

-POE STUDIES ASSOCIATION, INC.-
NEWSLETTER

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Editors

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ANNUAL MEETING: PSA, Chicago, December 29, 1977
Palmer House PDR9, 10:00 - noon

Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV, Vice-President, will preside at the business meeting for reports and the election of officers. The program of papers consists of "Metrical Subtleties in Poe's Poetry" by Helen Ensley; "Poe and American Studies" by Stuart Levine; and "'William Wilson' as a Cumulative Allegory" by Ottavio M. Casale.

NEMLA, March 25-27, SUNY at Albany

The program of the Northeast MLA will include a Poe section chaired by Lawrence Stahlberg, English Dept., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va. 24061. Papers on Poe are still being solicited.

1978 PSA ANNUAL MEETING (MLA, New York)

PSA members are invited to submit papers by April 1, 1978 for the meeting in December. The reading committee consists of B. F. Fisher, program chairman, and Eric W. Carlson.

POE SCHOLARSHIP

ALS 1975 - American Literary Scholarship: An Annual/ 1975 - is now in print. Prof. Donald B. Stauffer is to be commended for a discriminating and objective survey of the year's Poe criticism, pp. 35-58. The March 1976 issue of *American Literature* carried a lead article by David W. Butler, "Usher's Hypochondriasis: Mental Alienation and Romantic Idealism in Poe's Gothic Tales," which sets forth significant parallels between the medical and the mystical aspects of Usher's mind.

Recent dissertations, 1976 (continued): Bretz, O.S.U., Sister Joan Helene, "The Tragicomic *Biron* in Hawthorne and Poe: Dimensions of Irony within Their Fiction," October, 2178-A, Saint Louis. Kirkland, Joseph Madison, "Poe's Universe: A Critical Study of *Eureka*," August, 970-A, Texas Christian. Savarese, John Edmund, "Some Theories of Short Fiction in America in the Nineteenth Century: Poe, Hawthorne, and James," September, 1555-A-1556-A, Princeton. Wilson, Harry B., "Psychological Projection in Six Romantic Poems, English and American," December, 3631-A, California at Davis.

1977 (to date): Billy, Theodore M., "Poe's Rhetoric of Farce: Protean Language in the Comic Tales," September, 1384-A-1385-A, New York at Binghamton. Page, Peter Crozer, "Poe's Ironic Universe: Art and Alienation in *Eureka* and the Prose Works," February, 5124-A-5125-A, Indiana. Sharp, Roberta Ilene, "The Problem of Knowledge in Poe's Scientific Prose," September, 1395-A-1396-A, Kansas State. Soule, George H. Jr., "Poe, Byron, and *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*," August, 792-A, New Mexico.

CORRECTION

In my review of *Topic 30: A Poe Miscellany* (May 1977 Newsletter) Gerald Kennedy's article on *Pym* was described as "almost identical" with his paper at the PSA meeting in New York (MLA). The paper read, which I assumed to be the same as the one submitted to me in advance, was actually a largely revised version—a fact not communicated to me either by the author or by our program chairman. My apologies to Prof. Kennedy. We hope for better communication in the future.

E. W. Carlson

The Poe House in Baltimore is closed while renovations are under way and until the Society finds a Curator.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF POE ABROAD

Prof. Cecil D. McVicker has been awarded a research grant by Iowa State University to begin preparation of a critical bibliography of European publications of Poe material, including articles, monographs, translations, etc., from 1968-77. (The bibliography of Dameron and Cauthen ends with 1967.) Excluding material in English, this bibliography will concentrate on Spain, France, and Italy, plus perhaps Germany, the USSR, and any other countries of Europe for which competent and willing colleagues can be found.

POE LECTURES

On Oct. 9, 1977, the 55th annual lecture of the Poe Society of Baltimore was presented by Professor B. F. Fisher IV, whose topic was "The Very Spirit of Cordiality: The Literary Uses of Alcohol and Alcoholism in the Tales of Edgar Allan Poe."

The Baltimore lecture of 1976 by Professor James W. Gargano, "The Masquerade Vision in Poe's Short Stories," is now available at \$2.50 per copy from Professor Alexander G. Rose, Poe Society of Baltimore, 402 E. Gittings Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21212, or at the Chicago PSA meeting. The Baltimore Society offers this and its earlier lectures to PSA members at 20% off list prices, plus 40¢ for postage:

Robert D. Jacobs, "The Courage of a Critic: Edgar Poe as Editor" (1971) 24 pp. List \$1.50

Eric W. Carlson, "Poe on the Soul of Man" (1973) 23 pp. List \$1.50

Burton R. Pollin, "Poe, Creator of Words" (1974) 85 pp. List \$5.00

John E. Reilly, "The Image of Poe in American Poetry" (1975) 36 pp. List \$2.75

Also from the Baltimore Society: A facsimile of the first edition of Poe's *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), produced with painstaking care by Wirth Bros. Printing Co. in 1939, when it sold for \$7.50. The remaining copies of this 1500 printing are now available to PSA members for \$2.50 less 10%, plus 38¢ mailing cost.

The Poe Studies Association and its *Newsletter* are independent of the journal *Poe Studies*, published at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99163, subscription \$3 per year (two issues, June, December).

NEW MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL FOR 1978

I wish _____, do not wish _____ to continue receiving *PSA Newsletter* (May, November).
(check one)

Enclosed is my \$3 check for dues and subscription for the calendar year 1978. (Checks should be made out to "Poe Studies Association" and mailed to Prof. Richard P. Benton, Dept. of English, Trinity College, Hartford, CT 06106).

NAME.....

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NEW POE TITLES

Barbara Moore, *The Fever Called Living*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1976. 350 pp. \$8.95.

Subtitled "A Biographical Novel of Edgar Allan Poe," this fictionalized narrative presents the story of Poe's life from April 1844, when he arrived in New York, to his death. Barbara Moore, with B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Arizona, is identified as "an award-winning journalist," as author of *Hard on the Road*. Being a novel, her imaginative reconstruction of Poe's last years contains no source notes or bibliography, but in an Author's Note she credits Ostrom's *Letters*, biographies by Quinn, Bittner, and Allen, Daniel Hoffman's *Poe*, Damon's *Chivers*, and Bayless's *Griswold*. The main narrative is set within the frame of a Prologue and an Epilogue, both dated Oct. 8, 1849, describing the composition of Griswold's infamous obituary of Poe for the *Tribune*. With Griswold identified as Poe's chief enemy, Ms. Moore presents a sympathetic portrait of Poe the man, attempting to redress the gross and often malicious distortions of the Griswold-inspired Poe legend. Interesting in style, and rich in details of Poe's active life as writer, editor, and family man, Ms. Moore's account dwells on Poe's literary feuds, on the jealousies among his literary lady admirers, on Mrs. Clemm and Virginia, on the desperate family circumstances, including malnutrition, and on Poe's efforts to carry on with his writing (especially the composition of "The Raven"). In the process we meet Griswold, Horace Greeley, Nathaniel Willis, Thomas Holley Chivers, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Sarah Helen Whitman, Fanny Osgood, Cornelius Mathews, Dr. English, Dr. Moran, and Dr. Francis, and others. But much as we may enjoy this social biography of Poe's final five years, we are left hungering for the inner reality of Poe the artist. Some day, we trust, there will be an "interpretive" and "spiritual" biography of Poe as fiction writer, thinker, and poetic mind.

—Eric W. Carlson

INTRODUCTION TO POE: A THEMATIC READER

This text, edited by Eric W. Carlson, is no longer available from Scott, Foresman. A revised edition is planned. Meanwhile, still in print are *The Recognition of Edgar Allan Poe: Selected Criticism Since 1829* (U of Michigan Press), both in cloth and paperback (\$2.95), and *A Casebook on Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher"* (Charles Merrill Publishing Co., Columbus, Ohio), \$2.50.

WHO'S WHERE?

Please notify the editors if you know the address of any of these.

Abel, David	Green, A. Wigfall	Neni, Charles N.
Alexander, Jean	Green, George H.	O'Connor, Roger
Barondes, Stanley	Greenwood, J. Arthur	Rayan, Krishna
Besker, Carol	Greer, H. Allan	Rea, Jay
Bruce, P.A.	Harwell, Richard	Roman, Robert C.
Cioran, E.M.	Hawkins, John	Schwartz, Arthur
Commer, Fred. W.	Hoffmeister, Chas. C.	Sheehan, Peter J.
Cross, Sally L.	Kisner, Sister M.	Skell, Bonnie L.
Culhane, Mary	Lowndes, Robt. A.W.	Snider, Harry C.
Davis, Loy E.	Maddison, Carol	Stein, Aaron Marc
Diskin, Patrick	Marcade, Maurice	Stewart, Charles D.
Fink, William J.	(France)	Strickland, David
Ginsberg, David	Mottram, Eric	Stromberg, Jean S.
Grant, Vernon	Mourier, Maurice	Zion, Rhoda Piner
	(France)	

John Carl Miller, *Building Poe Biography*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1977. 297 pp., \$20.

John Carl Miller's *Building Poe Biography* is the first of a projected four-volume study of the materials from which John Henry Ingram built his biographies of Poe. Volumes Two and Three will cover the letters Sarah Helen Whitman wrote to Ingram "as well as important articles about Poe and his works that Ingram wrote and published during the 1870's." Volume Four "will pick up with Ingram's struggles, achievements, and defeats, from 1880 through 1916, when he attempted to claim and hold an indefensible position as the sole arbiter of all things concerning Poe." Professor Miller does not make clear whether the whole series will bear the title of the first volume or whether each volume will be given its own.

The volume now printed is wide ranging. It opens with a brief sketch of Ingram and of the status of Poe's reputation when Ingram began to take an active interest in it. The book then prints and comments upon eighty-six letters which Miller has selected from the Ingram Collection at the University of Virginia and groups them into six chapters according to correspondents: Maria Clemm, Rosalie Poe, William Hand Browne of Baltimore, Marie Louise Shew (Houghton), Annie Richmond, and George W. Eveleth. The closing chapter is a brief (ten-page) survey of Ingram's work on Poe biography up to the publication in 1880 of his two-volume *Edgar Allan Poe: His Life, Letters, and Opinions*. Miller has furnished a useful appendix identifying "names, topics, newsclippings, and letters frequently mentioned in the text" and also has furnished two annotated bibliographies, one of Ingram's works concerning Poe and the other of works Ingram published about subjects other than Poe.

Though it does print and annotate important letters which Ingram used, the book is a distinct disappointment because Miller makes almost no effort to explain *how* Ingram used the letters, *how* he fashioned this material into his biographies of Poe. More often than not, Miller is content simply with isolating the "facts" (the italics are his) which Ingram garnered. In light of the title to the book, of the publisher's claim that it "presents these letters with commentary on how Ingram employed the information given him," and of Miller's own confidence that his readers will "watch Poe biography slowly taking shape in these pages," *Building Poe Biography* does not fulfill its expectations.

John E. Reilly

MASTERPIECE THEATRE PRESENTS DICKENS AND POE

In the recent ten-part series on the life of Charles Dickens presented by the Public Broadcasting System, episode nine imaginatively depicted a meeting of Poe and Dickens. Although there is no documented record of such a meeting, the producer gave himself free rein to represent Poe in the stereotyped fashion—as a brash flatterer and self-promoter imposing himself on the famous, and, under the excitement of a convivial occasion, overindulging in drink and associating with low women and opium addicts. At midnight of the following evening, Dickens joins Poe at the bedside of M. Valdemar, Poe being the mesmerizer who, when the dead patient is released from his trance and collapses in dissolution, laughs madly at the fleeing, horrified Dickens. Alistair Cooke's concluding comment on the fictional nature of the Valdemar scene is made in such a casual, quiet way that the uninformed is not likely to distinguish fiction from fact. We trust that you have written to your local PBS channel objecting to the gross misrepresentation of Poe in that episode, as well as to the treatment of Dickens throughout the series. Some weeks ago a letter to the *New York Times* drew upon the Dickens biography by Edgar Johnson, as a source for the true facts, in criticizing this series for its numerous distortions. The letter did not, however, mention the alleged Poe-Dickens meeting.

—E.W.C.

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