

International Theodore Dreiser Society
American Literature Association Meeting
Boston, Massachusetts
May 26, 2017

Business Meeting Minutes

Present:

- Renate von Bardeleben, Michelle Dostal, Anita Duneer, Yoshinobu Hakutani, Miriam S. Gogol, Cara Erdheim Kilgallen, Roger W. Smith, & Thomas Riggio

Budget: Treasurer's Report

- The Society currently has a balance of \$1384 (Wells Fargo) and \$1040 (PayPal) for a total of \$2424 (this year). Last year's balance was \$2803.
- This year's balance is lower because of a \$500 donation to art spaces, \$787.50 to University of Nebraska Press, and \$250.00 Hannah Huber for essay prize.
- Currently, there are 50 paying members and 110 online members (12 fewer than last year).

Next Year's Program:

- Miriam brought up next year's ALA program and panels; she suggested "new" theoretical approaches, such as Foucault's "Technology of Self" as a potential topic.
- Tom pointed out that an open session would work well, with suggested topics like "Cowperwood as Trump" and the "Neglected Writings of Dreiser" or, suggested Renata, the "Rediscovering of the Forgotten Books of Dreiser."
- *The Genius* and *The Stoic* came up as possible works to focus on, as did the political writings and tobacco novels.
- Miriam suggested "The New Woman" as a potential theme, and recommended opening up panel topics to Dreiser and writers influenced by him, naturalism, or determinism – such as Toni Morrison, Petry, et al.
- Yoshi, Tom, and Roger suggested Dreiser and Wright, as well as Dreiser's influence on Hemingway, Faulkner, and Fitzgerald.
- Michelle noted that transhumanism is a timely topic, so perhaps a focus on robotic representations of labor in Dreiser might prove interesting.
- Miriam and Roger also suggested focusing on the autobiographical writings, chiefly *The Gallery of Women* and *Twelve Men*.
- Roger advised on *Newspaper Days*.
- Yoshi suggested *A Book about Myself*.
- *Dawn* came up as a possibility.
- Renate recommended *Amateur Laborer*.

Future of Dreiser Studies (Digital Dreiser):

- Promoting Theodore Dreiser through Facebook and, in particular twitter, became an extensive topic of conversation.
- The Walt Whitman and Edith Wharton Societies were discussed as models for their authors' digital presence.
- Roger noted that he has worked hard to create a site, DreiserOnline.Com.

- The question of funding came up, so the conversation shifted the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEAH) and potential grants in a current era of far less funding opportunities.

Studies in American Naturalism:

- Anita introduced herself as book review editor for the journal, and requested that book notifications be sent to her.