

CRITICAL ESSAYS ON *Eugene O'Neill*

MARTINE

*Critical Essays on
Eugene O'Neill*

James J. Martine

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CRITICAL ESSAYS ON AMERICAN LITERATURE

This series seeks to anthologize the most important criticism on a wide variety of topics and writers in American literature. Our readers will find in various volumes not only a generous selection of reprinted articles and reviews but original essays, bibliographies, manuscript sections, and other materials brought to public attention for the first time. James J. Martine's volume on Eugene O'Neill is unique in this program in that it consists entirely of original material, including an extensive bibliographical essay in the introduction, the first appearance of O'Neill's letters to Dudley Nichols, as edited by Jackson R. Bryer, and additional essays by Steven E. Colburn, Frank R. Cunningham, Lisa M. Schwerdt, Peter Egri, June Schlueter and Arthur Lewis, Joseph S. Tedesco, Carl E. Rollyson, Jr., Ellen Kimbel, Michael Manheim, Steven F. Bloom, Laurin Roland Porter, B. S. Field, Jr., and Susan Tuck. We are confident that this collection will make a permanent and significant contribution to American literary study.

James Nagel, GENERAL EDITOR

Northeastern University

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INTRODUCTION

If one were to climb the beanstalk of American drama, what would be discovered at the very top is a giant. His name is Eugene O'Neill. He towers above American drama like a colossus, and for many critics — theatrical reviewers and scholars — other playwrights were but petty things to walk under his huge legs and peep about. John McClain, the drama critic of the *New York Journal American*, said at least twice, and as late as 1958, that O'Neill makes today's playwrights look a little silly. One must understand this set of expectations to approach the mass of criticism and scholarship, approbation and disapprobation, on O'Neill. It seems there is no other case in American literature of a reputation towering so alone above others in the field. Hawthorne has Melville as company in American fiction; Emerson and Thoreau are inevitably coupled as one considers their particular corner of that heaven in nineteenth century America. In this country, perhaps only Whitman stands so alone above fellow journeymen in his field. One must appreciate this eminent position allotted to O'Neill if one is to fairly sort out the comments of critics, theatrical and scholarly, on America's second Nobel laureate — the only one in drama.

"Monumental" is the word most often used to describe O'Neill's work, from *Strange Interlude* to *A Touch of the Poet*. This word may be used as well to describe O'Neill and his reputation. But "monumental" describes a monument — and a monument stands on a pedestal. Birds fly over it, and caretakers may buff it — but it remains a monument, impervious to buff and bird. Being a monument, or a giant, is difficult. Viewing either can be neck-straining. Looking up may give a poor perspective. Looking straight-forward may present only a view of the ankles.

This towering O'Neill has been measured for the most part and for six decades against O'Neill. It creates problems, to be sure. Even O'Neill's colossal failures must be weighed on the scale of the gargantuan expectations almost everyone had and has of this dramatist — and there were giant killers, to be sure — Jacks and jackasses. Were many of his plays — including some of his best — overwritten? By the mid-1950s, the critics had learned the word "prolix." The terms applied to O'Neill by critics who didn't much like his work are inevitably dinosaur or brontosaurus — giant figures. No one ever

accused O'Neill, or his work, of being too small. It would seem the rules that apply to O'Neill apply only to O'Neill. Somewhat the same thing must be said in the compilation of a bibliographic essay on this father of American drama. There is no way to pretend to be comprehensive. One must be selective in seeking a path through the scope and density of scholarship on O'Neill to see what the giant was up to. Climbing the second, scholarly, beanstalk can be slippery business. If O'Neill wrote at length, the same thing must be said concerning what has been written *about* him. There is writing about O'Neill, there is excellent writing about O'Neill, and there is a great deal of both. Necessarily, then, what follows must be selective. To avoid being too long, one must risk being too brief, and, at that, it will be long.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A basic item for scholars and general readers is John Henry Raleigh, "Eugene O'Neill," in Jackson R. Bryer, ed., *Sixteen Modern American Authors: A Survey of Research and Criticism* (New York: Norton, 1973), pp. 417-43. An update of this volume is promised from Duke University Press in late 1984. A good early study is Ralph Sanborn and Barrett H. Clark, eds., *A Bibliography of the Works of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1931) which was reissued in 1965 by Blom by arrangement with Random House. Also included are "The Collected Poems of Eugene O'Neill" which describes O'Neill's early verse and reprints examples. While the editors concede that a perfect bibliography had yet to be compiled and that theirs leaves something to be desired, this volume is interesting because it includes a full collation of items in chronological order beginning with 1912 through 1929, pp. 3-83. Part two, pp. 85-106, contains references to critical matter on O'Neill, then unpublished plays, and anthologies. Part three, pp. 111-61, is devoted to poems by O'Neill, his earliest work. The volume includes 22 illustrations, reproductions of title pages, specimen pages, and front covers.

Jackson R. Bryer made a worthy contribution with "Forty Years of O'Neill Criticism: A Selected Bibliography," *Modern Drama*, 4, No. 2 (Fall 1961), 196-216. See also the same author's *Checklist of Eugene O'Neill* (Columbus: Merrill, 1971), a fundamental checklist of the dramatist's material. The 1970s saw the publication of the two most thorough and important studies in this area. Jordan Y. Miller, *Eugene O'Neill and the American Critic: A Bibliographical Checklist*, rev. 2nd ed. (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973) begins with a brief chronology of the playwright's life, pp. 3-14; continues with a chronology of composition, copyright, and domestic publication, pp. 15-43, and major productions of O'Neill's plays, pp. 44-88; and provides a list of miscellaneous letters and other items that O'Neill wrote and that have appeared in print, pp. 89-97. The main portion and real value of the book, however, is the critical bibliography, pp.

98–472, a comprehensive guide to the American critical reception given O'Neill from his earliest days until 1971. Miller lists books, periodicals, and works that include individual references to produced and published versions of the separate plays. The volume lists all critical references under the titles of the plays in alphabetical, rather than chronological order and is handy to use. Charles A. Carpenter, "Parts of Books On O'Neill, 1966–1978: Addenda To Miller," *The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*, 2, No. 3 (January 1979), 29–31, adds 58 items, many of them published in foreign languages, which was beyond Miller's intention. Another excellent volume is Jennifer McCabe Atkinson, *Eugene O'Neill: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1974). This valuable, impressive guide to O'Neill's writing is a thorough listing of works by O'Neill including reprintings, full descriptions, and locations of materials. A descriptive record of O'Neill's complete published works, this book is significant because it fills a scholarly gap of more than 40 years by updating Sanborn and Clark. Between 1931 and his death in 1953, O'Neill wrote 8 more plays, nearly completed a ninth, and worked on fragments or drafts of eleven others. During this same time, he saw ten more of his plays published and eight others were published posthumously. One must also mention the massive three volume J. Russell Reaver, comp., *An O'Neill Concordance* (Detroit: Gale, 1969) although Miller and others have questioned the scholarly usefulness of a concordance that is not complete since only 28 plays are included. All the major works since 1924 and representative earlier works are analyzed. Worthy of mention is that Louis Sheaffer, Pulitzer Prize biographer of O'Neill, has been awarded a grant-in-aid by the American Council of Learned Societies in connection with his next book, a survey of the major writings on the playwright. For the past half dozen years the best source of information on O'Neill has been *The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter* edited by Frederick C. Wilkins, Suffolk University, Boston, Mass. Containing essays of interest to O'Neill scholars, it includes news, notes, and queries. Readers can also find there abstracts of articles and reviews printed elsewhere. This is now an important and major source.

EDITIONS

In 1973, Raleigh concluded that there was no "established" text by O'Neill according to the practices of modern textual criticism. O'Neill's plays have been published and reprinted too often to catalog here. While there is as yet no complete edition, there are satisfactory collections. The Wilderness Edition, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Scribner's, 1934–1935) is twelve volumes of the O'Neill canon up to that point. The edition, however, was limited to 770 copies signed by the author. The Wilderness Edition was the source of an edition in three volumes, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Random House, 1941) which omits only some early one act plays. *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Random

House, 1951) adds *The Iceman Cometh* to volume 3, and it is this which Raleigh considers the standard edition. Supplements to this edition may be found listed in Raleigh, pp. 418–20, Atkinson, and Miller. Especially worthy of note and more readily available is the 3 volume Modern Library Edition, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Random House, 1982). Although copyright restrictions prohibit completeness, volume 1 contains 13 plays, volume 2 contains 8, and volume 3 contains 9. The reader may want to see *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (New York: Random House, 1952); *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1956); *A Touch of the Poet* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1957); *Hughie* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1959); and *More Stately Mansions* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1964), shortened from O'Neill's partly revised script by Karl Ragnar Gierow and edited by Donald Gallup. Also recommended here is Travis Bogard, ed., *The Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Modern Library, 1967) which contains *Ah, Wilderness!*; *A Touch of the Poet*; *Hughie*; and *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. Raleigh, pp. 418–19, describes the circumstances, and problems, of publication of *Thirst and Other One-Act Plays* (Boston: Gorham Press, 1914); *The Lost Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: New Fathoms, 1950); and *Ten "Lost" Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Random House, 1964). Concerning the controversy over the publication of the New Fathoms edition of the "lost plays," see John Mason Brown, "Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers," *Saturday Review of Literature*, 33 (17 June 1950), 28, 30–31, or Schaeffer, *O'Neill: Son and Artist*, pp. 625–26. Also of interest is Jennifer McCabe Atkinson, ed., *"Children of the Sea" and Three Other Unpublished Plays by Eugene O'Neill* (Washington, D.C.: NCR/A Bruccoli Clark Book, 1972) which reproduces four apprentice works. Travis Bogard, we are told, is presently at work on a complete two volume edition of O'Neill's published plays for the Library of America Series.

From 1922 on, O'Neill's plays have been available abroad. See Horst Frenz, "A List of Foreign Editions and Translations of Eugene O'Neill's Dramas," *Bulletin of Bibliography*, 18, No. 1 (May-August 1943), 33–34, the first attempt to list British, German, Swedish, French, Italian, Rumanian, and South American publication of O'Neill's works. See as well, Frenz, "Eugene O'Neill's Plays Printed Abroad," *College English*, 5, No. 6 (March 1944), 340–41.

While there are O'Neill collections in the New York Public Library and the Dartmouth Library, among others, the major manuscript holdings are located at the Princeton Library and the Yale Library. The manuscript holdings at Princeton are described in Marguerite Loud McAneny, "Eleven Manuscripts of Eugene O'Neill," *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 4, Nos. 2 and 3 (February-April 1943), 86–89. Walter Prichard Eaton, "The Eugene O'Neill Collection," *Yale University Library Gazette*, 18, No. 1 (July 1943), 5–8, describes the Yale University Library's manuscript material including several of O'Neill's most important plays. The O'Neill Collec-

tion at Yale is by far the largest single collection of material. A brief description of the major collections is in Egil Törnqvist, *A Drama of Souls* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969), 266–67.

The major work on O'Neill's letters has only recently begun. Earlier pieces include "A Letter From Eugene O'Neill to Arthur H. Quinn," *Arizona Quarterly*, 13, No. 4 (Winter 1957), 293–94; John S. Mayfield, "Eugene O'Neill and the Senator From Texas," *Yale Univ. Library Gazette*, 35, No. 2 (October 1960), 87–93; James Milton Highsmith, "A Description of the Cornell Collection of Eugene O'Neill's Letters to George Jean Nathan," *Modern Drama*, 14, No. 4 (February 1972), 420–25; Highsmith, "The Cornell Letters: Eugene O'Neill on His Craftsmanship to George Jean Nathan," *Modern Drama*, 15, No. 1 (May 1972), 68–88; and William J. Scheick, "Two Letters by Eugene O'Neill," *Resources for American Literary Study*, 8 (1978), 73–80. The 1980s will address the need for editions of the playwright's letters, and the work has fallen to sure and eminent scholarly hands. Jackson R. Bryer, ed., *"The Theatre We Worked For": The Letters of Eugene O'Neill to Kenneth Macgowan* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1982) collects 157 letters and telegrams of a twenty-nine year correspondence beginning in 1920 with the celebrated theatrical critic and producer. This significant volume is only the harbinger of larger things. Bryer and Travis Bogard have reached an agreement with Yale to edit a larger, more inclusive collection of the dramatist's letters. This badly needed volume will be an important contribution to O'Neill scholarship and is previewed by Bryer's piece in the volume readers presently have before them.

BIOGRAPHY

As the bibliographic situation is better than satisfactory, further scholarly work is forthcoming on manuscript materials, and the future for the letters is promising, the area of biography in an *embarras de richesses*. It is not, however, difficult to be selective here, for there are two major biographies. By almost any measure, Arthur Gelb and Barbara Gelb, *O'Neill* (New York: Harper's, 1962) would be considered a definitive biography. O'Neill's life, from his relationship with his parents and brother, through his sea faring days to his remarkable final years with his last wife, Carlotta Monterey O'Neill, was as dramatic as anything he ever wrote. His life, of course, provided sources of much of his writing. The Gelbs's massive biography captures the drama and torment of his life. It is hardly a funny story, and the Gelbs have brought their man back alive. Well written, rich in detail, the Gelbs's *O'Neill* is an outstanding biography; a new edition (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) adds an "Epilogue," pp. 945–64. The picture is altered somewhat by another excellent biography, this one in two volumes, Louis Sheaffer, *O'Neill: Son and Playwright* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968) that covers the dramatist's life up to 1920 when *Beyond the Horizon* opened on Broadway. Sheaffer's second volume, *O'Neill: Son and Artist*

(Boston: Little, Brown, 1973) covers O'Neill's rise to celebrity world wide and the period of the decline of his reputation, which ironically is now seen as the time of composition of his greatest, most enduring drama. Sheaffer's massive biography is carefully researched and well presented. While some critics and scholars seem to consider the Sheaffer volumes the most significant, it would serve no purpose here to attempt to choose a standard biography between the work of Sheaffer and the Gelbs. Perhaps it is enough to say that a giant of the proportions of O'Neill deserved two such comprehensive biographies. In any case, the presence of two major biographies must be seen as a happy circumstance for readers. The interviews and years of research (7 for Sheaffer, 5 for the Gelbs) were time well spent for the authors; the pages (1,293 pp. for Sheaffer, 990 for the Gelbs) are time well spent for those interested in the details of O'Neill's life.

There are other, quite worthy, studies of the life. Since O'Neill was a remarkably autobiographical writer, the number of biographical examinations is warranted. The first book published completely devoted to O'Neill is Barrett H. Clark, *Eugene O'Neill* (New York: McBride, 1926). This was revised and reissued in 1929 as *Eugene O'Neill: The Man and His Plays*. Of subsequent editions of this volume, perhaps the most useful is that issued in 1947. This is a pioneer work without the completed canon at its disposal, but it remains a worthwhile reference source. Although not technically a biography, also of interest is Agnes Boulton, *Part of a Long Story* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1958). This memoir by an O'Neill wife and the mother of two of his children is, as the title suggests, only part of a long story, but it is an interesting part, including O'Neill's tales of his attempted suicide, his early alcoholism, and his struggles in Greenwich Village and Provincetown. While the focus of Boulton's story is chronologically narrow, Croswell Bowen, *The Curse of the Misbegotten* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959) was the first significant attempt to cover the playwright's life from birth to death. Written with the cooperation of O'Neill's son, Shane, Bowen's account focuses upon the life of the dramatist and the lives of those around him. The O'Neill tragedy is seen as the "curse" of a lack of communication of love that bedeviled both O'Neill's parents' and brother's relationship with him and his with his wives and children. Unhindered by annotation and scholarly apparatus, the narration pauses only briefly on each play; the prose is readable and the story compelling.

Like Sheaffer's first volume, Doris Alexander, *The Tempering of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962) covers the important periods of O'Neill's life up to his earliest success. Alexander centers on that part of his life which was to be the crucible from which he would draw what were later his best plays. This biography is a significant scholarly item. Frederic I. Carpenter, *Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Twayne, 1964; rev. ed. Boston: Twayne, 1979) is an outstanding briefer look at the playwright and his plays. Carpenter's book is intelligent and readable, a good place to begin for those interested in O'Neill. Since O'Neill must be

considered an eminently autobiographical dramatist, many of the books listed below treat the biography in one way or another in relation to the plays. As well, there is scarcely a book on American drama that does not include sketches of O'Neill, and reminiscences and recollections abound. One charming sample is Warren H. Hastings and Richard F. Weeks, "Episodes of Eugene O'Neill's Undergraduate Days at Princeton," *Princeton Univ. Library Chronicle*, 29, No. 3 (Spring 1968), 208-15. This piece by classmates and friends of O'Neill during his year at Princeton notes his "intense shyness," and refutes several popular legends about O'Neill while adding fuel for others. Eugene O'Neill's life was the stuff of which legends are made, and it is fortunate that his major biographers have attempted to separate fact from fabrication.

CRITICISM

General Estimates

Books

Eugene O'Neill is an excellent example of reputation's roller-coaster ride. In June 1920, *Beyond the Horizon* was awarded O'Neill's first of four Pulitzer Prizes. Other Pulitzers were given in May 1922 for *Anna Christie* and May 1928 for *Strange Interlude*. Following tremendous popular, critical, and financial success in the 1920s, O'Neill's reputation, certainly not his artistic powers, declined. In 1923, O'Neill was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters and won the gold medal for drama. Ten years later, in November of 1933, the playwright was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 1936 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The award of the Nobel Prize to O'Neill was ironic in a way, for it marked the passing of his reputation into near oblivion during much of the remainder of his life. Following his death on 27 November 1953, he was restored to critical approval and public favor, and posthumously awarded his fourth Pulitzer Prize, this time for his great play, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

Scholarship and criticism on O'Neill's work is vast and varied, to which the catalog of books in Miller, pp. 105-56, will bear testimony. The Gelbs, Sheaffer, and Carpenter do deal with the plays, and Barrett Clark's 1926 biography was also the first critical book. Other early studies include a brief pamphlet of limited value, Joseph T. Shipley, *The Art of Eugene O'Neill* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Bookstore, 1928), after Clark's, the first work devoted exclusively to O'Neill. Alan D. Mickle, *Six Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Liveright, 1929) provides unqualified praise for O'Neill, placing him in the company of the world's greatest playwrights. Quite another matter is William Salisbury, *A Dress Suit Becomes Hamlet. Why Not, If Mourning Becomes Electra?* (New Rochelle: Independent Publ. Co., 1933). This pamphlet is a vicious attack on O'Neill's plays up to that point. Jordan

Miller calls this invective "a low water mark in dramatic criticism." Unlike Mickle's panegyric is Virgil Geddes, *The Melodramadness of Eugene O'Neill* (Brookfield, Conn.: Brookfield Players, 1934). This pamphlet subjects O'Neill to disapproval. Geddes does not think much of O'Neill or his plays, but it is not the scurrilous attack of Salisbury. While not restricted to O'Neill, an early book on the Provincetown Players, Helen Deutsch and Stella Hanau, *The Provincetown: A Study of the Theatre* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1931) will be of interest to those interested in the playwright.

The first major critical book is Sophus Keith Winther, *Eugene O'Neill: A Critical Study* (New York: Random House, 1934). Treating the canon up to the time of the Nobel Prize, this book is an excellent pioneering study, a highly favorable estimation of O'Neill and an interesting approach to his thought. In an enlarged second edition (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961) Winther adds a brief final chapter, "O'Neill and Modern Tragedy," pp. 296-312, on the four plays published since the first edition. A final item worth notice from the 1930s is Richard Dana Skinner, *Eugene O'Neill: A Poet's Quest* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1935). Reissued three decades later (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), this search for an inner continuity of the plays uses a chronology provided by O'Neill (pp. vii-x) and examines the dramas in chronological order from *Bound East For Cardiff* to and including *Days Without End*.

In the 1940s, the United States went to war, her premier dramatist into withdrawn isolation, his reputation into near total eclipse, and serious scholarship on him into hiding. But the giant did not sleep. Suffering from physical ills and tormented by psychological introspection and reverie, his trembling hand tended the golden eggs that many critics now consider his finest works. With the New York premiere of *The Iceman Cometh* in 1946, revivals of *Anna Christie* and *Desire Under the Elms* in 1952, O'Neill's death in 1953 and the subsequent availability of new materials, the magnificent first American production in 1956 of *Long Day's Journey* directed by Jose Quintero, the 1957 production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten* and the 1958 production of *A Touch of the Poet*, and a profusion of Quintero staged revivals in the 1960s, O'Neill criticism and scholarship once again flourished. An important source of information on O'Neill's association with the Theatre Guild is Lawrence Langner, *The Magic Curtain* (New York: Dutton, 1951). The recollections of this Guild director, O'Neill's close friend, will be of interest to those concerned with either productions or relationships. The first extensive scholarly analysis is Edwin A. Engel, *The Haunted Heroes of Eugene O'Neill* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1953). Engel explores recurrent and dominant themes in the plays—dreams, drunkenness, and death—tracing them back to Nietzsche and Jung. The book is of interest precisely because it does not deal with biography but does a close literary analysis, concerned with themes and the merit of the plays themselves. Of special significance is the recent reissue (Staten Island: Gordian Press, 1981) of Doris V. Falk, *Eugene O'Neill and the Tragic Tension*:

An Interpretive Study of the Plays (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1958). Deliberately narrow in scope, confining itself to the tracing of a single, complex pattern in the plays, this volume examines the plays in order of performance. Psychological in approach, relating the pattern to the mind of the man who wrote the plays, this is a valuable piece of O'Neill scholarship, done with the permission of Carlotta to study and quote from the manuscripts in the O'Neill Collection at Yale.

As the gears of scholarship began to turn in the 1960s, a number of volumes began to appear, including major scholarly contributions. Three brief and inexpensive critical introductions are Clifford Leech, *Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Grove, 1963); John Gassner, *Eugene O'Neill* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1965); and Horst Frenz, *Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1971). Leech's 120 pages provide a convenient introduction. Gassner's Minnesota pamphlet of 48 pages is a good introduction to the plays and is reprinted in Gassner, *Dramatic Soundings* (New York: Crown, 1968), pp. 254-81. Frenz's 121 page monograph, translated from the German by Helen Sebba, begins with a short introduction on the history of the American theatre then turns quickly to O'Neill. While organized around biographic detail, the focus is on the plays. The drama, Frenz suggests, gives a glimpse of the man behind the experimenter, a man whose suffering and sacrifice distinguish him from any other American playwright or literary movement.

John Henry Raleigh, *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1965) greatly exceeds the ordinary length of volumes in the Crosscurrents/Modern Critiques series and considers the plays not in chronological sequence but as one organic whole made up of a variety of themes, characters, and preoccupations. Raleigh's analysis and evaluation of O'Neill's completed, published plays sees the great late plays not breaking new ground or discovering new themes but demonstrating mastery over similar elements in the earlier plays. Like Engel, Chester Clayton Long, *The Role of the Nemesis in the Structure of Selected Plays by Eugene O'Neill* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968) avoids the biographical in the examination of the plays, and this book is seen by critics as an important piece of O'Neill scholarship.

Perhaps the best scholarly studies of O'Neill are those provided by Timo Tiusanen, Egil Törnqvist, and Travis Bogard. A major critical study on many elements of O'Neill's plays, Timo Tiusanen, *O'Neill's Scenic Images* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968) concludes that the later plays are the great plays and is one of the most significant volumes of O'Neill scholarship. Another volume by an eminent O'Neill scholar is Egil Törnqvist, *A Drama of Souls: Studies in O'Neill's Super-naturalistic Technique* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969). This is a valuable and comprehensive study. Another excellent volume is Travis Bogard, *Contour In Time: The Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972) which contains outstanding discussions of the individual plays. Concerned with the autobio-

graphical nature of O'Neill's drama, this work by an important scholar is the product of a first rate mind and is among the best comprehensive critical studies of O'Neill.

Also worth mention are Leonard Chabrowe, *Ritual and Pathos: The Theater of O'Neill* (Lewisburg: Bucknell Univ. Press, 1976); Harry Cronin, *Eugene O'Neill, Irish and American: A Study in Cultural Context* (New York: Arno, 1977); and Lennart Josephson, *A Role: O'Neill's Cornelius Melody* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977). Drawing on some previously unpublished manuscript material, Jean Chothia, *Forging A Language: A Study of the Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979) centers on the linguistic medium of O'Neill's plays from low-colloquial through Irish dialect, Broadway slang and idiomatic American English to poetic prose. Chothia demonstrates that O'Neill's use of language, often berated, is, in fact, flexible and complex and that his dramatic language is much more poetic and effective than is commonly acknowledged. Another volume that contains much new O'Neill material is Virginia Floyd, ed., *Eugene O'Neill at Work: Newly Released Ideas for Plays* (New York: Ungar, 1981). Normand Berlin, *Eugene O'Neill* (New York: Grove, 1982) is a good introduction several scholars and critics like very much, and John Orlandello, *O'Neill on Film* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1982) compares nine O'Neill plays with their film adaptations. Michael Manheim, *Eugene O'Neill's New Language of Kinship* (Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1982) argues that the early plays are a series of distortions of the autobiographical motifs that will later emerge in *Long Day's Journey*. A sensitive and intelligent volume that demonstrates how O'Neill's career began in greatly disguised autobiography and ends in high tragedy, this fine book includes a useful treatment of motifs in *Long Day's Journey*.

There are a number of nice collections of essays on the dramatist. The entire issue of *Modern Drama*, 3, No. 3 (December 1960) is devoted to O'Neill, featuring an overview by Edwin A. Engel, "O'Neill 1960," pp. 219-23, and including articles by Arthur Nethercot, Doris Alexander, John Shawcross, Horst Frenz, and Sophus Winther, among others. A most substantial collection of essays, critiques, letters, and reviews is Oscar Cargill, N. Bryllion Fagin, and William J. Fisher, eds., *O'Neill and His Plays: Four Decades of Criticism* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1961) which includes personal memoirs of O'Neill by friends and colleagues, theatrical reviews, and a selection of O'Neill letters and his own essays. While the bulk of the volume reprints items published elsewhere, there is a fine introduction, pp. 1-16, and a good selected bibliography, pp. 487-517. John Gassner, ed., *O'Neill: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964) reprints a baker's dozen of articles and includes essays by Raleigh and Bogard published for the first time. Jordan Y. Miller in *Playwright's Progress: O'Neill and the Critics* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1965) reprints over 60 reviews and essays, and Ernest G. Griffin, *Eugene O'Neill: A Collection of Criticism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) reprints

criticism and includes Griffin's "Eugene O'Neill: An Introduction To His Life and Career," pp. 1-20, and a selected bibliography, pp. 139-51. Virginia Floyd, ed., *Eugene O'Neill: A World View* (New York: Ungar, 1979) provides a substantial collection of articles. The volume's first part presents essays with a European perspective including works by Tiusanen, Leech, Törnqvist, Frenz, and Peter Egri, among others. The second section is devoted to six essays, one by Frederick Wilkins and two by Raleigh. The book's final feature is the insights and comments of performers on O'Neill by Florence Eldridge, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Ingrid Bergman, and stage director Arvin Brown. Floyd provides introductions to the three parts.

Considerations of space make even a mere listing of graduate research on O'Neill impossible. To the 76 doctoral dissertations listed in Miller, pp. 473-85, the reader will have to add 38 dissertations done in the decade since.

Articles

Including a valuable letter from O'Neill, Arthur Hobson Quinn, "Eugene O'Neill, Poet and Mystic," *Scribner's Magazine*, 80, No. 4 (October 1926), 368-72, is an early estimation, by a respected scholar, of O'Neill as a great dramatist. While too much a historian not to know that it was too soon for a firm evaluation, Quinn recognizes O'Neill's genius; he is interesting in his view of the playwright as both mystic, a Celtic mystic at that, and poet. Occasioned by the production of *Dynamo*, Ernest Boyd, "Eugene O'Neill And Others," *Bookman*, 69 (April 1929), 179-81, was the first to suggest that O'Neill is best when he deals with simple, elemental emotions and when he attempts to treat ideas dramatically he is lost. Francis Ferguson, "Eugene O'Neill," *Hound & Horn*, 3, No. 2 (January-March 1930), 145-60, is an early evaluation written by one who is no admirer, and the essay focuses upon what Ferguson takes to be O'Neill's failures as a dramatist. Although it points out patterns and the autobiographic nature of the plays up to *Mourning*, H. G. Kemelman, "Eugene O'Neill and the High-brow Melodrama," *Bookman*, 75, No. 5 (September 1932), 482-91, by reducing characters to stereotypes and plots to their skeletons, reduces everything to absurdity; what might have seemed a devastating satiric attack in 1932 may be read 50 years later as a debunking article that is amusing, funny in places—if one allows for the fact that there is no writer to whom this might not be done. Edd Winfield Parks, "Eugene O'Neill's Symbolism: Old Gods for New," *Sewanee Review*, 43, No. 4 (October-December 1935), 436-51, is an even-handed essay with a misleading title. More emphasis is placed by Parks on the oft-omitted subtitle than the title. Not unmindful of O'Neill's weaknesses and certain of his strengths, in this defense of O'Neill's *Days Without End*, Parks's approach is through O'Neill's language, themes and philosophy; while the cause is *Days*, the article's treatment and importance goes beyond that. Inspired by O'Neill's Nobel, Homer E. Woodbridge, "Eugene O'Neill," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 37,