PROJECT MUSE®

Foreword: Steinbeckians Unite

Stephen K. George, Paul Douglass

Steinbeck Review, Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2006, pp. 9-11 (Article)

Published by Penn State University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/str.2007.0007>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/218347>

FOREWORD: STEINBECKIANS UNITE

STEPHEN K. GEORGE AND PAUL DOUGLASS

THIS ISSUE OF THE STEINBECK REVIEW marks the beginning of a new partnership among the editors, editorial boards, publishers, and institutions supporting Steinbeck scholarship in the United States. We hope it will inaugurate a period of increasing collaboration among the various communities interested in Steinbeck's life and work. We also hope it will bring an expansion of the journal's subscriber list and encourage the consolidation of a scholarly society dedicated to the dissemination of scholarship focused on Steinbeck, his period, and his circle.

In summer 2005 conversations began between the editors of *The Steinbeck Review* and *Steinbeck Studies*. We began with the question of whether the American Steinbeck community would most benefit from the continued existence of two scholarly journals devoted to the writer's work or if it might be better served by a "merged" journal linked to a resuscitated Steinbeck Society. As many readers know, the history of American scholarly publications devoted to Steinbeck has included the *Steinbeck Quarterly* (published for twenty-five years out of Ball State University) and the *Steinbeck Yearbook* (with three volumes out of Mellen Press), both of which are now defunct; a *Newsletter* that transformed itself into a biannual journal (*Steinbeck Studies* of San José State University); and the biannual journal founded in 2004 as *The Steinbeck Review*.

After much discussion and negotiation, all parties have agreed to combine forces. You hold in your hands a down payment on a journal that will combine the best features of *The Steinbeck Review* and *Steinbeck Studies*. The content of this issue draws

heavily on papers given at The Sixth International Steinbeck Congress held in Kyoto, Japan, last year. Plans for future issues will be created collaboratively with the editors and the combined editorial boards of the journals.

Steinbeck Studies was richly illustrated and incorporated some material not purely of a scholarly nature—this was due to its having evolved from an attractively produced *Newsletter* published by the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies under the skilled editorship of Professor Susan Shillinglaw at San José State University. *The Steinbeck Review* had established itself under the editorship of Barbara Heavilin and Stephen George as an important venue for Steinbeck scholarship, and the journal has benefited immensely from its sponsorship by the Cannery Row Foundation, Ball State University Archives and Special Collections, and The New Steinbeck Society of America.

Future issues of *The Steinbeck Review* will be illustrated, with articles, reviews, and some “intercalary” items of broad interest to Steinbeck aficionados. We are grateful to Scarecrow Press—with its long history of Steinbeck criticism, bibliographies, and academic study guides—for allowing the combined journal to take the title of *The Steinbeck Review* (a choice that should remove any confusion arising from the existence of The John Steinbeck Society of Japan’s journal, *Steinbeck Studies*). The journal will be edited collaboratively by the Director of the Center for Steinbeck Studies at San José State University and the current editors of *The Steinbeck Review*. Together with Mimi Gladstein, President of the Steinbeck Society of America, and other officers of that group, the editors have evolved a new plan for the “merged” publication’s production and distribution.

One key to this plan is the rejuvenation of the scholarly society devoted to John Steinbeck. While the New Steinbeck Society has recently organized events such as the “Steinbeck and His Contemporaries” conference which took place in March 2006 in Sun Valley, Idaho, the Steinbeck Society of America out of San José has existed recently more as a concept than a reality. With the coalescence of the journals, the editors are hopeful that a thriving John Steinbeck Society of America can establish a regular series of events and other benefits for members—including subscription to *The Steinbeck Review-Steinbeck Studies* journal. We also hope that an International John Steinbeck Society can be established to support the activities of national organizations such as the American society, The John Steinbeck Society of Japan,

and other emerging national groups from countries such as India, Korea, and China. Prospects for a unified and collegially bound group of Steinbeck readers, educators, scholars, and fans have never looked brighter. As partners in bringing these two journals together, we are indeed excited at the possibility of expanding John Steinbeck's place within the literary world to the degree that the author so richly deserves.