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ENDPAPER; How Do I Join?

By CATHLEEN SCHINE NOV. 21, 1993

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Monday. I am thinking of becoming a member of the New York glitterati. According to The London Daily Mail, Martin Amis has left his wife of 10 years, and the woman he has fallen in love with "is one of the New York glitterati." She's also the cousin of a good friend of mine, and I find, after hearing this news, that I am fiercely jealous. The most scandalous event in my family was when my cousin Andy turned down Harvard for Duke.

Tuesday A.M. If I joined the New York glitterati, would I have to date Martin Amis? While it's true he is quite attractive, a very funny, intelligent novelist and approximately the right age, I am married; anyway, I have read those very funny, intelligent novels, and they do not suggest a world view of sufficient sympathy toward the female gender.

P.M. Started and now cannot put down Diana Trilling's new book, "The Beginning of the Journey" -- an expansive, witty and fiercely entertaining memoir of her marriage to Lionel Trilling. I dragged it on the subway. I read it in the supermarket. She deals uncompromisingly with every idea and everyone capable of forming an idea ever to have crossed her path. There is a discussion of New York intellectuals joining the Communist Party in the 30's, of course, yet she never mentions becoming a member of the New York glitterati. I wonder if the Trillings

ever joined the New York glitterati. There is a passage in which Lionel dances to rock-and-roll at Truman Capote's black-and-white ball. But writers don't have black-and-white balls anymore. How does one even apply to the New York glitterati? Do you need four recommenders, the way you do when applying for a Guggenheim? The only things I'm a member of now are the Natural History Museum, the Audubon Society and American Express. My father used to belong to the Yale Club, until he moved to Canada. I wonder if there is a Canadian glitterati.

Wednesday. The Evening Standard ran a huge piece about Martin Amis and my friend's cousin, and The Daily Mail ran a two-page follow-up spread entitled "Martin and the Women," with photographs of six of Amis's former girlfriends. The English treat their writers so much better than we do. Imagine The New York Post running a two-page spread about Lionel Trilling and his girlfriends. There are so few opportunities for the serious writer in the United States. No one gossips about writers here. The only writers I can remember encountering in this way are Norman Mailer and Jay McInerney; and, when John Cheever's diaries came out, I read that he had not slept with Allan Gurganus. I went to college with Allan Gurganus. I didn't sleep with him, too. Yet I've never seen this reported.

Thursday. My back is bothering me, and there is, as usual, no mention of it in the tabloids. In France, philosophers wear leather and flick their long hair glamorously. Intellectuals hobnob with heads of state and heads of houses of couture. Everyone goes to good restaurants all day long. They come home only to water the plants with Champagne. Chanel named a perfume after the chic, avant-garde magazine *Egoiste* and paid handsomely for it. Intellectuals are taken seriously there. And in England, writers are considered to be on the same level as the Royal Family. But here? The press wastes itself on Donald Trump or Burt Reynolds. It's a scandal. Writers have sordid divorces just like everyone else.

Friday. I missed the 30th anniversary party for The New York Review of Books yesterday because of my back. I was sorry because I admire The New York Review of Books and all the people associated with it; and, for me, just the sight of the masthead will always bring back my first attempts to be somehow intellectual, in the days when I had never heard of the New York glitterati and read The New York Review of Books uncomprehendingly while listening, uncomprehendingly, to the Doors. But thinking about the party today, I am even sorrier I couldn't go. What if the New York glitterati were there? I may have missed my big chance. My husband

went, and he said it was a very elegant party full of intellectuals, but as for the New York glitterati attending, he wasn't sure whether they did or not. Maybe Calvin Klein will ask Barbara Epstein and Robert Silvers to name a perfume "The New York Review of Books."

Saturday. Time to recycle the newspapers today. Sifting through the alarming pile, I notice that The Daily News claimed that Tama Janowitz might be a man. She's not, but at least The News, to its credit, is paying some attention to the literary world. When I had just given birth to my first child and got my hair cut off so he'd stop pulling it with his tiny fingers, my mother said, "You look like a boy." How charming, I thought. How gamine. Then she said, "A fat boy." Maybe some stray remark from Tama Janowitz's mother accounted for The Daily News's temporary confusion regarding Tama, although I sat at the same table as Tama Janowitz at a wedding last year and she looked far too slender, rested and dressed-up to have just given birth.

Sunday. I saw my cousin Andy today. He's very happy at Duke. I'm not sure I would be happy as a member of the New York glitterati. Would I be any good at it? My friend's cousin, the member of the New York glitterati, was also described as a "femme fatale about town." That sounds like more fun. So I've decided to join Equinox, my fashionable local gym, instead.

A version of this article appears in print on November 21, 1993, on Page 6006094 of the National edition with the headline: ENDPAPER; How Do I Join?.