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### Note from the Editors

Welcome to the new edition of *49th Parallel*. The last few months has been an important and exciting period of transition for us. We have had a radical redesign, and also changed and strengthened our editorial policy to reflect the quality, dynamism, and probity associated with this e-journal. We have continued to welcome contributions that are at the cutting edge of contemporary thinking, using interdisciplinary and multimedia frameworks, which will provoke and stimulate important debates surrounding the North American continent.

Along with the revamped format and editorial policy, *49th Parallel* will also incorporate reviews of new literature and scholarship with each edition. It is our aim to not only document the past but also to chart contemporary and future trends and movement throughout the various disciplines. In accordance with this aim we are delighted to include eight book reviews relating to US politics thanks to Greenwood's Press. Ranging from the turn of the Twentieth Century, up to present debates about US foreign policy, they represent the first instalment of reviews of some of Greenwood's latest titles.

This issue draws together four articles offering a wide variety of perspectives ranging from Colonial history, to documentary photography in the turn-of-the-century industrial boom, and from the issue of black motherhood in slavery, to that of African-American intraracial subjugation in the twentieth century. While the first two articles are centred on an analysis of religious, historical, or photographic documents, the last two articles concern literary texts, whose main themes revolve around the questions of race and selfhood.

Michael Broek re-reads the history of the Puritans and Pilgrims in the light of the continuing confluence and influence of two philosophical narratives that have deeply informed the American character; the narrative of religious faith that lends itself to Hobbesian, absolutist interpretations, and the narrative of free-thinking, rationalist, humanistic democracy that draws from Lockean source.

Vanessa Raney explores the career of Lewis Hine with a focus on both his stature as a man who "helped to advance documentary photography as we know it today" and on his role as a documentarist who captured a period in America when child labour was a legitimised practice. To this purpose Raney presents a thorough survey of scholarship on Hine's work as a social reform photographer and artist.

Laura Dawkins focuses on the political and cultural usage of the 'black mammy' stereotype in contemporary and modern literature. With reference to the construction of blackness, the symbolic deployment of matricide, and the cultural implications of the 'passing' narrative in literature, Dawkins extracts an argument which contrasts the roles of the 'white mother' and the 'black mammy' in "Her Virginia's Mammy", one of the late nineteenth century 'Northern' writings of Charles W. Chesnut.

Alisa A. Balestra draws attention to the effects of intraracial subjugation within the African-American community in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, and focuses in particular on the concept of "victimization from within" affecting African-American characters in the novel, who act as both the marginalized "Others" and as the oppressors.

We hope you enjoy the new format, but most importantly, we hope you enjoy the articles and the ideas they stimulate. We would also like to invite readers to continue the academic debate through our [discussion forum](#).

This e-journal would not exist without its various contributors, and so we would like to express our sincere thanks to all those who have written for this edition and for keeping intellectual, forward thinking debate alive and vibrant.

KM, ER, & MS

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