

## A Tale of Two Fora

You are holding in your hands a very full issue of *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, containing newly available letters by Anna Letitia Barbauld, a trio of essays on Latin American women authors, and an Academy forum on academia in the age of Me Too. Our Latin American forum is the product of several years of planning and labor. When Carolina Alzate approached me and my then coeditor Laura Stevens about guest editing this trio back in 2014, we jumped at the opportunity. First, we were honored to work with Carolina, an illustrious academic in her field and an integral contributor to broadening the scope of *TSWL*. Second, we welcomed the opportunity to bring the study of Latin American women authors to a broader international and English-speaking audience. I will leave Carolina to speak more directly about the significance of these essays in her own preface, but I do want to emphasize that the authors featured in these articles—Soledad Acosta de Samper, Gabriela Mistral, Alfonsina Storni, and Camila Henríquez Ureña—are all important voices in their respective nations who interact with early feminism and the restrictions of patriarchy. They also interact in different ways with contemporaneous feminist struggles in the Anglophone world; these authors both responded to and in turn influenced the writings of women in English-speaking nations. I am certain that these pieces will be of great interest to our readership, and I am so glad that they are finally available in print.

Interest in internationalism also underpins our Me Too forum. While we received numerous excellent pieces in response to our call for essays, the pieces I have selected are international in scope, featuring the voices of academics from Canada and China as well as the United States. I have also deliberately selected pieces written by women at different stages of their careers, from a recently hooded Ph.D. to tenured academics. The pieces discuss a range of offenses, including microaggressions, consensual but problematic relationships, and physical assault. All raise important questions about consent, the experiences of being a woman in academia, and the ways we might begin to mitigate harm.

In "The #MeToo Movement by Committee," Kate Krueger traces the different forms of gender bias she has encountered in her career: seemingly minor comments on her body while on the job market, illegal discrimination while pregnant, gendered bullying and retaliation after tenure. Empowered by the Me Too movement, Krueger recently took action against her harasser, but her essay powerfully details the emotional toll associated with that act of resistance. Her contribution to the forum thus

compels us to ask: How many books are not written, how much knowledge is not produced, when women's energies are focused on fighting bullies, navigating bureaucracy to file complaints, and defending one another? How many women and people of color have left the academy because that emotional toll has been too great? How can we better protect targeted faculty when we see microaggressions or gendered harassment occurring in our midst? In other words, how do we reform a system that in many ways not only tolerates but rewards bullying by senior colleagues?

Turning from conflicts among faculty to conflicts between faculty and students, Corrinne Harol and Teresa Zackodnik detail the struggle of one department and university to mitigate the harms caused by faculty/student romantic relationships. "Consenting to Conflict" questions how we can respect students' adulthood while diminishing the harm such relationships can cause both to students involved in these relationships and to other students whose learning environments might be affected by them. To forbid such relationships entirely potentially drives the myriad harms that might occur underground and makes it difficult for students who have been harmed to come forward. However, their essay implicitly asks readers to consider whether restrictions on conflicts of interest go far enough to outweigh the damages potentially posed by professors who treat students as a prospective dating pool. In a moment in which many universities are seeking to rework—and in some cases institute for the first time—policies governing faculty/student relationships, Harol and Zackodnik's piece is particularly timely.

While Krueger, Harol, and Zackodnik write from the perspective of tenured academics, Heather Stewart speaks from the more vulnerable position of a graduate student in a department that was recently reprimanded for its hostility to women. A survivor herself, Stewart details in "Institutional Failures in the Rise of #MeToo: The Perpetuation of Epistemic and Other Harms to Survivors in Academic Contexts" the ways in which her experiences, her health and safety, even her status as a female philosopher were undermined during her graduation ceremony, which should have been a moment of triumph and celebration. It is my hope that Stewart's essay will spark a broader conversation not just about trigger warnings and respect for survivors but also about how faculty and administrators of good will respond to faculty provocateurs. Who bears responsibility for the speech described in the article? The speaker himself? The administration who gave him a platform? The audience who allowed him to continue? Where is the line between obnoxious speech and harmful speech? What do we owe the many survivors in our midst?

Problems with gender bias and sexual assault are certainly not unique to the North American academy, and in "A Long Way to Go: Guarding

Female Students in the Chinese Academy,” Shiqin Chen offers insight into the ways in which the Chinese academy is also grappling with the revelations of Me Too. Reform in the Chinese academy, Chen explains, is complicated by the deep respect that Chinese culture affords teachers and a persistent focus on female purity that might deter survivors from coming forward. Her essay raises a range of questions for further discussion: How can Chinese universities confront their own failings and do better? Are there ways to mitigate harms done to female students without putting undue service burdens on female faculty (for example, by requiring that a female supervisor always be present during meetings between male faculty members and female students)? How can the Chinese academy begin to shift its cultural attitudes towards women and scholarly work?

The reflections in our final contribution, Amber Pouliot’s “#HerToo? Academic Exclusion in the Age of #MeToo,” initially emerged as part of a longer essay published in the popular press. While mainstream publishers were happy to print a piece on the struggles of white women in the academy, they were less interested in discussing the problems of marginalized peoples, including women of color, queer women, and disabled women. In printing this piece, some of which was excised from the longer article by the publisher, we are asking members of the academy to think more broadly about the ways in which we implicitly exclude academics from already marginalized communities. Me Too began as a movement designed to elevate the voices of African American women; in transforming Me Too into #MeToo, the popular press has left behind marginalized and intersectional identities, and it is incumbent upon us as feminist scholars not to do the same.

I see these pieces as a starting point for what I hope is a series of conversations about consent, harm reduction, and equity in the academy. I invite interested readers to send us pieces for future academy sections, either in response to or building off of the pieces printed here. It is incumbent upon us not to lose momentum in encouraging societal and scholarly change, as we seek to make the academy safer and more welcoming to all.

With this issue, we have some new faces in our office. I am pleased to welcome to our team Caleb Freeman, our new publicity intern—follow us on Facebook and Twitter to see his excellent work—and Lily McCully, our book review editor-in-training. Many of you will work with Lily over the coming months, and we are excited to have her on board. These new faces must unfortunately be accompanied by some departures. Onyx Zhang, our subscriptions intern, and Amy Pezzelle, our current book review editor, will both retire at the end of the semester. I am so grateful to them for all their

hard work on behalf of the journal and will miss seeing them at work every day. Amy in particular has done an amazing job of keeping my work life organized and on track, and I will miss her deeply once she leaves. From all of us at *TSWL*, we wish Amy and Onyx the best!

Along with Amy and Onyx, we are also bidding farewell to three editorial board members—Theresa Delgadillo, Kate Flint, and Devoney Looser—whose terms come to a close with this issue. I want to express my deep thanks to each of them for their service. In their place, I am pleased to introduce the newest members of our editorial team:

Laura Engel is Professor of English at Duquesne University, where she specializes in eighteenth-century British literature with a focus on drama, gender studies, performance theory, material culture, and theater history. She is the author of *Fashioning Celebrity: Eighteenth-Century British Actresses and Strategies for Image Making* (2011), *Austen, Actresses, and Accessories: Much Ado about Muffs* (2014), and *Women, Performance, and the Material of Memory: The Archival Tourist, 1780-1915* (2019). She is editor of *The Public's Open to Us All: Essays on Women and Performance in Eighteenth-Century England* (2009) and coeditor with Elaine McGirr of *Stage Mothers: Women, Work, and the Theater, 1660-1830* (2014). Winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarship and the Faculty Excellence in Scholarship Award from Duquesne University, she is currently co-curating with Amelia Rauser an exhibit entitled *Artful Nature: Fashion and Theatricality, 1780-1820* at Yale University's Lewis Walpole Library. She is also currently guest coediting with Emily Rutter a special double issue of *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* on "Women and Archives."

Karen Gevirtz is Professor of English and Co-Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Seton Hall University, where she specializes in literature of the long eighteenth century. She is coeditor with Mona Narain of *Gender and Space in British Literature, 1660-1820* (2014) and author of *Life After Death: Widows and the English Novel, Defoe to Austen* (2005), *Women, the Novel, and Natural Philosophy, 1660-1727* (2014), and *Representing the Eighteenth Century in Film and Television, 2000-2015* (2017). She has published on female authors such as Jane Austen, Eliza Haywood, and Aphra Behn. A past president of the Aphra Behn Society for Women in the Arts, 1660-1840, she received the 2013-2014 Arts and Sciences Researcher of the Year Award. She is currently editing *The History of the Nun* for Cambridge University Press's forthcoming *Collected Works of Aphra Behn* and working on a project about the masculinization of the discourse

of medicinal drugs between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries.

Talia Schaffer is Professor of English at Queens College, CUNY and the Graduate Center, CUNY, where she specializes in family and marital practices, disability studies, affective relations, domestic life, decorative arts, women's history, noncanonical and popular fiction, aestheticism, gender and sexuality, women's studies, cultural studies, and nineteenth-century social practices, literature, and material culture. She is the author of *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (2000), *Novel Craft: Victorian Domestic Handicraft and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (2011), and *Romance's Rival: Familiar Marriage in Victorian Fiction* (2016), winner of the North American Victorian Studies Association prize for best book in Victorian studies. She has also edited *The History of Sir Richard Calmady* (2003), *Literature and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (2006), and coedited with Kathy Alexis Psomiades *Women and British Aestheticism* (1999). A 2018-2019 Laurence S. Rockefeller Visiting Fellow at the University Center for Human Values at Princeton University, she is currently working on "Critical Care," a book on the ethics of care as a promising theory for reading Victorian fiction.

I want to conclude this preface by expressing my deep gratitude to Karen Dutoi, our managing editor. Karen's hard work, incisive stylistic sense, and dedication to her work make *TSWL* what it is; the journal would not function without her.

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