subscription \$8 per year (two issues).

The *Poe Studies Association Newsletter* provides a forum for the scholarly and informal exchange of information on Edgar Allan, his life, works, and influence. Please send information on publications and completed research. Queries about research in progress are also welcome, as well as scholarly or newsworthy notes of interest to the PSA membership. Send materials to Kent Ljungquist, Department of Humanities, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-2287. We welcome suggestions designed to make the newsletter a more stimulating and useful publication.

THE POE STUDIES ASSOCIATION (newly elected and current officers)

President:	Liliane Weissberg <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>
Vice President:	J. Gerald Kennedy <i>Louisiana State University</i>
Secretary-Treasurer:	Dennis Eddings <i>Western Oregon State College</i>
Members-at-large:	Joan Dayan <i>Queens College</i> Richard Kopley <i>Pennsylvania State University, DuBois</i>
Immediate Past President:	Glen A. Omans <i>Temple University</i>

First International Gothic Conference

Ably captained by Allan Lloyd Smith and Victor Sage, of the University of East Anglia, and well-known to devotees of the Gothic, the First International Gothic Conference, 8-12 July 1991, provided a splendid forum for ideas and information concerning Gothicism in literature and in other arts. Held on the University campus, just west of the city of Norwich—fittingly, since this was the home of William Taylor of Norwich, renowned for his translation of Bürger's "Lenore" into English and for his promotion of German literature among British readers—the meeting drew together scholars-critics from many European countries and America. Appropriately, the Plenary Lecture, "Levi-Strauss, Narratology Theory, and the Gothic," was delivered by the PSA's own G. Richard Thompson. Other participants from the PSA included Liliane Weissberg, on the "Aesthetics of Horror," and Ben Fisher on "Gothic Possibilities in *Moby-Dick*." Few aspects of Gothic tradition were left unnoticed by the conferees, whose topics ranged from Walpole and Radcliffe to

Coleridge, Maturin, Irving, Poe, Spofford, on through later nineteenth-century writers like George Eliot, Henry James, American Naturalists, Stoker and Florence Marryatt, and into twentieth-century writers and films. "Horror," "humor," the grotesque, "mystery," "pain," and "power" were frequently heard terms. Mssrs. Lloyd Smith and Sage deserve gratitude for their heroic and kindly efforts on behalf of Gothicism and Gothic enthusiasts.

Subsequently, we have been informed that the International Gothic Association has been established. Dues are Ten Pounds annually, and membership may be obtained from Allan Lloyd Smith, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, England. A *Newsletter* will appear under the editorship of Clive Bloom, Middlesex Polytechnic, London, to whom all queries and contributions should be directed. A second conference will meet, or is anticipated to meet, in Germany in 1992, with the support of Professor Ulrich Mohr of the University of Bielefeld.

Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV
The University of Mississippi

Claude Richard, *Edgar Allan Poe écrivain*.

Ed. Henri Justin et al. Montpellier, France: Delta, 1990. 313 pp. Paper. \$20.40.

During the last two decades, scholars generally considered the late Claude Richard as among the best continental interpreters of Poe—a reputation earned despite formidable competition from heavyweight meta-theoreticians such as Derrida. In a 1980 interview, Richard isolated, perhaps, the polemic that distinguished himself from his famous contemporaries. Although he toyed with most contemporary fashions of criticism, Richard refused to reduce the status of Poe's words to *pretext*, existing merely to facilitate a critic's private ontology. For this Frenchman from Montpellier, the playful words in "Ligeia," for example, mandated an investigation to discern and, in doing so, to share Poe's intentions, which had been sometimes ignored in more boggling treatments.

In his selections for *Edgar Allan Poe écrivain*, Henri Justin may have unwittingly violated Richard's principles. The existence itself of a volume dedicated to Richard's scholarship directs too much attention on the development of the critic rather than the explication of the subject. As a result, we see Richard's growth as a scholar amid fluctuating aesthetics. We can all sympathize with Richard's youthful histrionics in his early essay "André Breton et Edgar Poe," and note the maturity he found through literary history in "Poe and the Yankee Hero: An Interpretation of 'Diddling Considered as one of the Exact Sciences.'" Starting in 1970, he began to incorporate into his readings the techniques of structuralism,

which thereafter often comprised the hermeneutics he applied to Poe. His subsequent confrontations with other epistemologies, such as deconstruction ("Destin, Design, Dasein: Lacan, Derrida and 'The Purloined Letter'") and Marxism ("L'Atomie Orphelin: *approximation* et *approximation* dans la cosmologie d'Edgar Poe"), sometimes resulted in uneasy aesthetic truces accomplished by fusing irreconcilables.

This heterogeneous collection contains twenty pieces: previously published essays and notes, early drafts of published essays, interviews, lecture notes, and outlines. The volume reprints some of Richard's best work but also several items I am sure he would have preferred left undisturbed. Present is Richard's thorough study of Poe's alternately self-serving and hostile relationships with Evert A. Duyckinck and his editorial circle ("Poe and 'Young America'"), but Justin unfortunately preserves several obvious typographical errors that plagued the original text in *Studies in Bibliography*. The editor also introduces his own mistakes—for one, he reports the original publication date to be 1988 rather than 1968.

Richard's strongest essays in the volume take advantage of his keen eye in close readings. "La Double Voix dans 'The

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Claude Richard

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Tell-Tale Heart" and "L'ou l'indicibilité de Dieu: une lecture de 'Ligeia'" demonstrate why he valued the methodology (though not always the spirit) of structuralism. He, like Poe, loved to tinker with words. "[U]ne lecture de 'Ligeia'" (Richard's subtitle itself joins in Poe's game) notes the alliterative and omnipresent *L* in the text and explores its transforming powers: *God* becomes *gold*; *dead*, *lead*; *back*, *black*. Richard would occasionally become involved in an argument and ignore relevant supporting criticism; nevertheless, the integrity of these explications remains sound and engrossing.

To me, Richard's commitment to unity in argument suggests that he would have had qualms about these selections. In his brief preface, Justin reports that Richard had intended to reissue his post-1974 essays. Apparently given free access to Richard's academic effects, Justin responded like Lucian's (or Goethe's) sorcerer's apprentice, who reveled in reading his master's secret book until he lost control of his new knowledge. To illustrate, rather than the final form printed

in Eric Carlson's *Critical Essays on Edgar Allan Poe*, Justin relies on an early draft of "The Heart of Poe and the Rhythmic of the Poems" which he found on a computer disk. The editor also reprints (with many silent emendations) what I assume were Richard's extensive lecture notes on "The Fall of the House of Usher." I suspect that, if given a choice, Richard might have emulated Paul Dukas, the composer of the famous scherzo based on Goethe's ballad, who, according to legend, got up from his death bed to burn his unfinished manuscripts.

In all, I respond ambivalently to this volume. It does reprint good work by a noted scholar, but most of the important articles are already accessible in any good research library. As a tribute, *Edgar Allan Poe écrivain* measures the range of one scholar's career but not the spirit of it, which, like Poe's, strive for "unity of effect" in critical pursuits. Perhaps the worth in reading this collection lies in our sympathetic observations of one scholar's attempt to admire—without surrendering his ego—the passing lessons offered by the succession of critical schools.

Richard Fusco
Philadelphia, PA

Organizations

On 6 October 1991, John T. Irwin (Johns Hopkins University) delivered the 69th Commemorative Lecture of the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore. His address, "Reading Poe's Mind: The Association of Ideas in 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue,'" will appear as part of his forthcoming book, *The Mystery to a Solution: Poe, Borges, and the Analytic Detective Story* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press). Secretary-Treasurer Jeffrey A. Savoye of the Baltimore Poe Society reports plans to publish previous lectures in the series by Richard Kopley and Richard Fusco, both of which deal with Poe's detective fiction.

On 21 February 1991, John E. Reilly (College of the Holy Cross) spoke on "Poe and Popular Culture" at a colloquium at the American Antiquarian Society. Professor Reilly's presentation, which expands on his previous work on "The Image of Poe in American Poetry," will be published as part of *A Companion to Poe Studies*, edited by Eric W. Carlson.

A Poe Studies session, chaired by Carol Hovanec (Ramapo College), will be held at the annual convention of the North-

east Modern Language Association (Buffalo, NY., 3-5 April 1992). Speakers include: Stephen Hahn (William Paterson College), "Poe and Probability"; Paola Gemme (Pennsylvania State University), "The Return of the Flesh: Woman as Resisting Character in Poe's Tales of Resurrection"; Norma Goldstein (Mississippi State University), "Problems of Narration and the Youthful Narrator in Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*." Secretary of the session is Davide Stimilli (Yale University).

Other Poe or Poe-related papers at the 1991 MLA Convention in San Francisco include: Emma Kafalenos (Washington University), "Function after Propp: Reading a Reading in Poe's 'The Assigment'"; Gillian Brown (University of Utah), "Poe's Anatomy of Anticipation"; and Thomas Cohen (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), "Poe's Pragmatism." In addition to sessions on nineteenth-century literature, PSA members also might find interesting a special session on "Rediscovering *Godey's Lady's Book*," chaired by Patricia Okker (University of Missouri, Columbia).

Current and Forthcoming Publications

The issue of *Poe Studies/Dark Romanticism* for June 1993 will be a special number devoted to "Poe and Gender." Address submissions and inquiries to the guest editor, Michael J. S. Williams, Department of English, University of Wisconsin/Stevens Point, WI 54481. Deadline for final submissions is 1 September 1992.

American Renaissance Literary Report: An Annual, Volume 5 (1991), \$35, contains three brief Poe items: "Was Samuel Fenwick Author of 'The Raven'?—A Claim in 1870 and Some Refutations"; "Poe's Engagement at the Odeon in Boston in 1845—Some Reminiscences"; and "Two Notices of Poe and a Poem Honoring Him". Send inquiries to Kenneth W. Cameron, Transcendental Books, Box A, Station A, Hartford CT 06126.

The Journal of the Short Story in English, published by the Department of Language and Literature at Belmont College (Nashville, TN), welcomes critical and theoretical articles on short fiction.

Valery and Poe: A Literary Legacy by Lois Vines (Ohio University) will be published in 1992 by New York University Press.

Poe and Pritchett

V. S. Pritchett, knighted in 1975, is one of the great literary figures of our time, being a critic, novelist, biographer, autobiographer, and short story writer. His last book, *Complete Collected Stories* (1990, 1218 pp.) concludes with "The Image Trade," concerning a world-famous author, named Pearson, whose publicity photograph, shown at an exhibition, turns out to be a grotesque reminder of the photographer and not of himself. This sobering reflection is articulated through praise of Edgar Allan Poe, in the penultimate paragraph:

No sparkling anemone there but the bald head of a melancholy frog, its feet clinging to a log, floating in literature. O Fame, cried Pearson, O Maupassant, O *Tales of Hoffman*, O Edgar Allan Poe, O Grub Street.

Burton R. Pollin
CUNY, Emeritus

Poe in the Marketplace Then and Now

Roger Stoddard's *'Put a Resolute Hart to a Steep Hill': William Gowans, Antiquary and Bookseller* (New York: The Book Arts Service of the Columbia Univ. School of Library Service, 1990) chronicles the life of Poe's contemporary and his activities as book dealer, author, publisher, and cataloguer. Stoddard records an annotation in one of Gowans' book catalogues as follows: "Poe the most original of all American poets, had a library made up of newspapers, magazines bound and unbound, with what books had been presented to him from time to time by authors and publishers. He had no very high opinion of the modern generators of books, especially those so employed around him, and hence many of these gifts found an early transfer into the possession of some second-hand dealer at wonderfully reduced prices" (p. 26).

The 19th Century Shop has scheduled for late 1991 or early 1992 publication *Edgar Allan Poe: A Descriptive Catalogue* (\$18.00), a reference for collectors of manuscripts, first editions, gift books, periodicals, and scholarly publications. Materials to be offered for sale, including first editions of all of Poe's works, come from the personal collection of Stephan Loewentheil, who had previously acquired items held by the late Bradley Martin. Prices will range from \$20 to \$200,000. Send reservations for the catalogue and inquiries to the 19th Century Shop, 1047 Hollins St., Baltimore, MD 21233.

Poe Miscellany

Mr. Karl Hopf is preparing production of a Poe bust, based on the known daguerreotypes of Poe, including the "Ultima Thule" portrait. Anticipated costs, including finish and postage, are estimated at \$25-35. Direct inquiries to the artist at 323 Jody Way, Timonium, MD 21093.

Two Canadian organizations, The Public Dreams Society and Grunt, produced "Masque of the Red Death," a mixed media installation and performance in Vancouver, British Columbia, 30 October-30 November 1991. The audience was invited to come in costume or to purchase a mask at the door before entering variously decorated rooms that had been created by artists. Musical accompaniment was coordinated by Mark Douglas.

John Limon, *The Place of Fiction in the Time of Science: A History of American Writing.*

New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. 224 pp. Cloth. \$29.95.

"Our intellectual age is antidisciplinary," writes Limon, who is concerned nonetheless with disciplinary intellectual history, and specifically with the historical incompatibilities of literature in relation to science. He identifies several "propositions" for considering a separate disciplinary intellectual history of literature, one being the argument that artists maintain a respect for their literary past (whether in Eliot's or Borges' or Bloom's sense) in contrast to the scientific view of historical progress. He also maintains that although writers of fiction are expected to respond to scientific trends, and although they must be a part of their intellectual era, they will remain apart from it, withholding "consent" from all scientific thought, and therefore cannot assimilate science into their work.

To support his thesis, Limon examines "the peculiar difficulties that authors have with science." He argues that writers alleviate their considerable "intellectual anxiety" by means of certain strategies that "despite all scientific revolutions, remain constant." In three central chapters, he discusses the strategies employed by Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne—three writers whose careers surrounded the period when science became "professionalized," gaining public support as it became increasingly complex. He finds in Brown's literary career an initial confidence in the unity of science and literature but a final admission that they are antagonistic: empiricism is discredited in *Wieland and Arthur Mervyn*; Ormond's rationalism is as murderous as the plague of yellow fever; and Edgar Huntly moves beyond empiricism and rationalism to what Limon describes as "the craving for bold knowledge." Similarly, Poe's writing cannot be justified in relation to science; indeed, his approach to science, Limon observes, resembles his approach to democracy. Limon traces Poe's "negotiations" with scientific thought from the early and hostile "Sonnet—To Science" to *Pym* (which may or may not have been influenced by German idealism) to the culminating *Eureka* with its "presumptuous assimilation" of *Naturphilosophie*, the science that, as Limon puts it, kept Poe's universe divine and alive. And if Poe initially regards science as predatory ignorance but finally exploits it in his prose

poem, Hawthorne attempts to "fraternize" with technology but finally cannot escape his own shadow-world of sin and guilt. Limon devotes most attention to *The House of the Seven Gables*, arguing that it represents Hawthorne's determined attempt to believe in progress, although technological Salem remains a product of seventeenth-century witchcraft and Protestantism.

In the last chapter, Limon attempts to identify the "essence" of literature's historical negotiation with science. He does so by considering selected fiction by three twentieth-century writers, Theodore Dreiser, Thomas Pynchon, and Norman Mailer, in relation to conclusions he has developed about Brown, Poe and Hawthorne, respectively. Limon concludes that Dreiser and Pynchon attempt to suspend belief in the scientific version of history by using procedures similar to those of Brown and Poe, whereas Mailer, like Hawthorne, "lingers always on the threshold of scientificity." Several passages here are among the most interesting in the book, such as those that associate *Sister Carrie and Arthur Mervyn*, or that trace Mailer's criticism of technology back to Hawthorne.

Not every reader will accept the propositions that Limon sets forth, or agree with his selection of authors and literary works. Too, his delight in wordplay can become distracting and obscure the strong linear progression of his argument. His study, however, is provocative and compelling.

Joan Tyler Mead
Marshall University



The Essential Poe: Selected and with an Introduction by Dave Smith.

New York: Ecco Press, 1991. 93 pp. Paper. \$8.00.

The Essential Poe, Volume 14 of Ecco Press's Essential Poets Series, is a handy little book, slim enough for the coat pocket, yet filled with nuggets of Poe's best and best-loved poems. Editor Dave Smith, a professor of American literature and creative writing at Louisiana State University, and a poet himself (note especially his 1983 *Homage To Edgar Allan Poe*), has selected 32 poems from the Poe canon, for the most part following Thomas Mabbott's text and sequence of Poe's works—from the early "Dreams" and "Imitations" to the late "Eldorado," "To My Mother" and "Annabel Lee." Included in the volume are two Poe pieces that bear directly on his poetry and poetic theory: "Letter to B—," which serves as the preface to *Poems* of 1831, and "The Philosophy of Composition."

Poe's famous "Ulalume," "The Raven," and "The Bells" are in the book, as one would expect, as well as "The Coliseum," an example of his blank verse, "Bridal Ballad," with the only female speaker in his poetry, and "To One in Paradise," his lovely dirge. It would be quibbling to complain that Smith fails to include a selection from "Al Aaraaf" or "Tamerlane," for he has chosen the poems judiciously, demonstrating the variety and range of Poe's poetic talent.

Readers of this book could argue, as William Carlos Williams argues in *In the American Grain*, that the "essential" Poe is not to be found in his poetry, but rather in his prose

tales and literary criticism. In fact, Smith grants this point in his introduction, admitting that Poe's enormous popularity and literary reputation are based primarily on the prose writings. Still, this book is part of a poetry series, and Smith makes a good case for Poe's poems. True, he writes, some modern readers may find Poe's metrics predictable or conventional, and some may judge even a popular poem like "The Raven" bathetic. But, he insists, Poe's poetic genius overshadows his flaws; his portraits of loss and alienation and his spiritual longing are mirrored in our age. Smith writes that Poe's "yearning for love, a home of utter peace, a place in the sun...speaks not merely of the American Dream of infinite possibility, but also of latent, grotesque futility." In Poe's best poems, he concludes "there is an unforgettable, extraordinarily compelling, and intensely human voice."

Like other volumes in the Essential Poets series—for example, on Keats, Blake, Wordsworth, Whitman, and Melville—the Poe book contains almost no scholarly apparatus, but only abbreviated notes to the poems and a short paragraph citing editions and critics of Poe. This book, plainly, is not aimed primarily at Poe scholars, but at general readers and lovers of poetry. In that aim it succeeds admirably.

Laura Jehn Menides
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

The *Poe Studies Association* and its *Newsletter* are independent of the journal *Poe Studies*, published at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99164, subscription \$8 per year (two issues, June, December).

DUES FOR 1992

I wish to receive the *PSA Newsletter* in 1992.

Enclosed is my check for \$8.00 for dues and subscription. (Check should be made out to "Poe Studies Association" and mailed to Dennis W. Eddings, Poe Studies Association, English Department, Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, Oregon 97361.)

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or home address: _____

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I recommend that the following person be invited to join the Poe Studies Association:

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George N. Dove. *Suspense in the Formula Story.*

Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1989. 137 pp. Cloth, \$25.95; Paper, \$12.95.

S. T. Joshi. *John Dickson Carr: A Critical Study.*

Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1990. ii + 195 pp. Cloth, \$34.95; Paper, \$16.95.

These books will appeal to those attentive to Poe's role among crime fictionists. Dove's, the more general, gives crisp, but nonetheless helpful, comments about devices established by Poe that have come to be hallmarks in this branch of popular writing: "the obtuse police," "intimation," or clues and hints, "the lull before the storm," "the conventional structure of the genre," "the transcendent detective, the slightly stupid narrator...the locked room." These last three features, plus the ineffectual police, as Poe employed them, are held up comparatively alongside "S. S. Van Dine's" (Willard Huntington Wright's) *The Greene Murder Case* (1928), in which we also encounter many of the recognizably Gothic properties drawn into detective fiction with wonderful subtlety by Poe. There they have continued to flourish as signal elements. The qualifications of "The Gold-Bug" as detective fiction are also debated (though not cited in the index, where p. 49 is also inaccurately given as p. 40).

As the first book-length critical work to address John Dickson Carr, Joshi's study should be recognized as a signal performance. He categorizes the sleuths, the types of crime fiction and other kinds of writings composed by Carr, offering evaluative observations about all. The primary and secondary bibliographies in this book are also valuable, although, strangely, Joshi omits my own essay on the Carr-Poe-King affinities, in *Poe and Our Times* (1986). The lists of translations and reviews ought to help many devotees—and save them considerable work.

That Carr knew and borrowed from Poe is undeniable. As long ago as 1933, Dorothy Sayers highlighted commonalities between the two writers, and Carr's works—broadcasts, radio plays, and the fiction itself—bear out the fascination that Poe held for his literary descendant. A "lost" detective story by Poe (supposedly written earlier than "Murders") that figures prominently in the plotting of Carr's *The Mad Hatter Mystery* is doubtless a fantasy cherished by many additional Poe enthusiasts—who keep hoping that some such document will turn up. The repeated uses of the locked-room mystery in Carr's fiction, and that of others, e.g., Leroux and Zangwill (the latter incorrectly cited in the index: p. 126 for 108), also stem from Poe, as we are reminded (just as we need to remember Carr's departures from his model). Joshi's comparison of the methods—and outcomes—in Poe's "Marie Roget" and Carr's *The Murder of Sir Edmund Godfrey* also makes for interesting reading. Poe's and Carr's uses of the outré are also noted, as are likenesses between "Maeilzel's Chess-Player" and *The Crooked Hinge*. Poe as a character in "The Gentleman from Paris," Carr's story originally published, fittingly, in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* [(1950) and just reprinted there: *EQMM* (May 1991), 52-77], makes that item much sought after. Overall, Joshi and Dove are well worth reading.

Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV
The University of Mississippi

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