

Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting of the Dreiser Society

American Literature Association
Boston, May 26, 2007

1. Secretary/Treasurer Donna Packer-Kinlaw reported that the society's current account balance is \$2,300.
 - a. There's been excellent feedback on the use of Paypal for making online payments of dues.
 - b. Given the society's healthy account balance, some discussion ensued about possible uses for it; the consensus was to retain it for a future Dreiser celebratory conference.
2. Keith Newlin reported on the status of *Studies in American Naturalism*.
 - a. The dean of the college of arts and sciences at UNCW and the chair of the English Department continue to help defray the costs of publication and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.
 - b. The expanded, double issue has succeeded in attracting attention; future issues will return to contents of approximately 4- 5 essays and 4-8 book reviews.
 - c. There were lots of fall submissions, approximately one article per week for a while, but there have been fewer in recent months, though essays continue to come in.
 - d. ProQuest, Manley, and Blackwell have offered to take over the publication of SAN and manage subscriptions (we would retain full editorial control), but, for the moment, we're not ready for outside management until the journal becomes better established. Eventually, however, we will likely seek a suitable publisher, once the journal is on its feet.
 - e. In the near future we may wish to consider publication of a special issue, such as Naturalism and African-Americans, to attract attention and contributions.
 - f. Marketing & Publicity: exchange ads have appeared in *American Literary Realism*, *Studies in American Fiction*, *ALN: The American literary Naturalism Newsletter*, and the *William Carlos Williams Review*; an ad will also soon appear in *American Literature*. A call for papers has also been posted on the UPenn CFP web site. We've also circulated allied author societies to encourage submissions and offered a reduced subscription rate. It was suggested to place a CFP in *PMLA*.
3. Forthcoming conferences. The Dreiser Society will sponsor one panel at the ALA Symposium on American Literary Naturalism, Oct. 5-6, 2007, with Cara Erdheim as chair; we will continue to sponsor two panels at the annual ALA meeting.
4. The *Jennie Gerhardt* centennial in 2011 generated some discussion as to the current interest (or lack, thereof) in *Jennie Gerhardt*. We considered the waning interest in teaching *Jennie Gerhardt*, though, and wondered whether the forthcoming *Genius* edition and Don Pizer's edition of new

Dreiser letters might generate further interest Dreiser's work beyond *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy*.

5. International Interest. We discussed the waning interest in Dreiser, and wondered about his popularity overseas in Russia and the UK. The discussion then turned to Dreiser in the East and how he's been viewed by Russian and Chinese scholars as more of a social critic than a literary naturalist. Renate von Bardeleben suggested the European Association of American Studies as a venue for publicity and/or stimulation of interest in Dreiser overseas.
6. Dreiser Bibliography. A committee comprised of Don Pizer, Steve Brennan, and Gary Totten is currently at work updating the Dreiser bibliography posted on the Penn DreiserWebSource.
7. Election of Directors at Large. Jude Davies and Cara Erdheim were elected by acclamation.

--Minutes by Cara Erdheim