

## From the Editor

By Lyn Miller-Lachmann

*The wind came back with triple fury, and put out the light for the last time. They sat in company with the others in other shanties, their eyes straining against crude walls and their souls asking if He meant to measure their puny might against His. They seemed to be staring at the dark, but their eyes were watching God.*

*As soon as Tea Cake went out pushing wind in front of him, he saw that the wind and water had given life to lots of things that folks think of as dead and given death to so much that had been living things....* (Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1998, p. 160)

At the urging of my son I reread *Their Eyes Were Watching God* on vacation this summer, just weeks before the onslaught of Hurricane Katrina. I watched the horrific video footage with Hurston's words running through my mind. Her description of the hurricane in the Florida Everglades is remarkable not only for the way she evokes the power of the storm and the chaotic struggle for survival of the humans and beasts caught up in it but also for her details of the social relations that the storm lays bare. The "people in the big houses" have their seawalls, and when these fail, the white "people" occupy the places of refuge on high ground, leaving the poor black "folks" to fend for themselves along flooded roads filled with corpses and desperate animals also seeking safety. After the waters recede, those in power order the displaced and disenfranchised to collect bodies under the supervision of armed guards. Janie and her beloved husband, Tea Cake, have to slip away like escaped slaves in order to return to their wrecked home.

As in Hurston's novel, those who perished when the levees failed in New Orleans were disproportionately poor, black, elderly, and disabled. Those who wound up in the squalor of the Superdome and the convention center, or all but abandoned beneath highway overpasses just west of the drowning city, were also, for the most part, the poor and people of color. They did not have a car or money for gas and food on their way out; they had no place to stay if they could leave.

Since its inception in 1992, *MultiCultural Review* has been "dedicated to a better understanding of ethnic, racial, and religious diversity." Seeing the footage of Hurricane Katrina's aftermath, I thought of how limited this goal is in a society in which race and poverty too often go together; and in recent years, the poor have experienced increasing immiseration. Underfunded schools, limited access to health care, a minimum wage that has declined in real value, residential segregation and isolation from jobs, and cutbacks in mass transportation that have made families dependent on cars and fossil fuels have hardened class lines. In the region where I grew up, and where the hurricane struck, centuries of slavery and legalized discrimination have assured that the face of the most vulnerable is, more often than not, black.

I fear that the rebuilding will only reinforce the divisions of class and race, as it did in the Florida community depicted in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Already, speculators have moved in to buy the homes and land owned by African Americans in the hardest-hit areas of New Orleans. The federal government has lifted affirmative action and prevailing wage requirements, which in an area only a few decades beyond Jim Crow is a recipe for well-connected companies exploiting black labor. The FEMA-run trailer parks for the evacuees threaten to disenfranchise them politically, economically, and socially in a manner typical of displaced persons camps. An understanding and appreciation of diversity must exist in tandem with a commitment to changing entrenched power relationships that ultimately privilege one class over another, one race over another, one life over another.

Displacement—a direct result of human actions rather than natural events—is a theme of the lead article in this issue of *MultiCultural Review*. Martin Goldberg's essay and annotated bibliography, "The Kindertransport: A Story of Loss and Hope" recalls the rescue of almost 10,000 children who were spirited out of Nazi Germany and Nazi-controlled areas of Central Europe in 1938 and 1939. Most of the children were Jewish; their parents sought safe havens for them in England after the terror of Kristallnacht. Quoting

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

**Managing Editor**  
Valerie Shea

**Layout and Design**  
Jennifer Fitzgerald

**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

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

**Book Review Editor**  
Sean P. Maloney

**Editor's Shelf Editors**  
Kathryn Mora  
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

# The **TP** Bluford Series

OVER  
1,000,000 SOLD!

## Ten Exciting Novels for Middle and High School Readers



### Why these books work:

- High-interest content
- Relevant themes for today's students
- Appropriate for 6th - 12th grade readers
- Teacher and classroom support
- Affordable — available to schools for just \$1.00

### What teachers are saying ...

Students have been begging for copies of the series to take home with them when they leave. Our teachers are delighted and say that they have never had kids give such a positive response to schoolwork.

Kathy Grace Holmes, Ridgeland, MS

Thank you, thank you!!! I am a reading teacher from Rockford, Illinois. This summer I had the great pleasure of using your books in my classroom. My students absolutely loved the books. Several students read ALL 10 of them within a 6-week period . . .

What an asset to teachers of reluctant readers!

Having read them all myself, I think your formula is wonderful. Keep them coming! *The Rocky City, Rockford, IL*

What started as a small wind is now a hurricane. Everyone is elated with the books. It's just amazing.

—Patricia Webb, Pittsburgh, PA

I felt I needed to tell you how much my students love the Bluford Series. Every time I receive a new shipment, I have students in my office throughout the day harrasing them . . . Yes, teenagers like to read—especially when the story is exciting and relevant.

—Marge Yodanis, East Orange, NJ

**TP**

Townsend Press • 800-772-6410 • Fax 800-225-8894 • [www.townsendpress.com](http://www.townsendpress.com)