TO THE READERS:
An Editorial Comment on Woolfians and Lupines

The Virginia Woolf Miscellany is exactly that, a collection of short notices about Woolf. At the same time I thought that it might be useful, and possibly stimulating, to have a mini-theme for this issue, on the considerable question of Virginia Woolf and politics. I wrote to several people, asking them to contribute. Their responses show a remarkable diversity. Perhaps the most provocative comes from Quentin Bell who offers a firm disagreement with Jane Marcus's well-known and controversial interpretation of Woolf's politics. Marcus's own contribution here is an interesting review, but should she so wish, of course she can write in response to Bell in a subsequent issue.

I've been thinking myself about the question of Virginia Woolf's politics. I certainly do not have any easy answers. My position, perhaps characteristically, is to reside somewhere in the middle but leaning towards the Woolfians, to approach the question with something of the irritating judiciousness of the historian. I do not mean to be reductionist and to ascribe too much to the origins of the individuals involved in this debate, but on the whole those who are Woolfians—which I am using here to indicate those who tend to see Woolf's politics as less radical and less central to her being—are male, and frequently English. On the whole, those who are Lupines—who see Woolf as more to the left and argue that these political questions are more central to her being—tend to be female, and frequently American. This point was made vivid for me personally when I was arguing with Jane Marcus at the Woolf meeting at Brown last February. She said to me scomfultly—but I believe in a moderately friendly manner—you sound just like an Englishman. She meant it as an insult, but as part of our argument I took it as something of a compliment. For I believe that context, as Brenda Silver has mentioned to me, is a crucial word in this debate. Americans may not be sufficiently aware of how important the context, background, nuances, class ambiguities, are for understanding a different culture, a culture different from within that culture. On the other hand, it is possible that the English, and perhaps particular Englishmen, might not dwell on the full implications—the fury they contain—of statements made by Woolf. Perhaps because I am an historian of England, although an American, I am more sympathetic to the view that sees Woolf as comparatively less political. As Quentin Bell makes clear in his essay here, Woolf was extremely active politically and was a socialist. But more, perhaps, in England than in other countries, that does not make one a Marxist. And in Lupine essays—penetrating and interesting as they are—it is perhaps too easy to lose sight of what I believe to be the central fact of her being: her commitment to her art. That is not necessarily questioned in those essays, but in my own opinion it is too easy for the emphasis to go wrong. The debate is valuable. Jane Marcus, in her powerful, if at times hectoring, prose has added a great deal in quality and quantity to Woolf/Lupine studies.

Her most recent publication is her very interesting essay "Liberty, Sorrorty, Misogyny" in Carolyn G. Heilbrun & Margaret R. Higonnet eds. The Representation of Women in Fiction Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1981 (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983). There is also her essay "Storming the Toolshed" in Signs 1982 vol. 7, no. 3. In 1981 she edited New Feminist Essays on Virginia Woolf (University of Nebraska Press) and this coming fall a second volume of essays, Virginia Woolf: A Feminist Slant also to be published by Nebraska. At least in quantity, the Lupines appear to be winning the war of words. But one should not think of it as a battle; rather, as sharing insights and views as Woolf enters her second century, more vital than ever.

Let me conclude by mentioning a few other relevant publications that have caught my attention in recent months. I was delighted that Selma Meyerowitz was willing to write for this issue, and I should like to draw attention to her excellent critical study of Leonard Woolf (Twayne Publishers, 1982). Other books have come out in recent months, and I mention them on the off and unlikely chance the readers of the Miscellany haven’t run across them. Perhaps of particular interest to Americans is the account of the women in that formidable American family, the Pearsall Smiths, in Remarkable Relations (Universe, 1982) by Barbara Strachey (an obviously appropriate name and relation: Lytton's and Adrian Stephen's niece). Two delightful odd books are, first, cartoons and a mock journal, with a foreword by Michael Holroyd, Kenneth Mahood The Secret Sketchbook of a Bloomsbury Lady (St. Martin's, 1982) and, rather self-indulgent on the part of the author, but nevertheless with vivid glimpses of Duncan Grant towards the very end of his life, and interesting (but are they totally reliable?) stories of his past, in Paul Roche With Duncan Grant in Southern Turkey (Notre Dame Press, 1982). Perhaps the most unusual publication is Ellen Hawkes and Peter Manso The Shadow of the Moth: A Novel of Espionage with Virginia Woolf. Here we have an extremely active Woolf, on the trail of spies and along the way attacking male hegemony. Is it a Woolf who really might have existed? Quentin Bell makes clear how much in a practical political way she really did, but whether she is actually the character rather similar to the American woman reporter in the book is another question. The Belgian woman who begins it all turns out to be murdered, rather than having committed suicide. In a rather portentous epilogue, the authors seem to be suggesting a parallel between her and Woolf. Whatever the validity of this comparison, both Woolfians and Lupines alike will, I believe, enjoy The Shadow of the Moth.

Peter Stansky
Stanford University

FURTHER NOTICES TO THE READERS

The next regular issue of VWM will be edited — perhaps we should say mediated! — by J. J. Wilson at Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928. Notices and articles (no longer than 800 words and the shorter the better) should be submitted on or before September 15. Your cash donations to keep VWM coming are, of course, welcome all year round at the above address; if everyone on our mailing list were to send in two dollars, we would be solvent — and might even be able to pay the student volunteers who mail out the Miscellany so faithfully each Fall and Spring . . .

For those of you who sent in $5.00 or more donations for Laura Moss Gottlieb's elegant and thorough cumulative INDEX TO VWM, 1973 -1982, thank you for your support and you will be receiving your copy as soon as it is printed up. Orders are still welcome; checks should be made out, as always, to the VWM Foundation, and, as always, are tax deductible.
VIRGINIA WOOLF, HER POLITICS

When the Conservatives were routed in 1905, Vanessa and Virginia Stephen went to Trafalgar Square and rejoiced. The long faces of George and Gerald Duckworth may have added to their joy, but it was what one might have expected; they were always left of center, Virginia being a little further left than her sister. In the same way she took more interest in the Working Men's College than did the other three Stephens or Clive Bell, with whose political work I think she sympathised. Leonard Woolf, when she married him, was becoming a socialist and they were both interested in the Women's Cooperative Movement; she attended the Fabian Conference in 1913, just before her worst breakdown, and when she recovered, joined the Society. She was secretary of her local branch of the Women's Cooperative Guild. Later she became secretary of the Rodmell Labour Party.

Leonard said that Virginia was "the least political animal that has lived" but was anxious to destroy the legend of the "frail invalidish lady living in an Ivory Tower;" he points out that she worked at "the grass roots of the Labour Party." Despite the contradiction, there is some truth in both statements. Virginia, when she met revolutionaries, seemed more interested in their personalities than their policies, and seemed to find politicians of her own sex, even Margaret Llewellyn Davies, worthy but tedious. But she did, I think, enjoy her work as a branch secretary. I have no doubt that when she got a vote she used it for the Labour Party and for no one else.

To what part of that heterogeneous body she belonged it would be hard to say. Her strong feelings and political activity on behalf of her sex complicated the issue, for feminism, to use a word she did not like, is compatible with political reaction; so, in the circumstances of the 1930s, was pacifism. Neither of her two polemics is socialist; it is hard to see how they could have been since both are concerned with the grievances of a privileged elite. Virginia had a deep and genuine sympathy for the kind of woman who provides cheap labour for industry, but it was a cause which she left to other advocates.

It is necessary to remember that she was born a hundred years ago if we would understand her class consciousness. Even when she exclaims that the "working classes . . . are not downtrodden, envious, and exhausted, they are humourous, vigorous and independent," she is too honest not to recognize that there is a barrier and the barrier is impassable. "We are winning' said Nelly (of the 1929 Election) . . . I was shocked to think that we both desire the Labour Party to win - Why? Partly I don't want to be ruled by Nelly."

"She was a kind of Fabian. She wanted change from above, but not by Nelly. She had no doubts about the value of her contribution: '... ladies want Mozart and Cezanne and Shakespeare' . . . these had to be socialists." Here I must invent an interruption. "Surely she was a maixist! That learned and eloquent lady, Professor Marcus had said so; it must be true." The matter is on my conscience. In my biography of Virginia I pointed out how close "The Leaning Tower" comes to maixist theory. For reasons which will appear, I did not call her a maixist, but if she had lived longer she might have become a maixist.

My suggestion seems to have fallen on too fertile ground. It seems that I have got this poor lady (should I say "poor person,") into intellectual trouble.

For what a monster has been engendered, Virginia was a maixist, not we are assured a "vulgar" but a "genteel maixist" yet one "deeply committed to the revolution." Such a statement requires abundant evidence. It should not be too hard to find; there are her published works, her letters, her diaries, the memoirs and letters of her friends. There surely we shall find the story of her conversion, her study of maixist literature, her reaction to the 1917 revolution and N.E.P., her views on Stalin and on the General Strike, her discussions with opponents or with comrades. But they are not to be found. They are not there. There is a little evidence but it points in another direction. When she wrote an article for the Daily Worker, she made statements which might indeed vex a maixist. When this was pointed out, she was amused, but a little puzzled. Leonard and I were there at the time. She asked us to explain.

In Three Guineas she toys with the idea that women might compete with their brothers in the accumulation of capital. But this would mean that the daughters of the rich would liberate themselves by exploiting the daughters of the poor. Being a socialist I think that she appreciated the dilemma and that it is for this reason that she argues that too much money is bad for the soul; she proposed that women should bind themselves to "poverty, chastity, derision, and freedom from unreal loyalties." Whatever else it may be this is not a maixist solution.

Finally, for what it may be worth, I offer my own personal testimony. I knew Virginia quite well enough to know that she was not a maixist.

It is sad that so talented a person as Professor Marcus should be so silly. But there is worse, for confusion breeds confusion. The Professor orders the Virginia of her imagination to the barricades. The real Virginia refuses to march. She is punished, reduced to being "a sniper in the ranks;" she is accused of antisemitism, found guilty of cowardice; worse still she is cowed by the enemy; when she published "A Society," Desmond MacCarthy "showed her claws;" they were not very terrifying - he said that it was "not her best work;" nevertheless she was overawed and "she never reprinted the sketch." For those who knew Virginia and Desmond, the story has a richly comic aspect, but also, if one cares for the defences of scholarship, it is sufficiently tragic. But if one believes that one has oneself set this mare upon her nest, it is infuriating.

Quentin Bell
Cobbe Place, Beddington, Lewes

1 Leonard Woolf, Downhill All the Way, p. 27.
3 Virginia Woolf, Diary (May 31, 1929).
5 Quentin Bell, Virginia Woolf, II, p. 219.
6 Jane Marcus, No More Horses, pp. 269 and 266; also New Feminist Essays, xviii.
8 Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas, pp. 112 - 145.

"I AM AN OUTSIDER!":
The Politics of Virginia Woolf

Last autumn Karen Offen and I taught a course on European women, the family and social thought. For the latter part of the course the reading included de Beauvoir, Freud, Aleksandra Kollontai, D. H. Lawrence, Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Rebecca West and Virginia Woolf. The class agreed that in the context of the course Virginia Woolf's was the most radical political piece.

The students were struck by the wit and incisiveness of Woolf's argument in Three Guineas, which they recapitulated as follows: Middle-class women's movements of the nineteenth century sought justice, equality and liberty for all, not merely for women, but for women and men. Yet, wherever they did so, whether in politics, in the universities, in the civil service, in professions like medicine, or in the arts, they were obstructed by professional men, that is by their fathers and brothers. In 1937, (the time of composing Three Guineas) many European men—as Jews, or as democrats—because of their race, their religion, or their politics—were being discriminated against. Their status as outsiders, (highly visible in the new fascist societies) Woolf believed, ought, at last, to enable men to empathise with women's situation. Fascism begins at home; we cannot fight it in Germany, or Italy or Spain, she argued, without eradicating it first in our very midst where patriarchy dictates to female members of the family. "We must crush [the dictator] in our own country," she wrote, and, more lightly but even more insightfully: "Here we go round the mulberry tree, the sacred tree of property."
Virginia Woolf recognized a dilemma for educated women who had won a toehold in male professions jealously guarded against outsiders. Such women were forced either to return to the private house with its "nullity, immorality, hypocrisy and servility" or to become part of "civilization," that is to become involved in professional "jealousy, pugnacity, and greed," leading inevitably to competitiveness and war. Whether, and on what terms to join this "civilization" fully was a matter of critical importance. It was the most urgent question to be pondered by women at that precarious historic moment in the 1930's when fascism threatened to destroy civilization.

From her diary we know how strongly Woolf felt about publishing her ideas on this subject. For six years she had developed them "violently, persistently, pressingly and compulsorily." She intended to write Three Guineas ever since her visit to Delphi in 1932, having laid the foundation by using the themes in her speech to the London Society for Women's Service in January 1931 and prepared the literary world for her ideas by reworking them in her novel The Years, published shortly before Three Guineas. Yet she feared that "the whole of Europe might be in flames" at any moment. "And my book may be like a moth dancing over a bonfire—consumed in less than one second." The intensity of her style reflects the urgency with which she wanted to force women to think about the time that was too short; it may last five years; ten years, or perhaps only a matter of a few months longer. But the questions must be answered; and they are so important that if all the daughters of educated men did nothing, from morning to night, but consider ... from every angle, if they did nothing but ponder it and analyze it, and think about it and read about it and pool their thinking and reading, and what they see and what they guess, their time would be better spent than in any other activity now open to them.

In her memoir of her nephew Julian Bell, killed in July 1937 in the Spanish Civil War—as she was in the midst of composing Three Guineas—Woolf underscored her sympathy with the cause of liberty and her determination to fight for it intellectually. The Spanish conflict and Julian's death exacerbated her horror of war and her accusation in Three Guineas that a male civilization made such wars inevitable. "I should evolve some plan for fighting English tyranny."

Yet the radical analysis Woolf applied to her own society and the passion with which she exposed the parallels between the long-standing historical dictatorships over women in the English social structure and in continental fascism is not seen as such by her other Bell nephew Quentin, who, in his biography of Woolf, wrote that Three Guineas was "the product of an odd mind" and who, moreover considered Woolf's view of the connection between women's status and the fascist threat "wholly inadequate." Ten years later, Quentin Bell has stated in an interview that he was baffled by the way Woolf had been raised to the status of Joan of Arc by American feminists; that "she wasn't a feminist and she wasn't political."

Woolf's sense of politics was not a matter of immediate practice but rather one of persuasion through the development of thought. She understood that politics is concerned with issues of power, and that power relations are reproduced in our everyday lives. Woolf often said that she had achieved a toehold in male professions jealously guarded against women by women and that power relationships are reproduced in our every-day lives. A graduate student in the class cited Berenice Carroll's fine essay distinguishing the superficiality of the politics of the hussings (for which Virginia Woolf admitted her boredom and dislike) from the depth of real politics as analyzed by Aristotle for whom "the determination of what is just is the principle of order in political society." Virginia Woolf has written a most penetrating and persuasive book about justice (or rather the lack of it) in the order of society as she knew it. She wrote with the expressed purpose of making her readers think about effecting a fundamental change in civilization. She was a writer, not an orator, she was in fact a politician who used her pen.

Woolf's own attitude to Three Guineas may be partly responsible for her biographer nephew's point of view. She knew that her violent attack on the universities questioned the very culture and civilization that had formed the men who were her closest and dearest friends including her husband, her brothers and nephew. Her sensitivity to criticism is well known, yet, in the case of Three Guineas her diary reiterates her indifference, as though she were bracing herself against poor reviews—especially from her own circle. She was however, unable to expel some of her most deeply held values; she worried about "vulgarity," about being too "insistent"—in sum about being superficially too political. She was afraid of "autobiography in public."

Nevertheless her greatest fear was that the book would not "dip into the surface." Woolf knew that Three Guineas was an important statement of her values—a statement she was compelled to publicize. She claimed that there was "more to it" than to A Room of One's Own. Hence she was able to become "vulgar," "insistent" and political. In the writing of Three Guineas she had achieved a spiritual freedom, a sort of "ecstasy," "My mind is made up.... I am an outsider.... I'm free."

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NOTICE: Caedmon has a new cassette of Claire Bloom reading selections from A Room of One's Own.

NOTICE: California State University, Long Beach's Special Collections Librarian, Mr. John Ahouse, informs VWM that they have received, as a gift from the family of the late Elizabeth E. Nielsen, five previously unpublished letters by Virginia Woolf. Written near the end of her life, the letters refer to the growing threat of war: "There is no doubt that work is the only consolation at this time."

LEONARD AND VIRGINIA WOOLF: A Case of Political Influence or Political Parallels?

Virginia Woolf often commented that her husband Leonard was much more knowledgeable about politics and economics than she was, thus seeming to suggest either that she was politically naive or that she may have been influenced by his greater expertise. Leonard, however, readily acknowledged Virginia's political consciousness and commented that her sensitivity to social and historical experience made Virginia "the last person who could ignore the political menaces" of the times. Moreover, Leonard realized that A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas were important political pamphlets, and that Virginia had been involved in practical politics by her participation at the grassroots level in Labour party politics and the Women's Co-operative Guild.

A study of their literary work reveals that both Leonard and Virginia Woolf were committed to illuminating the way social and economic institutions affect individual and communal life.
At the level of practical politics, both Leonard and Virginia were involved in the women's movement through their work with the Working Women's Guild of the Co-operative Movement. While studying the Co-operative Movement, Leonard was particularly impressed by the Women's Guild and even believed that the emancipation of women might prove to be one of the greatest social revolutions in history. Virginia, also impressed with the Women's Guild, conducted monthly meetings of a branch of the Guild, and in 1930 she wrote an introductory essay entitled “Memories of a Working Women's Guild” to a collection of essays by the Guildswomen entitled Life as We Have Known It. In this essay, she commented that although she felt alienated from the Guildswomen because of class differences, she believed that they were demanding important social and legal reforms. She also recognized that the women’s efforts to control their lives represented a powerful protest against the inequities of the class system.

In the 1930s when political consciousness was of utmost importance, both Leonard and Virginia protested against the rise of fascism. Leonard viewed man’s acceptance of tyranny and authoritarian social rule as a reversion to barbarism. Political beliefs were for Leonard an indication of social and personal life. Commenting that “people cannot be savage in politics and remain at the same time civilized in their private and social lives,” he protested the rejection of reason and the turn toward religion and intuition in philosophy, science and art. Like Leonard, Virginia claimed that the political world was an indication of the private world, commenting that “the tyrannies of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other.” Virginia first identified the psychology of male domination that a class system creates in A Room of One’s Own, and in Three Guineas she associated male domination with nationalism and militarism and, hence, with war. Later, a short essay, “Thoughts on Peace During an Air Raid,” argues further that “aggressiveness, tyranny, and the insane love of power” are typical of both male domination and fascism, and that the patriarchal system creates “subconscious Hitlerism,” or the “desire to dominate and enslave.” Virginia would thus readily have agreed with Leonard’s view that “one of the greatest of social evils has always been subjection and class domination.”

Since a social and political consciousness shaped both Leonard and Virginia’s writings, it would be difficult to determine which one influenced the other. Rather, it might be necessary to recognize that there were consistent political parallels in their thought and work.

Selma Meyerowitz
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ECHOS' BODY

How interesting it is that “the bottom of the barrel” in Woolf studies, to quote a guardian of the estate in these very pages—that is, the manuscript drafts of novels, so reluctantly released into print, have yielded such crisp and delicious fruit. Louise DeSalvo's edition of Melymbrosia, an early version of The Voyage Out, has been greeted with acclaim by the New York Times, and by scholars who now have the materials to compare the draft to the published version, as Stephen Hero is compared to A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. In the 1977 Bulletin of the New York Public Library revaluation of The Years, Grace Radin published the “two enormous chunks” of galley proof removed at the last moment, and reprinted here. We also have Mitchell Leaska's edition of The Pargiters, now eagerly devoured by students in paperback, as if to belie Woolf's retreat from her brilliant original conception of the novel, alternating chapters of fiction with chapters of fact. Did Woolf imagine when she left these masses of manuscript behind her, that her readers would become “pargetters” themselves, patching up and pasting together the fictional and factual parts as reconstruction of her most popular novel? Since Woolf de-constructed or embozzled the novel herself, readers and critics trying to patch up the parts are like the ancients trying to piece together the scattered parts of Echo's body. And since repetition is so insistently the signature of Woolf's art, it is perhaps fitting that the role of her modern readers and critics is that of pargetters and collectors of our Echo's scattered remains.

Splendid as Grace Radin's study of the manuscripts of The Years is, it reminds us that more remain in the magic barrel of the Berg. Radin reveals similar findings in her study of The Pargiters to Louise DeSalvo's study of Melymbrosia, an even more socialist and feminist text, and explicit lesbian passages. The 1910 section reads like a debate which might be going on among present-day feminists. Rose, a male-identified feminist, works for votes for women, but does not question the patriarchal system. Maggie and Elvira, international outsiders like Woolf herself, are isolated and ignorant of the problems of poor women. They are not even aware that it is against the law to disseminate information about birth control. When Rose explains that most women haven't got three guineas to consult a Harley Street gynecologist, they propose writing to the Times demanding free contraception for all. Maggie doesn't want a vote because “Englishwomen in politics are prostitutes. Every patriarch has his prostitute. She comforts him and then asks for favors.” Maggie and Elvira have a crude Freudian analysis of Rose's ferocious feminism: "her powers of expression have... been atrophied by a hideous childhood experience." This is interesting because the character of Rose is based on Ethel Smyth, whose mem-
oirs reveal a sublimely happy childhood. It was Woolf herself who claimed to have been sexually molested.

Elvira tries to imagine Rose in the arms of a young man, but is shocked into speechlessness when Maggie tells her that Rose loves women. "But whereas . . . I could think of Rose with equanimity in the arms of a man . . . the other thought is loathsome; just for ten seconds. But in the one case, you see Maggie I covered them with syringa petals. In the other--I didn't cover them (at all)--I saw them, naked; which seems to prove Maggie, that (the nature) of the act itself is a mixture of the ridiculous and the repulsive; or am I wrong?"

(TP, IV, p. 69 - 70) Grace Radin suggests that lesbian love appears naked of the trappings of sentimental romance because it has had no literature like heterosexual love to strew flower petals on the lovers' bodies. Elvira says "when you said Rose flung herself into the arms of Mildred in a greenhouse, a shock; horror; terror . . . something that lights up the whole of the dim past of the human race." Indeed. And quite possibly the past of the writer herself. While these passages do not appear in The Years, they do explain why Rose is showered with rose petals at the end of the novel. The expunged flower, syringa, one must point out, is the mock-orange used in bridal wreaths. Syrinx was one of Diana's nymphs who turned into a reed to escape being raped by Pan. The reed was made into a flute, perhaps too obvious a reference to Ethel Smyth, the author of Female Pippings in Eden, which offers a myth of the origins of women's music. Echo's refusal of Pan enraged him so that he had her body torn apart and scattered, but each part continued to sing from its hiding place in the earth, even imitating Pan's pipe. Perhaps one threatened maiden was singing to the other, not to Pan at all, as Eliot's mermaids sing each to each. At any rate, the scattered parts of the body of Virginia Woolf's manuscripts continue to sing, long after her author is dead, and we are grateful to scholars like Grace Radin for shedding light on them.

Jane Marcus
University of Texas at Austin

BLOOMSBURY STUDIES

When it was announced last fall that the University of Toronto Press was inaugurating a series of books called Bloomsbury Studies, the response was enthusiastic and somewhat incredulous. Was it really possible in these bad times when scholarly publishers were reducing their offerings that one of them was actually expanding theirs? The answer is not that the great recession of the eighties somehow missed Ontario but rather that Bloomsbury Studies has been some ten years in the making. The first book of the series to be submitted to the Press was J. W. Graham's definitive edition of the two holograph drafts of The Waves. The complexity of that edition resulted in its actually being published the year after my The Bloomsbury Group: A Collection of Memoirs, Commentary, and Criticism, which appeared in 1975 and was reprinted in 1977. The next year the University of Toronto Press published the proceedings of a conference on John Maynard Keynes and the Cambridge backgrounds of the discussion and criticism that led to his extraordinarily influential The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money. The editors of Keynes, Cambridge, and the General Theory were the economists Don Patinkin and J. Clark Leith, and their book helped make Bloomsbury Studies interdisciplinary, as it should be.

The reception of these books and the willingness of the University of Toronto Press to invest in such ventures as expensive scholarly editions of manuscripts or not always profitable collections of es-
says or conference papers began to attract other books. A Canadian centenary conference on E. M. Forster, organized by Judith Sherer Herz and Robert K. Martin resulted in E. M. Forster Centenary Revaluations, which was published last year, and most recently the Press had brought out another definitive edition of Virginia Woolf's manuscripts, Susan Dick's "To the Lighthouse": The Original Holograph Draft.

It became increasingly clear with the publication of these books that there was a need and an opportunity for an interdisciplinary series based on the achievements of the Bloomsbury Group. The current popularity of the Group has been successfully exploited by commercial publishers in England and the United States, yet this has not led to their initiating scholarly studies of the Group's work. Indeed there has been an apparent reluctance on the part of even scholarly publishers to bring out valuable specialist studies of such subjects as Virginia Woolf's texts. And of course such publications require subsidies from organizations like the Canadian Federation for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, or the research boards of universities.

The response to the announcement of Bloomsbury Studies has been very encouraging. Inquiries have been received from scholars working not only on Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, and Bloomsbury in general, but also on Clive Bell, Vanessa Bell, and Leonard Woolf. (But curiously no one seems to be interested in Lytton Strachey, whose writing still awaits good criticism.) And the kinds of studies underway are surprisingly varied in method and scope. They include criticism, political philosophy, literary history, textual studies, biography, bibliography, aesthetics, and visual art. The increasing interest in these last two fields is a welcome addition to the interdisciplinary range of Bloomsbury Studies.

Some scholars and critics, it is true, have misgivings about studies that focus on the Bloomsbury Group. There seems to be a feeling that such work will somehow be reductive--that the independence and originality of the work of Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, or Lytton Strachey will be diminished by emphasizing the Group's influence on them. But the more that is learned about Bloomsbury, the more one realized that the creative influences exerted within the Group were mutual. Bloomsbury's works obviously can and should be compared with those outside the Group. Yet it was in Bloomsbury that the individuals expected the most sympathetic and searching criticism and often received the most stimulating interpretations of their work. It should be stressed, however, that the general aim of studying the Bloomsbury Group's work--is not so much the mapping of often intangible influences as the comparing of works, the tracing of their interconnections, in order to understand them better.

One question that always arises concerning the study of Bloomsbury is the nature of the Group and who belonged to it. There is no longer much question about the core members, though there will always be some about peripheral figures. As far as Bloomsbury Studies is concerned, the conception of the Group is an open one that includes early and late members as well as those who were associated with the Group through close friendships with one or more of the original members. As for others, the focus on them for Bloomsbury Studies probably ought to be on their relationship with the Group's work. A study of Katherine Mansfield, for example, does not in itself seem a likely subject for the series, but a comparison of her writing with Virginia Woolf's or E. M. Forster's might very well be.

Finally, it should be mentioned that although most of the contributors have, in fact, been Canadian citizens or residents, Bloomsbury Studies is a North American series. The University of Toronto Press is incorporated in the United States as well as Canada, and it co-publishes the books of Bloomsbury Studies with various English firms such as The Hogarth Press, The Macmillan Press, and Croon, Helm, Ltd.

Inquiries and suggestions concerning the series are welcome and should be sent to the General Editor, c/o Department of English, 7 King's College Circle, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A1, Canada.

S. P. Rosenbaum
University of Toronto
VIRGINIA WOOLF SOCIETY: REPORT

At its business meeting in Los Angeles last December, the Virginia Woolf Society named new officers, forged an alliance with the Miscellany, and planned for its future.

First, the officers: President, Susan M. Squier, SUNY Stony Brook; Treasurer, Jane Marcus, University of Texas, Austin; Secretary, Elaine K. Ginsberg, West Virginia University. Louise A. DeSalvo, who with Mitchell A. Leaska and Grace Radin, has kept the Society alive for the past three years, and Madeline Moore, one of its founding members, will serve as Society “historians.”

Second, future projects: What emerged most clearly from the discussion in Los Angeles was a need for more communication about who was doing what and where. As a result, with this issue, the Society will have a column in each of the regular issues of the Miscellany, as well as producing an additional issue each fall devoted to bibliographical material on Woolf scholarship and events. This special issue will be available to members of the Virginia Woolf Society only. To include as full coverage as possible in this special issue, we urge everyone to send information about works-in-progress, theses, publications, media materials (films, etc.), conferences, events, etc. to Elaine Ginsberg (Dept. of English, WVU, Morgantown, West Virginia 26506). Elaine will be co-editing the bibliographical issue with Laura Moss Gottlieb, who is presently preparing the index for the Miscellany.

Next, membership and dues: In order to finance this special issue of the Miscellany, as well as other Society functions, we established a scale for membership dues: $5 per year for graduate students, the unemployed, and emeriti; $10 per year for all members who are presently employed. Current members will be receiving a letter from the Society; if you wish to join—or cannot remember if you have before—write to Elaine Ginsberg.

Finally, we decided on topics for the two Society panels at the 1983 MLA Convention in New York. One will focus on Woolf and the moderns; for information, contact Jane Lilienfeld, Dept. of English, Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609. The second panel will explore Woolf in the classroom; for information, contact Madeline Moore, Dept. of English, University of California, Santa Cruz, California 95064. In order to encourage students in their research, we will be reserving one place on the pedagogy panel for a paper by a student, though the topic need not be the teaching of Woolf.

Although we cannot predict what the next hundred years will bring, the Society feels greatly optimistic about the immediate future of Woolf studies.

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