

From the Editor

The last red house is no more. Resettled in our new digs, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* now occupies a couple of rooms in the center of the top floor of Zink Hall—a square modern brown sandstone building wrapped around with pitch-black-tinted, wall-to-wall windows. Our own rooms are lit almost entirely from above through ceiling skylights. We are not likely to get permission from the university to paint anything in these rooms red. But with a shared middle conference-and-photocopier room and entry to the hall alongside our continuing partner in scholarly publishing, the *James Joyce Quarterly*, we find ourselves thoroughly back at work and considerably less off schedule than we feared. Our sincerest hope at this juncture is simply not to move again. For managing editor Sarah Theobald-Hall who rejoined the journal less than three years ago and book review editor Lisa Riggs who rejoined it shortly afterwards, this has been like a baptism in fire. I am profoundly grateful to them and to the support also given by editorial interns Jeni McKellar, Tracy Wendt, and Elizabeth Thompson during this most wrenching of moves.

To speed the publication process, we chose just six rather than our usual seven essays from our short waiting list of accepted articles to fill out this issue along with eleven wide-ranging book reviews; our next issue will bulge correspondingly larger (an exciting issue I will describe further below). To lead off this spring issue, we publish two fascinating articles on the now-well known early modern women writers, Elizabeth Cary and Lady Mary Wroth, which enlarge our sense of these seventeenth-century writers' historical contexts and of the relative possibility for women's agency in those contexts.

In the first of these, "Counterfeit Colour': Making up Race in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*," Kimberly Woosley Poitevin goes beyond prior discussions of this play to show that "early modern women were in fact makers as well as bearers of racial meaning." Women used cosmetics to navigate racial waters, and even when they chose not to use them, they exerted agency in determining whether essentialist ideologies of race were thus undermined or further buttressed. In *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), Poitevin argues, gender and race deconstruct each other, though they do not do so equally in every character's hands. Indeed, Cary's play establishes its heroine, Mariam, as a warning to others that restraint in manipulating cosmetics will not protect them from being read, not only in racial terms, but in terms opposite from what their "natural" whiteface proclaims. In contrast, the cosmetically strategic villain Salome offers an example of pre-

cisely how cosmetics might be deployed to women's advantage. Staged in a pre-Christian and pre-Islamic Palestine, this play also reflects early modern discourses about Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jews and Muslims were conceptualized as both religious and racial in nature, even while much mixing and deception were widely practiced and acknowledged. Citing early modern tracts, Poitevin craftily demonstrates that warnings against the medical as well as spiritual effects of cosmetics, like those delivered by Thomas Nashe, Ambrose Paré, Thomas Tuke, and Richard Haydocke, were "hardly simple public service announcements; instead, they respond[ed] to a common desire to affix somatic signifiers of both moral and racial identities and to punish those women who attempt[ed] to disrupt or change their bodily signifiers."

In the next article, "In This Strang Labourinth, How Shall I Turne?": Needlework, Gardens, and Writing in Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*," Jennifer Munroe shows how Lady Mary Wroth "calls into question the gendered boundaries between [the] different domains" of needlework and gardens, on the one hand, and "laborious studies" and published writing, on the other hand, and how Wroth "contests [Robert] Burton's assertion that women should work with their needles and garden 'instead of' engaging in 'laborious studies.'" Munroe places Wroth's sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1621), in the historical contexts of early modern gardening and needlework practices to show how Wroth plays upon the interlacings of gardening and needlework, turning their overlapping metaphors into metaphors also for writing. Having visited Penshurst—the Sidney family estate where Wroth grew up—in June 2002, Munroe studied the layout of rooms in Penshurst and the reconstructed gardens and, more particularly, the view of the gardens from above through the Solar Room windows, the second-floor room where the women were likely to gather after dinner with their needlework. Munroe teases out the ambivalences inscribed in the figuration of "bands," "knottes," and "labyrinths"—all three of which appear as paradigms in all three domains of needlework, gardening, and writing—in order to emphasize the ways in which women need not merely be limited by (knotted into or bound by) needlework and gardening, but could also use these modes and writing for creative agency. Not merely imitating prior men's craftsmanship nor merely following men's guidebooks for needlework and gardening (among others, Munroe cites as examples William Lawson's *The Country Housewife's Garden* of 1617 and John Taylor's *The Needle's Excellency* of 1624), women both within Wroth's poem and outside it historically used these creative means to make something new. With the aim of publishing her work, however, Wroth pressed further than women needleworkers and gardeners to assume agency also in the nonfeminine realm of public writing.

In the third essay of this issue, “‘I Recognized Myself in Her’: Identifying with the Reader in George Eliot’s *The Mill on the Floss* and Simone de Beauvoir’s *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*,” Laura Green reopens the question of “identification” of readers with the characters of realist fiction. Starting with an insightful assessment of Freud’s classic psychoanalytic theorization of identification and desire, Green’s aim in this essay is not so much to uncover “whether such a perception [of readers’ identification] is accurate” as, first, to demonstrate “how the experience of literary identification within realist narrative works both to sponsor and complicate such feelings; and second, to what extent and why that experience may remain finally limited in its efficacy as a foundation for progressive action.” While women readers have often identified with the apparently transgressive possibilities enacted through the character of Maggie Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss* (1859-60), such readers have also “entertain[ed] the possibility” that Maggie Tulliver’s story is “stultifying rather than liberating” and ultimately produces a *mise-en-abîme*, “foreclos[ing] paths to revision” by subsequent readers. Green then focuses specifically on Simone de Beauvoir’s account of identification with Maggie Tulliver and Beauvoir’s “attempt to ameliorate” these stultifying effects in her explicitly autobiographical narratives in *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (1959). Beauvoir’s project too becomes problematic even in its attempt to “reimagine the fatal identifications” of Eliot’s novel “as relations of acknowledged and productive same-sex desire.” Nonetheless, Beauvoir does exert “the kind of pressure on the ‘heterosexual matrix’” that queer theory has similarly sought to apply to Freud’s heterosexually oriented model of identification and desire. The pleasure aroused by identification is not something that should be altogether dismissed. Moreover, Green argues, texts “that function as favored objects” of “feminist identification” often “themselves question, complicate, and attempt to move us beyond” ideological quiescence.

It is rare for *Tulsa Studies* to publish a scholar’s work more than once: so careful is our regular submissions process (where each essay receives at least two anonymous readers’ detailed reports) and so large the number of submissions that I can count on one hand the number of authors by whom we have published more than one article. In the time of my editorship, Marta Caminero-Santangelo is the third author to have submitted more than one essay ultimately accepted for publication. This second essay represents, moreover, quite a different subject from that of Caminero-Santangelo’s earlier essay on Eudora Welty and madness (vol. 15, no. 1). In “‘The Pleas of the Desperate’: Collective Agency Versus Magical Realism in Ana Castillo’s *So Far From God*,” Caminero-Santangelo demonstrates how important it is that we not continue uniformly to designate novels composed by Latino or Latina writers as “magical realism” sheerly because they

contain “magical” elements. Indeed, she prods us to notice the ways in which “realistic” rather than “magical” elements in the case of Castillo’s *So Far From God* (1994) produce her political message. Scholarship on Latin American authors has unwittingly tended to essentialize those writers by portraying them as merely carrying forward the lineage of the highly popular magical realist Gabriel García Márquez. Thus do scholars lose sight, however, of the extraordinary range of accomplishment among these writers. Castillo’s novel in particular is concerned both with “collective agency,” especially of women, and with “the challenges of environmental degradation and economic injustice”—concerns that she articulates through the realistic portions of her novel. In contrast, the “magical” can produce inertia: as Caminero-Santangelo argues, “potential threats to any sort of effective, active resistance . . . generally take forms that encourage passivity and reliance upon external forces” and are “embodied precisely in many of those textual moments that are marked by their ‘magic’ overtones.”

Although we have received a number of submissions on contemporary writer Barbara Kingsolver’s works over the years, our specialist readers have not previously endorsed them for publication. Thus Kristin J. Jacobson’s “The Neodomestic American Novel: The Politics of Home in Barbara Kingsolver’s *The Poisonwood Bible*” represents the first article on Kingsolver to be published in *Tulsa Studies*. In this essay, Jacobson tracks parallels between *The Poisonwood Bible* (1998) and a famous precursor-novel, Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* (1868), to argue that *The Poisonwood Bible* undertakes a crucial revision of the nineteenth-century American domestic novel. Grounding her approach in Rosemary Marangoly George’s conceptualization of the “recycled” domestic story, Jacobson has coined the term “neodomestic” to identify a range of works that have altered the literary tradition of “cult of true womanhood” novels. In the essay published here, Kingsolver’s novel exemplifies this revisionary trend. Charting ideological as well as generic developments within women’s domestic fiction, Jacobson singles out for special notice Kingsolver’s turn from stability to “instability as the foundation of quotidian American home life.” Further, while in Kingsolver’s novel, Jacobson argues, the American home is a “key site for white privilege’s reproduction,” it is also “a place not necessarily doomed to reproduce forever its imperial history.”

Closing this issue with an essay that is as creatively associative as it is analytic, “Bread and Brandy: Food and Drink in the Poetry of Marilyn Hacker” by Mary Biggs explicates—and celebrates—the culinary dimension of Hacker’s poetry from 1974 to 2003. In this article (like Jacobson’s essay on Kingsolver, this one represents the first of a number of essays submitted over the years on Hacker to reach final publication in *Tulsa*

Studies), Biggs shows how profoundly intertwined food and cooking are with Hacker's primary, usually paradoxical thematics of sex and love, travel and home, and women. Women realize themselves in this poetry, in part, through domesticity. Most paradoxically, Biggs finds the figuration of food and cooking alternately emerging out of and returning to a sense of exile. As Biggs argues, not only do women "make home" through food and drink "in market and kitchen [rather] than at the architect's drawingboard or the construction site," but it is also "more apparent to women" than to men that home "can be made anywhere except in spaces thoroughly corrupted, literally or symbolically, by patriarchal values." Moreover, "to make [home] oneself is obligatory if one is to have a communicative, sharing, loving life—and even constitutes high purpose." Through close readings in particular of "Five Meals," "Omlette," and "Morning News," Biggs also shows, however, that Hacker's sense that civilization may be preserved and even advanced through such values has become far less certain in recent years, and Hacker may, in her most recent volume, have finally left New York City—the home of her birth and much of her adulthood—never to return.

Our forthcoming fall issue returns to New York City to commemorate the life and meditate on the death of former *Tulsa Studies* editorial board member, Carolyn Heilbrun. The fall issue will focus on a special forum of papers gathered from the series of panels organized by Susan Gubar for the December 2004 MLA. Introduced by Gubar, this forum—"The Feminist Legacy of Carolyn Heilbrun"—includes Nina Auerbach's "Tenured Death"; Christine Froula's "On Emancipatory Legacies: A Séance"; Sandra M. Gilbert's "The Supple Suitor: Death, Women, Feminism, and (Assisted or Unassisted) Suicide"; Molly Hite's "We Think Back Through Carolyn Heilbrun If We are Women"; Gail Holst-Warhaft's "Death Unmanned"; Alice Jardine's "The Invisible Woman in the Academy: or, Murder Still Without a Text"; Susan Kress's "The Mysterious Life of Kate Fansler"; Sara Paretsky's "Remarks in Honor of Carolyn Heilbrun"; and Kathleen Woodward's "Performing Age." This forum is not to be missed.

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