

Resolution on the Retirement of
Professor Martin Green

Adopted by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

May 16, 1994

The members of the English Department and the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Jackson College of Tufts University, hereby record our warm appreciation for our retiring colleague, Professor Martin Green. Martin has been teaching at Tufts for 31 years, almost the full span of his academic career. It has been our good fortune to profit from his brilliance and productivity as a teacher and scholar during that time.

Martin received his own undergraduate education at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he studied with the formidable F. R Leavis. Leavis fought to establish moral principles as a basis for literary judgment and offered a powerful model of a social engagement based on passionate scrutiny of literary texts. After graduating from college, Martin received his M.A. from King's College of the University of London and served in the Royal Air Force for two years before teaching in Turkey and France. In 1957 he received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. A few years later he published Mirror for Anglo-Saxons, a series of literary and cultural essays on ideas of England and America and the relationship between them. It was a debut that was in some ways representative of what was to come. For one thing, the book takes up, reverses, endorses, and undoes Leavisite ideas; for another thing it is a book that comes out of the experience of its author, who at the time was making the transition from England to America. Since then Martin has written 26 more books on a great variety of topics, and each has been marked by the productive tensions that arise when something important is at stake for the author himself.

Martin's bibliography demonstrates both astonishing range and underlying coherence. The historic and geographic range alone makes his a very unusual academic career. From Napoleonic Haiti to 17th century Kongo to Gandhi's India to New York in

1913, Martin moves at a tremendous pace. But on closer inspection it is possible to see that he is always moving between certain broad oppositions, and always defining cultural options with moral/political consequences. One of his categories is action, adventure, and empire, and in this category belong such books as Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire; The Great American Adventure; and The Robinson Crusoe Story. At the other end of the spectrum is his commitment to nonviolence, which has led to The Challenge of the Mahatmas; Tolstoy and Gandhi, Men of Peace, and The Origins of Nonviolence. Violence and adventure on the one hand; peace and nonviolence on the other. Another major opposition is that between aestheticism and the moral responsibility of art, topics which arise in such books as The Von Richthofen Sisters; Children of the Sun; and The Triumph of Pierrot. Each category both resists and is penetrated by its opposite. Finally, there has been the recurrent question of America and the recurrent question of England; and as a subplot, the recurrent question of Boston. Beneath the dazzling variety of heroes, issues, times, and places is a consistent and evolving set of concerns.

Recognition of Martin's work has included many honors, awards, articles, and reviews. He won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1974 and a rare second Guggenheim three years later. In 1980 and 1981, he was in residence at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C.; and in 1987 he won a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Martin has been a remarkable teacher, particularly appreciated by his graduate students. He has, in fact, served as dissertation advisor to more students than any other faculty member in the university, and he has found the time to help and encourage his students long after they have earned their degree. His students remember him for his erudition, his articulateness, and his generosity; they also remember him for his highly developed sense of the absurd.

Martin's interest in nonviolence goes beyond the academic, and his plans for the future include contributions in the work of international peace and reconciliation. We look forward to reading the works he will continue to produce in retirement, and we hope that his freedom from the duties of teaching and advising will give him more time for his other involvements. It is with admiration, gratitude, and affection that we mark the end of this phase of his life. Our very best wishes go with him into the next.

Be it resolved that this resolution be spread on the minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and that a copy be sent to Professor Green.

For the Faculty,

Professor Linda Bamber