

Editorial

The editors of *49th Parallel* are proud to announce the journal's thirty-third issue since its inception, now exactly fifteen years ago. While it is fair to say the challenges of running a peer-reviewed periodical have hardly diminished over time in an essentially information-saturated environment, the rewards have been plentiful, and it is with pride and gratitude that we congratulate our contributors on shaping our newest issue and help take *49th Parallel* into its sixteenth year of existence. Thank you all.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our equal gratitude to Sarah Lou Stratton, who served as articles editor for over a year. Lou has parted ways with the editorial team to devote her full attention to her doctoral research at the University of Birmingham, which interrogates the role of pulp fiction and print culture with regard to lesbian community formation leading up to and during the height of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. We wish her the best of luck with her project and future endeavours. Thank you, Lou.

A closer look at the individual contributions of our latest issue reveals a significantly historical angle. With David Parker, Jaci Eisenberg and Andrew Stead, we are delighted to present three strong articles, each uncovering a different aspect of American history. Parker's "The Soldier, the Son, and the Social Scientist" examines three major late 19th century and early 20th century Georgia history textbooks and explores the various ways each one reflects the racial and sectional divides and attitudes of the era. Eisenberg – who we were proud to host at the *49th Parallel* conference at Birmingham in late 2012 – discusses the crucial role assumed by three American women in securing U.S. accession to the International Labour Organisation as an original agency within the now-defunct League of Nations. Finally, Andrew Stead's article on the iconic Senator Jesse Helms investigates the role Helms played in the development of U.S. assistance to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua between 1979 and 1988.

Interestingly, our review panel has taken a similar direction into the field of historical inquiry. With the recent anniversary of the Kennedy assassination in mind, Steven George examines Thurston Clarke's take on JFK's last one hundred days in office and transformation into the enigmatic symbol of Cold War liberalism we remember today. Again with a strong focus on Kennedy, Ashley Phelps and Dr. Roger Chapman turn to Svetlana Savranskaya's edited collection on the Cuban Missile Crisis, which might shed a new light on one of the key episodes in Cold War international diplomacy. With Hildegard Hoeller's *From Gift to Commodity*, Myrto Drizou's review takes on the problem of the literary representation of sacrifice and the exchange of gifts in the increasingly capitalist context of nineteenth century fiction. Finally, Charles McCary and Jaci Eisenberg help uncover *forgotten histories*, with McCary tackling Bill Reese's *Testing Wars in the Public Schools* and Eisenberg offering an astute evaluation of Melissa Fisher's *Wall Street Women*.

This new year promises to be an exciting one for American Studies. The coming summer will see the fiftieth anniversary of the passing and signing into law of the monumental Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as the doomed presidential campaign of Senator Barry Goldwater, a watershed moment for the modern American conservative movement. A quarter century ago, the United States and Canada implemented a first free-trade agreement, ushering in an era of stronger ties and weaker borders. In the literary field, the sad passing of Amiri Baraka earlier this year will no doubt invite a renewed analytical interest in the poet activist's work. Also, the recent publication of Lawrence Buell's ambitious work *The Dream of the Great American Novel* can be expected to add depth to the academic dialogue concerning the status and influence of the novel as literary form. Needless to say, we look forward to future contributions and, once again, thank all parties involved for this brand new issue.

Galatea Demetriou and Bart Verhoeven