To participate in an established or proposed project:

Write to the contact person listed in the SCE PROJECTS section of the newsletter.

To inquire about a new project or to propose one:

Contact the Executive Directors.

To inquire about or propose sessions for the MLA or regional MLAs:

Contact either the Executive Directors or the liaison listed in the SCE PROJECTS section.

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**In This Issue**

Letter from Cleveland .................................................. 2
Electronic College of Theory ........................................ 4
Current Projects .......................................................... 5
Coming Events ............................................................. 11
SCE Projects in Print .................................................. 15
From the Mailbag ......................................................... 16
Good Text . . . with Dr. Truth ......................................... 18
Letter from Cleveland

We have had several requests that the newsletter publish calls for papers in a timelier and more useful fashion. The problem occurs mainly with the MLA and the regional MLAs, which have deadlines that fall neatly between our current twice-a-year publishing schedule. We now try to mail by May 1 and November 15, which means that the spring issue appears just after panels must be selected and that the fall issue often goes to press before a new topic or chair has been picked.

One solution would be to publish the Fall/Winter issue after the first of the year, when it could more easily include information on the subsequent MLA and all the upcoming regional MLAs except the Northeast (which meets in the spring rather than in the fall). If this seems to be a change worth making, let us know.

Those of you not currently in the Electronic College may want to be aware that it broadcasts all calls for papers (both for SCE events and for others our members want publicized) as they are received.

On another topic, we are pleased to announce that Dick Ohmann has been elected to a second term as President of the SCE.

His was the only office filled at the 1991 business meeting, but as you might notice from the masthead, the terms of three members of the Board of Directors expire with the December 1992 meeting. Although we have not yet begun to set up the requisite Election Committee, we would appreciate receiving nominations from any of you. Any SCE member can nominate another member by submitting a letter to that effect along with a brief vita or biographical statement and an indication that the nominee is willing to serve. Send this to the SCE office by October 15, 1992. Election is by vote of the outgoing board, usually by mail ballot so that results are available before the business meeting at MLA.

Last but not least, thanks to all of you who have renewed your memberships for 1992. If you have not, we will have indicated that on the back cover in some suitably beseeching, nay demanding way. One benefit of being a paid-up member is that you are entitled to a discount on the volume of selected papers from last year’s conference on Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship. See SCE PROJECTS IN PRINT for complete information about ordering.

Sincerely,

Gary Lee Stonum

Martha Woodmansee

SCE News and Notices new series, 5 (Spring/Summer 1992)
The Electronic College of Theory

The Electronic College is now a "moderated mail reflector," meaning that we bundle messages received from the members and redistribute them via electronic mail. Whereas you once had to ask about joining the college (whereupon you received a set of hard-to-follow and harder-to-execute instructions), we now automatically enroll any SCE member for whom we have a valid electronic mail address. [If you want to be included on the College mailing list but have not otherwise let us know, send email to xx124@po.cwru.edu or write to the SCE office.]

The contents of the College’s mailings include discussions threads on topics of interest to members (Eribon’s biography of Foucault being a recent example) and news or announcements of the sort that appear in this issue. Indeed, many of the project descriptions, conference announcements and calls for papers included in this issue first went out over the College.

Electronic mailings go out from the college at irregular intervals, normally five to six times a month; each mailing usually includes somewhere between two and five separate messages.

Those who do not have access to electronic mail but would like to contribute (calls for papers, announcements of special issues of journals, etc.) should write to Gary Lee Stonum at the SCE.

Current Projects

Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship

Contact: Martha Woodmansee (English), Case Western Reserve University or Peter Jaszi (Law), The American University

Selected papers from the 1991 conference at CWRU are now available as a special issue of the Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal. Details may be found in SCE Projects in Print.

One other offshoot of that conference is an article that appeared in Lingua Franca for October 1991. Entitled "Keep Off the (Intellectual) Property" and conducted as an interview with Peter Jaszi, the article was mainly restricted to explaining how copyright law affects scholarly work in the humanities and social sciences.

Two major events are coming up. For its 1991 convention the MLA has agreed to devote a forum and four workshops to examining how current academic practices are affected by copyright regulation and how scholarship can in turn help shape the law. Details may be found in COMING EVENTS. In addition, an international conference will be held in March 1993 at the Rockefeller Foundation center in Bellagio, Italy, to explore how modern notions of authorship affect the distribution of cultural artefacts. Plans for the Bellagio conference are not yet complete; a fuller report on it will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Cultural Studies and Pedagogy
As what may be the culmination of this project, a very successful pair of panels were presented at the 1991 Modern Language Association meeting. (Far more successful than the MLA anticipated; dozens of people had to be turned away from the sessions because MLA coordinators had not booked a large enough room. Our apologies to those of you who were not able to get in.)

The New Economic Criticism

Contact: Martha Woodmansee and Gary Lee Stonum, (English) Case Western Reserve University, Donald McCloskey (Economics) University of Iowa

In the wake of a panel at the 1991 Midwest Modern Language Association meeting and a Literary Criticism Division panel at the 1991 Modern Language Association meeting, a full-scale conference is now being planned for October 14-17, 1993, Case Western Reserve University.

Abstracts, paper proposals, and proposals to design and organize panels are invited on all aspects of the relation between cultural and economic exchange. One topic we anticipate being addressed is the how the disciplines of economics and literary studies understand such notions as value, circulation, exchange, property, and so on. Another is the situation of Marxist and neo-Marxist thought after the fall of the Soviet Union. The two topics are only examples, however, and we encourage proposals that address cultural and economic exchange from other angles and with other aims. In particular, we encourage specific historical studies as well as theoretical reflection and analysis.

Rhetoric(s) for English Studies

Contact: Don Bialostosky (English), University of Toledo or Steven Mailloux (English and Comparative Literature), University of California at Irvine

Papers have now been selected for the first meeting of this project, at an SCE session during the 1992 MLA. See COMING EVENTS for a list of speakers.

Woman - Nation - Narrative

Contact: Anuradha Dingwaney Needham (English), Oberlin College

The first full gathering of participants in this project will take place at the 1992 Midwest Modern Language Association meeting, where both the SCE sessions will be devoted to the project. For a listing of participants and the papers that will be available see COMING EVENTS.

Benjamin Across Borders

Contact: Andrew Lakritz (English) Miami University and Rita Barnard (English) University of Pennsylvania

By the time the newsletter goes to press, the Benjamin symposium will have taken place at Miami University, April 17-18, 1992. Scheduled speakers include:

Douglas Kellner (Texas, Austin) "Benjamin and the Gulf War"
Martin Schwan (California, Irvine) "Benjamin’s Concept of History"
Respondents: Gerry O’Sullivan (Pennsylvania) and Allegra De Laurentiis (Miami)

James Rolleston (Duke) "The Book of the City: Contemporary Readings of the Arcades Project"
Alexander Gelley (California, Irvine) "Benjamin’s City Text"
Respondents: Holger Breil (Indiana State) and Herman Rapaport (Iowa)

Jennifer Berkshire (Miami) "Dissolving 'Myth' into the Space of History: Walter Benjamin’s Spatial Imagination"
Angelika Rauch (Minnesota) "The Cognitive Body of Walter Benjamin’s Concept of History"
Respondents: Paul Smith (Carnegie-Mellon) and David Carter (Miami)

Robert Ray (Florida) "Snapshots: The Beginnings of Photography"
Lynn Vietl (California, Berkeley) "The Arcadian Aesthetics of Detection from Poe to Potter"
Respondents: Britton Harwood (Miami) and Jane E. Stein (Miami)
Suggested Projects

In the Wake of Backlash: Refocusing Feminism

Contact: Laura Donaldson, Literature and Women’s Studies, Antioch College or Lila Hanft, English, Case Western Reserve University.

For the last decade neoconservative critiques of feminism have been institutionally powerful but, until relatively recently, invisible. Now, however, the highly publicized debates between such feminists as Susan Faludi (Backlash: The Undeclared War Against Women) and Camille Paglia (Sexual Personae) have demonstrated a need to reframe feminist goals. During the same decade, however, feminism has been mounting critiques from within of its own blindness to race, class, and other forms of difference; for a non-racist, -clalist and -homophobic feminism, the formulation of universal goals is necessarily problematic. The problem is how to formulate feminist goals that contest neoconservatism but do not rely on the universalisms of earlier feminism. We welcome ideas about how to answer this question. We hope to form a group working toward a 1993 MLA panel.

The Current Moment in Theory

Contact: Jeffrey Williams, English, East Carolina University

Terry Eagleton comments in The Significance of Theory that the 1970s were the time of great theories (Structuralism, Deconstruction, Feminism, Marxism, Reader Response, and so on, all with capital letters). The decade also marks the time of the institutional ascension of theory, the time when people were hired specifically to teach theory, when many journals focusing on theory were initiated, when conferences (sometimes heatedly) addressed issues in theory, and when theory became part of the curriculum. To spin out a narrative, theory went from rags and resistance to assimilation and riches.

Since the mid-eighties, the position of theory has changed. The current moment is marked by an entirely different relation to theory, or rather by a different institutional shape and space of theory. It is a different generation—in the computer sense—of theory. In general, there has been a decided turn away from the dream of theory, that a Theory could solve all our ills, and away from the contestory mode of articulating those Theories. The current moment seems marked by a number of features: a turn to history and culture, an assimilatory tone (one can be a deconstructive marxist feminist postcolonialist, without schizophrenia) a more reflective turn (both toward examining our institutions and profession and toward a more personal style), a more experimental turn (in expanding or questioning the sterile style of academic discourse), and a turn distinctly away from Theory to theories and practices.

The project will look at the ways we can define this moment. The hope is to answer the question, where are we now? Another way of putting this is to say that the project will try to sketch the purview and prospects for theory in the future, looking at the possibilities for theory as an institutional space, as a genre, as discourse, and as a professional device.

Emotions Criticism and History of Emotion

Contact: Bradley Rubidge, Comparative Literature, Stanford University

Research on such subjects as theories of emotion, the emotional impact of literature and art, the representation of emotion, the history of emotion and theories of emotion. At this point a mailing list is being established of persons interested in such topics, in order to facilitate correspondence and possible exchanges of preprints or work in progress.
The Scholarly Conference

Temporary Contact: Gary Lee Stonum (English) Case Western Reserve.

This project has run aground, at least temporarily. There continues to be interest in examining the art and science of academic conferences, with the possible aim of compiling a handbook of serious reflections and practical advice. Persons interested in taking a lead in this work should contact Gary Stonum.

Theory in an Electronic Age

Contact: Gary Lee Stonum (English), Case Western Reserve University

The press of other business has somewhat left this project in the lurch, yet a number of members have expressed interest in it. In the hope of identifying a project leader and some active participants, a mailing will soon go out to everyone we know of who has mentioned an interest in the topic. [To make sure of being included in that mailing, please write to Gary Stonum by May 30.]

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MLA and Regional MLA Liaisons

Modern Language Association: Martha Woodmansee and Gary Lee Stonum, English, Case Western Reserve University

Midwest Modern Language Association: Martha Woodmansee, English, Case Western Reserve University

Northeast Modern Language Association: Crystal Bartolovich, Humanities, Drexel University

South Atlantic Modern Language Association: Elizabeth Meese, English, University of Alabama

South Central Modern Language Association: Patrick Murphy, English, Northeast Louisiana University.

SCE News and Notices new series, 3 (Spring/Summer 1992)

Coming Events

October 15 - 17, 1992
Rocky Mountain MLA

Homer Pettcy (Arizona) has organized a panel on "Cults of Cultural Theory." Speakers include Pettcy, Gretchen Ronnow (Wayne State College) and Jennifer Jarkens (Arizona Quarterly).

October 29 - 31, 1992
South Central MLA

The chair of the SCE session will be Tom Samet (Louisiana Scholars' College at Northwestern State) and the secretary Theron Britt (Memphis State). Papers include:

"Nietzsche, Genealogy, and the Will to Truth," Peter Norberg (Rice)
"Rhetorical Theory and Politics," Michael Bernard-Donals (Mississippi State)
"F.R. Leavis: Literary versus Commercial Value," James R. Bennett and Scott Richardson (Arkansas)
"Q.D. Leavis and Virginia Woolf on the Early Jane Austen," Karen Cole (Louisiana Scholars' College)
The SCE's two sessions have been put together by Anuradha Dingwaney Needham (Oberlin) and Mary Layoun (Wisconsin, Madison). Both will be devoted to the Woman - Nation - Narrative project. As is customary with the MMLA, copies of the papers will be available before the conference, and the panels will be devoted to discussing them rather than reading them to the audience.

A. Woman, Nation, Narrative

"Three Couples Under Stress: Class, Gender and the Contours of Recent Philippine Nationalism," Michael Bodden (Wisconsin, Madison)

"Imaginary Homelands: The Interruption of Indian Nationalism by the Micro-Politics of the Domestic," Sangeeta Ray (Maryland)

"A Daughter's Quest in Marta Lynch's La Señora Ordóñez", Damarys Lacayo-Salas (Purdue)

"Production of the Gendered Post-Colonial Subject Amidst Oppositional Discourses: Tsitsi Dangaremba's Nervous Conditions," Khani Begum (Bowling Green)

"Body and Nation in New Caribbean Narratives: Mayra Montero," Roberta L. Salper (Point Park College)

"Beyond Men's Error: Black Women Dreaming America at the Turn of the Century," Ann duCille (Wesleyan)

B. Colonialism, Nationalism, and the Gendered Subject

"Intersections of Silence: Subjectivities of Race and Gender in the Lives and Words of Third World Israeli Women Writers," Smadar Lavie (California, Davis)

"Violence Within, Violence Without: A Discussion of Motif and Critical Debate in Rigoberta Menchú's I ... Rigoberta," Robin Jones (Colorado, Boulder)

"Writing the Body as a Women in the GDR Socialist State," Karen Janowsky, (Wisconsin, Madison)

"Making Difference, Making Profit, and Being a Man: The Genderfication of Moll Flanders in the State of Virginia," Indira Karamcheti (Wesleyan)

"Empire, Sexuality, and the Reproduction of Domestic Space in Frankenstein, Lawrence Needham (Oberlin)

SCE News and Notices new series, 5 (Spring/Summer 1992)

November 5 - 7, 1992  
Midwest MLA

"Going Native: The Cultural Production of National Bodies in Early Modern England," Gary Spear (Wesleyan)

November 12 - 14, 1992  
South Atlantic MLA

Martina Sciolino (English, Southern Mississippi) will chair an SCE session on "Feminism and Postmodernism: the End of Desire?" Details will be available in the next issue of the newsletter.

December 26 - 30, 1992  
Modern Language Association

The project on Rhetoric(s) for English Study will sponsor one SCE session, which will include papers by Jennifer Jackson (Penn State), John Schilb (Maryland), Arabella Lyons (Illinois, Chicago), and James Phelan (Ohio State). Further details will be available in the next issue of the newsletter.

In addition, the SCE is sponsoring a forum and a series of workshops on "The Law of Texts: Copyright in the Academy," as part of the continuing project on Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship. Forum participants include Andrea Lunsford (Ohio State), Martha Woodmansee (CWRU), Peter Jaszi (Law, American University), James Boyle (Law, American University), and Stanley Fish (Duke).


A workshop on "Author-ity in New Media: Academic Practice in the Digital Environment" will include James Sosnoski (Miami) Jay David Bolter (Georgia Tech), Pamela Samuelson (Law, Pittsburgh), and Gary Lee Stornum (CWRU).

A workshop on "Collaboration: Institutional and Cultural Constraints on Cultural Production" will include Lisa Ede (Oregon State), Rosemary Coombe (Law, Toronto), Mary Layoun (Wisconsin, Madison), Andrea Lunsford, and David Sanjek (Broadcast Music, Inc.).

A workshop on "The Construction of Authorship: Agendas for Research and Action" will include Martha Woodmansee, Margreta De Grazia...
Contributions are invited for an SCE panel entitled "Theory Blind." The organizers are Crystal Bartolovich (Humanities, Drexel) and Max Thomas (English, Pennsylvania). The following describes some of the assumptions, questions, and issues to be explored by the panel.

The bright burst of theory both dazzles and screens; its assimilation into the institution of the university both enrages and enables. Who is blind(ed)? Who pulls the shades with that sinister slashing [notion, arid what gets covered? Is this a generational politics, with one generation resisting the rise, another having worked through those early texts by the light of furtive candles, underground as it were, and yet another generation dutifully taking notes in class? Or is it a matter of academic power: how to cite your way up the academic ladder? What kind of institutionalization of theory has taken place? Is theory dead (long live theory), or just being born? And how might a panel behave in order to address these matters anyway? What is the problem at hand—to diagnose? predict? prescribe? Has theory, potentially so radical and yet (perhaps) subdued into curricular docility, reached a point for self-examination, or for parody? Who is theory when theory is at home, anyway, and what constitutes that (mobile) (home)? Addressing these questions, hoping the letters arrive, might well be an opening gambit in an investigation of the institutional politics and poetics of the "I".

As long as supplies last SCE members are eligible for a discount on the selected papers from the 1991 conference, "Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship," which is being published as a special issue of the Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal. To order, send a check for $10 to:

Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal
55 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10003

Please note on both the check and on the order that you are a member of the Society for Critical Exchange.

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Intellectual Property and the Construction of Authorship

Courts of law are being asked to recognize the mark of an author in situations more and more remote from the moonlit tower and freezing garret of the romantic poets. Yet the imagery of "creative genius" provided the historical rationale for copyright, and it remains essential to the rhetoric of today's courtroom.

The collection revives the interdisciplinary dialogue out of
which our idea of an author emerged, addressing both this idea's history and its present and future utility.


Introduction by Peter Jaszi and Martha Woodmansee. May, 1992, 400 pages
Regular price $13; price for SCE members $10

From the Mailbag

The Center for Literature and Psychoanalysis (English Department, Kent State University, Kent OH 44242) will sponsor an institute on "Psychological Change and Social Change: Freud and Lacan," May 26 - June 13, 1992. Enrollment is limited to practicing clinicians, faculty, and graduate students; tuition will be $200.

For further information, write to the Center directors (Robert Bamberg, Mark Bracher, and Vera Camden).

Jeffrey Williams, the new editor of The Minnesota Review, writes to announce the following special topics and to invite contributions (papers/fiction/poetry):

The Politics of AIDS (on AIDS; the public image of AIDS, the politics of medical research, health care policies.) Contributions by October 1, 1992.

The Institution of English (the politics of the formation of English studies; the institutional context of literature; the concerns of the theory market.) Contributions by March 1, 1993

Address all correspondence to Jeffrey Williams, Editor, Minnesota Review, Department of English, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353

Contributions are invited for the Sixth International Mikhail Bakhtin Conference, in Mexico City, July 5 - 9, 1993. Abstracts (in English or Spanish) must be submitted no later than October 15, 1992. For further information write to Lauro Zavala or Ramón Alvarado, Departamento de Educación y Comunicación, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana - Xochimilco, 04960 Mexico, D.F.

New Books by SCE Members:


Dear Dr. Truth:

You still haven’t answered my question. How many graduate students do you need to change a light bulb?

M. Berle
Klown Kollege
Sarasota, Florida

Dear Uncle Miltie:

Only one, dearie, but it takes eight years.

Dear Dr. Truth:

I am from the government, and I am here to help you.

In an effort to try to ascertain with some assurance that the process of tenure evaluation and establishment in college and university departments of humanities or letters or equivalent nomenclatural terms for such departments attain a more equitable set of procedures and processes, the Secretary of Regulation seeks to propose a standardized review protocol. Below find a draft of Uniform Voluntary Mandatory Tenure Guidelines for the Twenty-First Century, document number 1711T/34*GOTRIBE94*usw-9, (hereinafter UMVTG-21C) for your comment.

The Secretary especially wishes extensive peer review on this proposal. However, as no one can be the peer of Dr. Truth, on behalf of the Secretary and the Department, I hereby issue this Request For Comments with the understanding that yours will be the deciding voice.

The Secretary asks me to add this personal note: "Doc, honey, I need you on this one."

L. Dupont Fipse, Ed.D.
Under-Secretary of Regulation
Washington, D.C.

UMVTG-21C

To survive in the profession requires tenacity and adaptability as well as resourceful, even ingenious, use of the materials available to you. The award of tenure suggests that a candidate can be expected to live up to these demands. Unfortunately, however, past accomplishments do not always indicate future performance. Thus, the following examination has been devised in order to measure general aptitude for survival and also propensity for continued intellectual activity. Moreover, the examination has been designed to do so without regard to disciplinary specialty, theoretical orientation, race, gender, class, ethnic origin, or personal hygiene. Consider then the following scenario and respond to the questions below. You have 55 minutes. Spelling counts. Use only one side of the examination book.

You have been stranded on an uninhabited island with only the following items:

- Three Public Enemy CDs (Welcome to the Terrordrome, It Takes a Nation of Millions . . . , and Fear of a Black Planet)
- One package Blue Diamond Strike Anywhere kitchen matches
- Four hotel towels embroidered with the abstract of your dissertation
- The final papers, ungraded, from the largest undergraduate class you teach
- Volume 2 (P-Z) of the Compact OED, without magnifying glass
- Four packages of airline salted peanuts
- A sealed envelop inside which is written Dr. Truth’s secret identity

1. Written Assessment
A. Convene an appropriate MLA panel to discuss this hypothetical situation; provide in 500 words or less a description of the problematic the panel will address, its objectives in doing so, and the likely consensus the discussion will produce. If you require Audio-Visual equipment, you must request it not later than April 9. We mean it.

B. Indicate which Gilligan's Island character your reaction would most resemble in the first 24 hours of your ordeal. Estimate the likelihood that you would notice the similarity at the time.

C. Invent a field of post-futural studies, explain how your own work so far has been integral to it, then establish a Center for it on the island and apply for funding.

D. Explain whether Lee Atwater can see you from heaven.

2. Oral assessment (questions to be answered, impromptu, before the tenure review committee)

D. What have you or your Center done to assure that your work will meet the needs of the textually challenged?

E. Would you open the envelope?

F. Voulez-vous oublier Foucault? How about Yves Montand?

Dear Fips:

Your examination is not acceptable, and I do not recommend it be revised before resubmitting. After all, who could ever forget Yves Montand, clambering through the pool of spilled oil in Wages of Fear? Besides, post-futural studies is always already outmoded. For the 21st century you will need something a little more, shall we say, surtemporalistisch.

SCE News and Notices new series, 5 (Spring/Summer 1992)