

Minutes

American Conference for Irish Studies General Business Meeting

Friday, July 16, 2004 1:00 pm

Institute for Irish Studies, University of Liverpool, Liverpool UK

The meeting was called to order by President John Harrington at 1:03 pm.

I. Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes. Moved; seconded; motion approved unanimously.

II. Treasurer's Report

Harrington presented the budget. As a response to membership request, Gardiner transferred funds to tax-free mutual funds; the results were flat in a mixed year. The largest expenditure was for the U Mass Press mailing of the most recent ACIS Annual. The original contract, signed in 1992, was for three volumes; the subvention was originally to be \$10/volume for both production and shipping. Since then, there has been a 56% increase in costs. A poll of the Executive yielded a unanimous (11/0) decision to increase the subvention to \$13/volume, which was paid in single payment.

The 2004-5 budget was presented. Harrington noted that we are frequently ending up under budget. During the recent Executive Committee meeting, the Executive decided we could reroute money earmarked for the Treasurer and Secretarial budgets to donations, thereby increasing the donations pool from \$3000 to \$6000. Max. \$500 (provisionally) for any one donation, for group activity (e.g., conferences), not individual research. This will be announced in the Newsletter. Harrington asked the membership to help make people aware of this, and noted that we will in future itemize the budget more fully to make clear to whom the donations are going.

With regard to the budget for online maintenance, query: will this be sustainable? Conrad: Matt Jockers is currently maintaining the website and the content will be increasingly maintained by the Executive committee; in future, were Jockers to step down, we might consider outsourcing. Outsourcing of database maintenance was actually approved by the Executive and the General Business Meeting last year.

Query: For the sake of costs, perhaps we can make everything electronic? Harrington: we are working for increasing access and functionality, but in steps so that members are not left behind.

Comment: IASIL has database with e-mail addresses and sends their Newsletter that way. Jockers: we have that capability. [See New Business]

Query: Is it reasonable to keep budget the same? Harrington: So far, yes.

Query: Is there graduate student conference travel money? Answer: No
Query: Can we consider a discounted graduate student rate for the ACIS national? Comment: Perhaps we could fund graduate student projects rather than travel.

Motion: that the executive investigate the possibility of funding

A. graduate student projects of merit and travel to international conferences; and

b. untenured faculty to attend the annual ACIS meeting.

General discussion. Some comments: Grad student funding for conferences should be responsibility of that student's university. Funding could be reserved for international conferences. NE MLA funds travel to collections.

Moved; seconded; motion approved unanimously.

Motion to approve the budget.

Moved; seconded; motion approved unanimously.

III. Vice President's Report:

Wall will encourage more communication with publishers to increase nominations for book prizes; he encouraged ACIS members to alert him to books to be nominated. Information about prizes for books published in 2004: there will be a book prize notification in the fall newsletter. Instructions for submitting nominations are on the website. This year only, the book prize committees are announcing two years' worth of awards; the time-frame for judging has recently been shortened so that the awards can be made in a more timely fashion.

A. Book Awards Presentation for Books Published in 2002

1. Adele Dalsimer Prize for Distinguished Dissertation : Cara Delay, "The Fire of Devotion: Catholicism, Conflict, and Community Life in Rural Ireland, 1850-1920" (Brandeis University). "This

dissertation addresses a fundamental issue in Irish history: the transformation of Catholicism in Ireland in the nineteenth century. Original, provocative, thoroughly researched and carefully argued, it makes an important contribution to the study of Ireland's past." Committee Chair: Timothy Meagher, Catholic University of America

2. James S. Donnelly, Sr., Prize for Books on History and Social Sciences: Paul A. Townend, Father Mathew, Temperance, and Irish Identity (Irish Academic Press). "Townend's book draws on a vast array of fascinating primary sources to produce a scholarly analysis of one of the most extraordinary social movements in pre-famine Ireland. The temperance crusade of Father Theobald Mathew is brought into a broad social, political and cultural context thereby enriching our understanding of a turbulent period in Irish history." Honorable Mention : Linda Connolly, *The Irish Women's Movement from Devolution to Revolution* (Palgrave). Committee Chair: Robert Savage, Boston College

3. Michael J. Durkan Prize for Books on Language or Culture: Ben Levitas, *The Theatre of Nation: Irish Drama and Cultural Nationalism, 1890-1916* (Oxford: Clarendon Press). "Ben Levitas makes a significant contribution to the study of both Irish drama and Irish nationalism by introducing a rich set of impressively diverse - and previously neglected - institutions, productions, and historical contexts that helped shape the political and cultural landscape of modern Ireland. Levitas powerfully enhances our understanding of the diversity and complexity of cultural nationalism in modern Ireland, and does so in lucid and engaging prose." Committee Chair: Charlotte Headrick, Oregon State University

4. Robert Rhodes Prize for Books on Literature: Susan Cannon Harris, *Gender and Modern Irish Drama* (Indiana University Press). "This study is extensively and meticulously researched, masterfully argued, and it will substantially change our standard readings of many individual plays in the Irish canon and of key aspects of the Irish Renaissance as a whole. Harris has accomplished these outstanding feats, moreover, through the medium of a critical prose style that is not only exceptionally lucid and readable, but entertaining and engrossing as well." Honorable Mention : Ina Ferris, *The Romantic National Tale and the Question of Ireland* (Cambridge University Press). Committee Chair: Margot Gayle Backus, University of Houston

5. Donald Murphy Prize for Distinguished First Book: Susan Cannon Harris, *Gender and Modern Irish Drama* (Indiana University Press). " *Gender and Modern Irish Drama* is an important contribution not only to the study of modern Irish drama, but to the larger issues of Irish nationalism, rhetoric, and gender." Committee Chair: Philip Freeman, Washington University

B. Book Prize Awards for Books Published in 2003

1. Adele Dalsimer Prize for Distinguished Dissertation (Chair, Maria Tymoczko): Sarah E. McKibben. *Endangered Masculinities: Political Rhetorics of Gender in the Irish Colonial Context*. Cornell University, 2003. "Dr. McKibben's dissertation is a sophisticated study, applying contemporary theoretical materials (including postcolonial and gender theory) to (primarily) Irish-language texts responding to English colonialism, stretching into from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. She breaks new ground in her close analysis of these texts, integrating contemporary and traditional scholarly approaches and identifying new strands in the Irish literary tradition."

2. James S. Donnelly, Sr., Prize for Books on History and Social Sciences (Chair, Jerrold Casway): Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, and David N. Doyle. *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815*. Oxford University Press. "*Irish Immigration in the Land of Canaan* is a significant and enduring contribution to the literature of the migration experience. It is very much worthy of the Donnelly Prize. This collection of readings is a monumental contribution to Irish, Irish-American and immigrant studies. It is a thoughtful and extremely well organized and appendix book. The text will be a valuable teaching tool and research guide for students at all levels."

3. Michael J. Durkan Prize for Books on Language or Culture (Chair, Eileen Kearney): Helen M. Burke. *Riotous Performances: The Struggle for Hegemony in the Irish Theatre, 1712-1784*. University of Notre Dame Press. "In her richly researched and lucidly written *Riotous Performances*, Helen Burke challenges assumptions about the eighteenth-century Irish theatre as a static colonial institution, and instead proves it to be a deeply contested area of intense ethnic, religious, and class struggle. In her widely accessible, jargon-free style, she examines a wide array of primary materials (including dramatic texts, newspapers accounts, pamphlets, broadsides, and songs), placing the riotous performances she so thoroughly describes in their social and political context."

4. Robert Rhodes Prize for Books on Literature (Chair, Jose Lanter): Helen Lojek. *Contexts for Frank McGuinness's Drama*. Catholic University of America Press. "The committee agreed that the

strength of the study lies in Lojek's direct contact with the playwright and her extensive use of his papers, which allows her to fill in the developmental history of the plays, and locate influences and personal connections, without losing sight of the fact that the works have an existence apart from the author's personality."

5. Donald Murphy Prize for Distinguished First Book (Chair, Timothy Meagher): Colin Barr. *Paul Cullen, John Henry Newman, and the Catholic University of Ireland, 1845—1865*. University of Notre Dame Press. "Thoroughly researched, forcefully argued and clearly written, it addresses in an original way the history of one of nineteenth century Ireland's most important institution's significant figures."

C. Future Conference Sites

2005: The ACIS National, "Ireland Beyond Borders," will be held at the Keogh Center at Notre Dame, IN, 13 -17 April. Members are encouraged to submit complete panels as well as individual papers. Suggestions can go to Sarah McKibben, Chris Fox, or Susan Cannon Harris. The call will go out in early September; deadline probably in November.

Possible future sites:

New York, CUNY, for 2006 or 2007. There is also interest from Arizona State for 2006. Volunteers to host sites are greatly encouraged.

IV. 2004 Elections

A. Schedule

The call for nominations will be in the fall Newsletter; deadline for nominations will be in late November; the elections committee creates the slate in December. Ballots will be mailed in January; the ballot deadline will be in February. Results will be announced in March 2005.

B. Electronic voting

See 2003 minutes: last year there was a call from the membership to move to electronic voting. Matt Jockers has moved on this and the Executive approved a motion to proceed with the first stage of electronic voting this year. Jockers explained that the anonymity of one's vote will be protected; code allows the voter to access vote in case of catastrophe, but the vote and the voter's information will be stored in separate table that cannot associate vote with the member (except whether or not they've voted, denoted only with "yes"). Members will not be able to vote twice. Voters will be told to "print this page for your records" after voting; this is the paper trail. Security controls have also been built in. Those who do not want to use electronic voting can choose to print out a ballot with a voter ID. Members will also be able to request a paper ballot from Matt Jockers by writing or phone. All options will be made clear in Newsletter. Candidate information will still be mailed, along with instructions, Jan 1 2005, although it will also be available on the website.

Jockers noted that members need to contact him if their e-mail doesn't work when they attempt to log in. Query: is it possible to move to transferable preference voting system? Harrington: this is the first phase. We'll have a post mortem at Notre Dame on the effectiveness of this first stage. Comment: a member commended the Executive for ensuring that there will be a verifiable paper trail.

Motion: to approve the use of electronic voting in an initial phase in the ACIS elections beginning in 2005.

Moved; seconded; motion approved unanimously.

V. New Business

A. Executive

Harrington announced that the Executive had discussed the makeup of the Executive committee given changing nature of the duties of the membership and the needs of the various fields. The Executive decided to initiate a review of the makeup of its membership via an ad hoc committee.

B. Renewals

Harrington announced that there is going to be a new dues renewal notification system via e-mail. Dues renewal will be sent in September, November, January.

C. Newsletter

We intend to offer the option to receive the Newsletter electronically only. If a member does nothing, s/he will get the paper copy. Instructions and explanations will be in the next Newsletter. The benefits of online delivery are that the text will be searchable, and the Newsletter will be more quickly delivered.

D. ACIS Mission

Harrington put out a call for ideas about how to best act on the ACIS mission. Possibilities for future ACIS project might include pamphlets, bibliographical works, electronic materials, reprints, etc.

E. ACIS/Irish Studies history:

Last year there were no responses to our call for proposals to write a history of Irish Studies. We will repeat the call this year.

F. Other New Business/Member suggestions

A member noted that there have been no hardcopy calls for paper sent out for the past few years. Harrington: the choice to send out paper calls is the responsibility of the host. Harris: Notre Dame will send paper calls. A member suggested that we consider offering a Best Web Resource prize. A member suggested that we host conference abstracts on ACIS site rather than on host institutions' site; this would also allow us to archive old materials. A member suggested that we consider the possibilities of hosting an ACIS journal online.

Motion to adjourn. Moved, seconded; motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Conrad

Secretary