O'CASEY JOURNAL

To your list of Irish literature annuals—beginning with the Irish Renaissance Annual and continuing with the forthcoming Yeats Annual—add a new O'Casey Annual, whose first issue will appear in Fall 1981 under the editorship of Robert G. Lowery. Each issue of this hardbound annual will contain scholarly and critical articles, a bibliography of current O'Casey criticism, and extended book reviews.

The lineup for the first issue is complete, but contributions for future issues are invited. Articles may be on any aspect of O'Casey studies, but the editor particularly solicits articles dealing with O'Casey's plays after The Plough and the Stars or with his autobiographies. Potential contributors should write to Robert G. Lowery, P.O. Box 333, Holbrook, New York 11741 for a style sheet. The deadline for articles for the 1982 volume is October 1, 1981.

AHA, MLA

Once again ACIS will sponsor Irish sessions in conjunction with the annual meetings of the American Historical Association and the Modern Language Association. Both meetings will take place in late December: AHA will meet in Washington, D.C. from the 28th to the 30th, and MLA will convene in Houston from the 27th to the 30th.


The ACIS-MLA session, chaired by Herbert V. Fackler of the University of Southwestern Louisiana, will focus on the topic "The Modern Irish Novel, Excluding James Joyce" (rather a large exclusion, that). Papers are "The Hungry Grass: Richard Power's Pastoral Elegy" by James McKillop; "Fiction Is History: Change, Continuity, and the Persistent Mode of the Irish Historical Novel" by Richard Fallis; "From An Réal Beoch to The Poor Mouth: Does Myles na gCopaleen's Text Survive?" by Ian E. Dunleavy; and "Elusive Balance in Iris Murdoch's The Red and the Green" by Weldon Thornton.

Those interested in submitting a proposal for future meetings of AHA or MLA should send them to the ACIS Secretary, Johann Norstedt, English Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061. The deadline for proposals for the 1981 meetings is February 15.

HERITAGE OF IRELAND FILM SERIES

One of the highlights of the 1979 ACIS meeting at James Madison University was the showing of the series of six 52-minute films on "The Heritage of Ireland." Since then, teachers of Irish studies courses and directors of Irish studies programs have found the series highly valuable as an aid in teaching about the 9,000 years of Ireland's cultural development.

Written and presented by Douglas Gageby and produced by Louis Marcus, the series presents the cream of Irish art treasures and antiquities and traces the contribution to Irish civilization of the Stone Age peoples, Celts, Vikings, Normans, Scots, and English. Since many colleges cannot afford the full price of the series, several institutions can arrange to share a print on a regional basis. For further information, write to Louis Marcus, Documentary Film Production, 12 Fortfield Drive, Dublin 6.

RHODE ISLAND CONFERENCE

Rhode Island College recently sponsored a two part conference on the theme "Modern Ireland: A Quarter Century of Change." The first part of the conference, on September 11-19, featured two addresses by the Irish playwright Hugh Leonard, readings from Leonard’s work, and a panel discussion on the literature and culture of contemporary Ireland. The second part, on October 13-18, was highlighted by two addresses by The Honorable Jack Lynch, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, as well as other lectures and panel discussions.

Those interested in knowing how the conference planners managed to include celebrities like these without charging admission to the events might want to consult Ridgway F. Shinn, Professor of History at Rhode Island College, Providence, Rhode Island 02908.

FICTION AWARD

Eoin McKiernan, director of the Irish American Cultural Institute, has announced that IACI will offer a prize of $5000 for the best new novel dealing with Irish-American life in the American colonies or states in the late 18th century. The award, which is reserved for books that are published or at least in the proof stage, will be the first in the U.S. specifically earmarked for an Irish-related novel. Entries should be sent to IACI at 683 Osceola Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105; the deadline is June 20, 1982.

MORE CONFERENCES

Forthcoming conferences of interest to ACIS members include the following:

The Midwest Victorian Studies Association annual meeting (May 1-2, 1981, Newberry Library, Chicago). The topic will be "Law, Rule, and Resistance in Victorian England." (Presumably this includes Victorian Ireland under the "resistance" label.) For information write to Frederick Kirchhoff, Department of English, Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805.

A conference on "Samuel Beckett: Humanistic Perspectives," May 7-9, 1981, chaired by Morris Beja, English Department, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43220. A volume of selected essays and papers will be published by Ohio State University Press.

A Bloomsday Symposium on the theme "How Joyce Means" (Santa Fe, mid-June 1981). The purpose of the conference is to help Joyce enthusiasts make it from the Provincetown meeting last June to the 1982 meeting in Dublin. Directors are Mary Power, English Department, University of New Mexico, and Phillip F. Herring, English Department, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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Finally: An Anglo-Irish Literature Symposium at the University of Wuppertal, West Germany (July 9-11, 1981). This conference is arranged partly through the International Association for the Study of Anglo-Irish Literature (IASAIL). The director, Professor Heinz Kosok, invites the submission of papers for the conference. Those papers that are accepted will be published, and participants who read papers at the meeting will receive a small honorarium. Expenses are being kept down: there will be no conference fee, meals will be inexpensive or free, and there may be a travel subsidy for those coming from outside Europe. For further information write to Professor Kosok at the University of Wuppertal, Gauss-Str. 20, 56 Wuppertal 1, Germany.

GUIDE TO IRISH STUDIES: UPDATE 5

Course Listings:
Indiana University (Bloomington, Indiana): English and Ireland; A Rhetorical Struggle. Contact Karen Stroup and Kaylene Long, Speech Communications Department.

Maryvale College (13350 Conway Road, St. Louis, Missouri): The History and Culture of Ireland. Contact Dennis Wachtel, Communications Department.

University of Missouri-Kansas City (Kansas City, Missouri): Directed Readings in Irish History Seminar, Spring 1980. Contact Virginia Glandon, History.

University of Toledo (2801 W. Bancroft Street, Toledo, Ohio): The Irish Language and Heritage course is no longer offered in the Division of Continuing Education. The Anthropology Department now offers The Irish-American Experience, which alternates with Irish Ethnomusicology. Contact Seamus Metress, Anthropology.

University of Delaware-Wilmington campus (Wilmington, Delaware): Irish History, Fall 1980. Contact Maurice Brie, History.


Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, Maryland); Irish History mini-course or Credit Course, contact Maurice Brie, History.

Cape Cod Community College (West Barnstable, Massachusetts); Irish Art, Irish Literature, Irish History, 1 credit each or non-credit, Fall 1980. Irish Language, Introduction to Joyce, Spring 1981. Study abroad program with Institute of Irish Studies. Contact David G. Scanlon, Institute for International Studies.

Herbert Lehman College (New York City): Advanced Ethnology—Ireland, The American Catholic Community, Fall 1980. Irish History (non-credit) through Continuing Education. Contact C.C. Weston, History.


(Note: the listing of Maurice Brie at three institutions is not an error.)

—Maureen Murphy Hofstra University

BRETON LANGUAGE GROUP

Members interested in the Celtic languages might want to know of the formation of an American branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language. The Committee announces that it is a "non-political and non-ideological" group concerned only with the preservation of the language and culture of the Breton people. Further information may be obtained from Lois Kuter, 312 West Dodge Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

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Review Editor: Nita Cary
Bibliographer: Jim Ford, Boston Public Library


*Education*


*Folklore*


*Genealogy*


*History*


*Irish in Canada*


*Irish in the United States*


Flannery, John B. *The Irish Texans.* San Antonio: University of Texas Institute of Texas Cultures, 1980. $8.95. ($6.95 paper).


Irish Language

Law

Literature—Collections

Literature: Drama


Literature: Fiction—Collections

Literature: Fiction

Literature: Poetry—Collections
Poets from the North of Ireland. Edited by Frank Ormsby. Belfast: Blackstaff, 1980. $3.95.

Literature: Poetry
Ennis, John. A Drink of Spring. Dublin: Gallery Press, 1980. $3.60. ($1.80 paper)

Literature: Criticism
**reviews**


Sean O’Casey’s politics have been under examination for many years; since, in fact, the early 1960s when the first spate of books and articles about the dramatist appeared. Several of these studies were written by O’Casey enthusiasts and scholars, and most, though not all, seemed to want to absolve the dramatist of being a Communist, or at least of being an orthodox Communist (whatever that is). In general, the studies which were written from a right-wing or social-democratic viewpoint found a contradiction between O’Casey’s passionate humanism and what they saw as the authoritarianism of the Soviet state. The very few articles by left scholars also concentrated on O’Casey’s passionate humanism, but they brought an understanding of what O’Casey saw as a thriving, dynamic and forward-moving Soviet society. As support for their conclusions, nearly all the critics used enormous amounts of biographical and pseudo-biographical details, but none of these early studies, in my opinion, captured the essence of the playwright’s politics.

Neither, unfortunately, does Greaves’s study and there is some mystery why not. The author has solid left credentials with two important studies of James Connolly and Liam Mellows behind him. Moreover, he had the advantage of all the former studies. Further, he writes from an Irish republican perspective which, properly understood, is not at all contradictory to socialism. But in this study, the author seems intent on contradicting rather than analyzing most of the important things O’Casey said about himself. He finds, for instance, that the influences on the dramatist’s youth were anti-national (the English Shakespeare and the Protestant Boucicault) and that O’Casey’s conversion to Communism did not occur until the late 1930s, an echo from the 1960s writers who, by and large, were from different political perspectives.

A major problem for Greaves is the ghost of James Connolly, to whom the author attributes many events which O’Casey laid claim (for instance, writing the Irish Citizen Army constitution). In this respect, one cannot expect objectivity from the biographer of Connolly any more than one could expect Isaac Deutscher to render an objective treatment of Stalin or George Sand of Chopin.

The author does a disservice to his own book by failing in the majority of cases to footnote or to document his sources, and by an abundance of typographical errors. Further, there are careless misstatements of fact which reveal a hasty rather than a thoughtful familiarity with the dramatist’s works. Giving the wrong titles of books and the wrong spellings of important names does not ensure confidence in the rest of the material.

By contrast, Ronald Ayling and Michael Durkan have done a superb job of compiling a bibliography of O’Casey’s works. There are sections dealing with the playwright’s books; his contributions to other books, such as with a preface, an introduction, letter or article; his many contributions to periodicals; translations of his works into 26 languages; his private papers which include manuscript, typescript, and proof material (presently in the New York Public Library); details of the first stage productions and major revivals of his plays; and sections on adaptations, recordings and motion pictures.

Each section is rigorously annotated. We find, for instance, that the playwright who once aspired to be an artist supervised the design and color of the dust jackets of the first English editions of his autobiographies, and that he was working on the books as early as 1929. Moreover, I was surprised to find that the world premiere of *Oak Leaves and Lavender* was in Sweden.

The translations are intriguing. The Soviets recently held a one-day conference at the World Institute of Literature in Moscow to commemorate the centenary of O’Casey, so, in that country at least, there is more than just a theatrical interest. Germany is another country where O’Casey has a broad following in the theatre and in academic circles. The Berliner Ensemble has produced long runs of two of his later plays, *Purple Dust* and *Cock-a-Doodle Dandy*, and scholars from East and West regularly critique his works. In fact, the German Democratic Republic has recently issued a two-volume set of his *Collected Plays*.

Ayling and Durkan have performed a valuable service with this 12-year long project. It should be on the shelves of every library and student of Anglo-Irish literature, and it is a model for any other bibliography.

Robert G. Lowery
Editor, *Sean O’Casey Review*

Since 1940, ten ethnographies of Irish communities have been published (*Family and Community in Ireland* by Arensberg and Kimball in 1940, *Une Communauté Rurale de l'Île* by Cresswell in 1968, *Inis Beag* by Messenger in 1969, *Prejudice and Tolerance in Ulster* by Harris in 1972, *Inishkillew* by Brody in 1973, *The One Blood* by Leyton in 1976, *Harpstrings and Confessions* by Bax in 1976, *The Irish Tinkers* by Gmelch in 1977, *The Tory Islanders* by Fox in 1978), of which the book under review is the latest. In a sense, it is a replication study of the west of Ireland countryside first described by Arensberg and Kimball — what changes in the rural way of life have occurred between the early 1930s and the mid-1970s. The title of the book is somewhat of a misnomer, in that, although the focus of the study is on mental illness, especially schizophrenia, and its causes, the whole gamut of culture-and-personality forms of rural dwellers of the west is examined. To my mind, it is the most insightful and informative, and the best-written, of the Irish ethnographies. (That other anthropologists share my view is attested to by the recent announcement that in 1981 Schepel-Hughes will receive the Margaret Mead Award of the Society for Applied Anthropology.)

This book will please and benefit not only cultural and social anthropologists but folklorists, historians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and Irish specialists from the humanities, not to mention the general reader with an inquiring mind and a taste for literary excellence.

Schepel-Hughes spent a year in 1974-75 doing fieldwork in a “representatively small, isolated rural community of the Kerry Gaeltacht,” east of Dingle town, which she calls Ballybann, located on a bay and composed of a central village and eleven sister hamlets at the base of Mount Brandon. In addition to employing the standard ethnographic techniques of external and participant observation and guided and open-ended interviews among most members of the community, she singled out two groups of villagers — mothers and children — for the study of norms of child rearing. She also examined relevant materials on socialization mirrored in folktales, proverbs, and superstitions collected by the Irish Folklore Commission, as well as life histories written by Blasket Islanders. As a psychological anthropologist, she administered projective tests — Thematic Apperception and Draw-a-Person Tests and the Values Hierarchy Scale — and analyzed essays on a number of topics (e.g., “Why Does a Good God Allow Suffering and Sickness?”) assigned to students at the parish secondary school. She also observed, interviewed, and tested patients at a mental hospital and a psychiatric clinic. As an ethnographer, she examined Irish prehistory and history, both oral (expressed in legends and anecdotes) and written, in order to delineate continuities in culture and personality over time. The book is rich in quotations from poets, essayists, and playwrights of fame, past and present, and from her Kerry respondents recorded in her field notes and on tapes.

She defines her study in this manner: “I attempt a broad cultural diagnosis of those pathogenic stresses that surround the coming of age in rural Ireland today. I explore the particularly high vulnerability of young and middle-aged bachelor farmers to schizophrenic episodes in light of such social and cultural problems as the current disintegration of village and social life and institutions; the remarkable separation and alienation of the sexes; a guilt-and-shame-oriented socialization process that guarantees the loyalty of at least one male child to parents, home, and village through the systematic scapegoating of this (usually the youngest) son; and, finally, cultural attitudes toward the resolution of stress outside of family life and through patterns of dependency upon ‘total’ institutions” (pp. 3-4). Her theoretical approach is eclectic and sophisticated, and she makes considerable use of data gathered and theories propounded by Irish scientists.

In the final chapter, “Toward a Responsive Human Community,” she reviews what attempts have been made recently by the government “to reduce the serious stresses caused by feelings of relative deprivation and the conflict between secular and traditional values” (earlier she criticizes past policies of the government which have increased the stresses) and suggests ways in which rural revitalization can be effected by the actions of a concerned church and state. As one whose written works about another rural community of the Gaeltacht have been denounced, yet have (according to my respondents of yesteryear) brought about local improvements instigated by church and state, I hope that the countrymen of Kerry will benefit from the publication of this compassionate work.

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