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Articles on Alice Munro, Eden Robinson, Jacques Poulin, George Bowering, Mazo de la Roche, new Canadian poetry, and book reviews

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October 4 – 7, 2006
The University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada
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This commemorative conference will mark the second anniversary of the death of Jacques Derrida with a celebration of his work and an exploration of its promises, still to come. The occasion will be one for paying homage to Derrida by way of "counter-writing" his texts, or by way of "following," as he understood the term: in response to something other in a work, the attempt to make a difference. Proposals (in the form of a title, 250 word abstract, and a short bio) are invited for presentations from across the disciplines that engage Derrida’s legacy. For a list of topic areas, please visit our website: www.umanitoba.ca/mosaic/news
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INTERFACES 24:
Text and Architecture

Featuring work by William Gass, Ralph Dekonick, Agnès Guiderdoni, Virginia Ragun, Donna Cohen, and others.

INTERFACES, the scholarly journal co-published in a unique collaboration by the College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, Massachusetts) and the University of Paris 7/Denis Diderot, is a bilingual illustrated journal focusing on the dividing line — the "interface" — between language and the image, two means of expression, different and yet interrelated. Founded in 1991, INTERFACES publishes two issues each year. Each issue focuses on a theme drawn from the worlds of literature, linguistics, visual arts, the media, and civilization studies.

For more information, visit http://college.holycross.edu/interfaces or contact editors Frédéric Ogée: ogee@eas.jussieu.fr or Maurice Géracht: mgeracht@holycross.edu.
its articles on Proust, Joseph Roth and the "Yiddishisms" of Abraham Cahan's writings in English. There is nothing in its rubric about submissions to deter such contributions, and the journal could do with more on these other modernisms to complement what it has to say about American literature in its themed issues ("Sexuality and Narrative", "Technocriticism and Hypernarrative", "Gothic and McVeighism").

Not that MFS gives "racechange", for one thematic example, short shrift. On the contrary, this is a particularly successful issue. Susan Gubar, whose 1997 book lends this issue its name, offers a polemical postscript that should be read first, on "the heirs of minstrelsy's stereotypes", these "brutalities of a racist past". Scott Fitzgerald crops up again, this time as the author of The Great Gatsby — a novel about a man who sheds his skin. "The scandal of Jay Gatsby's success", writes Meredith Goldsmith, "can only be described, it seems, through a series of ethnic and racial analogies."

The most intriguing of these pieces is Jinny Huh's account of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Africa. It was there that the creator of Sherlock Holmes met the great abitillitant and former slave Henry Highland Garnet, on a steamship during a voyage of 1881-2, and took many photographs for the British Journal of Photography, including one of a native prince ("His hightness did me the honour of informing me that it was wonderfully unlike him"). No mean detective herself, Huh offers convincing evidence for rereading "The Yellow Face", a Holmes story first published in the Strand Magazine in 1893, in the context of his African travels of the previous decade. It was in this period, no doubt, that he evolved certain ideas about detection that he could not have learned from Dr Bell in Edinburgh.

Race has emerged as a presiding concern of this journal, with its issues on "Queer Fictions of Race" and "South African fiction after Apartheid", as well as a forthcoming special issue on Toni Morrison (echoing MFS's response to Morrison's Nobel Prize of 1993). Issues like these profit from "intersectional approaches" to modern fiction — readings that is, along parallel, complementary theoretical lines. Yet this is very much the creation of the past few years. In the beginning, MFS was predominantly a journal about dead white males — Joseph Conrad, Henry James, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence — although it also managed some live white males (J.D. Salinger, Graham Greene) and the odd female (Iris Murdoch, in 1969 and 2001).

Most consistently, special issues of MFS indicate the continued dedication of American academics to one particular dead white upper-class female, Virginia Woolf, to whom four separate issues have been devoted, from 1956 ("early recognition", according to Laura Doyle) to 2004 (edited by Laura Doyle). These have included checklists of Woolf scholarship and criticism that form a useful whole, and the 1992 issue reprints some previously "unrecorded" TLS reviews with a note by J.J. Kirkpatrick.

The latest in this series within a series is fantastic in the overlap of its contents: it offers Mark Hussey's essay on "Mrs Thatcher and Mrs Woolf", Grantham versus Bloomsbury; Scott Cohen on Woolf's visit to the 1924 British Empire Exhibition, the inspiration for her brilliant essay "Thunder at Wembly"; and Emily Delgarno on Woolf reading Tolstoy. It is Urmila Seshagiri who provides this issue of Modern Fiction Studies with its finishing touch, in the form of "Orienting Virginia Woolf", an essay arguing that "some of Woolf's radical literary innovations arise from a material and a formalist politics of race". Who would have guessed it?

MICHAEL CAINES

**Radical History Review**

Radical History Review is published three times a year by Duke University Press. It is handsomely produced with a glossy, cover, issues normally running to around 200 pages although occasionally, as with the current issue on "Homeland Securities", to over 300. Its day-to-day affairs are handled by its managing editor from offices on the tenth floor of the Talmant Library of New York University, in Washington Square. Overall control of editorial policy, however, is exercised by a Collective of some thirty members, mostly New York-based academics. There is, in addition, a group of some twenty-five editorial assistants, not all of whom are academics, whose expertise in particular fields can be called on as required. According to its guidelines, the journal aims to "explore radical interpretations of the past, further political debate among historians, and stimulate cooperation among all progressive academics and activists".

For the past decade it has been Review policy to organize issues around specific themes, which it advertises a year or more in advance on the internet. It is currently asking for articles on Religion and Politics for the Fall 2007 number, in anticipation of which potential contributors are requested to email abstracts by March 15, 2006. Among the topics it would like to see covered are: religion and state violence; missionary and imperialism; the commodification of religion; intelligent design; and stem-cell research. Although we are not specifically told, it can be inferred that the entire Collective has access to these abstracts and can thereby contribute to the shaping of each number. Once a decision has been made as to the general outline of an issue, two or three members of the Collective then take on the job of actually putting it together.

The range of topics covered reflects the Collective's concern with present-day issues. Among those lately featured are "Terror and History"; "Religious Diversity"; "National Myths in the Middle East"; "Two, Three, Many Worlds: Radical methodologies for global history"; and "Homeland Securities". In fact so relentlessly present-minded is its approach that an untutored reader might well suppose that history did not exist before the twentieth century and only really got going towards its end. But as the guidelines imply, and as is more forcefully spelled out in editors' introductions to individual numbers, disinterested inquiry into past events is not the Review's only, or even primary, concern. As the introduction to the global history issue puts it: "If we mean by radical history a broad project of politically committed, theoretically informed, and methodologically innovative history — concerned with teaching as well as research, activism as well as scholarship, the public as well as the academic — there are many ways for radical historians to contribute to world history. Dissenting antipostcolonial, diasporic, feminist, indigenous, queer, socialist, and subaltern perspectives can make a significant difference. Like old-fashioned Marxists, whose curiously convoluted and abstract language they have inherited, the authors of radical historians would appear to be as much about shaping the future as about studying the past. The same earnestness of intention and clumsiness of expression characterizes many, although by no means all, of the Review's articles. It certainly does not apply to those of R.J. Lambrose, whose sprightly tailpieces on "The Abusuable Past" are a regular feature. Nor can it be said of the admirably well-researched article..."