Conferences

Poe at the ALA

Two Poe panels sponsored by the PSA are scheduled for the ALA this May in Baltimore. The first panel, "Poe's Criticism," chaired by Terence Whalen will meet on Friday, May 28, 1999 at 10:30 a.m. in Maryland E. Panelists include Stephen Railton, University of Virginia, "Criticism as Fiction;" Meredith McGill, Rutgers University, "The Ruins of Shelley: Poe, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Poetic Inheritance;" Barbara Cantalupo, Penn State University, "In Praise of Macaulay (or Teasing the Titmice);" and Scott Peeples, College of Charleston, "I Might Term Him a Magazinist: Poe and N. P. Willis." Organized by Joel Myerson, the second panel, "Poe and His Contemporaries," will be chaired by Barbara Cantalupo, Penn State University and will meet on Sunday, May 30, 1999 at 9 a.m. in Maryland E. Panelists include: Noelle Baker, Georgia State University, "Phrenology, Literary Theory, and Biographical Portraiture: Tactical Minefields in Whitman's Defense of Poe;" Mary DeJong, Penn State Altoona, "Rufus Griswold, Anthologist and Editor;" and Richard Kopley, Penn State DuBois, "Readers Write: Nineteenth-Century Annotations in Copies of the First American Edition of Poe's The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym."

In addition to these two panels, a seminar entitled, "The Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe," run by Leo Lemay of the University of Delaware will meet from 12 noon to 1:45 p.m. on Friday, May 28, 1999 in Maryland E.

International Edgar Allan Poe Conference

The International Poe Conference, honoring the sesquicentennial of Poe's death and sponsored by the Poe Studies Association and the Poe Museum (with support from Penn State and Louisiana State), will take place on October 7-10, 1999 in Richmond, Virginia. The conference will feature forty sessions—one hundred and twenty papers—concerning varied aspects of Poe's life and work. The countries represented on the program will be Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and the United States. Among the speakers will be Nina Baym, Silvia Campanini, Eric Carlson, Joan Dayan, Ben Fisher, Alex Hammond, Daniel Hoffman, M. Thomas Inge, John Irwin, Henri Justin, J. Gerald Kennedy, David Ketterer, Philip Levine, Meredith McGill, Elsa Nettels, Burton Pollin, Louis Renza, John Reilly, Sumanyu Satpathy, Dave Smith, Reiner Smolinski, G. R. Thompson, and Uchigoro Uchida. The guest-of-honor will be John Dunning, author of the murder mystery novels Booked to Die and Bookman's Wake. John Astin, renowned actor and formerly of "The Addams Family," will perform in the one-man play, "Once Upon a Midnight."

To register for the conference, call (800) 778-8632 or e-mail ConferenceInfo1@cde.psu.edu. To reserve a room at the conference hotel, The Jefferson (http://www.jefferson-hotel.com), call (800) 424-8014. Special conference rates are as follows: single/double-$145 per room per night ($163.13 with tax); triple-$155 per room per night ($174.38 with tax); quad-$165 per room per night ($185.63 with tax). When making your reservation, please mention the Poe Studies Association.

All participants in the Poe Conference must be current (1999) members of the Poe Studies Association. Therefore, if you are not already a member of the Poe Studies Association or if you have not yet renewed your dues, please send your check for $8, payable to "Poe Studies Association," to Roberta Sharp, Secretary/Treasurer, Poe Studies Association, 1010 Rosemary Lane, La Verne, CA 91750.

Poe Festival in Prague

Peter Fawn is the chair and organizer of a three-month Poe festival. "Edgar Allan Poe—Illustrations of a Tormented Mind," arranged by The Edgar Allan Poe Society of Prague and sponsored by AIG Insurance, American Express, and Hotel Intercontinental in cooperation with Charles University, Praha 2000, and the Prague Castle Administration. The conference has been three years in planning and will begin on August 3, 1999 and run through the end of October. The festival features an exhibition of illustrations, original manuscripts, first editions, Poe's personal possessions, and recreations of scenes from Poe's fiction with items on display from the collections of Susan Jaffe Tane, Stephen Loewenthal, Holt Edmunds, the Poe Museum of Richmond, and the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Prague.

Fawn chose Prague as the site of the conference because of "the Gothic qualities that lend themselves to Poe's works and form a perfect backdrop for the festival." The opening of the exhibition will be at the Carolinum, Charles University with a gala concert of Sergei Rachmaninov's "The Bells" as well as other "Poe-inspired" pieces in the Rudulfinum Concert Hall "poised on the banks of the River Vltava which runs through the heart of the old city of Prague." A series of opera performances inspired by Poe's work will be held in October and "staged in the magical and very apt settings of the cellars of the Old Kings Palace in Prague Castle. The audience will be privileged to witness this spectacle in what will be only the second time this century that the public has been allowed access to this special area of Prague Castle." Chamber music concerts will also be staged during October when, Fawn writes, "we will discover some interesting musical interpretations of Poe's works dating back to 1855." A series of films on Poe and his works sponsored by the Czech National Film Archives and the British Film Institute will be screened during September and October. Lectures by Burton Pollin and Richard Kopley will be featured in September. For further information, contact Peter Fawn, President, The Edgar Allan Poe Society at praguepoe@btinternet.com or at the festival contact address: Peter Fawn, Edgar Allan Poe Society of Prague, c/o 14 Watling Road, Southwick, Brighton, England BN424DSD.
Poe in Cyberspace

At times the World Wide Web is a house of cards. Primary e-text sites may be the root of second- and third-generation pages which either copied the original content (often without credit) or linked to it. As successive generations build up the process of recopying or relinking, the original site is often forgotten. What happens, then, if a root or primary e-text site is suddenly removed? Will the result be a small chain reaction? Such a potential catastrophe actually took place in the realm of Poe e-texts when the important Virginia Tech Eris Books source dropped out of service without warning in September 1998.

Predating the expansion of the World Wide Web, the Virginia Tech Eris Books collection contained plain e-texts of 133 authors—English, American, classic, and foreign. The Poe section contained more than 140 works in 122 files; for many years it was the largest readily available electronic edition of Poe on-line. But anyone putting in an Internet request after September 1998 to the usual Poe address (gopher://gopher.vt.edu:10010/11/134) would receive this curt message: "Server error: Sorry, access denied." (Perhaps the old gopher protocol itself, initially a menu for basic ftp network, had finally been superseded by the Web’s own http protocol.) Persistent snooping on the Eris Books site yielded this terse explanation:

The Eris Books have been removed from this site. The works that were on this site can be found at the Project Gutenberg site at http://www.promo.net/pg/. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

webmaster@vt.edu
Sept. 23, 1998
gopher://gopher.vt.edu:7000/erisbooks.

Not unexpectedly, for a few months other Poe lists continued to link to the dead Eris Books site. By March 1999, more than five months later, the Poe texts had not yet surfaced as promised at the Project Gutenberg site, although it is hoped that they will yet do so. The better specialist indexes, such as Voice of the Shuttle, Internet Public Library, and the CMU English Server, had trimmed the luxuriant but dead Eris shrubbery. But the Web has no method of automatically treating "bit rot," the problem of abandoned or orphaned or changed pages or sites, and even the best web search engines continue to show dead links. (If you think it’s hard to get information onto a computer network, try getting it off.)

The extent of the problem is shown by a recent AltaVista search, which revealed 65 Internet sites with links to the defunct Eris Books Poe e-text site. (Let’s not even think about links to the other 132 Eris authors!) Some of the lists needing updating are at such normally honorific locations as Book Stack (Oxford), Xroads (Virginia), Carrie (Kansas), IAT (UNC), Mimi (Keele), Poets (Cornell), Favorite Authors (Ohio State), Forrest’s Fall of the House of Usher, and Great Books (Mindspring). Of course, the usual crop of dead links can be found on personal pages at AOL, Geocities, and Tripod. (My embarrassing discovery was that the leading offenders here were my own forgotten drafts of old Poe webiographies, orbiting like abandoned space debris.)

Although the copycat nature of the Web can produce dead links, it can also create backup copies which prove useful when an original ceases to be available. Indeed, several lesser known e-text file copies or mirror sites, relatively unimportant when Eris Books was still functioning, can now be used to fill in the gap. The miracle of these digital copies is that they can be indistinguishable from the originals. Here are several alternate locations for the Eris Books Poe e-text collection—not yet generally picked up by electronic bibliographers:

1. The University of Missouri at St. Louis (UM-StL) put up its own set of Poe e-texts from a Walnut Creek CD-ROM, quickly withdrawn in 1992 after a copyright controversy over a dictionary it contained.
gopher://gopher.umsl.edu:70/11/library/stacks/books/poe

2. Stefan Gmoser, who formerly maintained links to the Poe Eris e-texts, has now refurbished local text copies with readable HTML typefaces. http://bau2.ubik.ac.at/pg/poe

3. Mindspring Thorazine has a copy of the Eris Poe e-texts, unfortunately coded in HTML which produces white text on a black background, impossible to print. http://www.mindspring.com/~thorazine/Poe/


Some members of this text family contain Pym, some Eureka, some neither, some both. By the way, the provenance of these Poe e-texts cannot be positively established. The Walnut Creek CD-ROM used by UM-StL dates from 1992 ("Desktop Library CDROM, 1st ed. Aug. 1992, CDRM1017370"). The Virginia Tech Eris Books gopher site obviously predates my first downloads from it, dated August 1, 1994. Other CD-ROM editions may date back to 1990, making it seem likely that some CD-ROM edition probably came first. But regardless of which electronic edition was the earliest, where did all these texts—over 140 tales, poems, and criticisms—come from in the first place?

There are two identifying marks of this family of e-texts: first, the works are grouped into about 120 files; and second, two of these files, identified as "Criticism" and "Marginalia," are clusters containing several works. These two characteristics are closely matched in only one printed edition, the Borzoi Poe: The Complete Poems and Stories of Edgar Allan Poe (2 vols., New York: A. A. Knopf, 1947, 1092 pp., with an Introduction by Arthur Hobson Quinn and Bibliographical and Textual Notes by Edward H. O’Neill).

After the Borzoi Poe was kept in print by Knopf well into the 1970s, it appeared under various reprint titles, the most recent being Complete Tales and Poems (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1992. ISBN 0-88029-366-7). This economy version can be found on remainder tables as well as on the publisher’s Web site, www.barnesandnoble.com. By the way, you won’t find it at the rival web site, www.amazon.com!

Although the Borzoi edition is not a standard edition for scholarly reference, as are the Harrison and Mabbott-Pollin editions, it may uniquely help to fill a definite pedagogic need for combined printed/electronic editions of Poe. For the most part, Poe editions are available in print or electronically—rarely in both forms. There are no electronic editions of any of the standard printed editions of Poe, such as Harrison, Mabbott-Pollin, or the Library of America edition—the latter based in part on Mabbott and recently issued as a school paperback edition. On the other hand, there is no printed counterpart for the widely available electronic family of some 30 Poe texts, variously accessible at Internet Wiretap, the Oxford Text Archive, the Virginia Electronic Text Collection, and the Michigan Humanities Text initiative. (For on-line links to these Poe and other e-texts, see a "Poe Webiography" at http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~ehrlich/poeties.html.)

To be sure, there are corresponding printed editions for such historically-based e-texts as those which have appeared recently in the Poe Society of Baltimore, "A Digitized Library of Southern Literature" at the University of North Carolina, the Michigan American Verse Collection, the Michigan/Cornell Making of America project, and the Virginia/Chadwyck-Healey Early American Fiction project—but they are likely to be found only in the rare book rooms of research...
Poe Exhibit at the Morgan Library


Upon entering the room of the Poe exhibit, the manuscript of "The Tale of the Ragged Mountains," its eight sheets joined with sealing wax forming a long scroll, was framed and hung on the left wall. Nothing distracted from its presentation, an indication of the care and attention given to the exhibit overall. All of the material was positioned so that the viewer could easily read Poe's small but clean, clear handwriting in the other seven manuscripts on display: "Tamberlane," "The Bells," "Uulalume," "Politian: A Tragedy," "The System of Dr. Tarr and Professor Fether," "Hans Phall," and "Annabel Lee."

Viewers could easily read Poe's minute print that fits "Hans Phall" onto an 8 x 6 inch piece of paper, and could see the deliberate energy and thoroughness that went into crosshatching out the epigraph Poe had originally thought to use.

In addition to the above manuscripts, the exhibit provided examples of Poe's criticism, both in notes and personal letters. Most impressive was the display of Poe's notes for a projected book, The Living Writers of America, Some Honest Opinions about their Literary Merits, with Occasional Words of Personality (ca. 1846) that includes the self-reflection: "Shall I subject myself to the possible charge of vanity (in other words of being proud of that of which none but a conceited ass could help being proud)—or shall I suffer the public to remain un-..." (See the last page of the newsletter for a reproduction of this text.) Also included were "A Chapter on Autography" from Graham's, xiv, 5 (1841), a letter to Joseph Evans Snodgrass (12 July 1841), and a letter to Horace Greeley (21 February 1847) expressing Poe's distress at Greeley's criticism: "[you] do me a vital injury—to wound and oppress me beyond measure."

Six images of Poe were displayed, two from Graham's including the portrait in the February 1845 number engraved by Welch & Walter after a watercolor sketch by A. C. Smith, 1843 or 1844.

The notes accompanying this exhibit pointed out the "poor likeness" of this portrait: "the portrait was dismissed by one journalist as a 'gross wrong to Mr. Poe, and a fraud upon the purchasers of the Magazine.'" The second Graham's picture was a reproduction of the hand-colored engraving in the July 1941 number that Thomas Mabbot identified as Poe standing next to Maria Clemm. The notes here explained that "others have argued that Poe would not have allowed his image to be used in this way, citing his comments about the 'contemptible pictures in Graham's Magazine.'" Also on exhibit was an engraved portrait by Frederick T. Stuart, 1885, after a copy of the "Thompson" daguerreotype (1849) and another engraving by an unidentified artist after the "Annie" or "Stella" daguerreotypes. Set aside with special note was one of the five copies of the "Ultima Thule" daguerreotype by Samuel Masury and S. W. Harthorn. Here the exhibit noted Baudelaire's 1860 description of that image: "Here he is very French: mustache; no sideburns; collar folded down...His brow is enormous both in breadth and height; he looks very pensive...Despite the immense masculine force of the upper part of his head, it is, all in all, a very feminine face. The eyes are vast, very beautiful and abstracted." Included, as well, was an etching by Nicolas-Francois Chifflet of Poe that appeared in the 1884 edition of Baudelaire's translation of Poe's tales, and according to the exhibit's notes, "it bears no resemblance to extant photographs of Poe."

Impressive were the illustrated versions of Poe's works including the 18 by 24 inch Mallarme-Manet edition of "Le Corbeau" (Paris: Richard Lesclide, 1875); also displayed was the framed wrapper depicting a raven by Manet. Equally intriguing was the Gustave Dore "Raven" (New York: Harper & Bros., 1884 [i.e. 1883]) with box and the first edition of Baudelaire's Histoires extraordinaires par Edgar Poe (Paris: Michel Levy Freres, 1856) which includes his autograph inscription to the writer Emile Deschanel. Charles Fouqueray's etchings on display illustrating "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Mystery of Marie Roget" made expressly for Baudelaire's text presented striking erotic images of murder.

A pleasure to experience, this exhibit presented the many sides of Poe—from his personal struggles with alcohol (e.g., autograph letter to George Eveleth, 29 February 1848) to his professional role as editor, from his biting response to an admirer (autograph letter dated 10 September 1849) to his affectionate letter to Annie Richmond about composing "The Bells" and "Hop-frog." On display, too, was evidence of Poe's influence on others. Included, for example, was Poésies de Stéphane Mallarmé (1932) illustrated by Henri Matisse, with the page open to Matisse's etching of Poe, created to illustrate Mallarmé's sonnet about Poe's tomb. All in all, this exhibit provided a comprehensive picture of Poe in an intimate setting, presented with grace and integrity.

Heyward Ehrlich
Rutgers University


Le Corbeau (The Raven)

Reviews


Popular music makers of the past were interested in Poe texts and used recordings to publicize their partiality: e.g., Buddy Morrow in 1960 (RCA); in 1963, John Habash’s “Folk Ballads” from Poe’s “World” (Reprise) includes nine tales; and in 1969, “The Glass Prism” (RCA) uses almost a dozen poems. The rise of rock music in the seventies evoked from England the “Allan Parsons Project” who uses four tales and three poems for adapted texts (20th Century Records). A bit later we find Poe texts used on recordings by the Finnish group “Billy Boys,” a folk song arrangement by Earl Dick, “The Dream Lovers,” and also Greg Kihn using “Annabelle Lee” (sic) and a heavy metal group, “The Iron Maiden,” offering Steve Harris’s adaptation of “The . . . Rue Morgue” among other numbers. Hosts of dramatic readers of the past often used musical effects for atmospheric background or narrative hints, but never before has there been a group of popular musicians, here of the rock genre, been assembled specifically to present their reading, chanting, or dramatizing of Poe texts with music as a background.

Hal Willner and various associates, such as Allen Ginsberg, embark upon this newly chartered ocean. This ambitious and highly professional pair of CDs (issued also on cassettes) proves Willner’s long experience and expert ability to assemble fourteen varied “performer artists” committed uniformly (except for one) to serious presentation of twelve Poe texts. Fascinating are hints of the evolution of the concept and partial enactment of portions of the recordings through the years: Willner’s very early love of Poe’s works, his discovery of Poe’s “influence” on people he was recording (e.g., Marianne Faithfull, Ken Nordine, and Diamanda Galás), his adopting, slowly, executive producer Michael Minzner’s idea of an album on Poe using techniques of Willner’s earlier recordings and broadening the “spoken word” performances of Vincent Price, Basil Rathbone and other male purveyors of the “horror genre” on film and tape. The final stages included Allen Ginsberg’s coaching of his friend Jeff Buckley in “Ulalume” early in 1997 before the death of both, mere months later, with Ginsberg as spokesman for the director’s opinion: “Everything leads to Poe . . . [T]race all literary art to Poe’s influence: Baudelaire, Genet, Dylan” (liner notes). This review is not directed toward people as spokesman for the director’s opinion: “Everything leads to Poe.”

Mr. Willner expressed his regret about the impish title, adapted from a film by his favorite, W. C. Fields, which used “molasses” in the place of “rabies.” Fields also furnishes him with the main titles for the two separate disks: “Burglars Singing in the Cellar” and “The Devil’s Brew,” implicitly referring to Poe’s real cause of death as well as the nefarious activities of some of his characters.

And now briefly we need consider the performances of the twelve celebrated “musicians [who] read Poe” (Shore Fire Media’s publicity notice of December 1997), twelve of them for the same number of works. In general, we should note that many depend largely upon background sounds for “Gothic” effects, as in older recordings of spoken word and on dramatized Poe disks and tapes, with synthesizers added to wind machines, glissandi on harps and pianos, and many percussion instruments and horns, but three entire poems have specially composed vocal music. The credits for everyone connected with this project are scrupulously listed for each user.

Number one is Marianne Faithfull, whose low-pitched and effectively theatrical voice comes from early acting in Hamlet, Chekov, etc. She provides an insightful approach to “Alone” with sea bird and music box sound effects (“Waltzing” excerpts) as an effective introduction.

The early reception of the record in over twenty press reviews has been almost uniformly favorable, but more important to us is the reviewers’ realization of the beauty and importance of Poe’s texts. The reviewer of the Atlanta Constitution says, “Even the language . . . intoxicated,” of Billboard, “a writer whose works beg to be read aloud;” of People, “writing that continues to fascinate and provoke 150 years after;” Publishers Weekly, “the potential to radically re-invent canonical literature;” Post-Dispatch, “Poe’s haunting influence remains strong, true and unabated;” Boston Herald, “reaffirms the damaged genius of Poe;” Cinncinati Enquirer, [his] words demand to be performed;” Seattle Post, “deepen the hypnotic effect of Poe’s words;” Tampa Tribune, “[the] complement or introduction to a true original;” Washington Post, “Willner [et al.] wanted to pay the maximum respect to Poe’s words.” Only the Washington Post had severe reservations about the merit of Willner’s achievement, but then again, its reviewer “swallowed” the absurd theory which the title connotes: the Baltimore doctor’s hypothesis about Poe’s death through an undetected rabies infection, developed by ignoring all but a single small detail in one of several accounts issued over many years by Dr. Moran, all the earlier diagnoses from Poe’s three physicians of the dangerous effects of his binges, the episode of the Temperance oath in Richmond, and his lifelong reform-pledging letters.

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Number two presents "The Raven," read by Christopher Walken, in an intelligent but rather too rushed utterance, with more concern about avoiding Victorian oratorical rhetoric than in communicating subtle emotional effects implicit in Poe's deliberate artistry. His thick, dentalization of every emphasized "d," the lack of any great range of pitch to express the great emotional gamut of these lines of anguish, a substitution once of "placid" for "pallid," of "Gil' yad" for "Gil' e ad" and an added "s" for "tempests" in stanza seventeen—all show a want of suitable preparation and serious address. There are the usual sea bird background mewings, sound effects of synthesizers, and guitar.

Number three is "The Tell-Tale Heart" read by Iggy Pop, renowned associate of "The Stooges." An insistent music box accompaniment hypnotically suggests the character's obsessive madness. Effective is the monotonously slow, even pacing of three different well chosen musical excerpts. Controlled, although unfortunately inelegant is the general diction confronting Poe's vocabulary, such as "dissimilation," and even "none" sounds like "noan," not "num." Impressive are the initial scene of approach and the last, of self-betrayal at the end of the tale. The intermittent drumbeats throughout are effectively varied in tempo and dynamics, with all being well dramatized.

The fourth is Ken Nordine's "Conqueror Worm," in a similarly deep and gravelly voice, but with far better diction than Pop's. Sound effects of bass, synthesizer and piano are helpful in evoking a horror film orientation (his specialty) as a simplistic approach to a more thematic poem than appears here.

In number five, Diamanda Galás inappropriately reads the male abuser's confession of "The Black Cat." Her elaborately staged dentalized t's and d's are indistinct or unpleasant. Here the muscle" and the second of "dif-f'er-ent." All lines become a rock setting, with gasping stresses and a monotonous melody of the reviews ignored or disfavored this item. Concord. Poe's finest text is utterly irrelevant here. Most tune shows a like latitude of musical spirit with more and well arranged for trap drums and flugel. As a swinging Number seven presents Ed Sanders in "To Helen" clearly at thirty-seven minutes, the interminably longest of all! secrecy, and deliberateness prevail. The effect? A reading of "Mask of the Red Death" as part of "Plague Mass" in 1990. The erroneous title given to number eleven, "City and [sic for in] the Sea" bodes ill for the "performance" by Deborah Harry and "The Jazz Passengers." They afford it a simple and dull melody for a massed chorus of poor male voices and female voices chanting monotonously to the drum and horns chiefly, with other instruments interspersed, sometimes weaving in unintegrated anabesques. Suddenly stanza three produces a lively, jazzy section on the refrain "Death looks gigantically down" to return in the fifth stanza. Stanza four is whispered (a hint of Poe's "winds") to effective organ-like keyboard music, and uneasy riff, returns as a coda. Altogether a strange effort!

Number twelve is a sensitive reading, as expected, by Marianne Faithfull, with a background chorus from "Priori No. 2" by P. Williams.

Gabriel Byrne, ushered in the thunderclaps, later forebodingly repeated, melodramatically reads well "Masque of the Red Death." Varied excerpts from Bach, Rossini, and "Mein Bruder" of somber organ riff, returns as a coda. Altogedler a strange effort!

Number fourteen is a brief excerpt, again from "The Raven," now read by "shock master" Abel Ferrara as though amid a background party group. His muttered, carelessly pronounced and phrased lines tease bouts of laughter and queries from them antiphonally during the two-minute performance. It originated in a Halloween Poe concert at a Brooklyn church a few years back, which also fostered several others on this recording, here specially re-performed for us.

All told, the records deserve to be in every Poe student's collection, for the amazing scope and variety of these performances, all interesting for the reasons too briefly detailed. I must express deep appreciation to Hal Willner and Bill Adler, the company president, who provided useful materials, including many of the reviews, publicity sheets, and helpful telephone conference time.

Burton R. Pollin
Professor Emeritus
The City University of New York

Shawn James Rosenheim's Secret writing/ from Edgar Poe/ to the Internet: THE CRYPTO/GRAPHIC/IMAGINATION is a welcome addition to the canon of Poe scholarship and criticism. I've tried to reproduce the title as it appears on the cover of the book because the designer was onto something, a realization that the author wrote two books that have been ingeniously intertwined: one book is on Poe's interest in and use of codes and on his indebtedness to communications technology of the nineteenth century, while the other is on the phenomenon of cryptography as it developed through the nineteenth century and as it relates to contemporary advances in communications and computer technology. Hence, in the title on the cover of the book, Poe is given priority of mention, while the cryptographic imagination of an amazingly large number of significant readers, that it would only just overstate things to say that the cryptographic imagination, finally a form of mapping. It is not topographic, but thaumaturgic, leading the reader into mysteries of sign, depth, and transformation—mysteries notably figured in the West by the story of Christ's birth, death, and transubstantiation (64). What is surprising here is the leap into transcendence, which comes without warning and without any prior preparation and is actually antithetical to the main thrust of Rosenheim's thesis. Elsewhere, for example, Rosenheim had maintained that "the hieroglyph implicitly suggests a strategy for suturing the fundamental split in human identity between corporeal presence and symbolic consciousness" (21). (Does Rosenheim intend the positivist "corporeal presence and symbolic consciousness" as synonyms for the more spiritualist "body and soul"?) Before making his leap of faith, Rosenheim was not concerned with insoluble "mysteries" in The Gold-Bug, but rather with cryptographic problems that are susceptible of solution by rational analysis. He makes his leap of faith on the basis of the bones Legrand and the narrator find buried with the treasure. Rosenheim's leap, however, is enabled not by "poststructuralist thought," but by St. Armand's essay on Poe's use of the lore of alchemy in the tale. Ironically, Rosenheim's leap of faith is not justified by the details of this particular story and constitutes a misreading of the tale. "The Gold-Bug" is not one of Poe's apocalyptic tales, like "The Pit and the Pendulum" or "The Power of Words." It is a "prophetic" tale, one with a moral that is conveyed by the ironic ending. "With its connotations of permanence and spiritual worth," Rosenheim writes, "the gold is not only a material reward that accrues to Legrand; it is also a symbol of pure meaning." Nothing could be further from the truth. To some extent, Rosenheim has fallen into Poe's trap, but to some extent, he has just read carelessly. The "treasure" uncovered by the three protagonists consists not only of gold; it is made up of many kinds of worldly goods, including gold coins, to be sure, but also jewels and other valuables. Nor is it certain that the entire treasure "accrues" to Legrand; the narrator's use of the first person plural in his description of the treasure scene suggests, rather, that the wealth has been divided, at least between Legrand and the narrator: "We estimated the entire contents of the chest, that night, at a million and a half of dollars; and, upon the subsequent disposal of the trinkets and jewels (a few being retained for our own use), it was found that we had greatly undervalued the treasure" (Collected Works, III:828).

Rosenheim is so intent on cryptography that he misses the ironic moral of the ending, which is an analog to the moral of Shelley's "Ozymandias," alluding to the parable in Luke 12:12-26, and specifically verse 21: "the man who amasses wealth for himself..."
Rosenheim writes of "the tale as an allegory of the superiority to a head-body dichotomy and all concern sex" (165). Metaphors which challenge the reader. All three tropes point "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," Edgar Allan Poe wrote three reading. For example, one of Rosenheim's insights is that "Rue unearthed, not by poststructuralist thought, but by conventional "The Psychology of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue,"' Leo ligatures" (76). In a dazzling and witty essay published in 1982, Lemay conveyed the same insight: "In the conclusion of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue,' Edgar Allan Poe wrote three metaphors which challenge the reader. . . . All three tropes point to a head-body dichotomy and all concern sex" (165).

Rosenheim writes of "the tale as an allegory of the superiority of brain to brawn, in which Dupin handily defeats both the sailor's evasions and the ape's brute indifference" (75). Lemay had made virtually the same point more than a decade earlier: "Dupin and the narrator represent the analyzing and creative intelligence--aspects of reason; . . . the orangutan and the sailor represent animality and sexuality--the body alone" (188). Rosenheim finds that, "[a]lthough the Prefect is figured as a 'creature,' it is just his failure to negotiate between head and body that prevents him from imagining the animal nature of the killer" (84). Again, Lemay had made the same point years earlier: "Literally, Dupin seems to be saying that the Prefect failed to solve the mystery because he failed to take sex into account--or because he failed to integrate the entire person, head and body, intellect and sex" (165).

Despite its faults, Rosenheim's inquiry into Poe's "cryptographic imagination" is a contribution to our understanding of Poe's relation to postmodernity, even if cryptography does not provide the key to all of Poe's writings. Rosenheim's contribution might have been even more impressive if he had simply acknowledged that there was meaningful Poe scholarship and criticism before the advent of postmodernity.

Patrick Francis Quinn (1918-1999)
Emeritus Professor Patrick F. Quinn, Wellesley College, and honorary member of the Poe Studies Association, died on February 23, 1999 at the age of eighty. Professor Quinn received his BA and MA degrees from the University of Wisconsin and his Ph.D. from Columbia University. He taught at Bowdoin College before joining the English Department at Wellesley in 1949. Retiring in 1987, he continued his writing and research on Poe. Melville and Faulkner and "devoted his time to two other passions: classical music and baking pies" (4 March 1999, Wellesley Townsman).

We are indebted to Professor Quinn for his significant contributions to Poe scholarship, especially his classic work of criticism, The French Face of Edgar Poe (1957) and his edition of The Library of America's Poetry and Tales (1984).

Richard Kopley
Penn State DuBois

Poe Bibliography, 1997-99
The bibliography below does not claim to be complete, but is an effort to synthesize material published on Poe, his work and his influence in 1997 and 1998, noting a few publications from 1999. The list includes nine books on Poe, three editions of Poe's work, nine books on Poe in languages other than English (French, Spanish, Swedish), sixteen books with articles devoted to Poe's work, and four reissues of classic Poe criticism along with numerous journal articles. The editor thanks Jana Aergersinger of Poe Studies who graciously shared the notes and references sent to her by Burton Pollin, and, of course, thanks go to Burton Pollin who assiduously collected numerous references especially those in French. The editor also wishes to thank those who sent in responses to the request for citations on the PSA listserv.

Baltimore, Maryland

The annual birthday dedication sponsored by The Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore (http://www.epoe.org) celebrated the 190th year of Poe's birth and featured performances by John Astin and the Baltimore Bach Society with a bagpipe tribute by the Calvert Pipe Band. Jeff Jerome, curator of The Poe House, toasted Poe and raised a glass, as well, to John Astin: "a better man never brought you to life." The program began with Astin reading "The Masque of the Red Death" interwoven with the chorus singing selections from Gabriel Fauré's Requiem.

The ritual offerings at the gravesite, once again, were performed by the "man in black" who "tipped his black hat" at those watching from the first floor window of the Westminster Church (Baltimore Sun, 19 January 1999). The Washington Times notes that the man who began the ritual fifty years ago died in December; according to Jeff Jerome, he had "passed the torch five years ago when he left a note saying someone else must take his place...since then different men have performed the tribute." (29 January 1999, 2).

J. Gerald Kennedy will be the presenter at The Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore's annual lecture on October 3, 1999 at 2:00 p.m. in the Edgar Allan Poe Room of the Enoch Pratt Library (400 Cathedral Street).

Carrboro, North Carolina

In January, the Somnambulist Project presented the "quasifictional, semihistorical account" of Poe's life, Dan Dilly Poe, a "mixed-media production [that] employs several types of puppetry, lighting and stage effects" designed for "theater-goers of all ages." Written by Jason Arkles, the play tells the story of Poe's life as "poet, critic and amateur metaphysician and the parallel life of David Poe—a possible relation whose identity is inexplicably entangled with that of the writer" (Chapel Hill Herald, 16 December 1998).

New York, New York

At the Miller Theater at Columbia University in February as part of a series, "Opulent Music," The Lark Quartet played "Conte Fantastique" by André Caplet based on "The Masque of the Red Death." Jacqueline Chambord read from Baudelaire's translation of Poe and Kristin Linklater read Poe in English to provide background for the musical works. As New York Times reviewer Paul Griffiths suggests, "the readings were finely done, they added yet another set of connections and correspondences to the musical ones already ricocheting through the program and gave the evening an educational air" (3 March 1999).

At Hunter College's Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery, "A Painter's Poet: Stéphane Mallarmé and His Impressionist Circle" was on exhibit in March. The catalogue for the exhibit is described by New York Times reviewer, Grace Glueck, as "informative, with many scholarly contributions...an essential part of the show" (12 March 1999). Included in the exhibit was Mallarmé's translation of "The Raven" (1875) and all of Manet's lithographs that illustrated this edition, described as "sketchy, dark but very legible vignettes much in the spirit of Poe's haunted ruminations. For more information, see "Special Offers" on page 11.

From April 9-11, "professional poets, amateurs and the curious [partook] in over fifty poetry recitations, conversation groups, competitions and workshops...at Cooper Union...and throughout the downtown area" (NY Times 5 March 1999). Included were "midnight readings of erotic poetry and Edgar Allan Poe." For more information, www.peoplespoetry.org.

Warrensburg, New York

In November 1998, Kevin Martin performed A Touch of Poe, cited for its professional excellence by the Edinburgh Festival in 1996.

Washington, D. C.

"2xPOE," a play by Fraudulent Productions adapted by John Spitzer from "The System of Dr. Tarr and Professor Fether" and "The Case of M. Valdemar" and directed by Dana A. Palanker was presented at the D.C. Arts Center in late March through April 24, 1999. Washington Post theater reviewer, William Triplett, describes Fraudulent Productions' "the ever-adventurous Frauds, who brought us a lusciously creepy and intriguingly avant-garde staging of The Fall of the House of Usher' last season" (24 March 1999). His review of this production is mixed. The second piece, 'The System of Dr. Tarr,' is everything 'M. Valdemar' isn't—dramatic, multilayered, excessive and mean. You can take it as allegory or at face value; either way, it locks up your interest right away, despite the fact that you figure fairly quickly the cynical but hilarious plot...Palanker and her cast go to town with it all, as they should. She maintains a marvelously deadpan tone throughout the show and gets good performances...Mitch Finegold's sound design reverberates ominously with industrial rumblings and banging. Rob Brooks's lighting is austere but effective. They work well in both plays. Too bad only one works."

Richmond, Virginia


PSA Financial Report

Roberta Sharp, Secretary/Treasurer, reports that the Poe Studies Association membership totaled approximately 230 in mid-March, 1999. The investment account balance at the end of February 1999 was $3,111.59 including $22.53 dividend for the year to date. The PSA checking account balance is $7,198.14.

The PSA extends special thanks to The Poe Society of Baltimore, Roger Texier of The Gordian Press, and Penn State Berks-Lehigh Valley College for their generous donations. A thank you, as well, to honorary members Daniel Hoffman and J. Lasley Dameron, and members Joan Mead, Shoko Itoh, William Zimmer, Ken Emkey, M.D., Glen Omans, Tsutomo Karasawa, Lars-Erik Nygren, J. P. VanderMotten and Rene Van Sloaten for their donations.

This publication is available in alternative media on request. Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its workforce. U.Ed. LV 99.84

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Notes and Queries

Jeffrey Savoye (jsavoye@erols.com) writes:
I am seeking confirmation of the two middle names of Poe's correspondent E. H. N. Patterson. John Ostrom gives the name as "Howard Norton," but The Poe Log gives the name as "Horton Norton." Ostrom appears to have taken Patterson's full name from Eugene Field's book Some Letters of Edgar Allan Poe to E. H. N. Patterson..." (Chicago: The Caxton Club, 1898), itself taken from the earlier article "Poe, Patterson and Oquawka" (America, April and May, 1889). Kenneth Silverman, The Poe Encyclopedia and others since 1987 appear to repeat "Horton Norton" from The Poe Log. Both versions, of course, cannot be right. I am reluctant to question Thomas and Jackson's extremely reliable Poe Log, but "Horton Norton" has the ring of a typographical error. Can anyone provide a conclusive answer to this minor puzzle?

Burton Pollin (ap2@is4.nyu.edu) writes:
Roger Texier (of the Gordian Press) and I are planning to reedit and republish the Letters of Poe, 1948 (Harvard ed.), (Gordian Press with Supplement). The revised two-volume edition will incorporate all previous supplements and changes. Knowledgeable devotees of Poe are urged to communicate as soon as possible any leads to other "new" letters of Poe that should accompany those that he sent to Francis Liber (6/18/36); John C. Cox (9/11/38); Thomas Wyatt (4/11/41); E. L. Carey (9/42); Robert Hamilton (10/3/42); Elwood Evans (9/23/43); Nathaniel P. Willis (5/21/44); John R. Thompson (1/31/49); John Sartain (2/2/49); Maria Clemm (8/5/49); or Maria Clemm (9/10/49).

Any data sent to the editors of Poe Studies or PSA Newsletter or to R. Texier (Gordian Press, P. O. Box 40304, Staten Island, NY 10304) or B. Pollin will be fully and gratefully acknowledged.

The Baltimore-Washington Beer Works (http://www.ravenbeer.com) recently introduced in the U. S. the beer, "The Raven"—"a full flavored, robust and beautifully hopped Special Lager of rich golden color"—brewed by Anker-Brauerei, Nagold, Germany. As the flyer notes: "Experience the genius of Poe through a beer brewed in his color"—brewed by Anker-Brauerei, Nagold, Germany.

Special Offers

The Gordian Press is offering to members of the Poe Studies Association a 25% discount on all volumes of The Collected Writings of Edgar Allan Poe: Volume 1: The Imaginary Voyages, Volume 2: The Brevities, and Volume 5: Writings in The Southern Literary Messenger. Each has a list price of $75 and is available to members at $57.25. Volumes 3 and 4: The Broadway Journal with a list price of $100 per set is available at $75 per set. Pollin's Word Index to Poe's Fiction is available at a special price of $25 when ordered with any of the volumes of Collected Writings. All orders are shipped postage-paid. Orders should be sent to The Gordian Press, P. O. Box 40304, Staten Island, NY 10304, and the member discount should be mentioned.

A Painter's Poet: Stéphane Mallarmé and His Impressionist Circle is available from Dr. Jane Roos of Hunter College for $22.50 (including shipping). Please e-mail her at jmroos@aol.com if you are interested in purchasing this scholarly and informative catalogue.

Closed on Account of Rabies, a 2-CD package, is available from Mouth Almighty Records (MouthMight@aol.com) at 516 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001 for a special rate of $15 for PSA members.

Another Raving

The Raving
A Poe-etic Version of the Baskerville Legend

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many quaint and curious volumes that were leather bound—
While I nodded, snoring, scowling, suddenly I heard a growling,
And then an awful, hideous howling, as from some gigantic hound—
"Tis some watchdog," I muttered, "howling just to guard the ground—
Only this or I'll be bound."

Heeding not Mortimer's warning, I vowed to sit until the morning
Perusing all the tomes and parchments in this chamber to be found
Lamplight pages was adorning, while I sat there sneering, scorning
All those tables of hellish warning of a supernatural hound—
"Just some watchdog," I repeated, "howling just to guard the ground—
Only this—Oh! What's that sound?"

I had heard an eerie scratching on the window's wooden thatching,
Followed by more ghastly growling just outside my chamber door—
Then there came a sorry whining, as from some puppy pleading, pining
To be let in for its dining as there was nothing on the moor—
"Poor old watchdog," I muttered, "looking for its soup du jour—
Only this and nothing more."

Swiftly I the door unbolted, and was violently jolted
By a creature so gigantic I could barely see its shape—
As I fled through all the hallways, knowing it was with me always,
It would haunt me in the hallways, it was Rue Morgue's killer ape!
"Holmes and Dupin," I shouted, "Come and help me to escape!"
They just stood with jaws agape.

Then a shot from nowhere rang out. "Good old Watson!" Sherlock
sang out,
As the ape sank to the floor, and Watson gave it even more—
Meanwhile I was really raving, glad I had a life worth saving,
As I knelt upon the paving, thanking Watson in the door—
"How came it here?" Holmes wondered, "Dupin, tell us of its lore—
Only this or I'll be bound."

The Raving
Edgar Allan Poe, "The Living Writers of America"
Autograph notes, [1846], for "the Literati of New-York City," published in Godfrey's Lady's Book (1846-48).
The Pierpont Morgan Library. Purchased by Pierpont Morgan, 1909, MA 614.

Acknowledgments

For information appearing in this issue, the editor wishes to thank the following PSA members and interested parties: J. Dameron, P. Fawn, D. Hoffman, R. Kopley, P. Manning, B. Pollin, J. Roos, J. Savoye.

On the back:

©Len Moffatt 1998
Begin with the memoir — to which afford Willis's, Simms', and Fields' personal descriptions. End with a postscript regarding to Publisher's Appendix of Notices, prepared with special for giving Mone...

Next — Introduction with: The difficulty of writing about contemporaries — Provincial quaintness of authors — instance this in an account of the year of the present work — state the great circulation of Locke's Book, got out cheaply, according to how he was engaged into giving up the introduction (conditional) if referring to English attack. Then original Preface. Such a method to extend the plan — cautious investigation — discreet petty animosities it will be seen that.

We are through petulance, or neglect, or underestimation of the measure, the man who is consistent is a fool — the deficiencies for every. Perhaps I have put myself to be conveyed to foreigners (the Sec. The book is not an object is to convey to foreigners) the Sec. The book is not an object is to convey to foreigners. The Sec.

The reason I have put this account in my own countrymen (who cannot be supposed conversant with the writer) is that you have an interest in our literature. How far the journals are reliable — have already spoken partially on this topic in the preface to the "Litterati." Speak of the W. Am. — it proves, local condition of W. I. mean incidentally to this topic, giving in the fact that the greater majority of this books is written by northern men — this as of the nature advance of cultivation from E. to W. — Political, sectional animosities altogether independent of the partisan animosities of England, and such as equally affect us — result a degeneration of Southern, a Western talent, which upon the whole is greater, more vivid, than that of the North, less conventional, less conservative — want of concentration gives birth to a peculiar eloquence, whose separate penchants render it nearly impossible to get at the truth — existence of the Humanity amongst which belong Emerson, Lowell, Hawthorne, Godwin, Fuller, this gentleman who judges all literature in accordance with his hobby — even writing or estimating works of preserved art by real critics. The St. Art. Society, Matthews, Denkiehisch, Jones, Cheever, once — now reduced to Matthews and Dunwikish. The magazines, for the most part, own of eloquence — honorable exceptions in favor of Boston Books on Am. Art. —镇, Rattle, Kenne, Bryant, Groswild. As an account of each — freemans apt to be conveyed by such a work as Groswild's — best valued only as a comprehensive — Pearson — I judgment of it all. Hoffmann — looks what Groswild says add it all, it show that I am not marked by soreness — how in the public to know that I am in better condition to judge the truth — appeal to that public in regard to my whole editorial career — in great measure above from elocution — swearing by no measure — after all the best evidence is internal — in my criticisms I have seldom given an opinion without at least the semblance of a reason — have all my life dealt in opinions — opinion of my contemnor is refer to Afflante. I give these opinions, too, part because I have a right to be proud of them and, second, because the share of vanity is one which I feel able to bear — being! Shall I subject myself to the possible charge of vanity (six words of being proud of that of which none but a concealed eye could help being proud) or shall I suffer the public to remain opi...

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English as only English opinion.