

Editorial

As the seventh--and thus far largest--issue of Pynchon Notes goes to press, we are struck by the incongruity that marks the field of Pynchon studies: on the one hand, increasing interest by scholars and non-scholars alike; on the other, stubborn resistance to the acknowledgment and legitimization of that interest by parts of the MLA bureaucracy.

Signs of the growing interest in Pynchon's work are everywhere, in the number--and improving quality--of books published and about to be published, and in the articles whose appearance the bibliography of Pynchon Notes duly records. The interest is, increasingly, international; it emanates from Germany, Israel, Britain, Japan and France, as the contents of future issues of Pynchon Notes will substantiate. We note the intensity and extent of this interest only to juxtapose it to the resistance manifested once again by the MLA Convention committee, which has refused to approve for the 1981 Convention a seminar proposed by Professors Walter Isle and Gary Thompson. It is the fourth such refusal in four years. Earlier, from 1975 to 1977, when the seminars and special sessions of the MLA reflected to a considerable extent the interests expressed by members of the MLA (as signaled by their signatures on formal petitions), three seminars devoted to Pynchon and organized by one of us (KT) were held; the last of these attracted 135 participants and requests for the papers.

Even as a section of the MLA bureaucracy finds the idea of using the interests of its members to gauge the worthiness of seminars either quaint or threatening, the compilers of the MLA International Bibliography responded in a different manner. Recognizing both the significance of the continued existence of the privately financed Pynchon Notes and the importance of the increasing number of articles that appear in its pages or are recorded in its bibliography, they added this publication to the Master List of Periodicals covered by the MLA Bibliography, where it is referred to by the acronym PNotes.

The editors of Pynchon Notes launched this publication with the hope that, without ghettoizing scholarship about Pynchon's work, it could serve as a forum for the exchange of information and informed opinion. Hoping to encourage similar exchange at the 1981 MLA Convention, we have arranged for an informal meeting, by the courtesy, but without the sanction of the MLA Convention organizers. It will be held on Monday, December 28th, from 6 to 7:15 PM, in Hilton 529. We hope that the occasion will be a lively and friendly one. We have no long agenda, but do hope to spend some twenty minutes on discussion of courses of action that might enable us to organize formal seminars at future MLA conventions. After that, we are looking forward to prolonged socializing. It will be a time, as one contributor to PN wrote recently, for putting faces to the names.

In closing, we note, with some regret, the necessity of charging subscription fees for future issues of PN. Publication costs continue to run ahead of inflation, and the US Postal Service has raised its rates once again. PN has become larger and the list of PN recipients has expanded and come to include overseas scholars; concurrently, our costs have risen to the point where we, and occasional contributions from friends, can no longer meet expenses. We therefore feel obliged to ask for a subscription of \$4.00 to cover those expenses in 1982.

JMK, KT