From the Editor

Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature has now completed fifteen years of publication. To mark its anniversary, Carol Christ—Vice Chancellor and Provost at the University of California, Berkeley, and an Editorial Board Member of *Tulsa Studies* since its founding issue—visited the University of Tulsa campus on February 10 to speak about "The American University and Women's Studies." We reprint her talk here for the interest of all our readers. In this lecture, Christ considers the spectacular growth of women's studies not only from her perspective as a rising scholar and university administrator who has been involved in the development of women's studies from its inception, but from the perspectives of colleagues and fellow scholars in various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. After assessing the reasons for the rapid growth of women's studies in fields like psychology, English, and anthropology, Christ turns to its complex impact on and contributions to the university, concluding with some thoughts about its future direction.

So varied and independent have been the developments within women's studies, as Christ suggests early in her talk, that narratives of its progress must be equally diverse. My own hope is, first, that such mini-narratives (as Lyotard might call them) will eventually cohere, not in a single, homogeneous, or seamless metanarrative of women's studies, but in a multitextured quilt whose many participants will be able to recognize their hands somewhere among the patches, even while not absolutely identifying with them; and second, that the "ends" of this quilt will continue to emerge with new beginnings for the increasingly multiplicitous populations with which women's studies overlaps.

The history of women's studies at my institution, the University of Tulsa, began almost twenty years ago, rather unusually—as some readers may recall—near the top of the academic hierarchy, with Germaine Greer's establishment of an advanced center for archival study of women's literature and subsequently, in 1982, of a learned journal. Today we may acclaim not only this journal and not only the unique resources at this university for intensive study of women's literature in the Graduate Program in English and in McFarlin Library's Special Collections, but also a vital undergraduate women's studies program that is bringing together some of the university's finest students. As in many other institutions, women's studies is now

represented at the University of Tulsa in departments throughout the College of Arts and Sciences as well as in the humanities and social science departments mentioned by Christ and, notably also, though more sporadically, in the Colleges of Business and Law.

The fact that this enterprise is a genuinely interdisciplinary one was nowhere better demonstrated than in the campus event with which we celebrated the journal's birthday, which began with a recital by our resident chamber group, Trio Tulsa, and culminated with Christ's talk. When Greer started *Tulsa Studies*, she inspired study not only of women's literature, but of many aspects of women's culture and history—most notably, of women composers. Thanks to Greer's inspiration, Trio Tulsa—Anna Norberg on piano, Diane Bucchianeri on cello, and Derry Deane on violin—has recovered and then introduced the work of women composers before audiences around the world; chosen as artistic ambassadors by the United States Information Agency, Trio Tulsa has traveled across four continents premiering women's music. On the occasion of our anniversary, Trio Tulsa played for the large assembled audience stunningly beautiful works by Amy Beach (1867–1944), Clara Schumann (1819–1896), and Gwyneth Walker (1948–).

The process of gathering materials for a special library exhibit honoring the journal's anniversary reminded us how truly distinguished its history has been. In the course of its fifteen-year history, *Tulsa Studies* has twice won the most coveted prize available to journals in literary studies—for "Best Special Issue"—and on a third occasion was named a finalist for this award. This contest, organized by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals, draws competing journals from throughout the humanities, arts, and sciences; and the awards are sought after particularly by journals in literary studies, for which no other national awards exist. Only one other journal, *SAQ*, has received this honor twice. The mission of *Tulsa Studies* is the same today as it was fifteen years ago—to publish groundbreaking scholarship dealing with women writers of the past and present (for details, see the comprehensive Index in this issue)—and it has been pathbreaking as well in its contributions to feminist theorization. The three issues for which *Tulsa Studies* has been recognized in the "Best Special Issue" category include "Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship," edited by Shari Benstock (1984—first place), "Redefining Marginality" (1991—first place), and "Toward a Gendered Modernity" (1989—finalist). (In the wake of these accomplishments, since spring 1994, I have served as an officer of the CELJ—my term as President will finally end later this year in December.)

The history of *Tulsa Studies* is a story, of course, also of struggle—a story recorded in many past Editor's Notes—and so it was especially gratifying to pause for a day to celebrate the good times and the achievements of these

fifteen years. Not least in that history is the house itself in which *Tulsa Studies* is produced, alongside the *James Joyce Quarterly*. Those of you have visited or worked here, or simply follow our movements vicariously from afar, may be interested to learn that the door of the *new* "Red House" in which we reside now glows with a fresh coat of spectacularly red paint, thanks to the extracurricular energy of our editorial interns. The house, though still bedraggled in other spots, is once again worth viewing for its door alone.

Every issue of *Tulsa Studies* becomes at some point in its production my "favorite," and such is certainly the case with this issue. The essays in this issue of *Tulsa Studies* reflect the stunning growth in sophistication and diversity of criticism and scholarship on women's literature since the beginnings discussed by Christ. The lead essay in this issue of *Tulsa Studies*—Meredith Skura's "The Reproduction of Mothering in *Mariam, Queen of Jewry*: A Defense of 'Biographical' Criticism"—investigates matriarchal as well as patriarchal components of family structure, focusing on Mariam's particular position within the family, in order to consider how relationships to women, not only to men, produce female subjectivity. Skura confronts the backlash against biographical criticism in this article, showing that while such criticism has tended to restrict writer and text to the domestic sphere, it need not and indeed should not do so: the "boundary between domestic and public, self-expression and political discourse, is hard to draw," writes Skura, but a more comprehensive biographical criticism could "enrich our sense of the overlapping identifications and antagonisms that create subjectivity in the public world and the complex ways in which both early and later, public and private, companionate and authoritarian contexts combine to produce it." In particular, this enlargement of the biographical background enables Skura to shift attention from previous emphasis on Mariam and Cary's husbands to a number of related characters and issues rarely discussed or even noticed in this play and in Cary's life: especially to *Mariam*'s mother figures—Alexandra, Doris, and Sara—and to the interrelationships between Cary's early life, her Catholicism, and "the whole web of relationships in which marriage exists." Moreover, Skura's Mariam destabilizes the definition of women by defying normative prescriptions of obedience and by "crossing genders" to identify with Caesar and possibly even with Christ.

In archival research into two manuscripts from 1671–1714 containing Elizabeth Freke's autobiographical memoirs, Raymond Anselment uncovers the testament of a woman whose "essential preoccupation" is neither divine providence nor family records, but the author herself. Anselment's article, "Elizabeth Freke's Remembrances: Reconstructing a Self," begins by critiquing the only existing edition of these manuscripts, Mary Carbery's

early-twentieth-century version, which combines and confuses the two manuscript accounts, producing a third version. As Anselment demonstrates, the two original narratives differ both in fact and in their attitudes toward marriage, motherhood, and widowhood. What arises from Anselment's reconstruction is the complex and changing image of a woman "asserting herself against the daily suffering and disappointments of aging and an increasingly isolated gentry life." Like Skura's Cary, Freke replaces the idealized maternal image so often found in women's autobiographical writings with a nurturing father, though neither Cary nor Freke proved happy in marriage. Unlike Mariam, Freke displays no "patient fortitude" toward her lot, but an angry bitterness. Nonetheless, Anselment's Freke faces her disappointments "with unprecedented candor and immediacy," "refusing to succumb completely to paralyzing self-pity." She is "contentious, melodramatic, yet formidable . . . to the end a strong-willed woman intent upon realizing herself despite . . . familial neglect and legal abuse."

Meredith Miller's essay, "Enslaved to Both These Others: Gender and Inheritance in H.D.'s 'Secret Name,'" scrutinizes the final episode of *Palimpsest*, "Secret Name," moving beyond an exclusive focus on women and gender relations to examine the ways this text portrays "a Euroamerican woman's struggle with a British officer for imaginative control over Egypt." Miller first rehistoricizes *Palimpsest* by considering how it is implicated in the 1920s' disputes between England and the Egyptian nationalist movement over ownership of the artifacts uncovered by the Carter-Carnarvon excavations, then reads the last section of H.D.'s text "with close and skeptical attention to its portrayal of Arabs as both more and less than human, to its Orientalist binaries, and to the attempts of the protagonist . . . to claim north African inheritance for Anglo-American women." Yet, Miller argues further, H.D. also acknowledges complicity with "colonialist patterns of discourse" and partially revises traditional, male-centered representations of racial and cultural others by closing with a scene of "covertly" eroticized female bonding between Western women—significantly named Helen and Mary.

Differences produced through intersections not only of gender and race, but of economic and sexual status, are pursued in the final article of this issue, Kimberley Roberts's "The Clothes Make the Woman: The Symbolics of Prostitution in Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* and Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem*." Roberts's essay specifically shows how crucial a figure the prostitute became in the development of the Harlem Renaissance. The "sexualized 'fallen' black woman" acted as scapegoat in both white and black reform literature in the context, on the one hand, of anxieties about economic competition for jobs and interracial sex and, on the other hand, of pious blueprints for racial uplift. Miller argues that the prostitute functioned as the "ultimate commodity" during a period in which the "black

body" had become an "economic quantity for consumption by white audiences in various venues." Yet the prostitute might also participate to some extent in consumer culture, particularly in her deployment of clothes. The codifications of fashion enabled novelists of the Harlem Renaissance, moreover, to figure the complex interrelations of race, gender, sexuality, and class. Larsen's and McKay's novels offer, of course, differing representations of the prostitute, "for while both authors seem acutely aware of the prostitute's position in an oppressive socioeconomic system," Larsen's project focuses more explicitly on the intersections between the prostitute and respectable women, whereas McKay stresses the sheerly metaphoric value of prostitution, particularly the ways in which the prostitute could stand for "the patronized, thereby feminized [Harlem Renaissance] writer." Still, both writers criticize the position of the black sexual woman in this period, and both are prey to a literary marketplace that prostitutes and consumes them.

In addition, in this issue, our Archives section features a bibliography and descriptive publication history of "The Censored Erotic Works of Félicité de Choiseul-Meuse." Beth A. Glessner sent us this bibliography in order to draw attention to "the most daring author to write during early stages of [French] female erotic literature," the Countess Félicité de Choiseul-Meuse. Among Choiseul-Meuse's twenty-seven novels, Glessner finds her three erotic works especially remarkable in form and content as well as in their publication history. While not scandalous when judged by today's standards for sexual literature, these texts were designed to "entertain, instruct," and "shock," yet at the same time they present social critiques of gender inequities in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Moreover, these texts include discussions of how to narrate erotic stories. Glessner offers a listing of Choiseul-Meuse's twenty-seven novels, an overview both of the publication history and of critical reaction to her three erotic texts, and summaries of their narratives.

While this issue's wide range of approaches and authors—from Skura's thoughtful combination of biography, feminist psychology, and acute textual reading of a now-canonical Renaissance woman writer to Glessner's invitation to readers to enter the archives of a little-known French author of erotic novels—is a tribute to the past two decades of feminist literary scholarship, and to the part *Tulsa Studies* has played in fifteen years of feminist publication, we wish to dedicate this issue to the memory of someone who has been central to the practical production of *Tulsa Studies* for the past fifteen years: to Phillipa Harrison, owner of our typesetting company. She was a good friend to *Tulsa Studies*. With deep regret, we print her obituary here.