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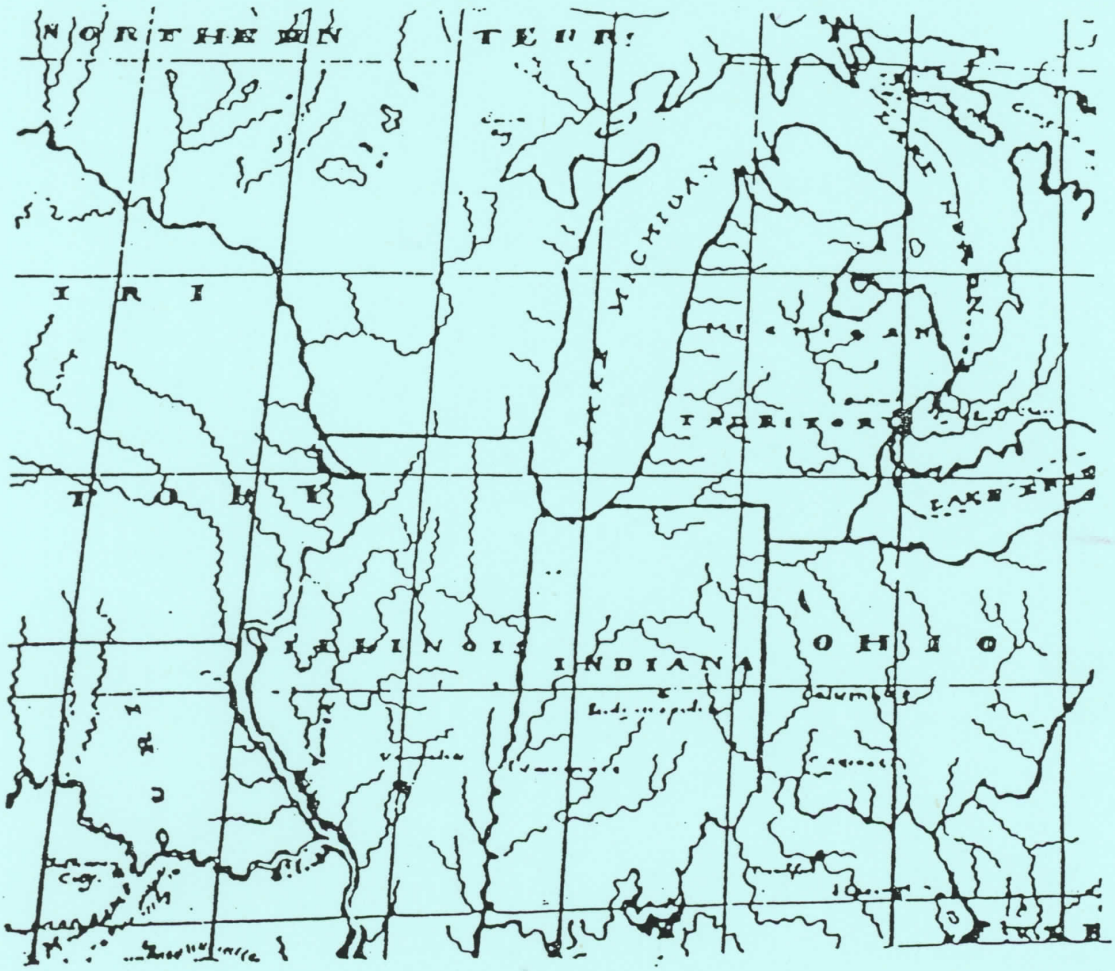

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Newsletter

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As the Century Turns; Midwestern Popular Fiction

Patricia A. Anderson

With the 20th Century soon to turn into the 21st Century, I decided to look at two novels with Midwestern settings, one of them popular in the 1890s and one popular in the 1990s. These novels are The Gentleman from Indiana (1899) and The Bridges of Madison County (1992).

I chose these two because they were both first novels, both were highly popular, and both their authors wrote additional books which were also very popular. Both have small-town rural settings, and both have main characters who were not native to these settings but rather came into them. I wanted to examine characteristics such as descriptions of the Midwest, descriptions of the people, and attitudes toward the Midwest and the people of the Midwest.

I'll begin with the earlier one. The Gentleman from Indiana, published in 1899, was Booth Tarkington's first novel, and he went on to become one of the most popular novelists during the first third of the 20th Century. Later such novels as The Two VanRevels (1902), Penrod (1914), and Seventeen (1916) were all best sellers.

The Gentleman from Indiana, published by Doubleday & McClure Company, was called a "Better Seller" by Frank Luther Mott in his book Golden Multitudes: The Story of best Sellers in the United States (R.R. Bowker, 1947, 3rd printing, 1966). A "Better Seller", according to Mott, was a book which hadn't quite reached the total sales of a "best seller," sales equal to one percent of the U.S. population for the decade in which it was published, and The Gentleman from Indiana would have needed sales of 625,000 for the decade 1890-1899. Three best sellers for that time period were The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,, Black Beauty, and In His Steps, the latter with a Midwestern setting. As a "better seller" for that decade The Gentleman from Indiana shared that distinction with The Jungle Book and Captains Courageous.

The novel is 384 pages long in a Grosset & Dunlap reprint which I have used for this study. Inside the cover is a price in ink of 25 cents, which means that my husband and I found it some time ago at a used book sale. With ads for other books taking up six more pages at the rear of the volume, it is probable that this copy sold for 75 cents when it was new, just as the other advertised books had.

The setting for the novel is central Indiana, "the heart of the flatlands" (2), in the county of Carlow in the latter part of the 19th Century. Much of the story takes place in the small town of Plattville, the county seat, and like much Midwestern literature of that

period, the novel begins with a brief description of a train ride and then the railway station at Plattville.

> There is a fertile stretch of flat lands in Indiana where unagrarian Eastern travellers, glancing from car-windows, shudder and return their eyes to interior upholstery, preferring even the swaying caparisons of a Pullman to the monotony without. (1)

Tarkington continues to describe the landscape and then turns to the station itself:

> On the station platforms there are always two or three wooden packing-boxes, apparently marked for travel, but they are sacred from disturbance and remain on the platform forever; probably the right train never comes along. (1-2)

These packing-boxes serve as seats for a few station loafers, who, Tarkington writes, look at the trains with "...the pity an American feels for a fellow being who does not live in his town." (2)

One day a young man arrives from the East, and it appears he has come to stay. This is John Harkless, some years out of college, a man who was born in Indiana but had been taken East as a very young child. He has now purchased the newspaper the "Herald" without knowing it was a failing enterprise whose past owner had recently left town with all the subscription money.

His arrival causes a sensation for "...people did not come to Plattville to live, except through the inadvertancy of being born there," (6) and the townspeople do not expect the paper to thrive. Harkless, however, takes on the corrupt political establishment and prevents its candidate, Rodney McCune, from receiving the nomination to Congress. In the process Harkless makes both friends and enemies, and the newspaper thrives.

McCune threatens Harkless with action by the "White Caps", a KKK-like group, if he remains in the area, but Harkless continues his crusade, undertaking also a war against the "White Caps." He finds assistance from another relative newcomer. This one has a mysterious background for he had suddenly appeared in Plattville about ten years earlier; an educated man, one formerly associated with a college, Mr. Fisbee had been the high school principal until age slowed him down and he was discharged. Since then he had taken to drink. Harkless hires him as a reporter, and then, as Tarkington writes, "The years drifted very slowly, and to him it seemed they went by while he stood far aside and could not even see them move." (13-14)

One day another newscomer arrived, again at the train station, and is met by the wealthy Judge Briscoe, his daughter Minnie, and Mr. Fisbee, the latter's presence being of great interest to the onlookers. This newcomer is Helen Sherwood from the city of Rouen who had met the Judge's daughter at school in the East.

As the novel proceeds John Harkless and Helen meet, and John realizes that she is the counsin of his best college friend, Tom Meredith, who now lives in the city of Rouen. Not only is she Tom Meredith's cousin, but she is the same person he had briefly met years ago while on a visit with Tom to Maine. In fact, the woman he sometimes day-dreams of one day finding was a taller version of Helen. When John looks at her "He noted that her hair curled over her brow...He did not care for tall girls; he had not cared for them for almost half an hour. It was so much more beautiful to be dainty, and small and piquant." (74). John, of course, falls in love with Helen at this time in Plattville, Indiana, and romance, politics, and violence combine to provide a satisfying story.

Let me add that humor, too, plays a part in this novel. Often it is dry humor, the type used by a local man named Mr. Martin, who, when he first sees Helen Sherwood, says to a companion, "I expect, maybe, Miss Sherwood is one of these here summer girls. I've heard of 'em but I never seen one before." (21)

One of the amusements in this Indiana town of the 1890s, one in addition to observing and commenting on fellow citizens, is the circus which comes to town and is described at some length by Tarkington. Crowds fill the streets of Plattville and merriment and mischief abound. Two con men run a shell game, taking money from those who can ill afford to lose it. John Harkless helps to jail them and is threatened by them.

Later, when Harkless disappears, the townspeople believe that the "White Caps" have him, and when Harkless is found beaten, shot, and close to death, the people are about to attack the "White Caps" where they live at Six-Cross-Roads and take revenge for the attack on Harkless. However, it was the con men who had taken Harkless and they are recaptured and again jailed.

Harkless had been found in the railroad freight yards and is very near death as he lies in the hospital there. He is visited by his old college friend Tom Meredith who helps him to recover. Meanwhile back in Plattville Fisbee and Helen Sherwood keep the newspaper going with Helen turning out to be Fisbee's daughter who had been raised by the Sherwoods when her mother died and Fisbee's university work had ended when a new administration had abolished his chair in archaeology.

The corrupt politician Rodney McCune reenters the story here and attempts a political comeback, but instead Harkless is nominated for Congress,and as the novel ends, it is clear who the next gentleman from Indiana will be and that Helen will be that gentleman's wife.

As David Anderson has written, Abraham Lincoln is a powerful symbol in Midwestern fiction, and John Harkless's description is certainly Lincolnesque. Tarkington writes that Harkless was

> "...a very tall, thin, rather stooping young man
> with a sallow, melancholy face and deep-set eyes that looked

tired." (26)

Harkless certainly fits this pattern in both his appearance and goodness.

The first novel by Tarkington is well written and intricately plotted. I have simplified the plot here, but anyone reading the book today should be entertained by the twisting events which finally bring about a happy hopeful ending.

The Bridges of Madison County, on the other hand, has a simple plot structure and a sad ending. Published in 1992 by Warner Books, this small book,171 pages long, by Robert James Waller has been a best seller since that year. Waller has since published two additional novels, Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend and Border Music (1995). As of March 26, 1995, Bridges, in 7th place, has been on the New York Times Best Seller List for 137 weeks. On that same list his new Border Music was Number 2. An article in the Times of January 27, 1995 says that ten million copies of his first two books have been sold. Waller can certainly be classified as a very popular Midwestern writer, and two of his books have Midwestern settings. Bridges costs $16.95 and as of now has not appeared in a paperback edition as has Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend.

The reviewers haven't much liked Waller's novels, but they recognize his popularity. As critic Ruth Coughlin wrote in the Detroit News (Feb. 4, 1995), "...if you don't know who Waller is, then someone should call a Code Blue." Waller, a management professor in Iowa, became a media success early and the sales of The Bridges of Madison County soared.

Like the two main characters in The Gentleman from Indiana, those in Bridges are not native to rural Madison County, Iowa. Robert Kincaid had been born and raised in a small Ohio town, but had left in the 1930s to join the Army where he learned to be a photographer. After World War II he continued his photography successfully, travelling the world and placing much of his work with National Geographic magazine. With his parents both dead and his short marriage a failure, he is a loner now, living in Bellingham, Washington.

He receives an assignment from National Geographic to photograph the covered bridges in Madison County, Iowa, where he arrives in August, 1965. Probably most of you are familiar with the plot of this novel. It has even been caricatured in Doonesbury. Kincaid loads his pick up truck and drives to Iowa. In Madison County Robert meets Francesca Johnson, originally of Naples, Italy, a war bride now married to an Iowa farmer. When the two meet, she is 45 and Robert is 52, and her husband and two children are away at the Illinois State Fair when Kincaid pulls his pick-up into her yard asking for directions to Roseman Bridge, one of the seven he planned to photograph.

What follows is a love story compounded of mysticism, sensuality, loneliness, and finally death. Wallter uses a narrator at the beginning of the novel, a writer who has been asked by Francesca's now-grown son and daughter to tell their mother's love story which they learned about only after her

death. Waller uses letters, a journal, even an essay written by Kincaid and titled "Falling from Dimension Z", and ends with the narrator interviewing a jazz musician who knew Kincaid at the end of his life.

There are few descripsions of the Midwest in this novel. There are, however, numerous descriptions of Kincaid. I'll let you decide whether or not they are Lincolnesque descriptions. For example, the narrator describes him as he leaves for Madison County:

> Kincaid wore faded Levi's, well-used Red Wing field boots, a khaki shirt and orange suspenders. On his wide leather belt was fastened a Swiss army knife in its own case." (2)

And then, in Francesca's voice, "He was tall and thin and hard and he moved like the grass itself, without effort, gracefully. His silver-gray hair hung well below his ears and nearly always looked dishelved, as if he had just come in from a long sea voyage through a stiff wind and had tried to brush it into place with his hands.

His narrow face, high cheekbones, and hair falling over his forehead set off light blue eyes that seemed never to stop looking for the next photograph." (24-25)

There are many, many descriptions of Kincaid, fewer of Francesca. When Robert first sees her she "...was barefoot, wearing jeans and a faded blue workshirt with the sleeves rolled up, shirttail out. Her long black hair was fastened up by a tortoiseshell comb her father had given her when she left the old country."(27) Kincaid observes her as "...about five feet six, fortyish or a little older, pretty face, and a fine, warm body," (38) and "...there was intelligence, he could sense that." (39)

As I said earlier there is very little description of Iowa in this novel. There is, however, the same type of interest in and scrutiny of strangers which I also found in The Gentleman from Indiana. When Kincaid goes into a café to get a take-out coke, the, "...busy conversation stopped while they all looked him over," After a half page of conversation about him someone says, "sure does have long hair. Looks like one of them Beatle fellows, or what is it they been callin' some of them other people? Hippies, ain't that it?" (77,78)

Kincaid then muses:

> He's learned never to underestimate the telecommunicative flash of trivial news in small towns. Two million children could be dying of hunger in the Sudan, and that wouldn't cause a bump in consciousness. But Richard Johnson's wife seen with a long-haired stranger--now that was news (78)

At one point Kincaid asks Francesca "How do you like it here in Iowa?"

She knew that "the standard reply was 'just fine. It's quiet, the people are real nice.'" She talks about what she is supposed to say, qualities which she admits are mostly true but adds "...it's not what I dreamed about as a girl." (42)

As the story evolves Kincaid and Francesca fall deeply in love, and he asks her to go away with him, but Francesca knows that leaving would ruin her family's lives. The two never see each other again, but on her birthdays Francesca goes through a ritual which help her remember Kincaid. She tries to locate Kincaid after her husband's death, but he has disappeared. Finally in 1982 a letter arrives from a lawyer telling her of Kincaid's recent death and that his ashes had been scattered at Roseman Bridge. The lawyer also sends Robert's camera and a letter from him. When Francesca dies in 1989 she leaves instructions that her ashes be scattered at the same place.

As the centuries turn, so do the public's reading tastes. Tarkington's novel provided a good picture of the social and political life of characters who felt at home in their Midwestern towns, people who belonged. Waller's novel, on the other hand, gives us a picture of two people who are basically lonely people, two who are never really at home wherever they are, two people who don't belong but are looking for meaning in their lives and find each other.

Dimondale, Michigan

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Sherwood Anderson's Advice to Young Writers

David D. Anderson

Last Sunday afternoon I wandered into a remarkable place in Lansing called "The Publishers' Warehouse," where new books of every topic and description, unsold in their initial publications, are offered at thirty to ninety percent off their original prices. I browsed through the fiction section, where I found nothing I couldn't live without--there's a tremendous amount of bad fiction published these days--and then went on to biography. There I looked at a few things and then picked up Charles Molesworth's Marianne Moore: A Literary Life, published at $29.95 in 1990, now on sale at $4.99. It's a thick book, of almost 500 pages and, as such biographies often do, it reminded me of a comment made by the late Russel Nye, Pulitzer Prize winning biographer, whom I was fortunate to have as my graduate advisor and dissertation director at Michigan State more than thirty years ago.

The story is probably irrelevant, but I'll tell it anyway. My dissertation was called "Sherwood Anderson and the Meaning of the American Experience." It was a critical biography of 440 pages, and as Russ put the typescript on the table at my defense of it in my final oral examination, he set the tone of the session by remarking "There's more here about Sherwood Anderson than anyone ever need know. Any questions?"

Russ's remark was facetious, of course, and one can never know enough about Sherwood Anderson, so as I looked at the Moore biography I turned to the index, ran my finger down the "As" column, and sure enough there was the entry I always look for: "Anderson, Sherwood, 181-182." I turned to the appropriate pages, and it was as I guessed: the meeting of a young poet, Marianne Moore, at 33 just beginning to be recognized, and Sherwood Anderson, at 46, an established writer, author of the celebrated Winesburg, Ohio, and pioneer in the new American Modernist movement. Appropriately, it was at a party in January, 1922, in Greenwich Village for Anderson, who had just won The Dial award of $2,000 for outstanding contributions to American letters by a young writer. The journal was then serializing Many Marriages, and Anderson, technically a young writer since he had published his first novel at 40, six years before, accepted gratefully.

At the award ceremony he had spoken about the difficulty with which artists survive in America, and, at the party following, as Molesworth tells it, he fell into conversation with Miss Moore. (Her photos at the time reveal a most attractive young lady.) He spent some time talking to her, at one point telling her he thought she should have won the award rather than he, and he went on, as he put it, trying to "enlarge" upon her poems. Although Anderson was not one of the

world's great poets, Miss Moore, Molesworth recounts, always remembered Anderson's kindness to her on that occasion, and she always appreciated it as an act of personal generosity by a literary celebrity to an unknown.

Such an incident was far from rare in Anderson's encounters with young writers and would-be-writers, and literary biographies and autobiographies of young writers of the twenties and thirties are replete with such incidents. Almost every young writer who came of age in those years remembered Anderson's influence upon his or her work. In 1936, Hamilton Basso, who was just beginning his writing career, in reviewing Anderson's Kit Brandon, wrote that "...we are reminded how much we owe this man and how deeply he has influenced our literature...I think it might be wise for us to remember that he was one of the headmasters at the school where so many of us learned our ABC's."

About twenty years later, Herbert Gold another writer just approaching success, who had grown up in Ohio but had never known Anderson, wrote that Anderson "...has helped to create the image we have of ourselves as Americans....all of the people of Winesburg haunt us as do our neighbors, our friends, our own secret selves which we first met one springtime in childhood..."

Writers who later went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature were equally influenced by Anderson, among them Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Saul Bellow, and more recently Toni Morrison, three of them, not coincidentally, Midwesterners, one of them from Anderson's own Ohio. Hemingway, who had known Anderson in Chicago in 1921, whose literary debt is as obvious as his personal dept--his Nick Adams stories are the offspring of Anderson's baffled young men, his Up in Michigan was clearly Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio, and Anderson introduced him by letter to Gertrude Stein and consequently the American expatriate colony in Paris--later repudiated Anderson's influence, in his inept satire called The Torrents of Spring but even he was forced to admit, in his posthumous memoir A Moveable Feast that "I liked some of his short stories very much. There were simply written and sometimes beautifully written and he knew the people he was writing about and cared deeply for them."

Both Bellow and Morrison have been strongly influenced by Anderson in their formative years as young writers, Bellow most obviously in The Adventures of Augie March, an influence he has often acknowledged, and Morrison in Song of Solomon, but neither of them knew Anderson and consequently did not have the good fortune to hear his comments on their work and the direction it should go. But William Faulkner not only benefited directly from having known Anderson in New Orleans in the early 1920s, but he acknowledged his deep personal and literary debt to Anderson on a number of occasions, most notably in interviews, in essays, and in the touching dedication of Sartoris.

In the latter, published in 1929, Faulkner returned to the people and place that he was to recreate in greater and grater detain in his best fiction for the rest of his life, the place in which he had grown up and to which Anderson sent him after his futile attempts to become a romantic poet. As Faulkner recalled it, Anderson told him "You're a country boy. All you know is that little patch up

there in Mississippi where you started from...." In his return, Faulker discovered what was to become his fictional Yoknapatawpha County, the place and the people who inhabited it and gave substance to his best work and the two generations of Southern writers who have followed him. The path from Winesburg, Ohio to Jefferson in Yoknapatawpha County is clear; equally clear is the path beyond in the fiction of Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy, Tom Wicker, and the new young writers, Southern or not, who are beginning to seek their places in the unfolding epic of American literature as we move into the twenty-first century.

Not only did Anderson give direction to the work of young writers in person, as he had Faulkner, Hemingway, and others, as well as indirectly to writers of his own day and ours as they read and found inspiration in the magnificent stories of Winesburg, Ohio, Horses and Men, The Triumph of the Egg, and Death in the Woods, but his letters in the 1920s and 1930s are full of comments about the craft of writing and the life of the writer, not only to old friends and established writers, but to young, unknown writers and other artists who had been touched by his work. He was always generous with his time, his comments, and his writing energy, and all of his letters show a compassion only possible in one who felt the needs and fears of others as deeply as his own. At the same time Anderson gave each of them something of himself.

Many of the letters are to writers who later became prominent, as in the cases of Hart Crane and Thomas Wolfe, as well as to the dozens of young artists who somehow foundered on the shoals that, Anderson knew, were always just below the surface of the young artists's uncertain course through a life as unpredictable as the Mississippi that took Huck and Jim on the raft away from the freedom they sought and into the main but always dangerous stream of American life and writing. Anderson, too, had found himself at unpredictable times in a life as insecure as the Mississippi river itself. To him, as he made clear, that uncertainty was not only an inevitable part of the writer's life, but it provided much of the substance of his work.

Thus, in 1920, in response to a discouraged letter from Hart Crane, he wrote, "Do keep pressed up against the wall, and don't sink into resignation. I imagine revolution doesn't accomplish much, but constant irritation with ugliness is necessary," and again, "Your poem ["Black Tambourine"] seems to me something fine not realized quite in you yet. I predict it will come through again and come through more completely and better realized..."

To Charles Bockler, a young New York painter and friend of his son John, who also aspired to become a painter, he wrote in 1929,

> It may be you will escape the dark valley I have been in, that I am walking in now. I have had to fight for and defend the artist in myself.
>
> Once Jack Dempsey said a marvelous thing to me. We were both at a photographer's. He walked, in his quick, nervous, half-brutal way, across the room and grasped my shoulders.

"Were you ever a fighter?" he said. "You have the shoulders, the frame of a fighter."

"No, I said, and then thought. "Yes, I am a fighter," I said.

It was just before he fought Tunney. "It is worse winning than losing," he said.

The sense of victory, fought for. You walk over the scene and see the dead and wounded. There are groans, and people weep.

I have hurt so many people, Charles, trying to keep some integrity. Do I dare go on existing? A few tales told at last. To push something out a little beyond the horizon, no one caring much.

The painter fighting, just for ground on which his easel may stand, the writer for his quiet room, his thoughts, word fitted against word, as color...

To his son John, who was in Paris at about the same time, he stressed the importance of learning from the masters:

Don't be carried off your feet by anything because it is modern, the latest thing.

Go to the Louvre often and spend a good deal of time before the Rembrandts, the Delacroix's.

Learn to draw. Try to make your hand so unconsciously adept that it will put down what you feel without your having to think of your hands.

Than you can think of the thing before you.

The object drawn doesn't matter so much. It's what you feel about it, what it means to you....

Try to remain humble. Smartness kills everything....

The point of being an artist is that you may live....

You won't arrive. It is an endless search.

A decade later, in 1938, as huge neared the end of his own creative career—he had less than three years to live—he wrote to George Freitag, a young writer living in Canton, Ohio, who later enjoyed a modest success, that "It sometimes seems to me that I should prepare a book designed to be read by other and younger writers. This not because of accomplishment on my own part, but because of the experiences, the particular experiences, I've had."

In the five pages that followed, and in a subsequent letter written the same day to Freitag, Anderson very nearly began the writer's book that he was to leave incomplete and in fragments at his unexpected death in Panama on March 8, 1941. The first letter of August 27th is the story of Sherwood Anderson, writer, and it is also the story of the artist in America, as it was and is, and will be, as Anderson knew it and continued to live it. It is the story of the search for the truth of human life and the attempt to express it clearly, completely, and, finally, it is Anderson's record of his search for a means of survival at the same time.

In 1938 Anderson was 62; he had come out of nowhere and known success, both as a business man and as a writer, and he had known failure at both. He had had his share of rave reviews and of hostile denigration, and yet somehow he had endured, and he was as fascinated by the wonder of it all as he was convinced that he had discovered the secret of what it took to become a writer and what that achievement meant in personal, human terms. And he was

equally convinced that what he could do any young American could also do, if he or she was willing to pay the price, a price that denied the financial success that lay at the of the American dream in Anderson's time and our own.

In his advice to young George Freitag and to the generations of ambitious young writers who followed, Anderson began with his conviction that commercial success and artistic accomplishment are forever at odds with each other:

> It is so difficult for most of us to realize how fully and completely commercialism enters into the arts....Some of my own stories, for example, that have now become almost American classics, that are put before students in our schools colleges as examples of good storytelling, were, when first written, when submitted to editors, and when seen by some of the so-called outstanding American critics, declared not stories at all.

In describing what he had attempted in the stories, implying that they were, as he once said of Winesburg, Ohio, in a form invented by himself, he described, first of all, what they were not:

> It is true that they were not nice little packages, wrapped and labeled in the O. Henry manner. They were obviously written by one who did not know the answers. They were simple little tales of happenings, things observed and felt....In my stories I simply stayed at home, among my own people, wherever I happened to be, people in my own street. I think I must, very early, have realized that this was my milieu, that is to say, common, everyday American lives. The ordinary beliefs of the people about me, that love lasted indefinitely, that success meant happiness, simply did not seem true to me. Things were always happening. My eyes began to see, my ears to hear. . . . I was a storyteller but not yet a writer of stories....

Anderson recounted the experiences of his youth and young manhood, at the racetrack, working with the fast horses for which he had a passion, as a farm hand, a soldier, and he told of the people he met and came to know, gradually learning in the process that the truth of human life can only be found beneath the surface. Gradually something happened:

> I began to gather these impressions. There was a thing called happiness toward which men were striving. They never got to it. All of life was amazingly accidental. Love, moments of tenderness and despair, came to the poor and the miserable as to the rich and successful.
>
> It began to seem to me that what was most wanted by all people was love, understanding. Our writers, our storytellers, in wrapping life up into neat little packages were only betraying life. It began to seem to me that what I wanted for myself most of all. . .was to try to develop, to the top of my vent, my own

> capacity to feel, see, taste, smell, hear. I wanted. . . [to be] always more aware of people, streets, houses, towns, cities. I wanted to take it all into myself, digest what I could.

Most of all, Anderson knew that unlike those who were convinced that life could be encapsuled in neat little packages, he couldn't provide answers; he could only grope for an elusive truth, and the result, in his stories, was too often condemned artistically as well as morally, because they lacked the structure that implied that truth is within our grasp, collectively and individually, because they were not what editors and publishers, businessmen all, prefer because they are salable, with what purports to be truth neatly packaged so that it can be bought and sold like any other commodity.

In closing the letter to young George Freitag, Anderson turned again to the commercialization of the arts, warning him again that publishers are such businessmen:

> And do not blame them when they do not buy your stories. Do not be romantic. There is no golden key that locks all doors. There is only the joy of living as richly as you can, always feeling more, absorbing more, and, if you are by nature a teller of tales, the realization that by faking, trying to give people what they think they want, you are in danger of dulling and in the end quite destroying what may be your own road into life.
>
> There will remain for you, to be sure, the matter of making a living, and I am sorry to say to you that in the solution of that problem, for you and for other young writers, I am not interested. That, alas, is your own problem. I am interested only in what you may be able to contribute the advancement of our mutual craft.
>
> But why not call it an art? that is what it is.

Although Anderson concluded and sent the letter the same day, apparently he felt that he had not said it all or he hadn't said it strongly enough, so later that day he wrote another letter to Freitag, emphasizing not merely the joys but the responsibility of writing, commenting at that end that

> It [writing] is a way of making love. It is a way of losing self. It must be that the painter, as he paints becomes always and more conscious of nature, its moods, of the strange beauty doing unexpectedly out of what seem to others commonplace scenes. Why should I care whether you, the young writer, have had your breakfast, whether or not you have money to pay your rent or buy a car? I care only that you may broaden my own vision, increase my capacity to feel, add a little to my understanding of others.

In these two letters Anderson said virtually all that he had to say to young Freitag and young writers in general. Although the "writer's book" that he felt he

should write was begun but not finished at his death, and it remains in fragments in the Anderson Papers in the Newberry Library in Chicago, in 1975 it was edited in a fine scholarly edition by Martha Mulroy Curry; as such it is a substantial addition to the Anderson works for scholars and Anderson afficianados. But Anderson remains at his best, more direct, most honest, and most deeply-felt self in his encounters, in person or in letters, with the young writers to whom he told the truth as he had experienced it and knew it to be.

Michigan State University

FIGURES OF EARTH

WILLIAM THOMAS

1935. March. A raw day. The old-fashioned drug store cheerfully warm. "Fred Larrabee, Pharmacist". Shelves of square bottles behind a long counter on one side, a marble-topped soda fountain in line with a candy case on the other. The gray-haired proprietor finishing his sale to a small elderly woman and coming behind the fountain.

"Good afternoon. What'll it be?"

Scooping ice into a glass, drawing syrup and soda water, stirring it with a long spoon.

"The gas-station man down the street told me you knew Paul Kaufman."

Peering at me over his glasses. "Paul Kaufman? Yes, I knew him."

"I want to talk to somebody who can tell me about him as a young man."

"You from around here?"

"Toledo."

"Didn't think I'd seen you before. I know about everybody here in Waterford."

"Paul Kaufman was a friend of mine." Trying to reassure him. "We did some work together. But he never told me much about his early life."

"You know he died six months ago."

"Yes."

"I suppose I can tell you." Coming around the fountain and sitting on a stool.

Paul Kaufman made his name famous in this town. When he was a kid, people thought he'd never amount to much. Some said he was no good, some called him a dreamer. Afterwards they said he had vision. I always thought he'd do something big some day—though I wasn't sure whether what he did would turn out good or bad.

He used to work for me here. His father died when he was eight or nine, and I gave him a regular job when he was fourteen. He'd open up the store before school in the morning and help at night. He was smart. He'd have made a good pharmacist—except he was such a queer young fellow.

I don't like to say things against the dead. But he had a strange sense of humor—a morbid imagination. Did ghoulish pen and-ink drawings. Some were funny and darned good, but they made me shiver. His humor hurt people, too. One Christmas he sent his maiden Aunt Minne a copy of What Every Bride Ought to Know. When he doped some medicine I'd fixed for the school principal

with stuff that turned his skin green for a week, I couldn't stand for that. I had to let him go.

He got a job cleaning Doc Gebbhart's office. But still got himself into trouble. The Doc liked to tinker with mechanical gadgets, and he had a sound recorder. Paul hid the thing in Doc's private office and made recordings of patients conversations. Then women got samples of baby food six months before the baby was due. They bounced Doc about it. Called him unethical. He found out what Paul had done and fired him.

But Paul more or less got over that kind of mischief. He quit school and worked for the Electric Company, testing meters or something, and then went to Columbus, and was reporter for a while on The Dispatch.

One evening he came in here—I hadn't seen him for a year or more—and said he was going to New York. Nick Sampson was here too. Nick had just closed the deal for the Banana Oil Shampoo business that eventually made him rich.

That is, Nick had bought a factory from a fellow that had gone broke making a shampoo that didn't sell. Maybe you wouldn't think it, but in those days lots of people didn't know their hair needed to be washed, and nobody ever thought about halitosis and B.O., at least not by their polite names. Nick was wondering what he could do with this thing after he'd got it., and he had an idea. That was advertise. But he didn't know how to go about it himself. When he heard Paul Kaufrman say he was going to New York to work for an advertising agency, up Nick jumps. "Young man," he says, "what do you know about advertising?"

Paul was sort of taken aback; said he'd never had any practical experience, but he'd worked out the ideas that got him the New York job.

"Young man," says Nick, "how much are they going to pay you in New York?"

"Twenty dollars a week," says Paul.

"You're not going to New York," says Nick. "You're coming to Toledo with me to work for thirty-five."

That's how they started. Nick told me he borrowed money to carry out Paul's schemes, and for five years after the business began to show a profit he put every cent it brought in back into advertising. By that time this country was Banana Oil conscious. And Paul wouldn't stop there. Told Nick they couldn't spend too much on advertising. And he proved it. The more they spent the more Nick made. The more Paul made too. Nick had promised him a block of stock if he could get the business making money, and sold him some more, and both were rich men.

All that was before the war. You'd have thought the war would hurt the business, but it didn't. When the United States went in, Nick got a big order from the Government. And the stuff don't cost anything to make. About six cents for a dollar bottle—including the bottle. Nick said to me one day, "Fred," he says, "as long as there's water in the Maumee River, there'll be Sampson's Saponfied Banana Oil Shampoo." But it was after the war that they really got going in a big way, in the early twenties when things were getting set for the boom. Paul showed the U.S.A. and Europe how to advertise. He played up the three-cornered bottle with the dent in each side. This testimonial business was his idea too. Film stars, society women, Queen Marie of Roumania—he paid any amount to get 'em to say they used Banana Oil Shampoo. Nick balked when

Paul said they might have to go to fifty thousand for Queen Marie, but she signed for twenty thousand. Seems pretty small potatoes nowadays, don't it?

Fifteen years after Nick and Paul got together they both had more money than they knew what to do with. Nick built a swell place out east of town. You ought to go and look at it. Nine master bedrooms, twelve baths. Nick likes it here. Enjoys being the town millionaire. Gives a party every Christmas for all the kids.

Paul bought an island in Lake Erie. And a Rolls-Royce and a yacht. Took a Mediterranean cruise in the yacht, and they say he broke the bank at Monte Carlo. But there's nothing to that, I know. He wasn't the sort to gamble heavily that way. He was deep in the stock market, but he and Nick both got out before the big crash and then sold short, Nick told me. It wasn't their luck to lose.

And one thing I've got to say about Paul, he was always good to his mother and sister. They live in New York now. He bought them an apartment. they idolized him. Paul had lots of abilities. Played the piano like a demon. Had Horowitz at his house once after a concert, and one of the guests bet him he didn't dare play one of the numbers Horowitz had played that night on his program. Paul sat down and played it. Horowitz said he might have had a concert career. If Paul hadn't got along so well in business or if he'd had another kind of start, he might have become a great musician or a great poet or a cartoonist instead of a great advertising man.

But the money was too much for Paul Kaufman. He was a free spender. Some of it well spent, too. He put a taxi driver through college because the driver returned a purse with seven hundred dollars in it that Paul had left in the cab. But a man like that is bound to be easy picking. He lost on a couple of theatrical ventures. Became well known as a night-club figure. Glittering trail down Broadway—you must know about all that. Women made a fool of him. At last he got one who wasn't that sort. A Follies girl, really in love with him. Mary something-or-other—I can't remember her name. He brought her down here one time—a beautiful woman, and very nice too. I'd never thought about chorus girls being human till I met her. But this didn't set with his wife—the girl he'd gone back to Columbus to marry a couple of years after he teamed up with Sampson. She stood for it as long as she could and then divorced him. When his wife left him, he left Mary, and Mary committed suicide. That sobered Paul up some, and they say he wanted his wife back, but she wouldn't have anything to do with him. She married another man.

This really him. Paul was sick for a while. Some people thought he was cracked. He was in a sanitarium several months. Afterwards he and Nick didn't get along so well together. Nick never said anything about it to me, but it seems Paul blamed him for his misfortunes—the money, and all. As if Nick were to blame for what he did. Once Paul was going to throw up everything and go to live in France, but Nick talked him out of it; After that the morbid humor in Paul's nature came out again. Devised hellish practical jokes. Friends sailing for Europe would open bon voyage boxes and find toads or snakes. A lot of people thought he was crazy, absolutely. But he got older, and tamer, and people quit talking about him.

For the last ten years he'd been almost forgotten around here. Lived most of his summers on his island and the winters in Florida and the rest of the time in Toledo and New York. I imagine that's where you got to know him.

They buried him in the cemetery just outside of town. Had a big funeral. About everybody in town was there. They gave him a good send-off. I guess he ended his life on a good note. He made a provision in his will to erect a fountain in the cemetery. It's going to be unveiled next Sunday.

"So I've heard."

"And I hope his soul rest in peace."

"You've told me what I needed to know," I said. "Thanks."

"You're welcome. Sorry I couldn't tell you more.

The March wind. Just the right kind of day for what I had to do. Walking to my car, my coat collar close around my neck. Looking at my watch, starting for the cemetery. Driving through the gate. A big truck on the top of the hill that was the pivotal point. The workmen just finishing their job. There, as it would look to spectators the following Sunday, a big bronze monumental fountain. The water pipes connected, the fountain coming to life.

A masterpiece. Till now not knowing exactly why I was doing it. My hands shaping this monument through a dead man's eyes and mind. Earth resting on a pillar in the center of a round basin. In the depths of the basin three ghoulish figures. One of the floating body of a drowned women. Another woman grasping the side of the basin as if trying to pull herself up. The third, a man, reaching with upstretched arms toward the Earth, the water falling over him and pushing him back. And on top of the Earth a grotesque little man, holding a big three-cornered bottle with a dent in each of its three sides. The jet from the top of the bottle bringing with it multicolored soap bubbles flowing over the bronze Earth, the three ghoulish figures, and—a few—out over the grave of Paul Kaurman.

Ohio State University/Marion

General Benjamin Lincoln's Journal of his Trip to Treaty With the Ohio Indians, April 29-September 9, 1793

David D. Anderson

The history of settlement, transition to statehood, and the emergence of a modern society in the territory north and west of the Ohio River began almost abruptly with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783, which ended the Revolutionary War, legitimized the loose confederation of former English colonies that had rather grandiously called itself the united States of America seven years earlier, and gave that new nation nominal title to the land between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes, and the Spanish and French territory to the South. During the years of transition the region itself passed through a number of names attributed to the area in whole or in part:

The Northwest Territory to about 1800; the Old Northwest in the early years of the nineteenth century as the region, beginning with Ohio in 1803, started its half-century transition to statehood; the West to the middle of the nineteenth century; then the Old West until gradually by century's end it became the Midwest or the Middle West, depending upon one's geographic and linguistic preference.

This record is clearly the stuff of which epics are made, and it has been named and explained by generations of American historians from Frederick Jackson Turner to Theodore Roosevelt to Ray Billington, Walter Havighurst, and Harlan Hatcher, to literally dozens of our contemporaries. That history is replete with heroes—Col. William Crawford, Mad Anthony Wayne, William Henry Harrison—villains—Simon Girty and his nameless brother—noble Indians—Chief Logan, Tecumseh—and hundreds of thousands of others, men, women, and children, lying in unmarked graves but remembered by a handful of place names and a series of statues collectively called "the Madonna of the Trail."

Yet, curiously, in spite of the epic proportions of the story, little survives—if, indeed, it had ever existed—of the documentary record of that transition. What is the epic story based on? Where, in the histories, are the footnotes to the written record, the first-hand documentation? The history of Puritan New England was documented before the passengers left the Mayflower; the documentary history of the mid-Atlantic region and the Carolinas is almost as early; to the North the Jesuits and to the Southwest the Conquistadors had already constructed a history and a record that was taking on the proportions of myth. Where, then, is our record, that created and written by those who had come into the Ohio Country before there was a Northwest Territory? Turner doesn't mention them, nor does Billington, although Moses Cleveland kept a journal of his trip to New

Connecticut in 1796 as George Washington had in 1750 and again in 1770 when he visited the headwaters of the Ohio. And a few of what can only be called early real estate brochures survive, including Manasseh Cutler's sketch of the Scioto county, written before he had actually seen it. But these were the records of what Walter Havighurst has called "land lookers," or, perhaps more properly tourists, speculators, and promoters. Where are the journals of those who came, however briefly, to effect the transition, in effect, to make our history? It was, of course, a practical, even pragmatic transition, made inevitable by the practicality, the pragmatism, of those who crossed the mountains, went up and down the rivers, treated with, endured with, lived and died with the aboriginal inhabitants? I decided to find out whether or not such a record existed, and if it did, what it said; if it did not, I would try to determine why, other than the nature of the age and its people, it did not.

Perhaps at this point a bit of history may put the dimensions of the problem into prospective. What became, however briefly, the Northwest Territory, has at once one of the oldest and almost the shortest history of any region in the United States. Its age is attested to not only by the earthworks that occur in every state that was once part of the Old Northwest, but by the literary record passed down orally from generation to generation of the Indians who had inhabited the area, a record gathered and recorded by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and others. Too, it has a colonial record that began less than two decades after Columbus's voyage, a record graphically portrayed in the Jesuit Relations. But its record in English and particularly the American English initially identified by Noah Webster is certainly the briefest of all American histories; unlike New England, the South and the Southwest, it is the only American region that had no pre-Federal colonial history and hence no basis for a myth. The territory had been Indian for millenia during which the aborginals thought of themselves as "the people" rather than Indian or native American; it had been French for two and a half centuries, and English for twenty years, from the Treaty of Quebec in 1763 to the Treaty of Paris in 1783, two decades marked by a brief English literary record, that of the humorous verse and serious description of Fort Mackinac, military occupation written by a young officer named De Peyster. It was then a territory permanently reserved to its original inhabitants. But in 1783 the British began their gradual withdrawal—it was to take more than three decades—and the Americans began to arrive. A simple statistic may emphasize the ensuing rapidity of change. In 1790 there was no reliable census of the West; in 1800 one-twentieth of the American population lived West of the Appalachian Mountains; by 1820 one-third lived in what had been wilderness a generation before.

But it was not uninhabited wilderness by any means. The record of the area between the first and second wars of American independence in the Old Northwest is full of clashes that resound even yet, particularly in Ohio; those of the record, including the assaults of George Rogers Clark in what was to become Indiana, that of General Hand against the Mahoning Indians in Eastern Ohio, of Colonel Broadhead against Coshocton in 1781, and the struggles in which Moravian and Christian Delaware Indians were caught in the middle and slaughtered, the "bloody year" of 1782-83, in which Pennsylvania rabble, reluctantly led by Colonel William Crawford, made their mark, shed their blood, and lost their lives and their cause in their futile incursion into the Ohio

countryside. By the last decade of the eighteenth century Indian resistance had hardened; Eastern pressures had intensified, until on August 20, 1794, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, on the banks of the Miami of the North, the Maumee, the Indian power was smashed; with Jay's Treaty in England in 1794 and The Treaty of Greenville in November of the same years, three quarters of Ohio and ultimately the whole of the Northwest was open to settlement.

All these are facts, stated with varying degrees of objectivity, pride, or shame by generations of historians as is the path of settlement and Indian opposition marked by Indian attacks against Marietta in 1788, Columbia (now Cincinnati) the same year, followed by attacks against Gallipolis, Massie's Station, Franklinton (near Columbus), and others. The massacre of hundreds of General Josiah Harmer's troops and the continual sniping around the settlements caused the decision to build a string of forts from the Ohio to Lake Erie to fall into disarray, especially after Little Turtle's warriors defeated General St. Clair on the Wabash on November 4, 1791.

The record continues, a record of blood, guts, and the drive of relentless migration and continuous pressure. But where were the sources—diaries, journals, letters—that documented what was one of the greatest,. most long-lasting clash of cultures in recorded history?

The answer, I became convinced, if there was one, rested not with the conflicts of the West but with the policy makers of the East and I found the first clue in a letter written by that man of eminent good sense, George Washington, to a member of the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Continental Congress, James Duane, in 1783. In it Washington, interested in the West from his young manhood, pointed out that, although the Indians, as allies of the British in the West, were defeated and could be driven to Canada with their co-belligerants, "the country is large enough to contain us all...and as we are disposed to be kind to them...we will draw a veil over what is past and establish a boundary line."

While the Continental Congress passed its various ordinances—1784, 1785, 1787—for the governance of territory they did not yet control, private citizen Washington planned his own Western policy. In 1784 he visited the West; in 1787 he presided over the Federal Constitutional Convention. In 1789 he became the unanimous choice as the first president of the nation under that document. And as crises continued, he determined to put his concept of an appropriate Indian policy into practice. One such attempt in 1789 is remembered vividly in the annals of the Frontier; the other, four years later, is the forgotten, in spite of the fact that it provides the first and only record of the attempt by Washington to implement his Indian policy. Both were carried out by the same man; both were initially failures; both, however, initial failures, resulted in quite different kinds of success.

The man was General Benjamin Lincoln of Hampton, Mass., a badly-wounded Revolutionary veteran with a curious record of success and failure, the suppresser of Shay's rebellion, a member of the Constitutional Convention, former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, and collector of the Port of Boston, and a longtime confidant of his wartime Commander-in-Chief, who had given him the honor of receiving Cornwallis's sword at Yorktown. His first assignment for the President was to treat with the Creek Indians in Georgia, to establish a mutually accepted border between settlers and Indians in Georgia, and to provide for permanent peace.

The treaty was initially unsuccessful; the white Georgians did everything possible to prevent a treaty, preferring instead an army to clear the area, and the Creeks, conscious of their buffer status between Americans and Spanish, proved more that willing to listen to Spanish promises of arms, ammunition, and money. Lincoln returned to New York to report his failure, but immediately another tack was suggested, probably by Lincoln. Another emissary brought the Creek chief, half-Scottish Alexander McGillivery to New York with his entourage, parades were held, and Washington and McGillivary treated as equals. A compromise line was drawn, and McGilivery returned to Georgia with a Brigadier General's commission in the American Army and a personal pension of $10,000 dollars a year as well an appointment as an American secret agent against the Spanish. Peace was assumed for a generation—until the Creeks were defeated by Andrew Jackson in 1813-1814 and finally ceded their lands to Georgia in 1825.

The second of Lincoln's missions to treat with the Indians took place in the Spring and Summer of 1793. It was this journey of which we knew at once the most and least because this journey produced the first record of the clash of cultures in the Ohio country. That record is the journal kept by General Lincoln from April 27, 1793, when he left Philadelphia with his commission to meet the Indians at Sandusky, until departing from Fort Erie on July 14 en route to Philadelphia to report his failure. It is a remarkable document, that of a man who is, at once, a keen observer and an eloquent recorder, with a clear understanding of the unspoken philosophy that sent generations of Americans and others to the every-moving West and to which Lincoln clearly subscribed. A few typical paragraphs includes all three:

> When I take a view of this extensive country, and contemplate the clemency of its seasons, the richness of its soil, see the saccharine, so grateful to our tastes, and necessary perhaps, from habit, to our happiness, flowing from the trees of the forest: and observe the fountains of salt water, and spots of earth impregnated with saline particles, called salt-licks, to which the beasts resort from the former of which a full supply of salt can be drawn for all the inhabitants at a very moderate price, while their situation is so far inland as to make this article, important to the well-being of man and beast, too expensive to be obtained in any other way; when I farther consider the many natural advantages; , if not peculiar to, yet possessed by this country, and that is capable of giving support to an hundred times as many inhabitants as now occupy it, (for there is at present little more to be seen on the greatest proportion of the lands that here and there the footstep of the savage,) I cannot persuade myself that it will remain long in so uncultivated a state; especially, when I consider that to people fully this earth was in the original plan of the benevolent Deity. I am confident that sooner or later there will be a full accomplishment of the original system; and that no men will be suffered to live by hunting on lands capable of improvement, and which would support more people under a state of cultivation. So that if the savages cannot be civilized and quit their present pursuits, they will, in consequence of their stubbornness, dwindle and moulder away, from causes perhaps imperceptible to us, until the whole race shall become extinct, or they shall have reached those climes about the great

lakes, where, from the rocks and the mountainous state the footsteps of the husbandman will not be seen. Here they may find an asylum fitted to their use, in the enjoyment of which none will envy them. I am strengthened in this belief, when I carefully examine the first laws given to man by his kind and watchful Creator, and the consequences which resulted from their being kept or rejected.

The first injunctions from Heaven to man were "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and *subdue* it." Had it not been for the last injunction "*subdue*," and man had been left to no other course of life for obtaining his bread than that of seeking it from the lap of nature, the world would soon have been filled with inhabitants; few, indeed, compared with its present numbers, would have filled it. When Adam was placed in the garden of Eden, he was not fixed there to be an idle spectator of the spontaneous productions of the earth, though surrounded with "every tree pleasant to the sight," but he was directed "to dress the garden and keep it." Feeling the power of these injunctions, he taught them to his children, and assigned a different employment to each. One was a "keeper of sheep," while the other was "a tiller of the ground.". . .

I think it was also in the original constitution, that this earth should be fully peopled. The benevolent Creator of the world early counteracted a different idea, which was taking place among men. When a plan was formed by the inhabitants of this globe of their becoming one great people, an attempt was made to arrest their minds, and to contract their views to the same objects. This they supposed would effectually secure the from scattering abroad through the whole earth. But the God of nature, who will cause his plans to be fully executed, at a moment when they were flushed with the hope of success, put an end to a design, arrogant and vain in a manner miraculous, kind, and important; so that at once a period was put to their follies, and the tribes placed in a situation which perfectly forbade a continuation of their mad and unwarrantable project. No longer speaking one common language, they separated themselves, and became different nations, each pursing its own views.

I am strengthened in these ideas by a later writer, who is of opinion that to cultivate the earth is a duty imposed on man by the laws of his nature; that the whole earth is assigned for the nourishment of its inhabitants; that every nation is obliged by the laws of nature to cultivate the ground which has fallen to its share; that there are some who to avoid agriculture would live by hunting, that although this might have been allowed in the first ages of the world when the earth without cultivation produced more than was sufficient to feed its few inhabitants, yet at present, when the human race is so greatly multiplied, it could not subsist if all nations resolved to live in the same manner; that those who still retain this idle life, usurp more extensive territories than they would have occasion for were they to use honest labor, and have therefore not reason to complain, if other nations, ore laborious and too closely confined, come to posses a part; that the establishment of many colonies in North America may, on their confining themselves within just bounds, be extremely lawful; that the people of these vast countries rather overran than inhabited them.

> All I mean to suggest is an opinion that the present inhabitants of this country will become tillers of the ground, the sacrifice their present pursuits to that important and natural object; or they will become extinct, or retire, as before mentioned, and thereby make way for those who will subdue the earth and dress it. . . .

These observations were recorded in transit on Lake Erie.

The journal records, too, the dimensions of what was the first gathering of the Western tribes in harmonious accord at the Falls of the Miami of the North: Wyandote, Delaware, Shawanee, Miamis, Ottawas, Chippewas,, and dozens of others treated among themselves while they sent their delegates to treat with the Americans on the lake shore to the north. The speeches on both sides, as Lincoln records them, are detailed, as is in the clarity of the positions from which neither side would retreat: the commissioners of the United States insisted that the Indians confirm the lands ceded by the Treat of Fort Harmer at the mouth of the Muskingham and add the land now comprising Cincinnati, roughly three-quarters of the present state of Ohio; the Indians demanded a retreat of settlement beyond the Ohio; the commissioners promised the largest sum of money ever given to Indians in exchange for land; the Indians answered that "money to us is of no value." On August 16 the negotiations came to an end; on the 17th Lincoln and the others departed for the East.

Not only had the treaty failed, but unknown to Lincoln and the others, a final resolution of the issue was nearly at hand, and Lincoln's attempted settlement of the clash of cultures, the search for peace, and the record of General Lincoln and the others, as well as his remarkable journal have been obscured by the conclusiveness of the aftermath.

Even while the conference was being assembled, General Mad Anthony Wayne had collected twenty-five hundred volunteers at Pittsburg, transported them to Cincinnati, and began to drill them extensively and intensively in tactical frontier warfare. In October the troops started north, building the string of forts that had been in prospect for a decade. Reinforced by Kentuckians after wintering on the way, they continued their slow, unexorable advance. One August 20, 1794 they met the combined Indians under Blue Jacket (Little Turtle the ranking chief, had objected to the stand) at the place called Fallen Timbers, on the banks of the Maumee. In an hour the Indians were in flight, and the course of life in the Ohio county and the Northwest Territory was forever altered. The ensuring treaty of Greenville, signed by more than ninety Indian representatives in August, 1795, was anti-climax; peace reigned and settlement accelerated, even as General Lincoln went home to Massachusetts, and a young Indiana name Tecumseh, present at Greenville, began to brood. But that is another story.

And General Lincoln's journal? It remained in Hingham for twenty-six years after Lincoln's death in 1810, and then in 1836, it, together with other papers, fell into the hands of the Massachusetts Historical Society. It was published as a curiosity rapidly forgotten in the Society's Collections, third series, volume five in that same year and for nearly a century it was enshrined only by a vague reference in a late nineteenth-century children's history of Ohio and a more detailed comment in Lincoln's entry in the D.A.B. But historians have chosen to

ignore both. Yet I am convinced it has much to tell us about the opening of the Ohio country that we have thus far forgotten.

Michigan State University

A Preview of the Dictionary of Midwestern Literature

The Dictionary of Midwestern Literature, now taking shape under the direction of Phil Greasely, will not only include a great deal of factual and interpretive information about Midwestern writers, but it also contains genuine literary discoveries, of which the following is an example. It is included here so that Society members may get a head start on the frenzy of research that its publication in the Dictionary is sure to engender. (editor's note)

Cecil J. Vrane, ca. June 14, 1890— ca. January 27, 1990

Biography: Cecil J. (no known middle name) Vrane was apparently a lifelong Midwesterner, an authentic Midwestern primitive, and an eloquent reflector of the linguistic, cultural, and aesthetic renaissance that resulted from the transition of the region from Old West to Midwest in the nineteenth century. His parentage and birthplace are unknown; he was a foundling, either abandoned or spontaneously germinated, along the Old National Road in Waycross, Raintree County, Indiana, on July 5, 1892, in the aftermath of that town's great Fourth of July celebration.

Raised in alternate years by a spinster schoolteacher and a bachelor hog drover, his name was constructed from Wanted posters in the Waycross post-office, and he received his education alternately in a one-room country schoolhouse and in a series of taverns on the main hog route to Cincinnati. He lived in rural obscurity, his literary works unknown until 1938, when the W.P.A. undertook the reconstruction of the men's outhouse behind the courthouse in Waycross. Then his best-known and loved poems as well as his spiritual biography were discovered under three coats of paint and three of whitewash. There were transcribed by the W.P.A. records copying project and made known to the world in 1940. He enjoyed a dubious celebrity for the next half-century until, with what would have been his best work unfinished in his hand, he was found dead under mysterious circumstances near the roadside where he had been found nearly a century earlier. Until his death, he was an annual candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Significance: In language tone, vocabulary, and rhythm, Vrane's works are the most authentically Midwestern since the publication of Huckleberry Finn in 1885. "Fantods," one of his best-known and most loved works, is a classic example of Midwestern literary art at its finest. In six stanzas, each of three, four, or five lines, it repeats the word "Fantods" in a perfect, subtle, but intensifying iambic pentameter until a sudden psychological crescendo is inevitably produced in the mind of the reader. Other noted works are "Golly Gee," a tribute to moonrise over the outhouse, "Well I'll be Dipped in Dip," a memoir of a year on a sheep farm, and "The Night of the Sheriff's Castration," an epic of Midwestern myth making. He really meant Circumcision, but he had a bit of

trouble with technical terminology. Fortunately, he never practiced the rustic surgery for which he was trained in the sties and feeding lots of east central Indiana.

Significant Works: "The revolt of Orphant Annie" and "Ten Nights in Susie's Parlor" deal with problems of gender confusion in a rapidly-changing Midwest." "Indiana Hits Its Misses" is a spirtual biography of a high order, recounting his adventures on the road with James Dean and John Dillinger. His papers, actually chips of whitewash, were last seen in the furnace room of the Lily Library. Unfortunately they were apparently spread on the ice in front of the building by an apprentice custodian during the winter of 1994.

Further Reading: For insights into the initial discovery and transcribing of Vrane's works, see "Problems in Transcription," W.P.A. Writers Project Monograph No. 1, 1941. His ony known biography is on "Wanted Poster No. 4, Raintree County Sheriff's Department, 1928."

Anonymous

BILLBOARD

Call for Papers

Midwest Modern Language Association
7-9 November 1996
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Special Session

Canonizing Early Modern Women

This Session seeks papers considering issues related to revising "the canon" of early modern British literature. Papers should focus on individual women or groups of women writing before 1800 and address questions of whose work is reconsidered for inclusion and why, and/or how attention to work by early modern women changes perceptions about the early modern period.

One-page abstracts or completed papers by 15 March to:

Frances Murphy Zauhar
English Department
Saint Vincent College
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650
412/539-9761, X2317
email: zauhar@acad1.stvincent.edu

Early inquiries encouraged!

Call for Papers

Annual Meeting
of the
Mideast Conference on Christianity and Literature

Sponsored by
Department of English
Department of Religious Studies
Alumni Chair in Humanities
October 18-19, 1996
Dayton, Ohio

The program committee invites papers on
any aspect of literature and its relationship to or reflections on Christianity.

Special sessions for

- **Responses to Christianity and literature from outside the Christian tradition, e.g., Islam, Judaism and other faiths**
- **Readings of original poetry**
- **New voices, especially graduate and undergraduate students and recent Ph.D.s**
- **All participants should send a membership or renewal fee of $25 (1 year)/$45 (2 years) Students: $20 (1 year)/$35 (2 years). Foreign members add $10 (1 year) or $18 (2 years) to Dr. Robert Snyder, Department of English, West Georgia College, Carrollton, GA 30118-2200.**

Reading time should not exceed 15 minutes (8-10 pages)
Please send two copies of completed papers or proposals by April 25, 1996

Professors Betty Youngkin and Alex Tuss, S.M., Co-Chairs
Mideast CCL Program Committee
Department of English
The University of Dayton
300 College Park
Dayton, Ohio 45469-1520
(513)229-3434 FAX (513)229-3563

ENGLISH
Assistant Professor
Beginning September 1996

AUGUSTANA COLLEGE seeks to fill a tenure eligible position as Assistant Professor of English.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The successful candidate will be responsible for teaching seven courses per year, consisting of first year composition and introduction to literature with special responsibilities in American literature and modern American poetry. The usual faculty duties will include student recruiting and advising as well as assigned committee work and participating in departmental meetings and other activities.

QUALIFICATIONS: The Ph.D. in English is required. We seek a person with a concentration in American literature, specialization in modern American poetry, evidence of scholarly activities, community/professional involvement and a commitment to the values and mission of a church-related, liberal arts college. Preference will be given to candidates that display prior teaching experience.

SALARY: Competitive; dependent upon qualifications.

CLOSING DATE: Review of applications will begin December 10 and continue until position is filled.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Send letter of application to include a statement of educational philosophy, curriculum vita, names and telephone numbers of three current references to:

Dean of the College
Augustana College - Box 763
Sioux Falls, SD 57197
605-336-5545

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/TITLE IX EMPLOYER.

CALL FOR PAPERS

DISABILITY, IDENTITY AND STORY

Proposed forum on Disability Studies, MMLA 1996, Minneapolis

Representations of disability in literature and film

Writers with disabilities view themselves and their work

What is crip lit?

Teachers with disabilities -- personal and institutional concerns

Disability as literary metaphor and as reality

Papers invited on these and other topics relating to disability and disability studies. Literary surveys, historical or language studies, personal narratives, examinations of writers or individual works.

Disability studies is a growing field that exists in tension between medical models, metaphorical constructions, and the real-life experience of disabilities.

Papers by March 1, 1996 to:

Virginia T. Bemis
Assistant Professor/English
Ashland University
Ashland, OH 44805

Phone: (419) 289-5120

email: vbemis@ashland.edu

CALL FOR PAPERS

1996 Midwest Modern Language Association

Panel on Young Adult Literature

ADOLESCENT FICTIONS: DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF YOUNG ADULTHOOD

The 1996 M/MLA panel on Young Adult Literature is accepting paper proposals which explore the "young adult" as a discursive formation. Submissions may examine constructions of young adulthood in literature, as well as in other discourses (such as medical, legal, psychoanalytic) which participate in the regulation of culturally-intelligible identities. Essays may focus on discourses from any culture and any historical period. Also welcomed are those papers which trace the (apparent) nonexistence of a discernable phase between childhood and adulthood.

Proposals should consider some aspect of the following: Who is the young adult at any given moment in history; how does discourse produce young adulthood as a distinct phase of maturity? What competing constructions of the young adult circulate within the same historical period? How do young adult identities differ along lines of gender, race, class, ethnicity, and/or sexuality? How is the young adult positioned (socially, legally) in relation to the child and/or the adult? How have discursive formations of the young adult changed? What cultural forces inaugurated such changes?

Papers must not exceed 8 single-spaced typed pages. Send 1-2 page abstracts by April 15, 1996 to: Bonnie Shaker, 614 Hogarth Ave., Niles, Ohio 44446.

Call for Papers

Midwest Modern Language Association
7-9 November 1996
Minneapolis, Minnesota

American Literature I: Literature before 1870

Topic for 1996 Meeting

Rewriting Cultural Scripts

The Session seeks papers addressing the topic of how an understanding of ideas about religion, politics, domesticity, or economics have changed as a result of reconsidering canonically "central" writers in relation to traditionally "marginalized" writers.

One-page abstracts or completed papers to:

Frances Murphy Zauhar
English Department
Saint Vincent College
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650
412/539-9761, X2317
email: zauhar@acad1.stvincent.edu

Please note:
The M/MLA deadline for submission to section chairs is 15 April

CALL FOR PAPERS

1996 M/MLA Conference
November 7-9,1996
Minneapolis Marriott City Center
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Session: Women in Literature

Topic: The Birthing of Feminism

Gloria Naylor, the author of *The Women of Brewster Place* and *Mama Day*, recently explained that her father taught her to be a feminist. This surprised several people at the gathering, particularly since so many women writers have been accused of male-bashing. This session seeks papers addressing how the works of women writers have been shaped by positive as well as negative masculine influences. Is feminism inherent? Is feminism something that women learn? If it is learned, must the mentors always be women?

Please send completed papers (8-10 pages) or 1-page abstracts to:

Crystal R. Robinson
Communication Skills Department
Columbus State Community College
550 East Spring Street
Columbus, OH. 43215
(614) 227-5451

Deadline: March 11, 1996

CALL FOR PAPERS

Section on Teaching Writing in College
Midwest Modern Language Association
1996 Convention, November 7-9
Marriott City Center--Minneapolis, Minnesota

Sub-jecting Our Students: What Does it Mean to Teach Writing?

While the overt objective of writing courses in the university is to teach writing, syllabi focus on a variety of topics: culture, literature, ethnic groups, or specific disciplines. How does this inform the writing that occurs both in and outside of classes labeled "writing"? What is it teachers of writing think they are teaching? How important is the subject matter to the teaching of writing? What are our writing classes teaching students? How does our pedagogy support or undermine our overt objectives? Can our assessment practices teach writing without teaching values? Should they? Possible topics include new definitions of the term "writing," examinations of how texts affect students' attitudes towards writing--and their ability to write, discussions of the problems associated with a writing in the disciplines approach, studies of the gap between theory we discuss and theory we practice in our writing classrooms, case studies of how technology opens or narrows the idea of a writing class and the definition of "writing."

Send papers or abstract to section chair:

Joan Mullin
Writing Center
University of Toledo
Toledo, Ohio 43606-3390

Deadline for submission: March 25, 1996

MIDWEST MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING
MINNEAPOLIS MARRIOTT CITY CENTER, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

NOVEMBER 7-9, 1996

CALL FOR PAPERS

SECTION: POPULAR CULTURE

TOPIC: "Popular Culture(s) Online:
Tales and Practices of/in Virtual Communities"

Chair: Charles J. Stivale, Romance Languages, Wayne State University
cstival@cms.cc.wayne.edu / fax: 313-577-6243 / off: 313-577-6240

The diverse activities of computer-mediated communication in both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (e.g., Listserv) varieties unfold as ongoing "events" in an alternate space/time enabled by an array of practices that are at once discursive and narrative. While the development of different forms of online "communities" has been touted in the popular press, usually as sensationally as possible, the narrative and discursive facets that contribute to the constitution of these various "virtual communities" have received little critical attention.

Thus, the tales and practices of/in these "virtual communities" will serve as topic for the 1996 Popular Culture section, and online participants, a.k.a. cybernauts, are invited to explore different manifestations of such activities. Please note that the emphasis in this topic is on actual practices and the "tales" that these may generate in different online sites, and not on representations of such activities (à la Neuromancer and Snow Crash).

Please submit abstracts of 300-500 words by April 1, 1996, to Charles J. Stivale via electronic format (cf. email/fax above) or postal service (Dept. of Romance Languages, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202).

Please note well: submission of an abstract to this section assumes that the author accepts the governance conditions defined for M/MLA annual conventions (cf. 85-87 of 1995 program). Specifically, authors agree to submit abstracts by the above date, to maintain current membership for 1996, to submit completed papers in M/MLA format by the fixed deadline (no later than August 31, 1996), and to a section format that places primary emphasis on discussion and not on delivery of papers. Accordingly, the 1996 section will commence with discussants addressing designated papers (7-10 minutes maximum) following which authors will have an opportunity to respond (3-5 minutes maximum); once discussants have intervened and authors have responded, the meeting will then be opened to questions and discussion from the floor. At the end of the section, the usual business of electing a new secretary will be completed.

CALL FOR PAPERS

John Brown: the Man, the Legend, the Legacy
A Multidisciplinary Symposium

Pennsylvania State University
Mont Alto, PA
Wednesday to Saturday, 24 to 27 July 1996

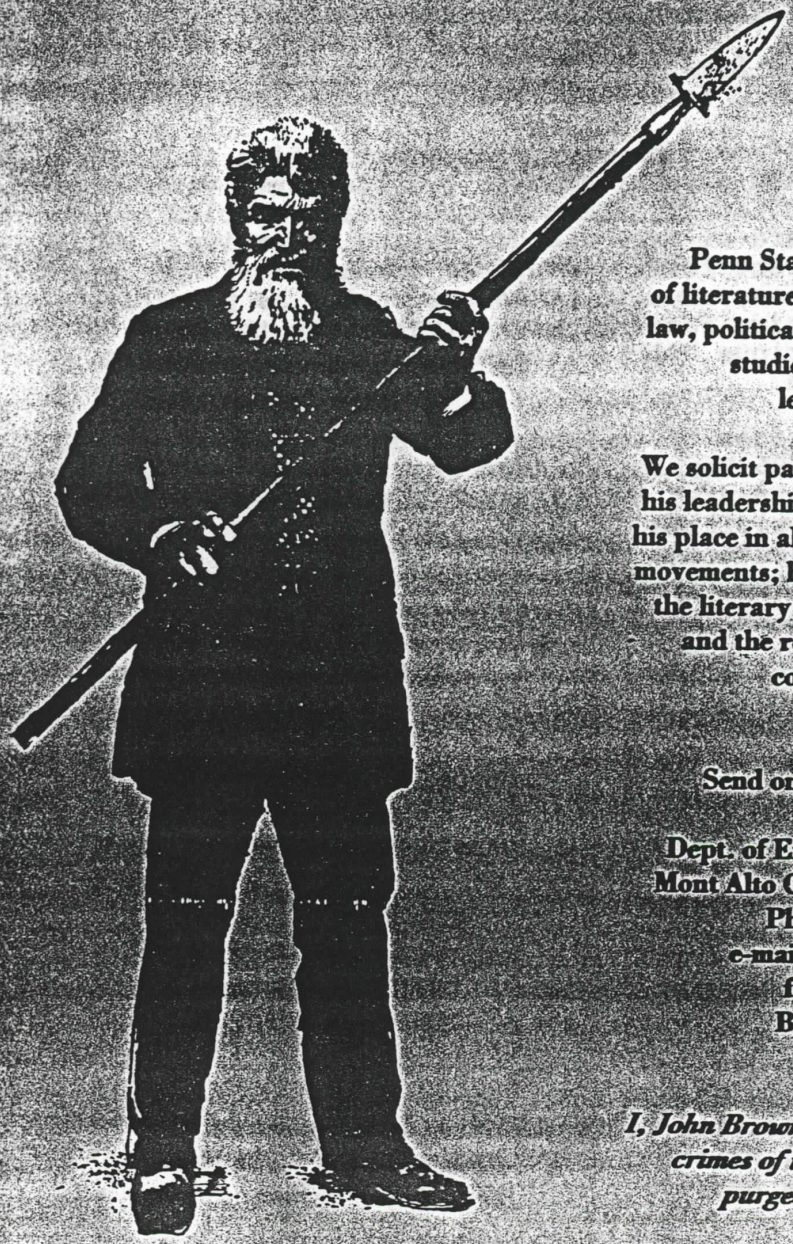

Illustration used courtesy of the National Park Service

Plenary Lecturers:
Paul Finkelman
Bruce Olds
Edward Renehan, Jr.

Penn State Mont Alto invites scholars of literature, history, psychology, sociology, law, political science, and African-American studies to consider the life and legacy of John Brown.

We solicit papers on his life, acts and beliefs; his leadership appeal and mental soundness; his place in abolitionist and Transcendentalist movements; his influence on national history; the literary and cultural responses to him, and the relevance of his actions to the contemporary climate.

Send one-page paper proposals to
Peggy Russo
Dept. of English, Penn State University
Mont Alto Campus, Mont Alto, PA 17237
Phone: (717) 749-6231
e-mail: u7k@psuvm.psu.edu
fax: (717) 749-6069
By 15 February 1996

I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away; but with blood.

PLEASE POST

American Literature on the Internet

Join the American Literature Discussion List (AMLIT-L).
Just send an e-mail message to:

listserv@mizzou1.missouri.edu

In the body of the message type: SUB AMLIT-L firstname lastname

example: Sub AMLIT-L Becky Thatcher

The American Literature Discussion list is a listserv list dedicated to the scholarly discussion of American literature and related topics. It is an edited list with a current membership of over 900 subscribers.

Also, browse the American Literature On-Line Webpage, a compilation of American literature related web sites around the world.

URL: http://www.missouri.edu/~engmo/amlit.html

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with questions or comments contact:

Michael O'Conner
University of Missouri-Columbia
engmo@showme.missouri.edu

Call For Papers

MELVILLE "AMONG THE NATIONS"

Papers and proposals (20-min. reading-time max.) are being sought for an international conference on the life and writing of Herman Melville to be held in

VOLOS, GREECE: July 2 to July 6, 1997

Only submissions with an international perspective upon Melville and his work will be considered.

Fields from which topics may be drawn include, but are not limited to: Melville's biography and travels, the fine arts, comparative literary relationships, worldwide social and cultural matters related to Melville, history, philosophy, religion, European critical theory, ethnic and gender issues, and language. Papers focusing on Melville's travels in Greece and influences from Classical Greek writing upon his own or from his work upon contemporary Greek culture would be especially pertinent.

Workshops are being planned to promote discussion of the pleasures and problems of translating Melville's writings and of teaching, studying, and publishing his work abroad. *Please indicate if your paper or proposal is intended for a workshop.*

Complete papers or proposals of 250-500 words should be sent to:
Prof. Sanford E. Marovitz, Dept. of English, Kent State Univ., Kent, Ohio 44242.

All submissions must be received by Aug. 1, 1996.

We anticipate publishing a volume of selected papers and workshop summaries after the conference.

(Presenters must expect to cover their own expenses.)

Program committee: Profs. D. Berthold (Texas A & M), M. Fisher (Ariz. St.), K. Georgoudaki (Aristotle U. of Thessaloniki), J. Kennedy (Mount State Vincent), R. Kopley (Penn State), L. Newman, emer. (North Adams State), T. Tsibouki (U. of Athens); co-chairs, S. Marovitz (Kent State) and Mr. A. C. Christodoulou (Volos, Hellenic American Studies Assoc.)

PLEASE POST / PRIÈRE D'AFFICHER

Call for papers

AIZEN©

President / Director : Dr. M. E. Fol
Co-Directors: Dr. Anna Gural-Migdal
Dr. Robert Singer

FIFTH AIZEN© INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on EMILE ZOLA AND NATURALISM

and THIRD NATURALIST FILM FESTIVAL

The International Association for Multidisciplinary Approaches and Comparative Studies related to Emile Zola and his Time, Naturalism, Naturalist writers and artists, Naturalism and the Cinema (AIZEN©) invites submissions for its annual Conference to be held in:

NEW YORK, USA
SEPTEMBER 27-29, 1996

We welcome proposals for papers, lectures, panels and special screenings. Innovative approaches are especially welcome. Renowned scholars, Assistant Professors, Instructors, Doctoral candidates from related disciplines (Literature, Film Studies, Philosophy, History, Women's Studies, Comparative Literature, etc.) are encouraged to submit proposals for 20-30 minute presentations. The suggested topic headings or panel requests are:

1). EMILE ZOLA 'S NOVELS (★ New critical approaches to Zola's text, ★ Scientific discourse and literary imagination in Zola's novels, ★ Children and childhood in Les Rougon-Macquart, ★ Zola: cinematographic adaptation and literary text, ★ Architecture, photography and cinema: Zola and the visual novel, ★ Representations of Zola in Film and Fiction, ★ Zola's career as an art critic and his relationship with Impressionism and the Impressionist circle, etc.)

2). CRITICAL RECEPTION OF ZOLA AND NATURALISM (★ Italy, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, Poland and other international sources)

3). FRENCH NATURALISTS (★ French Naturalist Writers revisited : Huysmans, Maupassant, Céard, Alexis, Hennique, the Goncourts, etc., ★ Realism vs Naturalism)

4). AMERICAN NATURALISTS (★ Evolution and transformation of American Literary Naturalism, - Jack London, Stephen Crane, William Dean Howells, Frank Norris, Willa Cather, etc., ★ **Special panel :Theodore Dreiser)**

5). SPANISH , HISPANIC NATURALIST WRITERS (★Pardo Bazan, Ibanez, Galdos, Gamboa, Azevedo, Marquez,etc.)

6). NATURALIST FILMMAKERS FROM AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (★ Renoir, Duvivier, Carné, de Sica, Lang, Lee, etc.)

Please mail your submissions or proposals with a brief resumé to:

Dr. Anna Gural - Migdal
2635 Rosemere
Duvernay, Laval, Quebec, H7E 2J9, Canada

or

Dr. Robert Singer
135, 86th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11209, USA

DEADLINE : MARCH 15, 1996

Papers may be presented in English, French, or Spanish and written in any language. All other languages are accepted if accompanied by a translation. The most challenging papers will be published in the international review **Excavatio©**. Please include a SASE with your correspondence. / Les communications peuvent être présentées en anglais, en français ou en espagnol. L'utilisation d'une autre langue ne peut être acceptée que si le texte est accompagné d'une traduction. Les actes du Colloque seront publiés dans la revue internationale **Excavatio©**. Pour toute correspondance, prière d'inclure une enveloppe timbrée.