

Alumni News

Alumni Literary Club

Five years ago this month, an idea was born which might be of interest to Caltech alumni everywhere.

The idea: to get together ten couples interested in literature, to meet once each month at the home of a different member couple, there to discuss the assignment of the month, and after such discussion to have beer and cheese amidst the convivial atmosphere thereby generated.

The lubricant and constant inspiration: Dr. Harvey Eagleson.

The theme and subjects covered:

First year: Modern American Fiction (Faulkner, Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe, Steinbeck, Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, Saroyan, James Branch Cabell)

Second year: Modern European Fiction (Camus, Virginia Woolf, Kafka, Evelyn Waugh, Henry James, Graham Greene, Sartre, Gide)

Third year: World Drama (Sophocles, Seneca, Racine, Shakespeare, Jeffers, Corneille, Victor Hugo, Moliere, Congreve, Wycherley, Otway — done with each participant taking a part in a reading of a play)

Fourth year: Miscellany (Pasternak, Tennessee Williams, Kerouac, T. S. Eliot, Yukio Mishima, Colin Wilson)

Fifth year: The Ulysses Theme (*Iliad*, *Odyssey*, Campbell's *Hero with 1000 Faces*, Kazantakis' *The Modern Odyssey*)

The couples are predominantly Caltechian (on the non-distaff side, that is). Most are loquacious. All are sociable, enjoy beer or a highball with the meetings and have an affection for Doc Eagleson (referred to by some of the women — most strangely to Caltech ears — as "Harvey"). Once a year we have a swimming and dinner party without literature, and all members enjoy this event too. Occa-

sionally, as with Tennessee Williams' *Sweet Bird of Youth*, the group both reads the work and sees it. The turnover in member couples has been negligible.

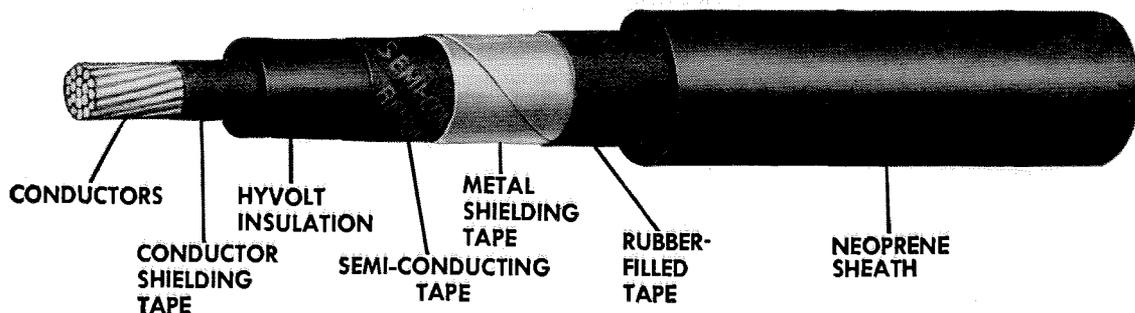
For those other alumni who might evince an interest in setting up a similar group, these words of advice: be sure to get someone of Dr. Eagleson's caliber to help guide and instruct; obviously try for couples who will clearly do their reading and who will participate in the group discussions; and (except in rare cases) have only one assignment outstanding at any one time.

All of the participants in the group agree that without what is by now affectionately referred to as "The Caltech Alumni Literary Club" their lives would be very much less interesting, and the extent of their reading very much curtailed.

Caltech Alumni: Be pleased to copy!

— Martin Webster '37

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