

THE POLANYI SOCIETY



NEWS BULLETIN

VOL. II FALL - 1977 NO. 1

Greetings:

The new format and name that appears with this issue of the Society's News Bulletin represents the renewed commitment of Polanyi scholars who have been members of the former "Society of Explorers", to press forward with their cooperation and research relative to the issues inherent in the thought of Michael Polanyi.

The new symbols are supported by a re-organization of the Society's recent East Coast Conference.

This issue of the Bulletin is devoted to a report of that Conference and the decisions that were made in the business meeting that was held in conjunction with the Conference.

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I. Conference Papers

The first day of the Conference was devoted to discussions centering around four papers that explored some of the "Uses of Polanyi". The papers had been written and sent out to conference participants in advance.

Samuel D. Watson, University of North Carolina, opened the Conference with a spirited discussion of his paper on "Polanyi's Place in the Tradition of Rhetoric". The thesis of the paper is "... that Polanyi is squarely in the tradition of rhetorical theory, both in its contemporary ambitions and in its classical background."

Maxine Greene, Teachers College, Columbia University, presented the second paper in the series on the "Uses of Polanyi". Her paper concentrated on "Tacit Knowing as Pedagogical Framework". Ms. Greene sought to identify common themes in the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, John Dewey and Michael Polanyi in an effort to speak to the dichotomy between the "humanists" and the "behaviorists" in current educational thought.

Jerry Gill, Eckert College, led the Conference in a third round of discussions on his paper, "On Knowing the Dancer from the Dance". Gill's paper demonstrated the uses of Polanyi for moving beyond the traditional models for understanding meaning in the arts.

The final discussion on the "Uses of Polanyi" was led by Doug Adams, Smithsonian Fellow. The discussion revolved around a paper and slide presentation on "Ironies in Jasper Johns' Painting: Parallels to Wittgenstein and Polanyi". The thesis of the paper is that "... Johns is doing with the abstract expression/pop dichotomy in art what Polanyi is doing with the subjective/objective dichotomy and the mind/body dichotomy in epistemology".

The second round of discussions focused on the general subject of the relation of Polanyi to other philosophers. The first discussion in this series was led by Gene Reeves, Wilberforce University, whose paper, "Polanyi and Popper: A Conjunction?" proposed the theory that the central thesis of Polanyi and the central thesis of Popper need each other.

Joseph Kroger followed with a discussion of his paper on "Polanyi and Lonergan". The purpose of the paper is "... to explore the relationship of Polanyi's and Lonergan's cognitional theories in general and their notions of scientific method in particular". Kroger argues that despite significant differences Polanyi and Lonergan "are in fundamental agreement in their accounts of the nature of the cognitive act (what Polanyi calls 'discovery' and Lonergan 'insight')".

A final discussion was led by Robert Innis, Lowell State College, relative to this published paper, "Meaning, Thought and Language in Polanyi's Epistemology", (Philosophy Today, Spring, 1974). The paper is an analysis of "... the contribution of Polanyi's theory of tacit knowing to a

general theory of meaning and to an understanding of the specific relations between thought and language".

Conference participants expressed their appreciation to the contributors for providing the material for very thoughtful and informative discussions, and to the Society for making the Conference possible.

Anyone interested in receiving copies of the papers that were presented to Conference participants should write either to the authors or to the Society office. Please be sure to send \$3.00 for each paper to cover the cost of duplicating and mailing. (\$4.00 for each paper to be sent outside the continental United States).

II. Re-organization

At a business meeting held during the Conference, the Society decided to reorganize to provide the membership with better information on Polanyi studies relative to research in the members' own fields of interest, and to stimulate gatherings of Polanyi scholars in connection with professional meetings.

To achieve this dual objective the Society has selected scholars in a variety of fields to serve as "Studies Coordinators". Each of the Coordinators will actively research materials of interest to the Society relative to that field and refer the information to the Society office for publication in subsequent News Pulletins. Each Coordinator will also attempt to organize auxiliary meetings of Polanyi scholars in their field in connection with meetings of professional societies.

Six fields of inquiry were selected at the outset, but the Society expressed a strong desire to add others as interest dictated. We are particularly interested in establishing a "Natural Sciences Studies" section.

The Society is also interested in maintaining direct communications with Polanyi scholars in other countries and would like to designate someone as an "International Studies Coordinator".

If any persons are interested in assuming responsibilities for the above activities or other fields, please notify the Office and we will assist in the development of such aspects of the Society's work.

III. Name Change

The Society also decided to change its name. While the "Society of Explorers" held some special meaning for persons inside the Society, it was often confusing to wider audiences. The members accordingly decided to rename the Society, "The Polanyi Society".

IV. Opportunity at Emory University

Dr. Robert Detweiler, Director of the Graduate Institute of the Liberal

*Organized
a program
with
detweiler
chairman*

Arts at Emory University recently informed us that a good deal of interest exists in Polanyi studies at the Institute and that they would be "... interested in looking at younger scholars who have the kind of interdisciplinary interest that Polanyi represents". He indicated that they will probably want to hire a guest professor for one or two quarters during the 1975-76 academic year and would be interested in a "younger Polanyi-type of scholar" for that position. Any Polanyi scholar interested should contact Dr. Detweiler at the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia 30322.

V. Renewal of Membership

Attached to this issue of the Bulletin you will find a membership form. Naturally we continue to invite new memberships into the Society, but it is also time for present members to renew their membership if they wish to continue with the Society under its new format. News bulletings will be issued to members at the rate of approximately three issues annually, depending on the need for information dissemination. We look forward to hearing from you. Members who renew their membership will be hearing shortly from the Office and from the "Studies Coordinator" of their area.

Return to:

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Application for Membership or Renewal of Membership in The Polanyi Society.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Institutional Relationship: _____

"Studies" Area (Education, Art, Religion, etc.) _____

Only those who are joining for the first time should complete the following:

Primary Interest in Polanyi: _____

Projects or Publications relative to Polanyi's Thought already completed:

MEMBERSHIP FEES: Regular Annual: \$10.00 Student Annual: \$6.00