Distinguished Achievement Award
Presented to Ronald A. Bosco

The “American Scholar” that Emerson envisioned is no mere bookworm. Character is the hallmark of the scholar, who bears high and demanding duties to self, truth, and others. In recognition of just such a sustained contribution to Emerson studies, the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society—at its annual meeting in Long Beach, California, on 31 May 2002—proudly presented its Distinguished Achievement Award to Ronald A. Bosco.

Professor Bosco is Distinguished Service Professor of English and American Literature and Religious Studies at the University at Albany, SUNY, where he has been honored as a Collins Fellow and as Grand Marshal of the University. Regarded as an inspiring and demanding teacher, he has directed several doctoral dissertations and has an extraordinary record of continual service to, and leadership of, top-level university committees and task forces.

Ronald A. Bosco is preeminent among the many editors who have been at work since 1960 preparing standard critical texts of Emerson’s monumental body of writings. No other scholar has had a hand in so many of these distinct projects. Professor Bosco was co-editor (with Glen M. Johnson) of the 16th, and final, volume of The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1982); editor of vol. 3 of The Complete Sermons (1991); editor of vol. 2 of The Topical Notebooks (1993); and co-editor (with Joel Myerson) of The Later Lectures (2 vols., 2001). Even now he is at work editing the Society and Solitude and Letters and Social Aims volumes in the Harvard University Press edition of The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson and, with Joel Myerson, is preparing the correspondence of the Emerson brothers. His many articles on the poetry, lectures, and biographical theory of Emerson are authoritative.

As scholars of the early years of the Concord Sage now know, Emerson had a rich foreground, and so did Professor Bosco—in American Puritan and colonial literature. He wrote his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Maryland on the imposing Cotton Mather, and even as he was preparing Emerson’s last journals for the press, he published several books on Puritan sermons. Aficionados of Puritanism know Professor Bosco as the world’s leading expert on the seventeenth-century poet Michael Wigglesworth. Broad-minded Emersonians also admire Professor Bosco’s recent forays into Thoreau scholarship. He has just completed two books designed to introduce Thoreau to wide audiences. And he is presently serving his second term as President of the oldest and largest society devoted to an American author, the Thoreau Society. All students of Transcendentalism know that this position—far from reflecting the “simplicity” valued by Thoreau—is a daunting full-time administrative job, and we are all indebted to Professor Bosco for his intrepid leadership.

A Founding Member of the Emerson Society in 1989, Professor Bosco has provided equally important and continual service to this organization. A frequent panelist and moderator at society events, he was appointed the society’s first official Program Chair and was elected to terms as President and Secretary/Treasurer. For several years he has been co-chair (with Joel Myerson) of “Emerson in 2003,” the society’s official planning committee for an ambitious bicentennial celebration of Emerson’s birth. Events will include exhibits and ceremonies in Cambridge and Concord, and a major scholarly conference at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston.

Emerson declared that the American scholar must “take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future.” Dynamic teacher, prolific writer and editor, selfless activist for his university and his profession—Ronald A. Bosco embodies Emerson’s high ideal.

—Wesley T. Mott
EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS
The newsletter of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society Published at Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Emerson Society Papers is published twice a year. Subscriptions, which include membership in the Society, are $10 a year (students $5). Send checks for membership (calendar year) and back issues ($5 each) to Robert D. Habich, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306-0460.

For future issues of Emerson Society Papers we solicit information about editions, publications, and research in progress on Emerson; as well as self-contained lessons, a glossary of terms, and annotated bibliography. To secure your copy, e-mail for information, please see the Society's Web site, www.mashist.org/conference/emerson.html. For answers to your questions, please e-mail conference@mashist.org or call (617) 646-0542.

EMERSON SOCIETY OFFICERS
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Penn State University-Delaware County
Secretary/Treasurer: Robert D. Habich (2003)
Ball State University

EMERSON IN 2003: "Thoreau and the Emersonian Influence"

This bicentennial celebration of Emerson’s birth in 2003 is being organized. Themes include: "Thoreau: The Emersonian Influence." If you wish to propose a workshop, panel discussion, or activity, please send your name and contact information, topic, and a one-page abstract no later than Friday, 13 December 2002 to the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering Committee, 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773.

Guide to Teaching Emerson
To commemorate the upcoming bicentennial of Emerson’s birth, Society member Mike Crim, author of “A Teachers’ Guide to Transcendentalism,” is making available “Thoreau and the Emersonian Influence.” If you wish to propose a workshop, panel discussion, or activity, please send your name and contact information, topic, and a one-page abstract no later than Friday, 13 December 2002 to the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering Committee, 44 Baker Farm, Lincoln, MA 01773.

With the bicentennial celebration of Emerson’s birth now looming in the spring, several organizations, including the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society, are preparing special programs, events, and publications. Joel Myerson and Ron Bosco, co-chairs of the Emerson Society’s “Emerson in 2003” efforts, announce the following updated working calendar. Events organized by the Emerson Society are indicated by an asterisk (*). If you know of other Emerson-related happenings scheduled for 2003, please notify our editor. The Spring issue of ESP will provide the latest updated calendar.

Jan/Feb. Emerson featured in Unitarian Universalist World
26 March *Opening of Harvard exhibition in Houghton Library on Emerson
27 March "Ron Bosco and Joel Myerson talk on Emerson before the Ticknor Society at the Houghton Library

Spring Exhibit of Emerson materials at 26 Beacon St., Boston (UUA Offices) with a program in connection with the exhibit that tentatively will include talks by Wesley Mott and David Robinson on Emerson’s minstry and connection to Unitarianism

2 April Panel discussion on Emerson at Harvard
8 April Opening of University of South Carolina library exhibition of Emerson (Joel Myerson)

Mid-April *Official announcement of Emerson Society

24-26 April *Conference at Massachusetts Historical Society, cosponsored by the Emerson Society, and exhibition of Emerson materials at the MHS
26 April Opening of Concord Free Public Library exhibition on Emerson; reception at Concord Museum; and opening of Emerson House to guests

Mid-June *Workshop/Forum on Emerson led by Robert D. Richardson, Jr., prior to UUA general assembly
26-30 June Emerson sessions at Unitarian Universalist Association Assembly meeting in Boston

After June 30 *Post-UUA general assembly conference in Concord with Barry Andrews, Jayne Gordon, and others
10-13 July Emerson Society Annual Gathering in Concord, MA, devoted to the theme "Thoreau: The Emersonian Influence"

16-18 Oct. Emerson conference in Rome

Jean Darcy, Queensborough Community College, CUNY

Emerson was keenly aware of this psychic split and experience. Emerson inserted transcendental language into a public employ to describe the communal traumas and withdrawal. In contrast, transcendental language connected the others in the world.

Shoji Goto, Rikkyo University

a different way for the self to encounter another self, stressing of the world should perceive that enemies "are such men as we; who is not grounded in the traditional concepts of subject and object, but

Jean Darcy, Queensborough Community College, CUNY

... All is for the soul." With this unity of time and space are abolished; "The act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one." The feel "that every man [is] another self with whom he might come to join, as left hand works with right." He denies the object as the essence of evil.

Emerson's Self and Another Self

Emerson achieved a unique personal perspective within the wondrous public spaces of the pre-Civil War years. That capacity for observation was not dependent on the religious rhetoric of his day, but on a personal orienteering skill he called transcendental "seeing." In employing transcendental language to describe the communal traumas of his day, Emerson employed a language of engagement that avoided both the apocalyptic and the Gnostic rhetoric that enabled speakers to preserve an innocent American identity. Using a rational framework built around the defensive need to construct an innocent identity, speakers necessarily dissociated themselves from the evidence of actual experience. Emerson was keenly aware of this psychic split and sought to use a language capable of witnessing the oscillating experience. Emerson inserted transcendental language into a public space dominated by apocalyptic and Gnostic discourses of revenge and withdrawal. In a transcendental language, metaphorical language connected the private voice in local space to a public interrogation of "higher law."

Emerson's Antislavery Speeches

T. Gregory Garvey, SUNY-Brockport

As a companion to issues such as the annexation of Texas, the Mexican War, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the guerrilla war that it caused, Emerson watched pro-slavery forces struggle for control over the terms of dialogue in the public sphere. As temes as sincere expression seemed to Emerson in his spiritual writings of the 1830s, it seemed even more distant in the context of civic and political dialogue during the 1850s. Emerson's anxiety about the systematic and intentional distortion of language is especially apparent in his 1851 "Address to the Citizens of Concord" and his 1854 "Fugitive Slave Law." In this latter speech, Emerson focuses on Webster's repudiation of sincerity as a goal of public dialogue. Emerson had revered Webster because he best represented the possibility of integrating the intellectual person with the practical demands of the politician. After Webster's speech of 7 March 1850, his watchwords continued to define a false rhetoric of virtue that emasculated slavery to defend the Compromise as a patriotic defense of the United States. Emerson's denunciation of this trend in American public life is consistent with even his most staid transcendental in that in speaking for the value of public authenticity, he speaks in defense of what he understands as necessary conditions of both selfhood and community.

Emerson's Self and Another Self

Sri Goto, Rikkyo University

Many philosophers since Descartes have investigated problems of the self, but the relation between the self and another self has seldom been thoroughly examined. Here we think, for example, that we encounter beings in the world by taking care of or being taken care of, and so any isolated thing or being is impossible. A subject without a world does not exist from the first. Levins, on the other hand, proposes a different way for the self to encounter another self, stressing responsible relations among beings, in which each self is interdependent and at the same time aware of its responsibility to others in the world.

Unlike Hegelger and Levinas, Emerson's concept of knowledge is not grounded in the traditional concepts of subject and object, but rooted in the soul. In the essay "War," Emerson says that the nations of the world should perceive that enemies "are such men as we; who laugh and grieve, who love and fear, as we do." And then he adds that it is not in the souls of men, but that we may feel "that every man [is] another self with whom he might come to join, as left hand works with right." He denies the object as the essence of evil.

Emerson's Self and Another Self

Emerson's Selves and Another Self

Fall 2002

Emerson Society Papers
An Emerson Bibliography, 2001

DAVID M. ROBINSON

Oregon State University

New scholarly works from 2001, including items missed in the 2000 bibliography (ESP 12, ii [2001]:6-7). Readers should also consult the periodic Thoreau bibliographies in the Thoreau Society Bulletin, and the chapter "Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, and Transcendentalism" in the annual American Literature Scholarship (Duke University Press).

Acharya, Shanta. The Influence of IndianThought on Ralph Waldo Emerson. Mellen. [Emerson's maturing appreciation of Indian Thought]

Adams, Kimberly VanEvela. Our Lady of Victorian Feminism: The Madonna in the Work of Anna Jameson, Margaret Fuller, and George Eliot. Ohio. [Fuller's use of the figure of the Madonna]


Bian, Judith Matson. "Margaret Fuller's (Unsuccessful) Plan for Papers on Literature and Art." AQG 14:26-31. [Cuts demanded by Fuller's publisher]

Bosco, Ronald A. and Joel Myerson, eds. The Later Lectures of Emerson. Iowa. [Fuller's use of the figure of the Madonna]


Garvey, T. Gregory. "Introduction: The Emerson Dilemma." In Garvey, The Emerson Dilemma, pp. xi-xxviii. [Reference volume devoted to other Historical overview]


Hudspeth's six-volume complete edition

Lyttle, David. "Emerson and Natural Evil." CS 9:57-84. [Emerson's value for Emerson's Antislavery Sermons]


Matteson, John T. "Grave Discussions: The Image of the Sepulchre in Webster, Emerson, and Melville." NEQ 74:149-66. [Emerson's influence on Fuller's use of the figure of the Madonna as advocates of women's rights]

Mott, Wesley T., ed. The American Renaissance in New England: Third Series. DLB 235. [Emerson's rhetorical strategy for antislavery]

Petee, David Allen. "Records of the Ministry at Large in Connection with Suffolk Street Chapel." JUUHS 28, 2:92-7. [Emerson's response to Thoreau's political protest]

Roberson, Susan L. "Reform and the Interior Landscape: Mapping Emerson's Political Sermons." In Garvey, The Emerson Dilemma, pp. 5-31. [Fuller's use of the figure of the Madonna]

Robinson, David M. "Emerson's 'Inquest' and Cultural Regeneration." AL 73:47-83. [Historical overview]

Showalter, Elaine. Inventing Herself: Claiming a Feminist Intellectual Heritage. Scribner. [Fuller's comparison of the Italian republic with the American republic]

Steele, Jeffrey A. "The Ethics of Care and the Limits of Social Protest." In Garvey, The Emerson Dilemma, pp. 115-35. [Emersonian Theory of Democratic Citizenship]
Friday, 12 July was Henry Thoreau’s birthday, but that morning it was Waldo Emerson who dominated the program at the Thoreau Society’s Annual Gathering at the Masonic Temple in Concord. Repeating the format of last year’s highly successful panel, this year’s Emerson Society contribution to the four-day celebration of Thoreau—“From Influx to Influence: Emerson, His Reading, His Readers”—featured brief, provocative remarks by three panelists on the nature of Emersonian influence, its dangers, its shortcomings, and its magnetic and enduring appeal. A lively audience of about 200 people then engaged in an hour-long spirited exchange with the panel.

Pictured outside the Masonic Temple just before the event are, from left, Richard Geldard (who commented on a statement by Stanley Cavell from a 1985 address), Elizabeth Addison (who commented on a passage from Emerson’s journal [JMN 4:269]), moderator Len Gougeon, Emerson Society program chair Sarah Ann Wider, and Wes Mott (who commented on Edgar Lee Masters’ The Living Thoughts of Emerson [1947]).

In celebration of the bicentennial of Emerson’s birth, the Thoreau Society is dedicating its 2003 Annual Gathering (10-13 July) to the theme of “Henry Thoreau: The Emersonian Influence.” In a year packed with special events devoted to Emerson, Emerson Society members will want to mark their calendars for this one in historic Concord, Mass. (As time draws closer, visit the Thoreau Society Web site, www.walden.org, or call 781-259-4750.) The Thoreau Society’s Annual Gathering—a wonderfully varied program of lectures, panels, historic tours, canoeing and other outdoor events, business meetings, exhibits, great food, and reunions with old friends—has become a “MUST” event for anyone who enjoys any of the Concord authors. (See the Call for Papers for 2003 on page 5.)