

FELLOWSHIPS

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*Cooke - Anne*

419 Temple Street  
New Haven, Connecticut  
October 22, 1939

*Rept*

Julius Rosenwald Fund  
4901 Ellis Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Mr. Reynolds:

In spite of the fact that I hold no Master's degree, the Graduate School has agreed to permit me to complete all of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree this academic year. I will not submit my dissertation this year because the subject I have chosen - Theories of Acting - will require longer interviewing and investigation than this year permits. By March, 1940 I will be able to state my progress in regard to that.

During the summer I completed a piece of research on the Greek Theatre in terms of modern theatre practice.

Since the practical theatre is a major part of my plan, I am enclosing a clipping from the Smith College Daily which in some way describes a creative project with which I am experimenting under the auspices of the Concert Project of the Association of American Colleges. My status with the Association is that of Faculty-Artist Visitor. If you would like further information about the techniques involved and the results, I will be happy to write you more fully.

Last summer Atlanta University held its third Summer Theatre School, the enrollment of which was over fifty. Five young women who had completed the two year's course of study received the Certificate.

Sincerely,

*Anne Cooke*

Anne Cooke

Enclosure/



FELLOWSHIPS

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### On Concert Project of Association of American Colleges



ANNE M. COOKE

*Studied at Yale, made artist visit to Smith*

Because of her progressiveness in the field of the drama, Anne M. Cooke, director of the University Players, and for six years director of the Atlanta University Summer Theatre, has been signally honored by the Association of American Colleges Concert Project. Last year the Association selected Miss Cooke to visit prominent eastern colleges as a member of their Faculty-Artist staff, and next year Miss Cooke will again continue her work in this field.

Miss Cooke was the first experiment of the Association in the field of drama and in interracial exchange, and the experiment has proved successful. The selection was based on her exceptional ability, personality, and general culture. The Association was interested in securing a college professor distinguished in the arts, who was not only a specialist in the field, but one who was interested in liberal culture as well. Miss Cooke possessed these qualifications.

The first college she visited was Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. Here there was opportunity to meet with a number of students in formal and informal gatherings to give a demonstration of modern dramatic techniques for conveying ideas which were built out of a group mind. Her purpose was to show that drama is not an isolated art but a part of our daily lives, and that the communication of ideas may be more forceful if action and gestures accompany the use of words. As a part of her program, Miss Cooke presented a "Living Newspaper," which while not a finished

production was a vitalizing experience for both participants and spectators. Her talent for eliciting ideas encouraged expression and inspired cooperation among the students.

It is the desire of the Association that members of their Faculty-Artist staff become identified with the life of the college campus visited. Miss Cooke's engagement at Smith was not only to give guidance in creating a production, but was also to give students and faculty the benefit of personal contact. It has been found that the cultural effects of the arts on students are more lasting when brought through people who teach them. The stimulus that arises from the Faculty-Artist's eager interest in the arts as a part of college life remains more valuable to the college than the memory of a lecture or a performance.

Miss Cooke has been director of the Atlanta University Summer Theatre since 1934 and director of dramatics at Spelman College since 1928. She is a graduate of Oberlin College, and has studied widely in her field in American colleges. In 1935 she went to Moscow to attend the Theatre Festival, and had opportunity to visit rehearsals in a number of the Russian theatres.

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## "LIVING NEWSPAPER" TO BE PRODUCED HERE

During the week of April 9-15, the students, especially underclassmen, who are interested in dramatics will have the privilege and stimulus of a visit from Professor Anne Cooke of Atlanta University, one of the most important Negro colleges. It is the only college in the south to operate a Summer Theatre and school of the theatre. For the past five summers, Miss Cooke has directed these, and for six years she has been Chairman of Fine Arts and Director of Dramatics at the university. A graduate of Oberlin College in Ohio, she has also studied for a year at the American Academy of Dramatic Art in New York, and for nearly two years at the Yale University Theatre in New Haven. In 1935 she went to Moscow, attended the Theatre Festival, and visited rehearsals in a number of Russian theatres. She comes to us under the auspices of the Association of American Colleges, which is interested in arranging week-long visits to different campuses by professors distinguished in the arts. We understand that several members of our own music faculty have thus visited other colleges.

### New Program to Be Tried

On Sunday evening, April 9, in the Browsing Room of the Library, Miss Cooke will meet with as many students as care to work with her on the following six evenings, and outline her plans to them. On the following Saturday afternoon or evening, she hopes to present, out-doors or in-doors, a kind of improvised "Living Newspaper". Group-action, with or without music, vivid pantomime, by groups or individuals, through which setting are suggested, not shown, impromptu dialogue, or speeches composed by the actress herself, sound-effects, or light-effects, thought up and contributed by students interested in such matters, imagination, stimulated and creative,—these are the objects at which she aims. There must be many Freshmen, and not a few Sophomores, whose zest for acting and the theatre has not yet had any outlet here. With such girls, mainly, Miss Cooke hopes to work up—not an artistic production, but a vitalizing experience for participants and spectators alike.

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The actual theme or subject to be thus dramatized has not yet been determined. Let each interested reader begin thinking! Should it deal with college affairs, or public affairs? Should it be artistic or propagandistic, satiric, or serious, historic or immediate, a *Commedia dell'Arte* fantasy, or a conflict for and against, say, the WPA or the CIO? Anything that will cost no money to present, but will give scope for vivid human performance, may be suggested—either to Mr. Eliot, who sponsors Miss Cooke's visit with the sympathetic interest of the department of Spoken English, or more directly by writing to Miss Anne Cooke, Yale University Theatre, York St., New Haven, Conn.

YALE UNIVERSITY