



The Catharine Maria SEDGWICK SOCIETY Newsletter

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Announcing the

Third Catharine Maria Sedgwick Symposium

June 13 - 15, 2003

The Red Lion Inn
Stockbridge, Massachusetts

Building on the success of the first two symposia in 1997 and 2000, Sedgwick scholars and specialists in nineteenth-century American literature will gather at Stockbridge's historic Red Lion Inn to present on Sedgwick's works, career, and historical contexts. Scholars will present on her novels - *A New England Tale*, *Hope Leslie*, *Redwood*, *Clarence*, *The Linwoods*, and *Married or Single* - as well as her short fiction, her didactic novellas, and her autobiography. Among topics considered will be Sedgwick's influence on other writers, her place in trans-Atlantic literary culture, her interest in politics and economics, her engagements with New England and New York City in her life and fiction, and her representations of Native Americans.

The program will also feature a keynote address on the state of Sedgwick studies by Susan K. Harris, Hall Distinguished Professor of American Literature at the University of Kansas and editor of the forthcoming Penguin edition of *A New-England Tale*, as well as a roundtable discussion on Sedgwick biography, and a forum for sharing ideas about teaching Sedgwick.

Stockbridge is located in the beautiful Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts, two hours west of Boston and 45 minutes east of Albany. A short drive from the Hancock Shaker Village, the town offers glimpses of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America, as well as delightful restaurants, shops, and pleasant walks. The Red Lion Inn was built in the late 18th century two years before Sedgwick's birth and is just one house away from the Sedgwick family home on Main Street. Attendees will be able to visit sites featured in several of Sedgwick's novels, including the Ice Glen (*A New-England Tale*), the Hancock Shaker Society (*Redwood*), and Monument Mountain and Laurel Hill (*Hope Leslie*).

A Note from the President

Lucinda Damon-Bach

This newsletter showcases three significant steps forward in Sedgwick studies; through this note, I also hope to encourage readers to share their work for two new web-related endeavors.

The first Sedgwick Society-sponsored special session was held at the Modern Language Association Annual Convention this past December. The MLA session was followed by a celebration honoring contributors to the first collection of Sedgwick criticism, another Sedgwick studies breakthrough, reviewed in this issue.

The third Sedgwick Symposium will be held June 13-15, 2003, directed by the First Vice-President of Programs, Melissa J. Homestead. The upcoming Symposium will be the first international gathering and will feature scholars who have done groundbreaking work, past and present, including Edward Halsey Foster, Sedgwick's first biographer, and keynote speaker, Susan K. Harris. More details about the Symposium, including the tentative program which showcases a wide range of new work on Sedgwick, are included in this issue.

It is a pleasure to invite you to attend the upcoming Symposium. If you have attended in the past, you will remember how lovely Stockbridge and the Berkshires are in June; if this is your first visit, you have a real treat in store.

At this time I would like to invite all who have ever presented at a past Symposium (or who have been accepted for 2003) to consider giving me permission to publish the abstract of your conference paper on the Sedgwick Society website. My goal is to include all the programs of past and upcoming symposia with links from paper titles to abstracts of the papers and e-mail links for contacting authors (for those who are open to such contact).

In addition, I plan to begin a new set of pages on teaching Sedgwick, and I invite all who have included Sedgwick's work in a course to share syllabi and assignments (especially those who have shared ideas at the Pedagogy Roundtables at past symposia). Please send your documents as WORD attachments for easy posting to the website. And thank you in advance for sharing your approaches to Sedgwick—both in your research and in your teaching.

I look forward to seeing you all in Stockbridge!

Acknowledgments

Sincere thanks to **Dr. Neil Cosgrove**, chairperson of the Department of English at Slippery Rock University. The Department of English has generously funded the printing and mailing costs of this newsletter. On the Society's behalf, I offer our thanks. Ellen Foster

Thanks also to our supportive membership and friends, especially those who have presented their scholarship at Society-sponsored panels and served on Society committees.

The Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society Newsletter

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2003 Sedgwick Symposium

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Susan K. Harris, Ph.D. (Cornell), Hall Distinguished Professor of American Literature and Culture at the University of Kansas, will present the Symposium's keynote address. Dr. Harris's publications include *Annie Adams Fields*, *Mary Gladstone Drew*, and *The Work of the Late 19th-Century Hostess* (Palgrave/St. Martin's, 2002); *The Courtship of Olivia Langdon and Mark Twain* (Cambridge University Press, 1996); *19th-Century American Women's Novels: Interpretive Strategies* (Cambridge University Press, 1990); and *Mark Twain's Escape from Time: A Study of Patterns and Images* (University of Missouri Press, 1982). She has also edited Catherine Maria Sedgwick's *A New-England Tale* (forthcoming, Penguin, 2003); Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000); Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing* (Penguin, 1999); and *Mark Twain: Historical Romances* (The Library of America, 1994). Her essays have appeared in collections published by Oxford, Johns Hopkins, and Rutgers University presses, and in journals such as *American Literature*, *New England Quarterly*, and *Studies in the Novel*. She has edited *Legacy: A Journal of American Women's Writing* and has served on advisory boards for *Leviathan: The Melville Society Journal*, *The Oxford Reader's Companion to Mark Twain*, and the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal, Missouri.

REGISTRATION

Because of space limitations and to encourage discussion and dialogue, all sessions will be plenary sessions, and attendance (including presenters) is limited to 50. A tentative symposium program appears on pages 4 and 5. More detailed information and updates can be found at : <http://www.salemstate.edu/imc/sedgwick/prog.html>.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are planning to attend but will not be presenting a paper, you can play an important role in the Symposium by volunteering to chair a panel. Please contact Melissa J. Homestead if you are interested.

STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CATALOGING PROJECT

When you are making your travel plans, please consider arriving a few days early to participate in an exciting Sedgwick-related volunteer opportunity. The Stockbridge Library Association has in its possession boxes of unprocessed Sedgwick family papers, and Barbara Allen, the Association's curator, and Ellen Foster, the Society's Vice-President for Communications, are coordinating a pre-Symposium project to help process these materials.

Volunteers will meet for an orientation to the cataloging process before beginning their adventures in the archives. This volunteer effort will be available Tuesday, June 10, through Thursday, June 12, prior to the Symposium. Please contact Ellen Foster (efoster@pathway.net) or Barbara Allen (ballen@cwmar.org) if you are interested in taking part in this project.

LODGING INFORMATION

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Red Lion Inn (www.redlioninn.com) for Symposium participants. Bed & Breakfast rooms (bathroom down the hall) are available at a special conference rate of \$95 per night, and deluxe rooms (bathroom in the room) are \$195 per night. Call the reservations department at (413) 298-1690 and specify Group Reservation Number #29545.

Ten guestrooms are also being held at the Days Inn in Lee, Massachusetts, at the price of \$79 single and \$89 double per night. Call 413-243-0501 to reserve a room. Ask for Anne and mention the Catharine Sedgwick Symposium. The rooms will be held until May 15th; after that date, the rooms will be released into the general reservations pool. Because the number of rooms available is limited and because Stockbridge is a popular summer tourist destination, you should make reservations as soon as possible.

If you are interested in sharing a room with another Symposium participant, please contact Melissa J. Homestead, who will try to connect you with others interested in sharing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Melissa J. Homestead: mjhomestead@ou.edu

Catharine Maria Sedgwick Symposium PROGRAM

(Subject to change)

Friday June 13th

SESSION 1

Testing American Nationhood: Transatlantic Contexts and Textual Resolutions

Chair: ANN RIVERA, SUNY-Buffalo

JENIFER ELMORE, Florida Atlantic University, "Campaigning Against 'Party Spirit': The Republicanism, Elitism, and Ultra-Unionism of Maria Edgeworth and Catharine Sedgwick"

PHILIP GOULD, Brown University, "Lafayette, *The Linwoods*, and the Cosmopolitan Nation"

ROBERT DALY, SUNY- Buffalo, "Networks of America: Assembling a Nation in *The Linwoods*"

SESSION 2

Sedgwick and the City

Chair: TBA

JENIFER BANKS, Michigan State University, "Walking New York's Streets: Sedgwick, Dickens and Gaskell"

DEBORAH GUSSMAN, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, "Fettered or Free?: The Politics of Marriage in Sedgwick, Carey, and Blake"

SOHUI LEE, Stanford University, "Sedgwick's 'The Irish Girl' and the *Democratic Review*"

Opening Reception

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

SUSAN K. HARRIS, University of Kansas, "The State of Sedgwick Studies"

Saturday June 14th

SESSION 3

Sedgwick in the "Century of Dishonor:" Indian Removals in Stockbridge, the Southeast, and California

Chair: KAREN WOODS WEIERMAN, Worcester State College

BETHANY SCHNEIDER, Bryn Mawr College, "Stock Terrors of Our Nurseries: Catharine Sedgwick and the Cultivation of Race Purity in New England Soil"

AMY DUNHAM STRAND, University of Washington, "Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* and the 1830s Women's Petitioning Campaigns"

SABINA MATER-SIEBEL, University of Mainz at Gernersheim, "'Indian Types': Catharine Maria Sedgwick's Influence on Helen Hunt Jackson's 'Indian' Literature"

SESSION 4

Sedgwick's Re-Visionary New England Places: Landscapes, Villages, and Cemeteries

Chair: KAREN M. POREMSKI, Ohio Wesleyan University

LISA WEST NORWOOD, Drake University, "The Nature of 'The Flourishing Village' in New England: The Legacy of Dwight's Prospects in Sedgwick's *A New-England Tale* and Other Novels"

JOAN VARNUM, New York University, "Moral Economy *versus* 'Market Revolution': The New Republic's Crisis of Economic Identity in Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *A New-England Tale*"

BETH SNYDER RHEINGOLD, SUNY-Buffalo, "On Common Ground: Sedgwick and the 19th-Century Cemetery"

Approaches to Teaching Sedgwick: A Roundtable

Facilitator: ELLEN FOSTER, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania

*Saturday June 14th***SESSION 5****Reading and Writing the Literary Indian: Intersections of Race and Gender in *Hope Leslie* and Other Texts**

Chair: ABIGAIL F. DAVIS, University of Minnesota

GENEVA M. GANO, UCLA, "Rowlandson on 'Tryal': Sedgwick's Redress"

PATRICIA LARSON KALAYJIAN, California State University, Dominguez Hills, "E-racing and Engendering Savagery: Sedgwick's Massacres at Mystic and Bethel"

REBECCA BLEVINS FAERY, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "Savage Masculinities: The Heroic Indian in Early 19th-Century Literature by Women"

Meeting of the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society**SESSION 6****Sedgwick Biography: A Roundtable Discussion**

Chair: Lucinda Damon-Bach, Salem State College

EDWARD HALSEY FOSTER, Stevens Institute of Technology, on his Twayne United States Authors Series Sedgwick volume 30 years later

MARY KELLEY, University of Michigan, on Sedgwick in *Private Woman, Public Stage* and on editing Sedgwick's autobiography and journals

TIMOTHY KENSLEA, Norwell (Mass.) High School, on his research on courtship and marriage in the Sedgwick family and on what can be learned by studying the lives of Catharine Sedgwick's brothers and sisters

JOHN SEDGWICK, novelist, on his family memoir in progress, "Class, Race and Madness in an Old American Family"

JENIFER BANKS, Michigan State University, on the challenges and rewards of editing Sedgwick's correspondence

MELISSA J. HOMESTEAD, University of Oklahoma, on Catharine Sedgwick's career as a professional author

PETER DRUMMEY, Massachusetts Historical Society, on research materials and opportunities in the Society's collections

Symposium Banquet*Sunday June 15th***SESSION 7****Herman Melville and the Emersons Read Sedgwick**

Chair: TBA

CHARLENE AVALLONE, Independent Scholar, "Herman Melville Reads Catharine Sedgwick"

VICTORIA CLEMENTS, College of Southern Maryland, "Sedgwick and the Emersons, or, Tales from a Flyleaf"

SESSION 8**Ann Sophia Stephens, Susan Warner, and Harriet Beecher Stowe Read Sedgwick**

Chair: TBA

TERRI TRUPIANO BARRY, Michigan State University, "'Giv[ing]... female genius a voice': The Influence of Catharine Sedgwick on Ann Stephens"

LUCINDA DAMON-BACH, Salem State College, "Susan Warner's Debt to Catharine Sedgwick: *Queechy* Meets *Redwood*"

GINNY MASTROMONACO, Fordham University, "Republican Motherhood and the Textual Vote for Reform: The Influence of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Redwood* on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*"

Field Trip to Laurel Hill, Stockbridge, Massachusetts

Leader: Lucinda Damon-Bach, Salem State College, and President, Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society

Rain plan: Hancock Shaker Society, in Hancock, Massachusetts

Soirées, Slums, and Sympathy: Catharine Sedgwick and the Cultures of Antebellum New York

**Modern Language Association
Annual Convention
December 2002**

An audience of nearly forty gathered on December 28, 2002, Catharine's 213th birthday, for the Sedgwick Society's panel at the 118th MLA convention. Together the three papers examined New York's influence on Sedgwick's fiction, as well as her influence on both the literary environment and literature of New York, aspects of Sedgwick's life and work that have received little prior critical attention.

Charlene Avallone's paper on Sedgwick's role in the social and literary worlds of ante-bellum New York and their representations in her fiction problematized the increasingly questionable model of separate gendered spheres and suggested Sedgwick's significance to the American novel of manners. Jenifer Banks examined Sedgwick's contribution to the American urban novel, specifically in *Clarence* and *Married or Single?*, showing that Sedgwick's heroines are not, like their male literary contemporaries, mere observers of city life, but are instead actively engaged in shaping the city in which they dwell. Sondra Smith Gates's paper on Sedgwick's popular didactic novels of the 1830's considered Sedgwick's idealistic solutions to the problems of class division that were becoming increasingly apparent during that decade.

In her response to the papers, Judith Fetterley pointed out that the very appearance at the MLA convention of a panel on Sedgwick focusing on a specific aspect of her work, instead of introducing or justifying her position in American literature, is a measure of how far Sedgwick studies has come. She emphasized the importance of Sedgwick as one of the first American urban novelists and also suggested that the politically problematic didactic novels demand further critical attention. Scholarship on Sedgwick, she noted, is inverting still prevalent understandings of American literary history, and we therefore urgently need not only a Sedgwick biography, but also reprints of *Clarence*, *Married or Single?*, and *Redwood*.

The lively discussion that followed might have gone on much longer had we not been asked to give up the room by MLA representatives, who were managing a very tight convention schedule.

Abstracts of the three papers appear in the following pages.

Victoria Clements, Moderator, College of Southern Maryland



MLA panelists Jenifer Banks, Charlene Avallone, and Sondra Smith Gates (l - r)

“The Infinite Variety of Life”: Catharine Sedgwick as Urban Novelist

Jenifer Banks, Michigan State University

The purpose of this paper is to “place” Sedgwick as an antebellum urban writer, an American author, and a woman writer. Focusing on *Clarence* (1830) and *Married or Single?* (1857), I argue that she writes against the model set, for example, by Washington Irving’s playful romp *A History of New York...by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809) and the more serious but highly derivative urban spectatorship found in his *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (1819-20), which he set in England. By setting her two novels in New York City Sedgwick anticipates many of her peers in recognizing that the American city, and New York in particular, has achieved sufficient stature to be a fit subject for the nascent, highly self-conscious *American* literature.

Americans’ failure to appreciate their cities is reflected in the development of city sketches and city-spectatorship in the American press. Dana Brand has argued that the role of the flaneur was “pervasive and conventional” in Britain and Europe by the 1830’s and made popular in America by writers such as Nathaniel Parker Willis (71). It is not until 1835, however, that the highly influential *Knickerbocker Magazine* began to publish such sketches set in New York rather than London or Paris. Sedgwick writes against this tradition not only by setting her novels in New York, but also by rejecting the values implicit in the pose of the flaneur. “If the fundamental cultural fact of the nineteenth century was understood to be the development of great cities,” Brand argues, then “the representative modern subjectivity was understood to be that of the city dweller, the passive yet compulsive consumer of a rapidly and perpetually changing spectacle” (4). Sedgwick confronts and critiques this “modern subjectivity,” replacing it with women city dwellers of various classes who construct their own subjectivity by engaging with the perpetually changing arena, turning it to their own use, and thus acting as *producers* of community, not mere spectators of spectacle.

“Few societies in history had ever urbanized as rapidly as America did in the first half of the nineteenth century, and few cities grew as quickly as New York”; thus one could argue that the New York Sedgwick knew was in the process of becoming, rather than a finished work (Brand 4). As such it became the site of contested space, and Sedgwick helped “lay claim” to some of that space for women both through her benevolent work and her publications. She helped

establish women’s place in the *civic* life of the city through her benevolent work which extended from teaching Sunday School to impoverished children to serving as First Directress of the Women’s Prison Association of New York. She helped establish women’s place in the current debate over the role of *literature* in shaping urban culture by drawing on such experiences to give authority to her urban fiction and non-fiction.

But Sedgwick is aware of the precarious position of the female author as urban observer; in the city constructed as spectacle she is in danger of becoming part of that spectacle. Through images of veiled identity, transparencies at a lyceum lecture, and a portrait sold at a public auction, she exploits the trope of spectator, to show how her heroine, Gertrude Clarence, increasingly asserts her own subjectivity in the face of male gaze. Sedgwick is also aware of the realities of the city as a commercial center, and *Married or Single?*, a darker novel, is characterized by the trope of imprisonment, both literal (“the Tombs,” almshouses and Blackwell’s Island) and figurative, to show how narrow the line between the marriage market and prostitution has become.

Sedgwick’s national pride and strong gendered identity are reflected in her declaration of independence as she distinguishes herself from the popular Charles Dickens. Although an admirer of Dickens, she is careful to distinguish herself from the pose of the flaneur, with its association with “Old World” decadence, he adopts as urban observer in *The Sketches of Boz* (1833-36), and *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842): “We have not the masculine pen of Dickens,” she writes, “nor alas! The fathomless genius whereby he sounds the mirey depths of humanity ...” (*Married or Single?*). It is precisely that “masculine pen” that Sedgwick is replacing with her own – a pen reflecting commitment, engagement, and agency.

Work Cited

- Brand, Dana. *The Spectator and the City in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. Cambridge UP, 1991.

Circles and Spheres: Catharine Sedgwick and the Conversational Culture of New York

Charlene Avallone

Although Catharine Maria Sedgwick lived and wrote in New York City half her adult life, her status as a notable New Yorker has become involved in ambiguities and contradictions, her residence and its significance for her work discounted to her subsequent diminishment. Poe situated Sedgwick, “one of our literary pioneers” of national reputation, in Knickerbocker circles with “Irving, Cooper, Paulding, Bryant, Halleck, and one or two others” yet questioned “the absolute merit” of her work together with her metropolitan status: “Strictly speaking, Miss Sedgwick is *not* one of the *litterati* of New York City” (1202, 1204). A century later, the influential *Literary History of the United States* acknowledged her residence only as a decline linked to her interest in representing urban conversation—“the chitchat of her ladies”—on becoming “a distinguished authoress who wintered in New York” (McDowell 290). While critical tradition thus invokes Sedgwick’s relation to New York circles to diminish her writing, we have yet to detail either her city residence or her ties to contemporary urban culture of her day as it debated its own shape and that of national culture.

Participation in the city’s overlapping conversation communities, from those of Knickerbocker writers, to the newly instituted Unitarians, and the mid-century prison-reformers and “Literati,” factored in the entire range of Sedgwick’s literary career—its motives, its thematics, and its forms—both reinforcing and challenging limitations prescribed by separate spheres ideology. Prying out actual nineteenth-century practices from under this theory that has long distorted perception of them can disclose the field of the social with its divides and its circles of community organization and professional, literary, and political activity. This sphere evinces the wide ranging and multiple forms of relation that exist within the public and the private as well as between the two domains, relations that challenge the simple binary of supposedly separate gendered spheres. Analysis of Sedgwick’s ties to antebellum New York social circles can enhance understanding of her literary and political significance now obscured by a critical tradition embedded in this theory and too often relegating her to a position delimited by New England domesticity.

By the 1820s, when Catharine lived in New York with brothers Henry and Robert and sisters-in-law, Jane (Minot) and Lizzy (Ellery), literary society was moving away but not yet apart from the “polite” literature of European belles lettres culture which blended literacy and orally and social, political, and literary practices in elite circles. With industrial capitalism, a new literary formation was emerging that would feature professionalism and nationalism in a print-focused culture, even as it remained engaged with oral practices in a variety of ways. Sedgwick would tap her extraordinary social capital to establish a position in New York circles that mediated this transition. To recognize fully Sedgwick’s active role among the first generation to make a profession of polite letters in the U. S. would require both acknowledging her influence on male writers and political issues and amending foundational assumptions of literary history.

Over the decades of her New York residence, Sedgwick promoted social interaction on a model developed from reading and her own experience of “rational” conversation and “reformed soirées,” thereby helping to define and disseminate the conversational stratifications that set a cultural elite apart from—and, she thought, above—the wealthy “fashionable.” Sedgwick selectively borrows from traditions of salon culture to enhance the influence of women of her own class, at the same time assuaging anxiety about women’s power and aristocratic European usages with criticisms of that culture. Her writings urge advanced literacy and an augmented social role for (elite) women and promote oral literary culture around the expansion of print and literacy, while they stress the careful adaptation of conversational refinements to American customs and political tenets, as well as compatibility with professional men’s work and middle-class women’s benevolence. She advises middle-class respectability, minimal refreshments, domestic settings, and selection of refined company for “talent or accomplishment . . . , whether bearing the brand of good society or not” (Sedgwick journal, 11 May 1833, in Kelley 137). Her novels (*Clarence*, *The Linwoods*, and *Married or Single?*), stories, and

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

sketches set in New York criticize urban conversation to reform fashionables, yet also contrast the deficiencies of rural discourse with the richness of urbane domestic conversation at its best, a feature as important to the resolution of her romance plots as the hero. Her conduct fiction for the laboring classes advocates a modest version of literate society for individuals in those classes on a path of upward mobility that she depicts as leading out of the city and its circles.

What difference might it make to recall the forms of literary association and publication in which Catharine Sedgwick contributed as a New Yorker to the development of an urban literary culture with claims to represent the nation? To re-examine Sedgwick's contemporary status as a Knickerbocker, a Unitarian, and an acknowledged "genius" in the "novel of manners" in the company of her contemporaries—both women and men—can advance not only more thoughtful appreciation of "the chitchat of her ladies" and a more extensive sense of her canon, but also a more comprehensive understanding of U. S. literature and of traditions of manners leading up to paradigmatic writers like Edith Wharton, with Sedgwick in a pivotal position (Jones, "Female Novelists" 484, and see 487). Restoring such understudied genres of U. S. writing as fiction of manners, where romance and

Renaissance theses of American literature have obscured more social modes, can give a larger sense of the uses and forms of writing and of writing's continuities with oral culture. Examining Sedgwick's New York engagement with the social holds potential to contribute as well to an enlarged perception of this sphere, helping to transfigure binary models of public and private and conducting to more comprehensive history and sociological theory.

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Sondra Smith Gates is an assistant professor of English at the University of Wisconsin - Fond du Lac.

Melissa J. Homestead is an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma. As first vice president for Programs, she directs the 2003 Sedgwick Symposium.

Sedgwick's New York Fiction of Reform

Sondra Smith Gates, University of Wisconsin - Fond du Lac

It is not by chance that Catharine Maria Sedgwick's most overtly didactic novels are all set in New York City. The New York of Sedgwick's era concentrated Americans' attention on the young nation's need for social and economic reforms. Massive waves of European immigrants entered the country's largest and most rapidly growing city in the 1830s, settling in crowded slums with poor sanitation and leading to massive outbreaks of cholera. Fears that the United States had replicated England's stratified class structures were reinforced by changes at the opposite end of the economic spectrum, as well. The gap between rich and poor widened as fortuitous business ventures made some New Yorkers fabulously wealthy overnight and a growing retail economy made consumer goods increasingly available to the middle classes.

While political radicals like Frances Wright and Stephen Simpson called for a redistribution of property to fulfill America's promise of equality for all, Sedgwick aimed for more gradual reform. My paper discusses how Sedgwick's short fiction and her three popular and critically acclaimed didactic novels of the 1830s—*Home* (1835), *The Poor Rich Man*, and *the Rich Poor Man* (1836), and *Live and Let Live* (1837)—attempted to create a more cohesive social fabric by appealing to the sympathies of readers. Sedgwick's didacticism operates in these texts by comparing and contrasting three sets of binaries: the city and the idealized country village, the rich and the poor, and the United States and England.

These sets of binaries often overlap with one another. In Sedgwick's story "The Country Cousin," for example, the protagonist Isabel is not only rich, but also urban and English in character. Lucy, in contrast, is not only rural, but also poor by comparison and American in character. Isabel's reformation occurs through contrast (of her own snobbishness with Lucy's sweetness), comparison (of the two girls' shared history and family), and, most interestingly, through an exchange of characteristics with her opposite/double (Isabel herself, we learn, is the daughter of a destitute rural woman). This pattern repeats itself again and again in Sedgwick's didactic New York fiction, as rich and poor characters, rural and urban characters, and British and American characters meet, merge, and swap identities.

In *Home*, the first novel of Sedgwick's series dedicated to the working classes, the protagonist

William Barclay begins life in an idealized country setting. When Barclay is left penniless and moves to New York to find work (as many young men did in the 1830s), the happy life of the country cottage serves as a model that the Barclay family attempts to replicate in the city. Yet though Sedgwick has presented country and city as opposites, Barclay's ability to move from country to city and back at the novel's conclusion suggests that Sedgwick also sees them as merely two parts of one coherent whole—much as the cousins Isabel and Lucy are part of one family.

A slightly less idealistic version of country life emerges in the two novels that followed *Home*, and these books are also less sanguine about solving the problem of urban poverty purely through individual sympathy. Sedgwick's main concern in her next book, *The Poor Rich Man*, and *the Rich Poor Man*, is to confront the intellectual dilemma that virtuous poverty poses to America's status as a meritocracy. She does this by redefining the terms "rich" and "poor" in a way more appropriate for democratic society, thus disassociating spiritual virtue from material wealth. The novel's protagonist Harry Aikin is proof that democratic institutions afford the poor opportunities for economic self-sufficiency and comfort. The counterpart of this notion, however, is that those who do not follow in Aikin's footsteps have only themselves to blame. The age-old strategy of blaming poverty on the vices of the poor takes on new significance in America, where (unlike in England) there are supposedly "no separating lines which the poor cannot pass" (*The Poor Rich Man* 154).

In her third novel, *Live and Let Live*, Sedgwick admits more realistically that "[t]hough we live in a republican country, the truth is, we have unequal conditions" (39-40). The novel is nevertheless brimming with optimism that those unequal conditions can soon be corrected by teaching the ruling classes to adjust to what Sedgwick calls "a new order of things" (79). The novel illustrates vividly the hardships of New York's domestic servants, but at the same time it looks forward to the day when America will fulfill its republican promise. In Sedgwick's New York fiction of reform, country and city, rich and poor, are only vestiges of an Old World past that America will soon bring together in harmony.

ALA 2003

Beaux Ideals?: Masculinity in Early Nineteenth-Century Fiction by Women

The Sedgwick Society is pleased to sponsor this panel at the 2003 ALA convention, May 2003, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. **Rebecca Blevins Faery**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will chair the panel.

Panelists and the titles of their papers are:

Stacy Hinthorn Van Beek, University of California - Irvine, "Rational Romeos: Masculine Character in Catharine Sedgwick's Anti-Erotic Romances"

Carole Policy, Palm Beach Community College, "B'hoys will be b'hoys, and so will girls: Class and Masculine Ideology as Performance in E.D.E.N. Southworth's *The Hidden Hand*"

Lucinda Damon-Bach, Salem State College: "Catharine Sedgwick's Model Man: New York Philanthropist-Mechanic Joseph Curtis"



Sedgwick Fêted at MLA Reception

Sondra Smith Gates

Following the Sedgwick panel at the MLA convention, Sedgwick Society members and other invited guests were treated to a lavish reception in honor of Catharine's 213th birthday and the publication of *Catharine Maria Sedgwick: Critical Perspectives*. Many thanks are due to co-editors Lucinda Damon-Bach and Victoria Clements for hosting the affair. As one of the lucky attendees, I can attest that the buffet was as delicious as it was beautiful; I'm still craving the blackberries from the fruit tray.

Tucked away in an alcove of the New York Hilton's Marketplace restaurant, the reception allowed Sedgwick scholars the chance to mingle, exchange notes on their current research, make plans for the upcoming Symposium, and admire the newly published *Critical Perspectives* volume, of which we are all immensely proud. Along with Lucinda, Victoria, and I, five other contributors to the book were able to attend: Charlene Avallone, Jenifer Banks, Judith Fetterley, Deborah Gussman, and Susan K. Harris.

Several other Sedgwick Society members and friends were also on hand, including James Fenimore Cooper Society president Hugh MacDougall. We were especially honored to be joined by Sedgwick descendent Stephen Delafield, the great-great-grandson of Catharine's brother Robert; in the photo above, Lucinda (l) and Victoria (r) welcome Mr. Delafield. The gathering was capped off with toasts from Lucinda and Judith Fetterley and a delectable chocolate torte served in honor of Catharine's birthday. The social event was an excellent counterpart to the scholarly panel and reminded me that one of the greatest perks of being part of the Sedgwick Society is the friendly collegiality of our members.

A Triumphant Milestone in Sedgwick Studies

Jenifer Elmore, Florida Atlantic University

A Review of *Catharine Maria Sedgwick: Critical Perspectives*. Ed. and intro. Lucinda Damon-Bach and Victoria Clements. Foreword by Mary Kelley. Boston: Northeastern UP, 2003. ISBN 1555535488. \$40.00 cloth

The appearance this year of a collection of critical essays entirely devoted to Catharine Maria Sedgwick marks a triumphant milestone in what, as Mary Kelley confidently asserts in her Foreword to the volume, “we can now call ‘Sedgwick studies’” (xii). Lucinda Damon-Bach and Victoria Clements, co-founders of both the Sedgwick Society and the Sedgwick Symposium, have once again advanced the study of Sedgwick, and the larger project of recovering early American women writers, by envisioning and editing *Catharine Maria Sedgwick: Critical Perspectives*.

Born out of the collective scholarship presented at the first two Symposiums (held in 1997 and 2000), *Critical Perspectives* is attractively packaged, neatly organized, gracefully written, and eminently user-friendly. The most innovative editorial feature is the insertion of relevant excerpts from nineteenth-century reviews and commentary immediately before fifteen of the collection’s sixteen chapters. This rather novel juxtaposition of old and new criticism provides a bonus cache of critical and historical resources which, rather than being relegated to an appendix, instead appears throughout the collection precisely where it is most pertinent and easiest to use. Furthermore, the collection’s then-and-now structure is novel in a Bakhtinian sense, presenting numerous contemporary critical perspectives dialogically while also creating a dialogical interplay between contemporary and historical voices. What better way to organize a collection in which several contributors offer dialogical and dialectical readings of Sedgwick’s works?

Also useful are the chronology of Sedgwick’s life and career at the beginning of the book, which is significantly more extensive than the best previously published chronology in Mary Kelley’s *The Power of Her Sympathy* (1993), and the comprehensive year-by-year bibliography of Sedgwick’s published works at the end of the volume. As valuable as these

features are, however, it is regrettable that neither *Critical Perspectives* nor Maria Karafilis’s edition of *The Linwoods* (2002) contains a comprehensive bibliography of secondary scholarship on Sedgwick. For that, readers must continue to consult the “Secondary Sources” page on the Sedgwick Society website or the MLA bibliography, neither of which is completely up to date.

Five framing essays by the editors and well-known, highly accomplished scholars of nineteenth-century American literature—Mary Kelley, Carolyn Karcher, Susan K. Harris, and Dana Nelson—situate Sedgwick and her work in literary history and also contextualize *Critical Perspectives* within contemporary literary and cultural studies. At the beginning of the volume, Kelley’s Foreword, the editors’ Introduction, and Karcher’s Chapter 1, “Catharine Maria Sedgwick in Literary History,” survey Sedgwick’s contribution from slightly different angles, but there is a bit too much overlap among the three.

Chapters devoted to single texts or single genres comprise the bulk of *Critical Perspectives*. In many cases these essays represent the first modern treatment of their respective texts to appear in print, such as Damon-Bach’s essay on *Redwood*, Patricia Kalayjian on *Clarence*, John Austin on the *Tales & Sketches* of 1835, Deborah Gussman on *Married or Single?*, Brigitte Bailey on Sedgwick’s travel writing, and Sondra Smith Gates on the domestic trilogy of *Home, Live and Let Live*, and *The Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man*. With their relatively narrow focus on texts that have been out of print for as long as 150 years, it is unlikely that these essays could have been published in other forums at present. That makes them no less interesting or valuable, however, and their inclusion here is surely the best possible step toward kindling interest in these relatively unknown texts and getting them back into print in the coming years. Probably due to length restrictions, neither Sedgwick’s biographical works nor her children’s and juvenile literature receive more than cursory mention in this volume. And despite the important insights of Austin’s essay on Sedgwick’s first *Tales & Sketches* as a collection, both the essay and *Critical Perspectives* as a whole

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

display a general unfamiliarity with the broad range of Sedgwick's short works, particularly those that address Irish and Catholic themes.

Two new essays on novels that are available in modern editions make their print debut here. Clements' essay on the significance of *Crazy Bet* in *A New-England Tale* corrects what now appears to have been insufficient attention to *Bet* in the introduction to Clements's 1995 edition of the novel. In a sharp postmodern reading with theoretical implications extending beyond Sedgwick's canon, Robert Daly sets the bar high for the series of readings that will likely follow Karafilis's new edition of *The Linwoods*. By contrast, this collection's lack of sustained new scholarship on *Hope Leslie* is disappointing. However, if the editors had to include only a previously published piece on *Hope Leslie*, they certainly chose well. Their selection of Judith Fetterley's "My Sister! My Sister!: The Rhetoric of Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*," first published in the oft-cited and widely available "No More Separate Spheres!" issue of *American Literature* (September 1998), confirms this essay as a destined classic—still the most compelling and authoritative reading to date of Sedgwick's most familiar novel.

A significant minority of these essays takes a more thematic, multi-textual approach. Melissa J. Homestead's "Behind the Veil? Catharine Sedgwick and Anonymous Publication" persuasively challenges received interpretations of nineteenth-century literary anonymity, using Sedgwick's career to argue that anonymous publication was as much a deliberate strategy for authorial self-fashioning as a modest hedge against public appearance. Charlene Avallone's meticulously researched "Catharine Sedgwick and the Art of Conversation" positions Sedgwick prominently in a reconceptualized nineteenth-century public sphere via her actual participation in and literary reproduction of cultivated conversation. Jenifer Banks's insightful synthesis of a wide range of archival materials gives readers a more concrete understanding of Sedgwick's hands-on involvement in social reform efforts. Far more than any previously published scholarship, Banks, together with Karen Woods Weierman on Sedgwick's unfinished antislavery manuscript and Sondra Smith Gates on Sedgwick's domestic novellas, provides us with a detailed and

documented understanding of how Sedgwick's political views, social activism, and charitable projects inform, intersect, and complicate her literary oeuvre.

In the space of just ten pages, Susan K. Harris presents what just may be the most ambitious critical attempt yet to synthesize a broad theory of Sedgwick's fiction. Drawing on a range of theories of American literature and culture from Sedgwick's time to the present, "The Limits of Authority: Catharine Maria Sedgwick and the Politics of Resistance" establishes a paradigm for reading Sedgwick's five major novels (1822-1835) across the theoretical lines of gender, ethnicity, economics, and politics in terms of a dialectic of resistance and submission to various forms of authority.

If Harris's critical milestone—the crowning achievement of *Critical Perspectives*—proves just how far Sedgwick studies have come since the appearance of Kelley's 1987 edition of *Hope Leslie*, then Dana Nelson reminds us not to rest on these laurels. Her short concluding essay, "Rediscovery," provides dismaying numerical proof that the work of revising the American literary canon by recovering forgotten and understudied authors is far from complete and must not be abandoned. The editors and contributors to *Critical Perspectives* greatly extend the scope of Sedgwick criticism at the same time that they repeatedly call for more new editions of Sedgwick's works and more scholarship that takes Sedgwick's entire career into account.

Future studies of the works treated here, as well as the still unexplored regions of Sedgwick's production—children's and juvenile literature, biographies and other non-fiction, and the vast majority of her short stories and sketches—will build on the foundational work of these seventeen pioneers.

Notes of Interest

Found: "New" Sedgwick Sketches;
Hope Leslie Engraving

Charlene Avallone has identified two sketches by Sedgwick; these have not been previously noted in any bibliography of Sedgwick's work. The sketches appear in volume 7 of the *Columbian Magazine*: "Truth vs. Fiction" (January 1847) and "Nine Years Since" (May 1847).

Should other researchers make such discoveries, please pass them along to Ellen Foster (for announcement in the newsletter) and Lucinda Damon-Bach (for updates to the website bibliography).

Charlene also found an engraving, by Robert A. West, co-editor of the *Columbian Magazine* in volume 5 (1846). The engraving depicts the massacre at Bethel (from *Hope Leslie*). Charlene isn't aware to any published references to the engraving; if a reader has seen such a reference, please let us know.

Upcoming Documentary Series

In the Fall 2003 Issue...

"The birth of the book," by Lucinda Damon-Bach and Victoria Clements

Reports from the 2003 Sedgwick Symposium and ALA 2003

Submission Deadline: August 15, 2003

WNET, Channel 13 in New York, is preparing a new 4-part documentary on slavery. The life of **Elizabeth Freeman/Mumbet** is the focus of the second segment, circa 1720-1830. As we receive information about this series, we will share the news.

Work-in-Progress: Lenox as a Summer Resort

In the course of research for a book on Lenox's early history as a summer resort, **Cornelia Brooke Gilder** is finding interesting references to Catharine Sedgwick, her brother Charles and sister-in-law Elizabeth.

Letters in the Ward and Tappan Papers in the Houghton Library at Harvard and the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College underscore the Sedgwicks' role in creating an hospitable environment for intellectual city families in the 1840s. The first cottage builders—The Wards, Tappans, Haggertys, Schermerhorns and, of course, Fanny Kemble—were all part of a network of friends and admirers of the Lenox Sedgwicks.

The Sedgwicks' home, "The Hive," where Catharine had her own "apartment" and garden, was the hub of a constant social functions—musicales, readings, dances—mingling all ages including Mrs. Sedgwicks' schoolgirls. The witty and spirited Boston heiress and Transcendentalist poet, Caroline Sturgis Tappan declared she wanted to be reincarnated as Charles Sedgwick's daughter. In a letter to Anna Barker Ward in Boston, Lucy Neill, wife of the new Congregational minister, describes Catharine Sedgwick in glowing terms.

Lenox's subsequent history and prosperity was grounded on these connections forged by the Sedgwicks.

Upcoming Conferences

The **14th International James Fenimore Cooper Conference** will be held at the SUNY College at Oneonta from July 14 - 17, 2003. The theme of the conference is "Coming of Age: Gendered Perspectives." We are focusing on two specific texts: J.F. Cooper's *The Deerslayer* and Susan Fenimore Cooper's *Elinor Wyllys*, but welcome research on any area of Cooper or his context. For more information, please contact Prof. Richard Lee at leere@oneonta.edu. A web page is available at: <http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/english/cooper.htm>.

SSAWW 2003, September 24 - 27, 2003, Fort Worth, Texas. The Sedgwick Society will sponsor the panel, "**The Choice of a Lifetime: Marriage and Singlehood in Sedgwick's Writings**," on Friday, September 26, 12:45 - 2 pm. Panelists are Jenifer Banks, Lisa West Norwood, and Sarah Robbins; Jenifer Elmore will chair the session. A complete announcement of the panel appeared in the Fall 2002 issue of this newsletter.

2003 Sedgwick Symposium Registration

Please register by May 15, 2003

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Mailing
Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

The registration fee includes the opening reception, beverage breaks between sessions, and facility fees. There is an additional charge for the Saturday night banquet. All of those who attend regular Symposium sessions must register, but non-participants accompanying registered Symposium participants are welcome to attend the banquet.

Please copy or clip, check the fees that apply, and send with your check or money order (payable to the Sedgwick Society) to:

Victoria Clements, 3710 Chaneyville Rd, Owings, MD 20736

Regular registration fee (member): \$80

Regular registration fee (non-member): \$90

Graduate student registration fee: \$70

One year membership in the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society: \$10, individual

One year membership in the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society: \$ 5, student

Saturday banquet: \$38

(includes appetizer, salad, main course, dessert, beverages, and service/tax)

Chicken breast with wild mushroom sauce

Grilled salmon with tomato-saffron conserve

Vegetarian option (TBA -- will be vegan)

TOTAL Enclosed: _____

REGISTER BY MAY 15!

After May 15th, registration on a space available basis with a \$10 surcharge.

Membership Form

Membership in the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society includes a subscription to the newsletter and e-mail updates of all Society activities, including calls for papers. The membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Membership expiration date appears on the newsletter address label to remind members of when it is time to renew.

Please be careful to write LEGIBLY!!

Membership (check one):

Regular	\$10.	_____	Lifetime	\$200.	_____
Institutional	25.	_____	Student	5.	_____

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Preferred mailing address *(Please use home, if possible; saves us space and time!)*:

Preferred e-mail address *(only one, please)*: _____

Phone numbers (H) _____ (O) _____

Would you like to receive e-mail updates from the Society? _____ Yes _____ No

Please return this form and your membership payment (by check or money order made payable to Sedgwick Society) to: Victoria Clements, 3710 Chaneyville Rd., Owings, MD 20736

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 c/o Ellen Foster
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