

# Humanities

## *SHORT STORIES: Wonderfully Loving Transpositions*

It is not surprising that television should turn to America's bookshelves for rich dramatic material. For great fiction is timeless, it speaks to us of human truths.

In America, short fiction has been a favored form of wresting truths from the national experience. Spare and incisive, the short story is "the way we most clearly see ourselves," according to literary critic Wallace Stegner.

For a century after the Civil War, American magazines and newspapers peppered the land with tales and insights of writers like Mark Twain, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Eudora Welty, James Thurber and others. Their tales are animated by social and intellectual commentary. In them, we find recurring themes, values and preoccupations to define and redefine our "rites of passage" as people and as a nation.

So there were no opening night jitters April 5 when the Public Broadcasting Service aired the premiere telecast of "The American Short Story." They knew they had a winner. "The American Short Story," which was funded entirely by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is a series of nine films of short stories by outstanding American writers. The series is scheduled for Tuesday evenings April 5 through May 10.

The nine stories, chosen for the project on the basis of "their literary merit, social insight and entertainment potential," are: Sherwood Anderson's "I'm a Fool"; F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Bernice Bobs Her Hair"; Henry James's "The Jolly Corner"; Richard Wright's "Almos' a Man"; John Updike's "The Music School"; Ambrose Bierce's "Parker Adderson, Philosopher"; Stephen Crane's "The Blue Hotel"; Flannery O'Connor's "The Displaced Person"; and Ernest Hemingway's "Soldier's Home." Actress Colleen Dewhurst introduces each film with historical and biographical information. Several are followed by panel discussions among their director, producer, actors or scholarly advisors.

"The stories reflect 100 years of examination of American values," says Robert Geller, president of Learning in Focus, Inc., the non-profit educational film group which received the NEH grant, and executive producer of the film project. "Our challenge has been to capture, on film, the perceptions, style, and narrative power of the author. Fidelity to the author has

been one of our main concerns."

No easy feat. For the problem is in the media: to educate film from fiction is not unlike turning a geode inside out. In the outward movement of the film, the glimmering crystals of the story's complex planes are revealed.

Impressively, that fidelity to the authors' stories has been achieved in "The American Short Story," and Geller allows that this is due to the active collaboration of the television and theater talent with the project's committee of twelve literary scholars. Himself a writer, producer and professor of literature and film, Geller points with pride to the enthusiastic participation of such noted American scholars as Henry Nash Smith, University of California at Berkeley; Matthew Brucoli, University of South Carolina; James Cox, Dartmouth College; Blake Nevius, UCLA; Earl Rovit, City College of City University of New York; and Calvin Skaggs, Drew University.

It's apparent that the prominent actors who audi-



Shelley Duvall had title role in "Bernice Bobs Her Hair," first film in The American Short Story series.

tioned for "The American Short Story" were attracted by the high caliber of scripts that resulted from the scholar/production consultations. All were paid standard public television scale.

LeVar Burton appears as a painfully naive youth struggling to become a man in Richard Wright's "Almos' a Man." Ron Howard, of ABC's "Happy Days," is Andy, a young hot-walker at an Ohio race track whose lie about non-existent wealth costs him the girl of his dreams in Sherwood Anderson's "I'm a Fool." Shelley Duvall, Bud Cort and Veronica Cartwright star in "Bernice Bobs Her Hair," F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1919 tale about a shy girl who decides to become a woman on her own terms. And in Flannery O'Connor's "The Displaced Person," Irene Worth, Shirley Stoler, Robert Earl Jones and John Houseman appear in a microcosm of rural society in the 1940s.

Free of the time strictures of commercial television, "The American Short Story" films last only as long as is necessary to tell their stories. They range in length from 28½ to 56 minutes. Six are paired for airing during the series run on the Public Broadcasting System. The network plans to rerun the series at least four times in the next three years. It will also be made available for school and non-school audiences.

Chloe Aaron, PBS senior vice president for programming, says, "We are looking forward to 'The American Short Story' as the highlight of our Spring 1977 season. This series represents public television in its fullest potential. It combines the finest writing of American authors with some of the best directing, scripting and acting talent this country has to offer. Certainly the series will not only entertain but will also introduce millions of Americans to significant aspects of our literary heritage."

Which is just the kind of expectation the Endowment had responded to. Under the guidelines of the NEH Media Program, funding is given to develop imaginative television, radio and film production in the humanities for national broadcast and distribution. Projects must be geared to the general adult public and involve direct interaction between scholars in the humanities and producers, directors, writers and actors of solid professional stature. Past projects have included: "The Adams Chronicles," "War and Peace," and "Classic Theatre."

**T**he short story series began in 1974 with the pilot film "Parker Adderson, Philosopher," a tale by Ambrose Bierce, the only prominent American writer who actually fought and was wounded in the Civil War. Robert Geller, writer-director Arthur Barron, and scholar Alfred Kazin united to shape the taut Civil War story with the surprise ending in which a man's true character is revealed on the brink of death.

With continuing support from the Endowment, the three helped formulate the initial design for the film

## MINNESOTA PREVIEW

To highlight the opening of "The American Short Story" to be telecast beginning on April 5, a preview of the F. Scott Fitzgerald story, "Bernice Bobs Her Hair," was presented on March 25 at the University Club, St. Paul, Minnesota, in the neighborhood where Fitzgerald was born. More than 250 guests attended the event hosted by the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Humanities Commission.

Some critical comments resulting from the premiere of *The American Short Story*:

**The Washington Post** (*Tom Shales*): "The American Short Story . . . is about the most promising and provocative thing to happen to TV this spring. . . . It's the kind of thing that reawakens one's dormant excitement for the possibilities of television. . . . It is for everybody."

**The New York Times** (*John J. O'Connor*): "The short story has been the special creation and pride of American literature, but . . . a rich source of programming material has been largely and inexplicably ignored. . . . Now, with the funding of . . . the National Endowment for the Humanities, the potential can be solidly grasped. . . . The American Short Story series is off to a singularly impressive beginning."

**The Washington Star** (*Patricia Simmons*): ". . . a hit . . . not to be missed." (*Bernie Harrison*): "If . . . 'The American Short Story' can hold to this quality, it'll give us something to watch besides the commercial reruns and sports."

series, originally titled "Anthology: the American Short Story." They had three major objectives. They would film great fiction reflecting central themes in the American experience. They would explore the shape of American social and intellectual mores through the history of her short stories. And they would whet their audiences' appetite for fine literature and television programming.

Then began the arduous task of choosing the remaining eight stories. Geller estimates they read at least 500 stories before selecting the 100 which were subsequently appraised by the project's committee of literary scholars. Committee chairman Calvin Skaggs recalls, "It was a very detailed process. We handled it informally so we could maneuver. We knew we wanted certain things to get a series which would be powerful on film and representative of 100 years of American short fiction."

They wanted, for instance: writers reflecting a diversity of experience; a variety of writing styles, from humorous sketches to deep philosophical probings; and recurring themes such as conquering the land, man's sense of aloneness, our passage rites from youth to old age, and statements about how we deal with crisis points in our lives.

"We got most of what we wanted," says Geller, "the regional, young and old, the bad and the beautiful."



Two scholars worked with the writers, directors, and actors on each story. Their critical review was weighed throughout the production. Yet never was there any sense that production was hamstrung.

Typically, scripts were reviewed and rewritten several times before approval. The process is seen in a scholar's note attached to the first draft of "Almos' a Man": "Eliminate all padding which relies on (other characters') development. Since a virtue of the story is its sparseness, its economy—a hard persistent concentration on Dave's problem of adolescence—any padding should pertain directly to Dave's state of mind."

Always, the guideline of "faithfulness to the author's intent" was followed. In some cases, however, story adjustments were made to clarify or tighten dramatic moments. In James's "The Jolly Corner," literary advisor Henry Nash Smith suggested the introduction of a seance scene to externalize the very internal conflicts of Sheldon Brydon's psyche. Smith notes that Henry James and his brother William, an early psychologist, were experimenters with telepathic communication and habits of seances.

The only major change in any of the stories occurs in the film of Crane's "The Blue Hotel." After much discussion, director Jan Kadar and scholar Alfred Kazin decided to compress the story's final scenes to one location and time frame. Geller points to the decision as "an exciting moment in literary discussion. The question is not which is better, but why we did what we did." To drive the point home, he tells an anecdote.

Fritz Weaver, featured in "The Jolly Corner" by Henry James, one of nine films in *The American Short Story* series.



In the back lot of MGM a young goat and an old goat are grazing on a mound of film nitrate cans containing the movie "Gone with the Wind." "Hey, this is great stuff," squeals the young goat, knocking off can after can. "Oh, I don't know," says the old goat, "I thought the book was better."

"Each medium has its own restraints and possibilities," says Geller. "The trick is to enhance the material by maximizing the latter."

W

hile literary fidelity was the talk of the sets, the sets themselves were meticulously authentic. The same farm near Milledgeville, Georgia, where the late Flannery O'Connor lived and wrote served as the set for her story "The Displaced Person." Fitzgerald's "Bernice" was shot on location in a lovely period home (the owners moved to a motel for a month) in which "every spoon, every bowl and room was intact." In "Parker Adderson, Philosopher," the rebel regiment is a ragged outfit, mostly young boys with peach-cheeks and old men with sagging jaws and gazes. For that was what was left of the Southern army then.

At the same time, "The American Short Story" staff inventively kept production costs for each film within a specified budget, about a half to a third what similar commercial ventures would cost. In "I'm a Fool," for instance, the racetrack scene is filled with church member "extras" whose building was painted in exchange for their work.

Now, as "The American Short Story" premieres, the series is "getting the kudos," as Geller puts it. And there are hopeful signs that commercial television may pick up the creative "ball." Well and good. We need more serious television programming which is not afraid to make its major responsibility making the audiences feel pain, whether the pain of discovery or the pain of empathizing with someone.

Indications are that audiences and artists want the challenge. Irene Worth was bowled over when shown Horton Foote's script for "The Displaced Person." "It's a poem, it's a poem, it's a poem," she said.

But perhaps no response to "The American Short Story" has the force of that received from John Updike, the only living writer represented in the series.

He saw his story "The Music School." "Thank you," he wrote the producers.

The film, written and directed by John Korty, is about a 1970s writer who, during a 24-hour period, struggles to find a focus in his life. Actor Ron Weyand relied almost exclusively on movement, expression and gesture for his performance.

To Updike "it seemed a wonderfully loving and inventive transposition into film imagery of the almost untranslatable verbal interweave of my rather essayistic story."

"A wonderfully loving transposition . . ." It was just what "The American Short Story" had in mind.

—Sally Ferguson



# Grants

## Doctor, Lawyer, Humanist

It is not likely that most doctors have ever read Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward*, just as many policemen have never read *Crime and Punishment*. A humanist, however, might feel that doctors and police are likely to be better people and better professionals for having had such experiences. One such humanist, William L. Blizek, Chairman of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, used an Education Pilot grant from NEH to broaden the learning of such professionals. His group created two special humanities courses for professional students at UNO. Some eight hundred Criminal Justice majors were offered "Humanities and Criminal Justice," while a section of the fifteen hundred pre-medical students at Omaha could elect "Human Values in Medicine."

The experimental course in Criminal Justice centered around literature. An initial unit on the philosophy of Criminal Justice, which included readings in

Locke and Rousseau, led into a study of the *Oresteia*, *Crime and Punishment*, *An American Tragedy*, *Native Son*, *The Stranger*, and Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*. Each of these works, of course, confronts the topics of crime and justice from a distinct perspective. The course was taught by J. B. Cederblom and included a symposium on criminal justice and punishment. The speakers were professors of Philosophy and Law and the Executive Director of the state Law Enforcement Commission. The papers presented will appear this year from Ballinger Press under the title *Justice and Punishment*.

"Human Values in Medicine," the experimental pre-medical course, focused on ethics. Professor Russell W. Palmer pursued such issues as the defining of death, experimentation and informed consent, the allocation of scarce organs for transplanting, behavior control, and genetic engineering. Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* and Ramsey's *The Patient as Person* sparked discussions.

This project developed at a time when economic pressure was turning students away from liberal arts programs toward career training. By creating especially focused humanities courses for candidates in professional programs, Blizek hoped to achieve two results. First and most obviously, the students had to be attracted to an elective humanities course, and secondly, by using material related to their specialized interests, it was hoped that a single course would have the effect of several of the more traditional, broad-based humanities courses. Considerable effort was put into measuring the results of the project.

A number of control groups were selected and, along with those participating in the program, were tested before and after on a series of hypothetical situations involving ethical, political, and legal questions. One section of each experimental course was taught at the sophomore level. Four control groups were used: some classes of students in conventional undergraduate humanities surveys; some lower level classes in non-humanities (Criminal Justice, Chemistry); a graduate elective humanities class offered for medical students at the University of Nebraska Medical Center; and a group of graduate philosophy students at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and at the University of Chicago.

Predictably enough, the graduate philosophy students demonstrated more sensitivity and awareness

## Law and Literature Session at MLA

This past December the Modern Language Association offered a "Special Session in Law and Literature" as part of its annual meeting. Some 40 people drawn from the disciplines of law and literature attended the session chaired by Richard Weisberg, one of the creators of the Reading List in Law and Literature appearing on page 6 of this issue. An equal number expressed interest in being placed on a mailing list for future announcements even though they could not attend the session.

Speakers and their topics were as follows: Professor Blair Rouse, Department of English, University of Arkansas, "Literature and the Law, an Interdisciplinary Arts Course"; Professor J. Allen Smith, Rutgers Law School, "Law and Literature in the Law School Curriculum"; Professor Richard Jacobson, Comparative Literature, University of Wisconsin/Madison, "Two Theses on Language, Literature and Law"; Professor Alan Berger, Department of German Literature, Cornell, "Legal History and Historical Fiction in the Old Icelandic Family Sagas"; Professor Richard Weisberg, Columbia Law School, "Captain Vere's Four-Sided Legal Argument in *Billy Budd, Sailor*."



than did the medical students on the issues presented; after all, they had considerably more academic training in these areas. But the most interesting results seem to have come out of a comparison of "Humanities and Criminal Justice" students with those in a conventional Criminal Justice course. According to Rest's "Defining Issues Test," those Criminal Justice students who completed the experimental humanities course demonstrated a shift toward principled moral reasoning, away from "stage model measures," as a result of their experience in "Humanities and Criminal Justice." Those who completed only conventional Criminal Justice courses showed a tendency to shift in the opposite direction as a result of their training. Put simply, not only did the experimental humanities course develop principled moral reasoning, but the Criminal Justice training seems to have discouraged it. Less dramatic results were found by comparisons among the pre-medical students.

It is often conceded that a familiarity with the humanities, or at least with the arts, is no guarantee of more humane conduct. The example of Nazi Panzer divisions marching to the strains of Wagner is well known. But many humanists persist in the belief that training in their field is a step toward greater sensitivity. The "Humanities Courses for Professional Education" project at the University of Nebraska at Omaha was begun (and continues under University funds) with this assumption. Moreover, its organizers have been rewarded with statistical evidence that there is some truth in their idea.

—Hank Johnson

## Courses by Newspaper

"Moral Choices in Contemporary Society, the sixth course developed by University Extension, University of California, San Diego, and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is the subject of Courses by Newspaper for Spring 1977. Articles prepared by eleven noted scholars are appearing weekly in more than 300 newspapers nationwide.

"Moral Choices" explores the dilemmas confronting modern Americans, with discussions on topics including the nature of morality, moral education, business, political and scientific ethics, and personal moral questions surrounding such issues as abortion, sexuality, marriage, work and interracial relations.

The articles and their illustrations are being distributed free of charge to participating newspapers by United Press International and Courses by Newspaper. This material is of general public interest or serves as the basis for credit or non-credit courses at cooperating two- and four-year colleges and universities.

Courses by Newspaper is also encouraging civic groups, service clubs, unions, religious and youth organizations and local libraries to form discussion groups and community programs based on the course topics. A *Source Book* featuring program ideas and resources has been prepared.

Other publications include an anthology and study guide and a set of audio cassettes expanding on the

themes of the newspaper articles. All materials can be ordered from Publisher's Inc., 243 12th Street, Drawer P, Del Mar, California 92014.

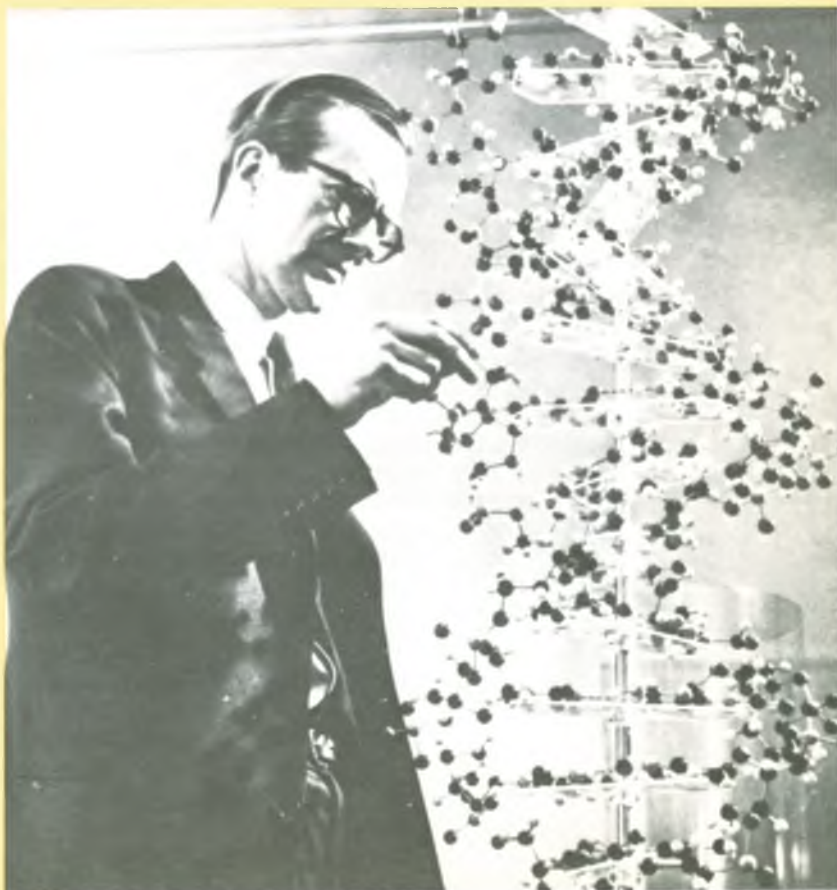
Authors of the essays appearing during the months of "Moral Choices" are as follows: Daniel J. Callahan, founder and director of the Institute of Society, Ethics and the Life Sciences; Kenneth B. Clark, professor emeritus in psychology at the City University of New York and research director of the Northside Center for Child Development; Lon Fuller, the Carter Professor of General Jurisprudence at Harvard University, now emeritus; Hans Jonas, the Alvin Johnson Professor of Philosophy at the New School for Social Research; Philip Reiff, the Benjamin Franklin Professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania; and Christopher Lasch, professor of history at the University of Rochester.

Other authors are Jean Lipman-Blumen, director of the Women's Research Project at the National Institute of Education; Martin E. Marty, professor of the History of Modern Christianity and dean of the Divinity School, University of Chicago; John P. Sisk, professor of English Literature at Gonzaga University; Robert W. Tucker, professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, who holds a joint position with the School of Advanced International Studies; and Ernest van den Haag, a psychoanalyst who is adjunct professor of social philosophy at New York University and a lecturer at the New School for Social Research.

In addition to the opportunity to pursue college  
(Continued on page 8)

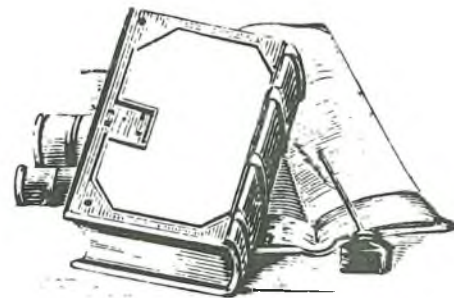
The Ethics of Biomedical Research is one of the topics in the CBN course, Moral Choices in Contemporary Society. Here Nobel Prize winner Maurice H. F. Wilkins studies a model of DNA molecular structure. Recent discoveries about these cells, responsible for hereditary traits, have made possible manipulation of genes and production of new life forms.

UPI Photo





## READING LIST ON LAW AND LITERATURE



This reading list on law and literature was developed by a Committee consisting of Richard Weisberg, formerly Assistant Professor of French and Comparative Literature, University of Chicago, and now a practicing lawyer in New York and a Lecturer in Law at Columbia; and Richard Danzig, Associate Professor of Law, Stanford Law School, and Prize Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows for 1976-1977.

### The Subject

Literature has long been fascinated with the law. While this literary interest dates back at least to the tragedies of Sophocles in ancient Greece and transcends generic and cultural boundaries, the modern novel and drama seem irresistibly drawn to the law, especially the criminal law. The following list introduces the reader to the nature and range of this concern.

Structurally, the texts chosen develop their law-related themes through extensive trial scenes (as in *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Brothers Karamazov*); by reference to specific statutes (as in *Billy Budd* and *The First Circle*); and by the use of lawyers as major protagonists (as in *The Fall* and *The Caine Mutiny*). Conceptually, they treat the legal process as an object of interest in and of itself; as an example of procedurally complex but substantively bankrupt modern institutions; as a metaphor for the literary process of truth finding and truth telling; and as a testing ground for various propositions of morality.

### Good Reading

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE. William Shakespeare. *Suggested edition, Signet Classic paperback.*

The case of Shylock versus Antonio has inspired debate for centuries. Shylock's "I would have my bond/ I stand for judgment/ I stand here for law" argument only recently has been given a sympathetic appraisal as against the sophistry of Portia's not so merciful tactics at the trial. This reconsideration stems partially from the awareness that climactic literary scenes must be understood in light of the rest of the work in which they appear. At the same time as it informs our comprehension of the Shylock-Antonio dispute, the play's repeated use of commercial legal terminology (surety, bond, oath, etc.) illuminates the questionable courtship behavior of the Venetians.

THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV. Fyodor Dostoyevski. *Suggested edition, Vintage Russian Library paperback.*

Although the legal aspect of Dostoyevski's last work explicitly informs more than one-fourth of the novel, this is rarely emphasized in the classroom or in critical commentaries. Yet the manner in which the law attempts to reconstruct the events leading to the murder of Fyodor Karamazov, an attempt which terminates in a logically compelled legal error, establishes a thematic and structural focus on the novel as a whole. By depicting a complete criminal procedure, from the examining magistrate's preliminary investigation through the closing arguments of attorneys at the trial, Dostoyevski conveys the message that any attempt to cast reality into a retrospective verbal form—whether it be legal or literary—will only impoverish that reality, sometimes with disastrously false results.

BILLY BUDD, SAILOR. Herman Melville. *Suggested edition, Hayford and Sealts, University of Chicago.*

Melville's story uses a British man-of-war as the setting for a conflict between individual conscience and social necessity. A dramatic trial culminates in the conviction of the sailor, Billy Budd, for the capital crime of striking (and killing) an officer who had just slandered his reputation. Acting as sole witness, prosecutor and judge, the complex Captain Vere expresses sympathy for Billy's essential rightness but nonetheless invokes the precise dictates of "the King's law" and has Billy hanged. The reader may want to consider whether Vere, in fact, subjugates himself to the demands of that law (one which Melville knew well).

THE TRIAL. Franz Kafka. *Suggested edition, Vintage paperback.*

Kafka's novel is less about a specific trial than about the phenomenon of guilt catalyzed by a complex pattern of internal and external forces. Josef K., arrested by questionable authorities acting under an unstated law, submits to the law's procedures without ever perceiving the law's substance. To achieve the latter recognition, K. and the reader must grapple with the famous parable, "Before the Law," in which a "man from the country" seeks entrance into "the Law" but must first confront the intermediary force of a "doorkeeper." The "man from the country," and later K. himself, die before entering the Law, but Kafka's novel carries the reader remarkably far into this mysterious realm.

THE STRANGER; THE FALL. Albert Camus. *Suggested editions, Vintage paperback.*

These short novels may be read together to emphasize several aspects of the relationship of fiction



and the law. In *The Stranger*, Camus, who was strongly influenced by Dostoyevski, replicates his narrative technique (events, preliminary criminal investigation of those events, and finally trial) and has the legal process culminate in an error. Meursault, convicted of the murder of an Arab on a hot Algerian beach, is condemned to the guillotine, not so much for having committed the homicide as for having failed "correctly" to mourn his mother's death or to accept his role as remorseful criminal.

In *The Fall*, Camus' last novel, the protagonist is a lawyer. Unlike the straightforward Meursault, Clamence is a highly verbal, overly self-conscious representative of his profession. While he has committed no overt crime, he suffers a fall from grace based on his inability to act effectively during moments of great personal meaning.

THE CAINE MUTINY. Herman Wouk. *Suggested edition, Pocket Books.*

The disjunction between legal statutes and moral propriety is underscored in this gripping sea story written more than a half-century after *Billy Budd*. A World War II minesweeper becomes the scene of a mutiny against a captain who attempts to mask his incompetence behind a paranoid insistence on running things "by the book." In one sense this tale concerns a dispute between the Captain and the mutineers over the language of the naval regulations permitting a subordinate to remove a commanding officer. In a deeper sense, this novel raises disquieting questions about whether "the book" is a sufficient referent and thus about whether men of the law (and indeed men of literature) have much to contribute in times of crisis.

THE FIRST CIRCLE. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. *Suggested edition, Bantam paperback.*

This work and *Gulag Archipelago* are centrally concerned with a specific section of the Soviet Criminal Code of 1926. Most of the characters in the novel have been arrested under Article 58 of that Code, which deals with "Counter-revolutionary Crimes," and exist "in limbo" at a high-level prison camp. Solzhenitsyn, by recounting their legal histories, powerfully associates Soviet society with Dante's *Inferno* and Stalin with Satan. Hence the book not only provides a form of legal documentation otherwise unavailable, but also asks how the individual must respond to absolute tyranny. Clearly, for Solzhenitsyn, passivity in the face of despotic laws does not lead to salvation.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL. E. L. Doctorow. *Recommended edition, Signet Novel paperback.*

This recent novel complements *The Trial*. Like Kafka's work, it emphasizes the perspective of those swept into the criminal system without any comprehension of their guilt or the system's motives and methods. Doctorow gives that perspective a modern significance by using events inspired by the Rosenberg trial of the early 1950s. He achieves a special poignancy by focusing on the perception and imperfect assimilation of "legal" events by the defendants' children. The children are, if anything, more innocent, unknowing and overwhelmed than K., but unlike K. (who lacks even a full name) they live for the reader as very real people, caught up in the security system and the legal system that we call our own.

THE LEGAL IMAGINATION. J. B. White. *Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1973. 986 pp.*

This textbook for law students also can be effectively employed by a layperson to explore the contrasts and similarities in legal and literary outlook and rhetoric. Professor White uses excerpts from judicial and humanistic texts to compare the enterprise of the lawyer with that of other craftsmen.

THE WORLD OF LAW. E. London, ed. *New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960. 2 vols.: THE LAW IN LITERATURE (654 pp.); THE LAW AS LITERATURE (780 pp.).*

While these volumes provide little editorial guidance or commentary, they have the strength of setting down in one place a broad spectrum of selections dealing with the law. The first volume reprints selections dealing with the law from works as diverse as the Apocrypha, *Don Quixote* and *The Witness for the Prosecution*. The second volume compiles "Accounts of Notable and Notorious Cases," "Testimony and Argument as Literature," and "Judgments, Observations and Reflections on The Law."

### Suggestions for Discussion

1. How does your experience with the law compare with that of the protagonists in *The Trial* and *The Book of Daniel*? How does your contact with legal institutions compare with your experience in other institutional frameworks? Does the comparison help to explain why novelists are so attracted to the legal setting?

2. In both *The Merchant of Venice* and *Billy Budd, Sailor*, two models of law are cast in opposition: on the one hand, an inclination to apply the law in precise terms, and on the other, a tendency to apply it according to the judge's (or jury's) sense of "equity," considering all elements of the participants' personalities, prior relations, etc. What are the arguments for and against each of these models of law? To which of these models do the authors listed seem most sympathetic? Does either model fully satisfy your own conception of justice?

3. In the novels listed, the most active characters in real life are among the most passive in the courtroom. Conversely, those who are most active in the courtroom—the lawyers—are often described as impotent in the outer world.

Do earlier works of western literature (e.g. *Oedipus Rex*, *Antigone*) establish the same dichotomy between effective forms of action inside and outside the courtroom? If Oedipus sees the legal process as essentially at one with his own heroic nature—even as he prosecutes his own guilt—what may have changed to produce the opposite view of Joseph K., Meursault, and Ivan Karamazov?

4. In many of these works, characters possessing legal or artistic talents display an over-refined verbal ability, an overly developed streak of self-consciousness, and a matching stance of intellectualized passivity toward everyday life. To what extent, in this light, is the work of the literary artist and the lawyer similar? Are they striving for similar goals? Are they succeeding?

(GRANTS, continued from page 5)

courses for credit or non-credit enrichment, Courses by Newspaper have drawn thousands of non-traditional students into continuing education programs and have brought the talents of outstanding scholars out of the classroom and into the living room of millions of newspaper readers. In all, more than 500 newspapers with a combined circulation of 20 million readers have presented these courses over the past few years. An estimated 20,000 readers have earned college credit through 300 participating educational institutions.

## Children's Literature Center

A substantial NEH grant to Simmons College in Boston will enable the establishment of a Center for the Study of Children's Literature. A threefold program will be established: graduate study leading to a Master of Arts degree in Children's Literature; a series of colloquia, seminars, and summer institutes; and cooperative community literature education.

The curriculum for the Master of Arts degree will include courses such as: "The History of American Children's Literature," "Themes and Protagonists in Modern Fantasy," "Victorian Children's Literature," and "Folklore and the Oral Tradition." An intensive writing course will encourage creative work in the field.

The colloquia, seminars, and summer institutes will permit professors and students in English and American literature to exchange ideas with those teaching and working in the field of children's literature. Both groups will be able to enhance their knowledge of the field and its relationship to all literature.

The community programs, to be given in cooperation with neighboring institutions, will offer lectures, performances and forums dealing with issues in children's literature to teachers, librarians, and the general public. As a result of these activities, the Center will become an important resource for organizing and synthesizing community literature education.

The Center, under the direction of Barbara Harrison, Assistant Professor of Education, will serve to elevate the stature of children's literature as a necessary and legitimate area of academic pursuit, a discipline of the same caliber as the study of adult literature. With fresh opportunities for prospective teachers, librarians, editors and publishers, the Center will be able to enhance the quality of children's literary experience as well.

The Center's first program will open on July 5, 1977, with a three-week institute on "The Contemporary World of Children's Literature." For further information, write Georgia L. Bartlett, Center for the Study of Children's Literature, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston, Massachusetts 02115 or telephone (617) 738-2258.

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