

## From the Editor

We are moving again. For those of you who have followed our migrant wandering every two years or so—starting less than a decade ago—from one lovely old house to another lovely old house to yet another lovely old house on the campus of the University of Tulsa, you will be surprised and perhaps disappointed to hear that we will be housed in a house no longer; for there are no more old houses to be had. Each in turn has fallen under the blades of bulldozers, as they plow out and level these increasingly kempt grounds to be embraced ultimately by the well-defined perimeters of the university's "master plan." I hear from some students, graduate and undergraduate alike, that the ever more groomed "look" of this campus counts among their chief reasons for coming here. The seemingly naturally distinguished appearance and ceaseless growth of the place establish the university "identity" as can little else. So I strike yet another grieving note as I embark on this preface. Yet I also wonder what it was those old houses supplanted in their own first construction, just three miles from the end of the Trail of Tears at Council Oak.

We teetered last spring on the verge of being moved to the basement of a squat old art deco building a couple of blocks away from campus, with a two-floor, high-security engineering project above our heads. Thus it is with some gratitude, despite all the angst, that we accepted the English Department's invitation to move into spacious rooms in the center of the floor it occupies in Zink Hall (a building still too modern to be on anyone's plan for demolition). Thanks especially to the considerate willingness and thoughtful initiative of the current Writing Program Director, Grant Jenkins (who, coincidentally, is author of one of this issue's essays—submitted when he was Writing Program Director at Old Dominion University with no plans to move west), to shift the university's Writing Center to the main building where Arts and Sciences is located, and thanks also to the fast thinking and hard work of the current departmental chair, Lars Engle, we may at last have found ourselves in friendly digs as "permanent" as such a campus location can get. We anticipate grappling with this relocation as early as winter of this year and request your patience with any temporary interruptions or delays that may result.

So busy have we been with the approach of this major transition and with the transition in managing editors that I failed to mention another important staff change. In Spring 2003, our excellent book review editor Marilyn Dallman Seymour started training an able successor in Lisa Riggs; in Summer 2003, Lisa took over all duties of our book review section and circulation desk, acting as the managing editor's right hand. While I would

like to blame my omission of this fact on the seamlessness of this transition, it was no less seamless than the transition to our wonderful new managing editor, Sarah Theobald-Hall—one of whose first duties was to coordinate this change in book review editors with me. Despite the belatedness, let me record here my deep gratitude to Marilyn for her ceaseless effort and amazing organization on behalf of the journal and to Lisa for a no less astonishing achievement in picking up precisely where Marilyn left off.

Meanwhile, *Tulsa Studies*'s no-more static "home away from home" online continues to experience major development. While at the time of this writing, our computer-savvy editorial intern Elizabeth Thompson is at work revising our web page design, a new electronic subscription form is already posted and working beautifully. (Please remember how much we rely on your subscriptions; think too of what you miss when, instead of full, shaped issues of this scholarly journal, all you will see are downloadable copies of isolated essays—meanwhile, *Tulsa Studies* keeps its essays in print for five years prior to their online conversion by JSTOR.) All the links on our site are in working order at [www.utulsa.edu/tswl](http://www.utulsa.edu/tswl): for subscription service, simply click "Subscription Information" on our home page.

Always looking ahead to future issues, both "general" issues gathered from the annual floods of regular submissions and "special" ones designed from primarily solicited work, *Tulsa Studies* has issues in hand projected nearly through Spring 2006. Forthcoming probably in the first issue of 2006 is a collection of essays coedited by transatlantic seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholar Laura Stevens with me—on Emotion and Women's Writing. We eagerly anticipate contributions from scholars working in a wide range of periods, including Cora Kaplan, Joseph Bristow, Marianne DeKoven, Lauren Berlant, Stephen Bending, Christine A. Jones, and Cynthia D. Richards, with essays on such topics as "Gender, Journalism, and Judgment: Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and the Affective Politics of Genre," "Women and Animals; Reason for Hope," "'I See Nobody': The Solitude of Lady Mary Coke," "French Fairy Tales, Their Sensible Readers, and the Sensitive Readers They Create," and "Romancing the Sublime; or Why Mary Wollstonecraft Fell in Love with that Cad, Gilbert Imlay."

Fittingly (also coincidentally) this fall 2004 issue marks *Tulsa Studies*'s move to a new home with its lead essay focused on the intrinsic migrancy of "home." Susan Stanford Friedman's "Bodies on the Move: A Poetics of Home and Diaspora" not only analyzes a series of diasporic and nondiasporic situations and writings in order to theorize home and diaspora, but produces a prose poetry of its own around "the affective body" painfully "on the move." As Friedman explains in (and about) this creative essay,

“the space in between . . . engages the heart, even while it tears us apart”; it “occasions the words that are symptoms and signs of survival” and thus “led” Friedman “to string a strand of jarring juxtapositions”: from her daughter’s Pakistani friend Saleema, friend and scholar Aisha Ravindran, friend and retired doctor Marianne Ferrara, and an unnamed South African friend in Madison, Wisconsin, through Asian American writer Meena Alexander, Hispanic Gloria Anzaldúa, Sandra Cisneros, and Américo Paredes, Japanese American Janice Mirikitani, novelist-critic Caryl Phillips, Native American Leslie Marmon Silko and Louise Erdrich, Caucasian American modernist H.D., African American June Jordan, white British modernist Virginia Woolf, and many other writer-critics, to scholar-critics bell hooks, Janet Zandy, Stuart Hall, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Uma Narayan, Homi Bhabha, Shirley Geok-lin Lim, Carole Boyce Davies, Edward Said, Madan Sarup, Roger Friedland and Deirdre Boden, finally to Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Three Little Pigs*, and numerous other adages. “Writing home,” this “necklace of distinct inscriptions: not equivalences . . . echoing each other across chasms of place and time” strings together many of the tropes for “home,” “homesickness,” and “homeland” and engages also the home’s intimate others of the “stranger” and “homeland security.” Publication of this essay in itself registers only a temporary “stay” in its motion from one location to another: first delivered at the Symposium on “Poetics of Dislocation” at CUNY Graduate Center in March 2002, subsequently presented in a revised version as the Women’s History Month Lecture here at the University of Tulsa in March 2003; then again at National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan in May 2004 and American Lebanese University in Lebanon in June 2004, this lecture has already travelled a wide swath of the world in changing and changed forms, until now it is poised in a computer in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in “typeset” form for the further launchings of this journal’s international and, eventually, internet distribution lines.

Though two centuries distant from current discourses of “terror,” Lesley H. Walker’s cautionary essay on one woman writer in France before and after the French Revolution reminds us of the historic sources of “the gothic.” In “Producing Feminine Virtue: Strategies of Terror in Writings by Madame de Genlis,” Walker recovers the often-neglected work of de Genlis and its role in transforming literary mothers from powerful mother-heroines, who secured their daughters’ happiness through “rigorous” instruction, into “passive” mothers who were themselves “persecuted victim[s] of ‘Providential inscrutability.’” De Genlis “wrote” the first “type of heroine out of history.” Practicing what Walker terms an “aesthetics of terror” “harness[ed]” to “a pedagogical project in which fear, fright, and anxiety are understood as necessary components of moral instruction,” Walker

looks particularly closely at de Genlis's play "La Mère Rivale," her first novel *Adèle et Theodore ou Lettres sur l'éducation*, and her post-Revolutionary novel *Les Mères Rivaless ou la Calomnie*, and she surveys the tremendous scope of de Genlis's achievements in her own day.

Mary Jean Corbett revisits the question of who actually was permitted to love whom in Austen's novels in the next essay, "'Cousins in Love, &c.' in Jane Austen." Where *Pride and Prejudice* worked for many years to confirm the anthropological notion that "exogamy" structures the marriage "traffic in women" in England in the nineteenth century and beyond, recent scholars have reminded us that an older model of "cousin love," associated with "the bad old days of unchallenged aristocratic power," remained available to families and writers in the early nineteenth century; it was legal and not considered incestuous. In *Mansfield Park*, Austen portrays love as "home alliance" (where the family is understood as "not itself a fixed unit") and as the "best opportunity to reconcile individual desire and family interest." Yet Austen also rings changes on this model, "significantly modif[ying] the alternative model of marriage in the family" by turning this still-heterosexual plot into a story about "character" and about a woman who is "nobody's property but her own" rather than about "rank, status, or cash."

"Narrat[ing] Some Poor Little Fable': Evidence of Bodily Pain in *The History of Mary Prince* and 'Wife-Torture in England'" juxtaposes a text from 1831 with a text from 1878 to explore two moments in the history of evidence in the nineteenth century: the first, the sole instance of testimony in English yet discovered that was written in the words of a West Indian slave woman; the second, the most exhaustive and definitive study of "domestic violence to date," which resulted in "significant changes in protective legislation for married women." Janice Schroeder examines how definitions and representations of evidence of physical pain shifted in the "humanitarian narrative" of this century. Influenced by the work of Thomas Laqueur, Schroeder looks at how "specific forms of evidence authorize their truth claims" and how the "body of the sufferer is transformed into a site of authority for the narrator and potential intervention for the reader." Viewing feminist theory, as Linda Alcoff has argued, as an effective tool for understanding "the problem of speaking for others," Schroeder argues that humanitarian narratives were not "inherently transformative," but rather "complicit with forms of power that privileged certain members of the social body at the expense of others."

Like all the essays in this issue of *Tulsa Studies*, but more pointedly and deliberately, the following article makes the particularly feminist gesture of pushing "beyond" prior feminisms: presenting a feminist critique of prior feminist readings, Sarah J. Bilston argues against the tendency, once

entrenched, to read covert ambivalence as “evidence of an effort to articulate submerged anger at stifling patriarchal constraints.” Eliza Lynn Linton, with her staunchly conservative domestic moralizing and her intense lesbian eroticism, is nothing if not ambivalent. Yet Bilston persuasively situates Linton within a continuum between “conservative” and “radical” extremes by unfolding Linton’s active participation as an agnostic in the Victorian public intellectual scene. Agnosticism was not a matter of flip flopping, but rather a position embracing uncertainty about and openness to “the unknown.” Linton’s “broad, judicious, and open agnosticism” enabled her even to explore the occult and spiritualist interests of her day. Thus this essay, “Conflict and Ambiguity in Victorian Women’s Writing: Eliza Lynn Linton and the Possibilities of Agnosticism,” is as relevant to the secularist of today’s stormy, heavily evangelically influenced electoral arenas as Friedman’s essay on “home” or Walker’s on pedagogical “terror.” Nonetheless, Bilston also warns against a too easy parallelism between past and present, citing Gillian Beer’s earlier warning against “the critical tendency” to “privilege our view of the world then locate it, magically, in the literature of the past.” In comparison to presentist and/or side-taking approaches, Linton’s metaphysical thinking “allowed for the existence of unsettling, unfathomable, natural forces . . . [it] authorized the individual to hold and adjudicate between ideas that conflicted—to quest rather than to resolve.”

Similarly, G. Matthew Jenkins argues for enlarged attention to the “ethical” in women’s writing. Recalling the absence of any feminist essay in the January 1999 special issue of *PMLA* on “The New Ethical Criticism,” Jenkins points out that this absence may well have derived less from a lapse in the part of that issue’s editor than from a dearth of work on ethics among feminist literary critics. In contrast, much feminist philosophical and theoretical work exists to guide literary critical readings, and Jenkins cites Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva among a host of others in a working list of writers on feminist ethics. Jenkins proceeds to focus on a particular woman poet, Lorine Niedecker, who “has remained relatively unknown despite her overtly ethical and stylistically innovative poetics.” Niedecker, courageous enough to be a poet and an intellectual despite her roots in conservative, rural Wisconsin, “savag[ed] . . . marriage, consumerism, and femininity” within the experimentalist mode of an Objectivist and phenomenological poetry. In “Lorine Niedecker, Simone de Beauvoir, and the Sexual Ethics of Experience,” Jenkins shows how Beauvoir’s feminist ethics can contribute to understanding Niedecker and how Niedecker departs from a Beauvoir-ian ethics. Sharing with Beauvoir a focus on particularity and singularity, Niedecker nonetheless also embraces otherness and alterity where Beauvoir rejected them. Yet for

Niedecker, “otherness” is also not constituted by dialectical opposition to the self or subjectivity, but rather exists beyond such binaries. Thus Niedecker finds an “opportunity for freedom” in sexual difference, and a sexed body that is “intimately infused with an infinite alterity.”

The last essay in this issue, “Re-membering Cassandra, or Oedipus Gets Hysterical: Contestatory Madness and Illuminating Magic in Angela Carter’s *Nights at the Circus*,” joins with Jenkins’s and Bilston’s articles to, in its author Jennifer Gustar’s words, “theorize . . . disbelief.” Corresponding to a theory of disbelief offered, Gustar argues, by Catherine Clément, one may discern a “disbelieving model” of narrative in Angela Carter’s writing. For Gustar, however, the special challenge is not so much to fill in gaps of attention in feminist history as to deal with the present: a postmodern world where there is no choice but to “negotiat[e] the terrain of disbelief.” Gustar’s alternative “Cassandrian model” works to unite “contestatory madness” (that is, theoretical and narrative representations of Freudian symptomology that resist and undercut an oedipal paradigm) with “illuminating magic.” Incommensurable traits are combined in the figure of Cassandra: “in her function as seer, Cassandra is empowered as one who can identify and confer ‘truth’; as a hysteric, she is disempowered, robbed of voice, and mad. Yet these apparently contradictory aspects combine.” Thus “Cassandra represents belief and disbelief at one and the same time.” Cassandra becomes a trope for “possibilities” in feminist fictions.

Writing this editor’s note one day before the 2004 presidential election, I am inclined to imagine the future in Cassandrian terms that are decidedly less full of postmodern possibility than I could wish. “Bodies in motion”—to return to Friedman’s essay—are also “bodies in pain.” Yet for Friedman, too, “writing” bodies in a dual poetics of “home and diaspora” enables a sorcery of possibility to reemerge in narrative paradigms that displace and divert what Schroeder critiques here as the less self-critically “humanitarian narrative” of the past.

Holly Laird  
University of Tulsa