

John Donne Society Newsletter

Vol. 22.1, Winter 2009

Call for Papers

Donne at MLA 2009: As in past years, the Donne Society will sponsor two sessions at the 2009 MLA Convention in Philadelphia (27–30 December). **Jeff Johnson** (tb0jsj1@wpo.cso.niu.edu) will chair a session on “Donne & Company” and **Brooke Conti** (bconti@brockport.edu) will chair a session on “New Perspectives in Donne Studies.” Please send proposals to either session chair by **1 March 2009** for consideration.

Donne Variorum Update

By Gary Stringer

(1) As of this writing (Feb. 2009) work on the 900-page *Satyres* volume is nearing completion. Though some of the material may require further tweaking, the volume has been edited and preliminarily set into type, and is currently being indexed. We expect to submit it camera-ready to the press later this spring.

(2) In late spring of 2008 we received word that the NEH had awarded us our ninth grant--\$200,000 to support the *Variorum* project for the three-year period Sept. 1, 2008--Aug. 31, 2011. The application focused on the three-part Songs and Sonnets volume, but we also received funds with which to purchase digital images of the O’Flahertie and the Westmoreland manuscripts, which we intend to add to DigitalDonne later this year.

(3) The NEH application also promised that we would make available electronic transcriptions of all the poem files used in preparing the four volumes published to date, and through the good offices of **Tracy McLawhorn**, this was promise was fulfilled in the fall of 2008. Interested parties can now download from the Variorum web site all the files used in editing volumes 6, 8, 2, and 7.1--go to <http://donnevariorum.tamu.edu/resources/> and click on “Transcriptions.”

(4) By the time of the Donne conference in Baton Rouge, we expect to have mounted on the DV website a web-based concordance to the 1651/54 prose letters, which has been prepared by **Tracy McLawhorn**, **Mary Farrington**, and other student workers in the DV offices.

(5) Over the past year the project has experienced a few personnel changes: **Greg Kneidel** and **Robert Evans** joined the staff of editors of the Songs and Sonnets commentary, and **Jeff Johnson** was appointed co-Chief Editor of the Commentary. In late summer our Editorial Assistant **Maia Falleesen** resigned, effective September 1, and it took us until November to locate a replacement. But we fortunately located a local person who had a great deal of experience and expertise in typesetting and web design and seemed tailor made to meet the growing technical demands of the position. Under the upgraded title of Assistant Editor, **Mary Farrington** began work for us on Monday of Thanksgiving week and has caught on to the various aspects of the project rapidly. Users will shortly see the results of her work in the typesetting of the *Satyres* and in upcoming additions to the web site.

DigitalDonne Update

By Gary Stringer

Over the spring and summer of 2008, we added three volumes to DigitalDonne: the 1635 *Poems*, the 1669 *Poems*, and the St. Paul’s manuscript. Images of the O’Flahertie and the Westmoreland manuscripts are on order, purchased with funds written in to the recent *Variorum* grant awarded by the NEH. We expect to add these manuscripts and the O’Flahertie copy of the 1654 prose letters to the site later this year. Items beyond these will be added as time and funds permit.

Oxford Handbook Update

By Jeanne Shami

With more than fifty newly commissioned essays from leading international scholars, *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne* will link past scholarship with current and future re-definitions to provide both a distinctive response to Donne and the significance of his work and an essential contribution to early modern studies.

The Handbook will be divided into four sections:

Part I – Research resources in Donne Studies and why they matter – examines prevailing assumptions within Donne studies and reviews or introduces students and researchers to some of the specialized scholarly tools available. Chapters in this section will provide a brief evaluation and description of the scholarly strengths, shortcomings, and significance of each resource, focusing on a balanced evaluation of the opportunities and the hazards each offers.

Part II – Donne’s genres – begins with an introduction that explores the significance and differentiation of Donne’s genres, including discussion of problems posed by Donne’s overlapping and bending of genres. Essays will trace the conventions and history of the genre, a brief history of its critical treatment, and (primarily) the ways in which Donne’s works in that genre confirm how and why his “fresh invention” illustrates his responses to the literary and non-literary contexts of their composition.

Part III – Biographical and historical contexts – creates perspective on what is known about Donne’s life; shows how Donne’s life and writings epitomized and affected important controversial issues of his day; and brings to bear on Donne studies some of the most stimulating and creative ideas developed in recent decades by historians of early modern England.

Part IV – Problems of literary interpretation that have been traditionally and generally important in Donne Studies – introduces students and researchers to major critical debates affecting the reception of Donne from the 17th through to the 21st centuries.

Of the 54 essays commissioned, almost all have been handed in, revised, and posted to the OUP support website. The schedule calls for the entire manuscript to be submitted to Oxford University Press by the end of the year for publication in 2010/11.

Donne's Letters Edition Update

By Dennis Flynn

Following decisions made at an editorial conference with the Donne letters project advisory board in December, the following appointments have been made to the editorial staff of the project: **Lara M. Crowley, Margaret Maurer, Tracy McLawhorn, and Jeanne M. Shami.**

As graduate students at NC State, Lara and Tracy have already provided much of the basic material for the text, in transcribing many letters from the early printed editions.

Long established Donne scholars, Margaret and Jeanne have already provided many of the basic theoretical concepts for this edition, placing letters in sharply focused generic and historical contexts. They both were active participants in one of the critical events in the history of this project, at the Cambridge RSA conference in 2005.

It seems appropriate then that all four of our new editors continue their work in completing an extremely significant project in Donne studies, something all Donne scholars have looked forward to throughout our careers.

Dues Renewal

If you have not renewed your membership for **2009**, now is the time to do so. Please send a check payable to the John Donne Society in the appropriate amount to:

Professor **Brian Blackley**
Department of English
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, NC 27695
email: blackley@ncsu.edu

The dues are: Professors, \$50; Associate Professors, \$40; Assistant Professors, \$30; Adjuncts, Independent Scholars and Retirees, \$20; and students \$10. Membership includes a one-year subscription to the *John Donne Journal*.

Back In Print

The Fall of 2008 saw the reprinting of **Arthur Marotti’s *John Donne, Coterie Poet*** (first published in 1986, but out-of-print for some years now) by Wipf & Stock Publishers. In his plenary address at the 20th Anniversary Donne Conference in 2005, **John R. Roberts** described Marotti’s book as one of the three books that “have had the greatest impact on Donne criticism in the past twenty-five years” (see “John Donne, Never Done: A Reassessment of Modern Criticism,” *JDJ* vol. 23 [2004]: 22-3). The book can be purchased online through Amazon.com or directly from the publisher at <http://wipfandstock.com/>.

Future Items

Send any project updates, relevant news, or other information you would like to see included in future installments of the **JDS Newsletter** to the editor **Sean McDowell** at mcdowell@seattleu.edu. The Newsletter is published three times a year (Winter, Spring/Summer, and Fall), and while it will publish relevant updates throughout the year, the Winter issue especially will be devoted to them.