



## From the Editor

By Lyn Miller-Lachmann

How we in the United States see the world, and how the world in turn perceives us, has been a major topic in the news in association with the recent presidential campaign. However, the identification and study of global perceptions of America and Americans throughout history has interested scholars of American Studies and its related disciplines for at least a decade.

In the past year, I have seen a steady stream of books on global perceptions of “America” come in for review, the result of this rising academic interest. Alexis de Tocqueville’s observations on the unique culture of the United States, penned in 1837, have served as the foundation of myriad other analyses of American exceptionalism in the years since.

Yet what we call America encompasses two continents, the denizens of which could also be considered American. The United States’s sense of itself as America (when it is in fact merely 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) points to our ignorance of a world that has often seen us as overbearing and insensitive. On the whole, however, the United States has been and remains a welcoming place. Immigrants from throughout the world have found hope, freedom, and economic opportunity. The immigrants’ experiences of living and working together in a new land, far from the sites of ancient rivalries and hatreds, has over the generations smoothed these ethnic divisions. Though our history has been less peaceful, today we do not face the murderous differences that are tearing apart the nations of the former Soviet bloc, for instance.

This welcoming attitude has extended to cultural expressions as well. The oft-criticized dissemination of U.S. popular culture has been accompanied by a quieter phenomenon—the arrival of, and growing support for, artistic endeavors from countries beyond our borders. Immigrants have provided the impetus for much of that cross-cultural movement. But U.S.-born scholars, writers, artists, and other intellectuals have embraced their counterparts from other lands, to the benefit of our entire culture.

Such is the phenomenon described by Jonathan Cohen in this issue’s lead article, “Neruda in English: Establishing His Residence in U.S. Poetry.” Neruda’s appeal to and influence on poets of Latino heritage is well documented; Martín Espada spoke of Neruda’s importance for his own work in an interview published in the spring 2004 issue of *MultiCultural Review*. Yet the first translations of Neruda into English in the 1960s were the work of prominent European-American poets, familiar names such as Robert Bly, Clayton Eshleman, Robert Kelly, W. S. Merwin, Selden Rodman, and James Wright. Neruda—himself influenced by Walt Whitman, as Espada pointed out in his interview—in turn fertilized the work of poets seeking to break with the “dry, impersonal poems of the modernists of the United States and England.” As Cohen documents, Neruda’s romanticism, surrealism, and political concerns all became part of the U.S. poetry mainstream during the turbulent 1960s and early 1970s.

Cross-cultural fertilization is not a phenomenon limited to the United States, though. For several years, *MCR* reviewer Leo J. Mahoney has been living and teaching in Turkey, first in Ankara and now in the provincial capital of Kars. One of his Turkish colleagues at Kafkas University in Kars, Ali Gunes, is a leading expert in the Middle East on the writings of British novelist Virginia Woolf. Mahoney interviews Gunes on the state of Virginia Woolf studies in Turkey and the source of her appeal in this overwhelmingly Muslim nation, with specific reference to the ways in which Woolf’s observations about women in England at the turn of the twentieth century parallel women’s struggles and dilemmas in Turkey today.

“The Native Forum and Beyond at the 24th Sundance Film Festival 2004” also reflects a global conception of multiculturalism. From the general program at Sundance, the feature film reviewed by Christine McDonald, Chris Eyre’s *Edge of America*, portrays an

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Lyn Miller-Lachmann  
mcreview@aol.com

**Managing Editor**  
Valerie Shea

**Layout and Design**  
Wendy Hummel

**Advertising**  
The Goldman Group, Inc.  
Deb Goldman  
deb@ggpubs.com  
(813) 264-2772

**Publisher**  
The Goldman Group, Inc.  
Todd Goldman  
todd@ggpubs.com  
14497 N. Dale Mabry, #205N  
Tampa, FL 33618  
(813) 264-2772

---

**African/African-American  
Studies Editor**  
Itibari M. Zulu

**Art Editor**  
Betty Kaplan Gubert

**Asian/Asian-American  
Editor**  
Jennifer L. Wu

**Book Review Editor**  
Sean P. Maloney

**Editor’s Shelf Editor**  
Larry Shea

**Education Editor**  
Dennis E. Showalter

**Film/Video Editor**  
Christine McDonald

**Internet/Electronic  
Products Editor**  
Frank Alan Bruno  
bruno@coleman.pvam.edu

**Juvenile Editors**  
Oralia Garza de Cortés  
Ginny Lee

**Latina/o Studies Editor**  
Danilo H. Figueredo


**Native American  
Studies Editor**  
Joel Monture

**Serials Editor**  
Renee Rude  
rrude@stcloudstate.edu

African-American coach and English teacher working with a girls' basketball team on the Three Nations Reservation in Utah. Additional films presented as part of the Native Forum at this festival (held annually in Park City, Utah) hail from Canada, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia. The films from Oceania offer broader indigenous perspectives than those found in North America alone. One of those, Vilsoni Hereniko's *The Land Has Eyes*, is the first full-length feature film produced in Fiji by Native Fijians.

Vladimir Wertsman's "Parting Words" column on the Holocaust in Romania honors those who bore witness to the Holocaust—an ever-dwindling number of now-elderly survivors and rescuers—as well as the historians and activists who have kept alive the memory of this terrible time. Their efforts have not been without controversy, as some in Europe and elsewhere seek to deny that the Holocaust existed or to minimize its horrors. Even more have failed to heed its lessons, as the past decade's genocides in the Balkans and Rwanda and the current one in the Darfur region of Sudan demonstrate. Global awareness and appreciation for diversity are our first defenses against

murderous racial, ethnic, religious, and political hatreds; an understanding of our past is yet another tool in our efforts to avoid repeating those atrocities.

This issue includes Isabel Schon's regular feature on recommended books in Spanish for children and adolescents. Readers may note that over the years, this article has grown in length, including publishers of Spanish-language titles located not only in Spain but also in the Americas and more recently in the United States. With more and more publishers producing and distributing original titles in Spanish as well as translations, review sources need to devote more space to evaluating these books in terms of content, illustration, design, and, in the case of books translated into Spanish, the quality of the translation. We are fortunate to have Dr. Schon, the esteemed director of the Barahona Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents at California State University San Marcos, as the author of this article and are pleased to announce that beginning in 2005 she will be reviewing books in Spanish twice a year, in both the summer and the winter issues. 



Dear Editor:

I started reading the article ["Paul Laurence *Who...?*" Fall 2004, p. 34] and stopped after the second voice (Gangi's) because I was thrown by your choice to italicize the Black writer's comments as opposed to those of the White writer. Your choice of type subtly marginalizes the Black speaker. Her words are "faint" and "hard to read" because of the type. Although you needed to distinguish the speakers, your choice of who was "italicized" bespeaks the very "invisibility" which the article attacks. True

devotion to and recognition of multiculturalism requires visual and textual diligence. How African Americans and other people of color are portrayed visually and literally matters.

—Dr. Sandra E. Gibbs  
Associate Executive Director  
National Council of Teachers of English

KELSEY ST. PRESS

**30** ~~years~~  
Go to  
[www.kelseyst.com](http://www.kelseyst.com)  
for special discounts & events

# NEST

MEI-MEI BERSSENBRUGGE  
POETRY

RICHARD TUTTLE  
COVER

WINNER OF THE 7TH ANNUAL  
ASIAN AMERICAN PRIZE  
FOR LITERATURE

"This book unites so many supposedly unreconcilable genres and tones that it's a must-have for anyone interested in the mutation of literary forms in our time. There are group portraits in here that astound. It is a great pleasure to find a book so stubbornly against the literary grain, and so free."

—W.B. KECKLER, *Rain Taxi*  
Paperback, \$14

**Four Year Old Girl**  
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge 1998

**Endocrinology**  
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge /  
Kiki Smith 1997

**Sphericity**  
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge /  
Richard Tuttle 1993

**Instan**  
Cecilia Vicuña 2002

**The Vertical Interrogation  
of Strangers**  
Bhanu Kapil Rider 2001

**Juice**  
Renee Gladman 2000

**Arcade**  
Erica Hunt / Alison Saar 1996

**Under Flag**  
Myung Mi Kim 1991

Kelsey St. Press  
50 Northgate Ave Berkeley CA 94708  
Ph. 510.845.2260 Fax 510.548.9185