

THE VLADIMIR NABOKOV  
RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Stephen Jan Parker

The Vladimir Nabokov Research Newsletter  
serves to report and stimulate Nabokov  
scholarship and to create a link between  
Nabokov scholars, both in the USA and  
abroad.

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RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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## NEWS ITEMS AND WORK IN PROGRESS

by Stephen Jan Parker

In early May the Nabokov Society was informed by the MLA Convention Manager that the proposal for a special Nabokov Section at the 1979 MLA Convention had been denied by the Program Committee. No explanation was provided. Following letters of protest from Ellen Pifer, Charles Nicol, Phyllis Roth and myself, the Convention Manager relented only to the point of providing us with a meeting room in San Francisco, though announcement of the Nabokov section will not appear on the official program. Therefore, please note:

A Nabokov section, with a full program of papers and discussion, will be held on December 30, 1979, from 9:00 - 10:15 a.m., in the Teakwood Room, Hilton Hotel, San Francisco. Upon conclusion of the session, the Vladimir Nabokov Society will hold its annual meeting. Please plan to attend.

Following the published Procedures and Policies guidelines of the MLA, the Nabokov Society applied for Allied Organization Status in August 1979. Stipulated deadlines were met and required information was provided. Our expectation, having met all requirements, was that allied status would be granted, allowing us to meet annually in conjunction with the MLA without having to make separate, yearly application for special sections. To our surprise, however, the MLA functionaries informed us of a new, as

yet unpublished, guideline which apparently will delay our obtaining affiliated status for at least one more year.

Therefore, one order of business at the Society's meeting in San Francisco will be the question of our 1980 meeting time and place. Should we again pursue an arrangement with MLA, or should we seek another venue for our meeting?

The Newsletter now has 190 subscribers. Of these, only 38 are libraries. I once again ask each of our readers who has a college or university affiliation to take the time to request of his/her library to subscribe.

As noted in the Spring 1979 issue, our new subscription/membership rates are as follows:

Individuals: \$3.00 per year

Institutions: \$4.00 per year

For subscriptions outside the USA add \$1.00 per year for postage.

Back issues, as available, are \$2.00 each. Checks should be made payable to the Vladimir Nabokov Society.

Our limited budget will not allow us to send our individual reminders and billing. Thus please note that subscription/membership renewals are due in advance of the Spring 1980 number.

The Newsletter would like to acknowledge and thank Dean Robert Cobb and the

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences of the University of Kansas for their continuing support of this publication.

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Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/Bruccoli Clark have announced the publication of Vladimir Nabokov's Cornell lectures. They will appear in two volumes, under the general editorship of Fredson Bowers, and will be based upon Nabokov's class notes and his marked copies of textbooks. Lectures on Literature: First Series, with an introduction by John Updike, will include Austen, Dickens, Flaubert, Joyce, Kafka, Proust, and Stevenson. Publication will be in August 1980. Lectures on Literature: Second Series, with an introduction by Simon Karlinsky, will include Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Gorky, Tolstoy, and Turgenev. Publication is expected in Fall 1980.

Mr. Richard Layman, Managing Editor of Bruccoli Clark Publishers, would like to obtain a set of student's notes from Nabokov's course at Cornell, English 311-12, for use in checking certain difficult spots in Nabokov's own lecture notes. Anyone possessing such class notes should contact Mr. Layman at BC Research, 3020 Devine Street, Suite 203A, Columbia, S. C. 29205.

Mrs. Vera Nabokov informs us that the British Omnibus edition of Mr. Nabokov's writings has now been published. It contains, in one volume, Lolita, The Gift, Invitation to a Beheading, King, Queen, Knave, and Glory, with an introduction by

Peter Quennell. It appears in the Collins Collectors' Choice series (London: Collins, 1979).

Professor Ellen Pifer (Dept. of English, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware 19711) has completed an article, "Dark Paradise: Shades of Heaven and Hell in Nabokov's Ada" for Modern Fiction Studies and a review of Dabney Stuart's Nabokov: The Dimensions of Parody for Modern Language Quarterly. Professor Pifer will also serve as panelist and discussant in a film studies session at the Midwest MLA Conference in November in Indianapolis. She will respond to a paper on Fassbinder's film of Despair and give a short talk on the novel before the film is screened.

A recent publication of special note is the first Russian language book-length study of Nabokov's writings. Announcement of the work -- V poiskakh Nabokova (In Search of Nabokov), by Zinaida Shakhovskoy -- indicates that it includes reminiscences, analysis of works, and illustrations. The publisher is Editions "LEV," 85 rue Rambuteau, 75001, Paris, France.

Professor Marina T. Naumann (Russian Department, Douglass College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J. 08903) read a paper, "Pushkin and Nabokov," at the Southern Conference of Slavists in New Orleans, October 18-20, 1979.

Professor Gleb Struve (1154 Spruce, Berkeley, CA 94707) appeared as a special guest of the Midwest Slavic Conference in

May at the University of Minnesota. A talk which he gave was entitled, "Vladimir Nabokov: Reminiscences of a Personal Friendship."

Mr. Walter Robbins (663 South Limestone St., Lexington, KY 40508) is working on a study, "Lolita as a Parody of Herman Hess and His Writings."

Professor D. Barton Johnson (Department of German and Russian, University of California, Santa Barbara 93106) has completed work on three articles: "A Guide to Vladimir Nabokov's Putevoditel' po Berlinu" (for Slavic and East European Journal); "Nabokov as a Man of Letters: The Alphabetic Motif in His Works" (for Modern Fiction Studies); "The Scrabble Game in Ada or Taking Nabokov Clitorally" (for Maledicta: The International Journal of Verbal Aggression).

Dr. Annelore Engel (Slavisches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Von-Melle-Park 6, 2000 Hamburg 13, West Germany) has worked for Rowohlt in recent years, correcting translations of Nabokov's works. She did the Ada translation and is now at work on Look at the Harlequins! She is also engaged in translating some of Nabokov's poetry into German.

Mr. Douglas Holm (P. O. Box 8502, Portland, Oregon 97207) informs us that he is the editor of a quarterly film review, Cinemonkey, the title of which comes from a word coined by Vladimir Nabokov in his

short story, "A Russian Beauty." [The Russian original, in "Krasavitsa", is "kine-mon'ka." ED.]

## BYLAWS

### VLADIMIR NABOKOV SOCIETY

(The following By-laws will be proposed for ratification at the Society meeting in San Francisco.)

#### I. NAME

The organization shall be named the Vladimir Nabokov Society.

#### II. PURPOSE

The Vladimir Nabokov Society is dedicated to the appreciation of the writings of Vladimir Nabokov, to the exchange of views and information concerning these writings, and to the fellowship of their readers. To these ends the Society has established a Newsletter, annual meetings, and a system of governance. All further projects undertaken by the Society shall be evaluated in the light of these considerations and commitments.

#### III. MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership in the Society is open, upon payment of membership fees.

B. There shall be two classes of membership.

1. REGULAR MEMBERS. Individuals paying annual dues to the Society, at rates established by the Board of Directors, shall thereby become active members. They shall receive the publications of the Society,

have the right to vote on all issues presented to the membership, and be eligible to hold offices and serve on committees. Regular members shall have one and only one vote in all issues submitted to the membership for determination.

2. INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS.

Institutional memberships shall be available for universities, libraries, or other bona fide institutions and organizations, at rates established by the Board of Directors. They shall receive all information and materials authorized for distribution as part of the privileges and rights of membership, but shall not have the right to vote or hold office.

IV. MEETINGS

- A. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held in December, in conjunction with the Modern Language Association Convention. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- B. The meeting shall consist of the Program and the Business Meeting.
1. The Program shall be conducted by the Program Director or other person designated by the Board of Directors. It shall be open to the public.

2. The Business Meeting shall be conducted by the President, or in case of absence, the Vice-President, through the succession of officers. It shall be restricted to voting members of the Society.

- a. An agenda shall be printed in the Newsletter or other previously mailed material or shall be available from the Board of Directors no less than 24 hours before the meeting. Any member may propose additional business from the floor.
- b. The voting membership present at the meeting shall constitute the quorum needed to carry on business matters. A simple majority of those present shall decide an issue, but any individual or the Board of Directors may ask that a given action be confirmed by the vote of the entire membership of the Society, in which case general membership participation shall be obtained through the Newsletter or a mailed ballot.
- c. Proceedings of any busi-

ness meeting shall be reported to the membership through the Newsletter.

## V. OFFICERS

- A. The Editor shall be responsible for publishing the Vladimir Nabokov Research Newsletter and any other publications required by the Society. The Editor shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.
- B. The Program Director shall conduct the Program at Society meetings, shall be appointed by his/her predecessor with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors, and shall serve a one-year term.
- C. The other officers of the Society shall be elected by the membership. They shall include a President, Vice-President, and, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, a Secretary and a Treasurer. They shall take office on January 1 of the year succeeding their election. Officers antecedent to these bylaws shall be assumed to have taken their positions as of January 1, 1979.
  1. The President shall serve for a two-year term and be ineligible to succeed himself/herself. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Society, preside at business meetings, have the

management of the business of the Society, and see that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Directors are carried out. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees and shall report to the Board of Directors on all matters within the President's knowledge that may affect the Society.

2. The Vice-President shall be vested with all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the President during the absence of the latter and shall have such other duties as may be determined by the Board of Directors. The Vice-President shall serve for a two-year term and be ineligible to succeed himself/herself.
3. The officers of the Secretary and Treasurer may be instituted at the discretion of the Board of Directors. These officers shall then serve terms of two years, and these terms shall be renewable. Until such time, the power of Treasurer shall reside with the Editor, and the power of Secretary with the President and the Board of Directors.
  - a. The Treasurer shall be charged with the responsibility of paying authorized expenses and pre-

paring an annual report, to be approved by the Board of Directors.

- b. the Secretary shall prepare the agenda for business meetings of the Society and shall have such other duties as may be determined.

- D. The Board of Directors shall appoint from among its members, or members of the Society at large, a committee to supervise nominations and conduct elections.
- E. Should an officer resign or be unable to assume the duties of the office, the Board of Directors shall appoint a replacement until the next designated meeting of the Society.

## VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- A. The Board of Directors shall consist of all officers of the Society and the five previous presidents, provided they have maintained their membership.
- B. The Board of Directors shall decide the policies of the Society, and shall approve all budgetary requests beyond ordinary operating expenses.
- C. The Board of Directors may appoint committees to carry out

projects initiated by the Board or the Society as a whole.

- D. All actions of the Board of Directors shall be reported to the membership by means of the Newsletter or other appropriate publication.

## VII. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- A. These bylaws shall remain in effect until ratified, replaced, or amended at the next meeting of the Society.
- B. After ratification, further amendments to the bylaws must be submitted in writing to a business meeting of the Society, and must be received by the Board of Directors at least 24 hours previous to the meeting.
- C. Amendment to the bylaws shall require a simple majority of those present at a duly constituted business meeting. The Board of Directors may ask that such amendment be confirmed by the vote of the entire membership of the Society, through the Newsletter or mailed ballot.
- D. Amendments to the bylaws required by the laws of incorporation shall not require ratification but shall be presented to the membership of the Society.



SOME NABOKOV HOLDINGS IN THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

by Stephen Jan Parker

Beginning in 1958 Vladimir Nabokov gave various papers and manuscripts as a gift to the Library of Congress. A proviso of the donations was that use of the materials was to be restricted until fifty years after the death of Vera Nabokov or of the Nabokovs' son, Dmitri. What follows below are lists of two groups of materials submitted December 10, 1958 and September 28, 1960. They represent but a portion of the complete Nabokov holdings in the Library of Congress. The format, punctuation, and abbreviations have been maintained as per the original lists as compiled and noted by the Nabokovs. English titles under which Russian works are now known have been added in brackets for the convenience of non-Russian readers.

Apart from indicating the precise nature of these materials which, unfortunately, this generation of Nabokov scholars will not be able to examine, the lists provide some fascinating new information. For example, we learn that Conclusive Evidence was originally entitled The House Was Here and Bend Sinister had for its first two titles A Person from Porlock and Vortex.

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MATERIAL GIVEN TO THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ON  
December 10, 1958

Russian manuscripts

MASHEN'KA, [Mary] first novel, MS. ink.  
First half on sheets, 66 pp., about 20  
pp. missing; second half complete in  
notebook. Fair copy. While in pro-  
gress, entitled SCHASTIE ("Happiness").  
Publ. by Slovo, Berlin, Germany, 1926.

OTCHAYANIE (Despair). MS. complete, 148  
pp. ink, some on both sides of sheets.  
Written in 1932. Publ. Petropolis,  
Berlin, Germany, 1934. First serialized  
in Sovr.Zap., Paris.

PRIGLASHENIE NA KAZN' (Invitation to a Be-  
heading), MS, compl., 208 pp., ink,  
mostly on both sides of sheets. Publ.  
1938, Dom Knigi, Paris, France. First  
serialized in Sovr.Zap., Paris.

PODVIG (The Exploit), [Glory], MS., ink.  
278 pp. + 4 pp. of notes. written on  
both sides of sheets. Publ. by Sovre-  
menniya Zapiski, first as a serial, than  
as a volume in 1932.

DRUGIE BEREGA (Other Shores). Trans-  
lated by the author, with slight modifi-  
cations, from Conclusive Evidence. MS  
Foreword (4 pp.), Ch. 1 (20 pp.  
mostly pencil), Ch. 2 (29 pp.), pencil,  
Ch. 3 (31 pp. pencil and pen), Ch. 7

From DLC  
case file, Dec 10 1958

(pp. 1-5, 7-9, 15, 9 pp. in all, ink), Ch. 10 (23 pp., ink), Ch. 12 (31 pp., both sides of sheets, ink), Ch. 14 (30 pp., ink). Published by the Chehov publ. house of the Ford Foundation, New York, 1954.

Short Stories: Spring in Fial'ta (26 pp., ink, first publ. in Sovr.Zap., then in collection Vesna v Fial'te, the Chehov Publ. House, NY., 1956); Ozero, Oblako, Bashnya ("Lake, Cloud, Castle"), 9 pp., ink (written in 1937, Marienbad, Czechoslovakia; publ. in Sovr.Zap., then in coll. Vesna v Fial'te); besides MS, a clipping from Sovr.Zap.; Nabor ("Recruitment", 6 pp. ink; first publ. in Posledniya Novosti, Paris then in Vesna v Fial'te; besides MS, a clipping from Posl. Nov.; Korolyok ("The Coiner"), clippings (two parts) from Posl. Nov., where was first published; later included in Vesna v Fial'te; Tyazheliy Dim ("Heavy Smoke"), clipping from Posl. Nov.; later incl. in Vesna v F.; Lik (MS. 32 pp. ink; first publ. in Russkiya Zapiski; included in Vesna v F.); Poseshchenie Muzeya ("A Visit to the Museum"), a clipping from Sovr. Zap.; it was later incl. in Vesna v Fial'te.

Pis'mo v Rossiyu ("A Letter to Russia), draft, 4 sheets. First publ. in Rul (?), Berlin; then in collection Vozvrashchenie Chorba ("Chorb's Return"), Slovo, Berlin, 1929; Podlets ("The Cad"), MS. 50 pp. ink, written 1927, publ. in Rul (?), then in Vozvr. Chor-

ba; Passazhir ("The Passenger"), MS., 9 pp., written 1927, publ. in Rul, then in Vozvr. Chorba.

Ograda ("The Enclosure"), later Muzika ("The Music"), first publ. in Rul, then in Soglayadatay ("The Spy"), a collection, publ. by Russkiya Zapiski, Paris, 1938; Zanyatoy Chelovek ("The Busy Man"), draft, 18 pp., fair copy, 14 pp.; written 1931, publ. in Sovr. Zap. and The Spy; Obida ("The Insult"), 18 pp., written 1931, publ. in Sovr.Zap., included in The Spy; Pil'gram, draft 24 pp., fair copy 23 pp., written in 1930; publ. in Sovr. Zap., then in The Spy; clipping from Sovr.Zap. with draft of English translation; Sluchay iz Zhizni ("A Case History"), 7 pp.; first publ. in Rul (?), then in The Spy.

Dar ("The Gift"), MS of first chapter of the novel, of which, Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5 were serialized in Sovr. Zapiski, later published, together with Ch. 4, by the Chehov Publ. House, NY., 1952.

#### ENGLISH MSs

Bend Sinister. MS complete. 272 sheets, a few on both sides, mostly ink, a few pages in pencil. Published by Henry Holt Co., 1947. (Before publication title was "Person from Porlock", then "Vortex").

The Real Life of Sebastian Knight. MS. Chapters: 3 (8 pp. MS), 4 (7 pp. corrected typescript), 6 (18 pp. MS), 8 (10 pp. MS), 9 (10 pp. MS), 10 (10 pp. MS), 11 (10 pp. MS), 12 (10 pp. MS), 13 (9 pp. MS), 14 (10 pp. MS), 17 (10 pp. MS). All MS in ink.

Written in Paris in 1938-39; first published by New Directions, NY., 1942. Some Notes correcting the French translation of this novel, sent to translator.

Conclusive Evidence. Title page with discarded title "The House was Here". Discarded foreword, MS. Ch. 1 (20 pp. MS, ink and pencil; and 2 pp. of notes), Ch. 2 (19 pp., MS, ink; first publ. in The New Yorker as "The Portrait of my Mother"), Ch. 3 (part of MS fair copy, on 13 cards; first publ. in The N. Yorker as "The Portrait of my Uncle"), Ch. 8 (23 pp. MS, pencil and ink; 12 pp. of notes and drafts, pencil and ink; first publ. in The N. Yorker, title "Lantern Slides"), Ch. 10 (13 pp., corrected typescript, some MS; first publ. in The N. Yorker as "Curtain Raiser"), Ch. 11 (12 pp. typescript, corrected; first publ. in The N. Yorker as "The First Poem"; 16 pp. MS and notes), Ch. 12 (21 pp. mostly MS, pen and pencil, some corrected typescript; first publ. in The N. Yorker as "Tamara"), Ch. 15 (drafts: 3 pp., loose; 1 card; 10 pp. in notebook; first publ. in The N. Yorker as "Gardens and Parks").

Short stories. Bibliographical note for Nabokov's Dozen, MS, 2 pp. pencil "That in Aleppo Once..." (16 pp. MS, Atl. Monthly, Nine Stories and Nabokov's Dozen; "Conversation Piece, 1945", (13 pp., MS, ink; The New Yorker, as "Double Talk", Nine Stories, Nabokov's Dozen. "Assistant Producer" (22 pp. MS, The Atl. Monthly, Nine Stories, N.'s Dozen); "The Double Monster" (14 pp., MS, The Reporter, N.'s Dozen); "The Vane Sisters," MS ink, on 59 index cards, being published in The Hudson Review.

MATERIAL GIVEN TO THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ON  
September 28, 1960

1. Manuscript of the screenplay LOLITA, consisting of the following filing cards:
  - a) 34 cards numbered from "p.1" to "p.34" ("Prologue")
  - b) 128 cards numbered "1" to "128" ("Act One")
  - c) 121 cards numbered "129" to "249" ("Act Two")
  - d) 141 cards numbered "250" to "390" ("Act Three")
  - e) 23 "alternate" cards for Prologue, numbered "p.1a" to "P.23"
  - f) 23 "second alternates" for Prologue, from "p.1aa" to "P.23"
  - g) 85 "alternates" for Act One, all marked "One" in left top corner

- h) 8 "alternates" for Act Two, all marked "Two" in left top corner
  - j) 132 "alternates" for Act Three, all marked "Three" in top left corner
2. 94 filing cards with manuscript notes used in the writing of the novel LOLI-TA.
  3. 50 cards and two sheets of various notes, mostly for CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE ("Speak, Memory"), and the fictitious review which was not included in the book and one copy of which was included in one of the batches already in the Library's possession.
  4. Corrected typescript and set of galley proofs of INVITATION TO A BEHEADING, publ. by Putnam, 1959 (transl. by Dmitri Nabokov, corrections by V. Nabokov).
  5. 4 pages proof of French translation, corrected by V. Nabokov (transl. by Jarl Priel), of Foreward written in English for the Putnam edition of INVITATION TO A BEHEADING.
  6. Two volumes of the typescript of a work in eleven typescript volumes, "PUSHKIN'S EUGENE ONEGIN, translated and annotated by Vladimir Nabokov". The work consists of a translation of the complete Pushkin text including all variants, dropped stanzas, the "tenth chapter, Onegin's Album and Pushkin's Notes", of an Introduction, extensive Commentary, four Appendices, Biblio-

graphy and Index. The present two volumes ("vol. 2" and "vol.3") contain the translation of Chapters One-Eight, Pushkin's Notes and "Onegin's Journey". This "copy 2" is the author's working copy with numerous handwritten changes and insertions. The remaining nine volumes will be given to the Library of Congress as they are gradually set and corrected in proof.

7. 8 manuscript pages and 23 typescript pp., the translation, corrections and exchange of queries-answers with the Bollington Foundation (publishers of the work) on Pushkin's "Notes" to EUGENE ONEGIN.
8. Typescript of the "SONG OF PRINCE IGOR'S CAMPAIGN" (translation of the 12-century Russian epic with Foreword and Notes, with MS pedigree and map; corrected galleys; 13 filing cards with corrections.

## ABSTRACT

The Mirror Worlds of Carroll, Nabokov,  
and Pynchon:  
Fantasy in the 1860's and 1960's

by Beverly Lyon Clark

(Abstract of Dissertation submitted for the  
award of Ph.D., Brown University, June  
1979.)

In Victorian England symbolic, non-realistic fiction was largely forced underground, with Alice, into such marginal fiction as children's literature. Now, however, fiction tends to be more relative and provisional, more open-ended and multivalent, more what Jakobson would call metaphoric--in short, not realistic in the traditional sense. Thus some Victorian children's literature, like the Alice books, bears surprising resemblance to works by mainstream contemporary writers like Vladimir Nabokov and Thomas Pynchon.

To compare Carroll, Nabokov, and Pynchon I explore the technique of fantasy mirror worlds. As fantasy (or non-realistic, non-didactic fiction) the mirror world (or world within the world of the fiction) to some extent opposes its outer world yet seems plausibly real to some of the outer-world characters, and it generally includes one or more characters who exist solely within the mirror world.

Prior to the nineteenth century mirror worlds were generally allegoric or satiric, but

in the nineteenth century they were becoming less equatable with some other realm, and they gave the imagination freer play. The mirror world could be a fantasy realm, a realm that might play with "real"-world concerns but would not directly comment on them. Yet even then Victorian fiction tended to keep the mirror world closely circumscribed and subordinate and punctuated by such "realistic" norms as Carroll's Alice or measurements in inches and feet.

Now, though, the mirror world is less closely circumscribed and fantasy is not relegated to children's literature. In contemporary works fantasy and "reality" can intermingle complexly and suggest the indeterminacy of experience. In fact, in the twentieth century traditional realism may seem fantastic because not true to experience, and fantasy may paradoxically be the only way of being truthful, for conscious fantasizing can recognize its own provisionality in a way that traditional realism does not

Contemporary writers also tend to be more self-reflexive or self-conscious, more eager to remind us that we are actually reading a book. The Alice books may be somewhat self-reflexive, but less thoroughly so than such books as Pale Fire, Ada, and The Crying of Lot 49--with their Hurricane Lolitas, their anagrammatic Baron Klim Avidovs, their Emory Bortzes and Genghis Cohens.

The status of fantasy and the nature of the significant ordering principle for each author has also shifted. For Carroll, the

rational order is paramount and Wonderland is basically a diversion (and one to which Alice attempts to bring rational, conventional order), even if the diversion is incipiently subversive. For Nabokov the imagination is the significant ordering principle. For Pynchon there is no significant ordering principle, for our imaginative orderings are paranoid, yet fantasy is all we have and all we can do is embrace ambiguity.

## ANNOTATIONS & QUERIES

by Charles Nicol

(Material for this section should be sent to Charles Nicol, English Department, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809. Unless specifically stated otherwise, references to Nabokov's works will be to the most recent hardcover U. S. editions.)

### Lo. Lee. Ta.

In Chapter 5 of Lolita Humbert, "winking happy thoughts into a little tiddle cup," muses on an historical pageant of prepubescent girls who were loved, after one fashion or another, by older men. Among these he includes Dante's Beatrice, "a sparkling girl-teen," and Petrarch's Laura, whom Humbert chooses to call Laureen. His use of the Irish diminutive forms to characterize these two Italian and French virgins may reflect ironically on his own estrangement from Lolita's native culture: he imagines Petrarch or Dante confronted and baffled by an Irish lass as he was by an American.

Humbert's use of "Laureen" for Laura reminds us of his obsessive name-play on Dolores, his favorite form of which, of course, is Lolita. The first paragraph of the novel lists the full range of Dolores derivatives but focuses, lovingly, on Lo. Lee. Ta. This way of introducing his beloved's name is probably an imitation of Petrarch's sonnet in which a diminutive of Laura, Laureta, is poeticized syllable by syllable:

Quando io movo i sospiri a chiamar voi  
e'l nome che nel cor mi scrisse Amore,

LAU-dando s'incomincia udir di fore  
il suon de' primi dolci accenti suoi;

vostro stato RE-al che'ncontro poi  
raddoppia a l'alta impresa il mio valore;  
ma "TA-ci", grida il fin, "chè Parle more  
è d'altri omeri soma che da tuoi."

Così LAU-dare et RE-verire insegna  
la voce stessa, pur ch'altri vi chiami,  
o d'ogni reverenza et d'onor degna;

se non che forse Apollo si disdegna  
ch'a parlar dé suoi sempre verdi rami  
lingua mor-TA-l presentuosa vegna.

(Petrarch's Lyric Poems, trans. and ed.  
Robert M. Durling, Harvard, 1976, p. 41)

Humbert might have discovered this example of Petrarch's name-play while researching the historical precedents for nymph-worship. And, as Nabokov has observed, "Italians pronounce [the name Lolita], of course, with exactly the necessary note of archness and caress" (Strong Opinions, p. 25). Petrarch's variations on the name Laura parallel Humbert's on Dolores: Humbert himself pays tribute to his predecessor both by echoing one of Laura's diminutives and its manner of presentation in his opening paragraph and by creating another nickname for her: Laureen.

--Diane M. Ross, Department of English,  
Yale University

### Elphinstone

In his Annotated Lolita (p. 346) Alfred Appel claimed that "the town of Elphinstone (pp. 240-9) is invented" and that the writer Percy Elphinstone (p. 33) "has been impossible to document." Actually there is a town of Elphinstone in Manitoba (50° 32' N, 100° 20' W), less than a hundred miles as the butterfly flies from the North Dakota border--and Nabokov's lepidopteral summers, which generated Lolita's motels, did include "Canady." Although Elphinstone has a suggestive Valley View Motel, there is not a Silver Star Motel (nor a Gray Star for that matter, noting en passant the similarity of the Russian words). But Manitoba does provide raw material in such actual motels as Silver Leaf, Silver Beach, Silver Birch, plus Lone Star, North Star, and especially Golden Star. As for the author, one might think first of Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, Byron's lady friend. On the other hand, one is reluctant to overlook the several educational and inspirational writings (listed in the British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books v. 61 col 193) by one James Elphinstone, who was Bishop (Log preserve us all) of Condom.

--John A. Rea [sic], Linguistics,  
University of Kentucky

Will Brown, Dolores, Colo.

As a teenager in northeastern Massachusetts in the 1940's, I heard fairly often the word "brown" used to mean "sodomize." The first time I read Lolita, therefore, I was immediately convinced that Humbert interprets "Will Brown, Dolores, Colo." (Annotated Lolita, p. 253) as a telegraphic message from Quilty, to wit: "I will sodomize Dolores in Colorado." Eric Partridge (A Dictionary of the Underworld, 3rd ed., p. 75) recorded a related meaning--"To commit pederasty"--in 1938, but so far as I know, the word was not defined in print as "to sodomize"--actually, "v.i., v.t., To have, permit, or prefer heterosexual anal intercourse"--until 1975, in the Supplement to Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner, Dictionary of American Slang, p. 682.

I can't prove that Nabokov knew this use of "brown." In two ways, though, the double meaning seems required by the text. First, Humbert calls the motel-register entry "Horribly cruel, forsooth." Appel (p. 417) correctly glosses the allusion to Browning, but "Horribly cruel" is excessive unless Humbert is reacting to what he takes to be an obscene taunt. Second, Humbert later calls Quilty a "trickster who had sodomized my darling" (p. 297). To my knowledge, there is no basis whatever for this charge unless "Will Brown, Dolores, Colo." is more than a literary allusion.

--Robert M. Ryley, York College,  
CUBY

The Day After the Fourth

During his stay in the Quebec sanatorium to which he retires in the winter and spring of 1950, Humbert Humbert composes a thirteen-stanza elegy on vanished Lolita (pp. 257-59). Since the stanzas are quatrains, the total number of lines is, as Appel archly observes, fifty-two (Annotated Lolita, p. 420). With some calculated comic effect, he associates this number with the year-long trek (1947-8) and with 1952, the year in which both H. H. and his nymphet die. As the tone suggests, the interpretation (with its cross-reference to the sum of the license plate numbers) cracks under the strain.

But there is a numerical detail in the third line of the first stanza that asks for interpretation. The stanza reads:

Wanted, wanted: Dolores Haze.  
Hair: brown. Lips: scarlet.  
Age: five thousand three hundred days.  
Profession: none, or "starlet." (p. 257)

Although the exercise seems not yet to have been done, it is possible to work out the date when Lolita was five thousand three hundred days old. She was born on January 1, 1935. Of the years following, 1936, 1940, 1944, and 1948 were leap years. Their sum is 1464 days. The other ten years (1935 through 1947) come to 3650. We need 186 more days to make up 5300. Adding the number of days in the first six months of 1949 brings us to 181. The date Humbert emphasizes in his poem, then, is the fifth of July.



Apart from being the birthdate of both Kinbote and Shade in Pale Fire, the fifth is also the day after the fourth. In his Keys to Lolita (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1968), Carl Proffer brings together on page seven the clues that establish Quilty's wit in abducting (if that is the word) Lolita on the Fourth of July. As is so oftent he case, Humbert is unaware of impending doom and the details that might show it to him. Because he is both unsuspecting and ill, he goes to the Elphinstone Hospital the day after Quilty and Lolite have left.

As everyone knows, Nabokov often uses the detective story as a shaping device or as a source of allusion. This is not surprising for an author preoccupied both as writer and scientist with precise detail and the delight of discovering it. The poem itself makes use of the conventional police description, in the opening stanza and in later lines. If such a description is to be useful, it ought to be accurate, and although Proffer is probably right (Proffer, pp. 153-154) about some of the slip-ups (mainly Humbert's), it seems clear that this dating has been carefully constructed by the author and recollected, if not exactly in tranquility, by his hero, still enough the conscious artist to reckon the leap years and the varying days in the months of the year, and illustrating by that reckoning once more the consonance of precision and passion.

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#### A Henry James Parody in Ada

In chapter 24 Van and Ada compare notes on their childhood travels in an attempt to determine whether their paths might have crossed at some earlier point in the history of the Novel. The chapter opens with a thirteen-line sentence beginning "Van regretted that because Lettrocalamity (Vanvitelli's old joke!) was banned all over the world, its very name having become a 'dirty word' among upper-upper-class families...." The sentence continues on (and on) with an abundance of subordinate clauses and parenthetical inserts before finally coming to rest on Van's lament for the demise of recording devices. Had such existed, the children "might have recorded (so as to replay, eight decades later) Giorgio Vanvitelli's arias as well as Van Veen's conversations with his sweetheart" (p. 147).

Who is Vanvitelli? The initial allusion is partly to Van Veen but this is not a satisfactory explanation for the second reference. Unmusical Van is certainly not Giorgio Vanvitelli, the aria singer. I would suggest that this gentlemen is Daisy's questionable suitor, Mr. Giovanelli, in Henry James' Daisy Miller, who gains entrée into American society in Rome through his charming performance of Italian songs at parties. Note also that James' story, like the episode in Ada, deals with the theme of the foreign travels of children of the very rich. A close reading of the chapter opening (and particularly the first paragraph at the top of p. 148) suggests that Nabokov is parodying the involuted "pale porpoise" prose of James.

It seems not unlikely that the "dirty word," Lettrocalamity (cf. the novel's L disaster), which Nabokov annotates in the British Penguin edition as "a play on Ital. elettrocalamita, electromagnet" (p. 468), is also a punning reference to Nabokov's view of James' style: a calamity of letters. A second parody of James' style occurs on page 485 of the McGraw-Hill edition, and a Jamesian olio What Daisy Knew (Daisy Miller + What Maisie Knew) is mentioned on page 512. Nabokov's attitude to James is eloquently rendered in The Nabokov-Wilson Letters.

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Notes to Vivian Darkbloom's "Notes to Ada"

The English paperback edition of Ada (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1970) contains a series of notes signed by Vivian Darkbloom. These notes have never appeared in the United States and are now out of print in England. Charles Nicol and J. E. Rivers are seeking permission to reprint them in their forthcoming anthology of new criticism Nabokov's Fifth Arc. The anthology will also contain "Notes to Vivian Darkbloom's 'Notes to Ada,'" by J. E. Rivers and William Walker. Following are some preliminary annotations to Darkbloom's annotations, selected to illustrate the playfulness and allusiveness of Darkbloom's notes and the resulting need for sometimes explaining his explanations. The annotation by Darkbloom is given verbatim from the Penguin edition, followed by a commentary by Rivers and Walker. Page

references here are to the McGraw-Hill edition (New York, 1969).

p. 4. Tofana: allusion to 'aqua tofana' (see any good dictionary). Commentary: Darkbloom's injunction to "see any good dictionary" is a red herring--unless we define a good dictionary as one that contains a definition of "aqua Tofana." The phrase is not in The Oxford English Dictionary nor in Webster's Third New International Dictionary. It is, however, in the Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary, and it also merits an entry in Sir Paul Harvey's Oxford Companion to English Literature (4th ed., rev. Dorothy Eagle). Aqua Tofana, or Tof-fana--"Tofana water"--was a poison invented and sold by an Italian woman, Toffana, who lived in Palermo and Naples in the seventeenth century. She labeled it "Manna di S. Nicola di Bari" ("Manna of St. Nicolas of Bari"). Its main ingredient was probably arsenic.

p. 14. Aardvark: apparently, a university town in New England. Commentary: Ada's "Aardvark, Massa" corresponds to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Calling Harvard "Aardvark" is a very old joke.

p. 14. Gamaliel: a much more fortunate statesman than our W. G. Harding. Commentary: The full name of W. G. Harding, twenty-ninth president of the United States, is Warren Gamaliel Harding (1865-1923). Harding's administration is considered one of the most corrupt in American history. The "idealistic President" Gamaliel in Ada has more in common with the Biblical Gamaliel, "a

teacher of the law, held in honor by all the people," who in Acts 5: 34-39 gives wise advice to the Sanhedrin on how to deal with the apostles.

p. 16. Lolita, Texas: this town exists, or, rather, existed, for it has been renamed, I believe, after the appearance of the notorious novel. Commentary: The town has not been renamed. Lolita (pop. 400, in Jackson County, Texas, southeast of Houston and north of Port Lavaca) is still listed in The National Atlas of the United States of America (Washington: United States Department of the Interior, 1970). In a telephone conversation on 2 April 1978 Mr. Grover Klaus, the town historian, said he had been living in Lolita for fifty-four years and that it always had been, and still was, Lolita. He added that there may have been some talk of changing the name but nothing ever came of it. Incidentally, the inhabitants of Lolita pronounce the name of their town [lulida], with the "t" voiced.

p. 17. Faragod: apparently, the god of electricity. Commentary: The god of electricity takes his name from Michael Faraday (1791-1867), the English physicist celebrated for his research on electricity and magnetism. The "god" in Faragod is perhaps a translingual pun on "-day" via the similar-sounding Latin word *dei*. (*Dei* is the genitive singular and nominative plural cases of *deus*, "god.>").

p. 120. The Nile is settled: a famous telegram sent by an African explorer. Commentary: According to Alan Moorehead, The

White Nile (New York: Harper, 1971), p. 78, these words were not telegraphed. They were spoken by John Hanning Speke on 22 June 1863 before the Royal Geographical Society in London. Speke meant that the mystery of the Nile's source had been settled.

p. 136. Heinrich Müller: author of Poxus, etc. Commentary: German version of Henry Miller (1891-). Just as Nabokov later invokes "the Burning Swine" (Swinburne) and calls down "A pest on his anapest" (p. 367), Darkbloom here puts a pox on Henry Miller's trilogy The Rosy Crucifixion, consisting of Sexus (1949), Plexus (1953), and Nexus (1960).

p. 142. Rockette: corresponds to Maupassant's La Petite Rocque. Commentary: The title of the story by Guy de Maupassant is "La Petite Roque" ("Little Roque") (1885). It is not "La Petite Rocque," as in the Darkbloom note. The distortion is slight but perhaps intentional. "Roque" is the family name of the girl in the Maupassant story; rocque is the French word for the rook in chess, thus giving Maupassant's title a Nabokovian twist. The name given to the girl in Mille Larivière's story, "Rockette," means "little rock" and may be intended whimsically to recall the capital of Arkansas or, perhaps, the famous dancing troupe at Radio City Music Hall, The Rockettes.

p. 145. miron-ton etc.: burden of a popular song. Commentary: Not the burden of a particular song but a refrain that frequently occurs in popular songs in France.

p. 159. Stumbling on melons...arrogant fennels: allusions to passages in Marvell's 'Garden' and Rimbaud's 'Mémoire'. Commentary: Andrew Marvell's poem "The Garden" contains the lines "Stumbling on Melons, as I pass, / Insnar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on grass" (Stanza 5, ll. 39-40). Lines 17-19 of Arthur Rimbaud's poem "Mémoire" read: "Madame se tient trop debout dans la prairie / prochaine où neigent les fils du travail; l'ombrelle / aux doigts; foulant l'ombelle; trop fière pour elle" ("Madame holds herself too erect in the prairie / adjoining, where the sons [threads] of toil are snowing; umbrella / in her fingers; treading upon the umbellate flower; too proud for her"). Fils can be translated either as "threads" or "sons," and critical opinion varies as to what Rimbaud meant. The word ombelle is a generic term for plants with umbellate flowers, of which the fennel (French Fenouil) is one.

p. 169. quelque petite etc.: some little laundress. Commentary: An allusion to the laundress of Touraine, with whom the narrator suspects Albertine of having a lesbian affair in Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu.

p. 304. Tapper: 'Wild Violet', as well as 'Birdfoot' (p. 306), reflects the 'pansy' character of Van's adversary and of the two seconds. Commentary: The name Tapper alludes to a French term of derision for a homosexual man: tappete. The Bird's-Foot Violet (Viola pedata) has large purple or blue flowers. "Pansy," in addition to being a slang term for a homosexual man, is a flower

belonging to the violet family, and violet or lavender is a color traditionally associated with homosexuality.

p. 340. Sig Leymanski: anagram of the name of a waggish British novelist keenly interested in physics fiction. Commentary: Kingsley Amis (1922-). His interest in science fiction is manifested in his study New Maps of Hell: A Survey of Science Fiction (1961) and in the anthologies Spectrum (1961) and Spectrum II (1961), which he edited with Robert Conquest.

p. 365. sturb: pun on Germ. sterben, to die. Commentary: "Sturb" is both a neologism derived from and expressing the meaning of German sterben and an obsolete English synonym of "disturb." The pun consists in the combination of both meanings in Rattner's use of "sturb."

p. 368. Larousse: pun: rousse, 'red-hair' in French. Commentary: The pun is on French rousse ("redhead") and on Petit Larousse (Little Larousse), the well-known French dictionary and encyclopedia.

p. 403. Love Under the Lindens: O'Neill, Thomas Mann, and his translator tangle in this paragraph. Commentary: The imaginary author of Love Under the Lindens, "Eelmann," is a combination of Thomas Mann (1875-1955) and Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953) (O'Neill's name is misspelled in Darkbloom's note). The title also evokes Mann and O'Neill by mixing O'Neill's play Desire Under the Elms (1924) with the Schubert song "Der Lindenbaum," which figures in Mann's The

Magic Mountain (1924). The title Love Under the Lindens may further echo the fact that Van's and Ada's love begins under the lindens (see pp. 51-52 of Ada). H. T. Lowe-Porter ("a firm of Packers & Porters") did well-known English translations of Mann.

p. 443. ridge: money. Commentary: "Ridge" is an English cant term of obscure origin, apparently obsolete since the end of the nineteenth century, with the general meaning of "gold" or "gold coin" and the specific meaning of "a guinea." It appears to have been used mostly by criminals, or in reference to criminal activities, and is therefore an appropriate word for Demon to employ while upbraiding Van for Van's incestuous relationship with Ada.

p. 466. pendant que je etc.: while I am skiing. Commentary: Darkbloom's "etc." glosses over some scabrous word play. Lucette says, "pendant que je shee in Aspenis." "Shee" is "ski" as pronounced in German and the Scandinavian languages. "Shee" is also a homophone of French chie, the first person singular of chier, "to shit." It could also be understood as a whimsical verb formation, "to she," i.e., to engage in sexual activities with women (in this case, lesbian activities). "Aspenis" seems to be a gratuitously obscene combination of "ass" and "penis," with a quibble on Aspen, the famous ski (and she) resort in Colorado.

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--William Walker, Department of English,  
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#### Ada's "Dream-Delta": A Query

In Part 4 of Ada (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 546) the narrator asks: "Is there are mental uranium whose dream-delta decay might be used to measure the age of a recollection?" Vivian Darkbloom's "Notes to Ada," published in the English paperback edition of Ada (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), annotates "dream-delta" as an "allusion to the disintegration of an imaginary element." Darkbloom apparently has in mind the scientific techniques for dating substances by the extent to which the radioactive elements they contain have disintegrated. The best-known of these techniques is the Carbon-14 method applied by archeologists to establish the age of organic remains. But what precisely does "delta" mean? Is it a reference to delta-rays, a secondary manifestation of radioactivity produced when rays from a radioactive element strike the atoms of another element? Or is it the mathematical symbol  $\Delta$ , used to indicate the increase or decrease of a quantity?

J. E. Rivers and William Walker

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We shall continue updating the bibliography of Vladimir Nabokov's works, in coordination with Field's Nabokov: A Bibliography, in the Spring 1980 issue of the Newsletter. For now, please note the following correction of #1278 on page 33 of the Spring 1979 issue: It should be deleted since it is not a translation by Vladimir Nabokov. It is, rather, a translation from the Bulgarian to Russian of Poe's "Silence" rendered by Vera Nabokov.

In this issue we offer the first of our annual Nabokov checklists. The bibliography for 1978 which follows was compiled in most part by Ms. Mary Stuart, Assistant Slavic Reference Librarian, Slavic and East European Department, University of Illinois Library, Urbana-Champaign. We shall attempt to make this regular feature of the Newsletter as comprehensive as possible and ask that you keep us informed of all publications pertaining to Vladimir Nabokov.

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