

## FOREWORD

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Vincent Casaregola

The *Iowa Journal of Literary Studies* is pleased to present its readers with Volume Seven, continuing and expanding upon a tradition of high quality artistic and critical work by graduate students at Iowa. The enthusiastic support we have received from all sectors of the University has helped us to produce our most extensive issue to date.

Once again, we sponsored our annual fiction and poetry competitions, and this year we initiated an award for nonfiction as well. We congratulate Ann Patchett who won the fiction award with her story "For Rita, Who Is Never Alice." We also congratulate Alicia Gaspar de Alba ("*La Llorona* Myth, Revised") and Sheldon Stump ("Untitled") who share this year's poetry honors, as well as Mary Stefaniak, whose critical essay "What We Talk about When We Talk about Style" received the first *IJLS* award for nonfiction.

The competition in fiction was judged by John Gerlach, a Professor of English at Cleveland State University, whose own work has appeared in such journals as *The Prairie Schooner*, *The Ohio Review*, and *The North American Review*. Judging responsibilities in poetry were shared by Professors Melba Boyd and Fred Will of The University of Iowa. Melba Boyd is an Assistant Professor in English and Afro-American Studies and the author of three books of poetry: *Cat Eyes and Deadwood*, *Song for Maya*, and *Thirteen Frozen Flamingoes*. Poet and essayist Fred Will is the Visiting Associate Director of the International Writers' Workshop, and his recent books include *The Sliced Dog* (poetry) and *Shamans in Turtlenecks* (essays). Our nonfiction competition was judged by Professor Nancy Jones of the Department of English and the Rhetoric Program at Iowa. She is co-editor with Carl

Klaus of *Courses for a Change in Writing: Selections from the NEH/Iowa Institute*.

We would like to thank all those who submitted their work to the *IJLS* this year. We were pleased with the large number of high quality submissions, and we hope that this trend continues so that we might some day publish two or three issues each year.

My job as editor was made much easier and more pleasant by the exceptionally talented staff working for the *IJLS* this year. Their unselfishness, dedication, and hard work have produced tangible results, and the fine publication we have to offer you is very much the result of a balanced, team effort.

#### SUBMITTING WORK TO *IJLS*

All students enrolled in graduate programs at The University of Iowa are eligible to submit their writing and/or artwork to *IJLS*. Recent graduates of these programs are also eligible. We accept submissions of poetry, fiction, essays, criticism, book reviews, and artwork from July through January each year.

Though we receive many submissions from students in departments specifically committed to literary study, we want to encourage students in other disciplines to submit their work as well. We would like to see work from all areas—the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, law, medicine, and business. Whether the submissions be works related to literature or to other fields, we are interested in bringing into print the fine work of Iowa graduate students. We hope to represent an increasingly wide range of interests. We would also like to prove false the assumption that literature and writing are the private domains of a small isolated group. In the spirit of Whitman, we wish to contain multitudes. We hope that graduate students throughout the University will respond to our invitation and submit works of all kinds to *IJLS*.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

I take great pride in seeing the quality of work by Iowa graduate students. As editor of the *IJLS*, I have had the opportunity to read and review some exceptionally good writing and scholarship, and I have been allowed to witness the initiative, effort, and discipline that went into producing many of these works. More recognition and appreci-

ation should be given to these students, and I think it is unfortunate that their work is sometimes ignored or underrated.

Our University and our state have endured significant economic pressures in recent years and continue to suffer from them. Such pressures often produce in individuals, and in institutions, a crisis of self-doubt that far exceeds the economic problems. We can be tempted to forget or to undervalue who we are. That is a dangerous state of mind because it can stifle inspiration and initiative just when they are most needed. I hope that we will not succumb to that temptation. We must never lose sight of the qualities that have given this University its most significant endowment—a spirit of honest and unpretentious inquiry, education, and expression.