



# Writing Women

A Newsletter for the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Women Writers Association

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## 2007 BWWC Results in Special Issue of *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*

The editors of *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* are pleased to announce that a special summer issue (number 3.2) featuring keynote talks and selected papers from the Fifteenth Annual Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers Conference is available on-line at <http://www.ncgsjournal.com>. *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* is a peer-reviewed, on-line journal committed to publishing insightful and innovative scholarship on gender studies and nineteenth-century British literature, art, and culture. The journal is a collaborative effort that brings together advanced graduate students and scholars from a variety of universities to create a unique voice in the field. We endorse a broad definition of gender studies and welcome submissions that consider gender and sexuality in conjunction with race, class, place, and nationality.

The special issue includes keynotes by:

- Ann Ardis, Teresa Mangum and Sally Mitchell, "The New Woman's Work: Past, Present, and Future"
- Deborah Epstein Nord, "Outward Bound"
- Laura J. Rosenthal, "Eliza Haywood: Discrepant Cosmopolitanism and the Persistence of Romance"

and conference papers by:

- Susan David Bernstein, "Radical Readers at the British Museum: Eleanor Marx, Clementina Black, Amy Levy"
- Jessica Damián, "Helen Maria Williams's Personal Narrative of Travels from *Peru* (1784) to *Peruvian Tale* (1823)"
- Christine DeVine, "Isabella Bird and Mountain Jim: Geography and Gender Boundaries in *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*"
- Julie Donovan, "Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan) and Walter Scott's Worn-Out Inexpressibles"
- M. B. Hackler, "The Cemetery Tourist: Mourning with Authority in the Travel Writing of Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley"
- Jamie Horrocks, "Camping in the Kitchen: Locating Culinary Authority in Elizabeth Robins Pennell's *Delights of Delicate Eating*"

- Joy Johnson, “Print, Image, and the Cycle of Materiality in George Eliot’s *The Lifted Veil*”
- April Nixon Kendra, “‘You, Madam, Are No Jane Austen’: Mrs. Gore and the Anxiety of Influence”
- Ashley Miller, “Obscurity and Affect in Anne Bannerman’s ‘The Dark Ladie’”
- Gregory Vargo, “Contested Authority: Reform and Local Pressure in Harriet Martineau’s Poor Law Stories”
- Marilyn Walker, “Loci of Limitation and Liberation: Spatial Subjectivity in ‘The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point’”

—Melissa Purdue and Stacey Floyd  
(University of Kentucky)

### **Report from the 2007 BWWC: University of Kentucky**

The fifteenth annual conference, hosted by the University of Kentucky, drew nearly 200 conference participants from across the country as well as from several international locations. Although the weather was *incredibly* chilly for April in the bluegrass state, we still managed to convince a few intrepid presenters to venture to Keeneland Race Track and some other sites in Lexington, including the delicious Dudley’s Restaurant and several used bookstores. Deborah Epstein Nord began the conference with her intriguing keynote address on the female traveler in nineteenth-century England. Intermingled with the successful panel presentations throughout the day on Friday and Saturday, Ellen Bayuk Rosenman and Laura Rosenthal also contributed to our discussions of British women writers with their addresses on Edith Simcox and Eliza Haywood, respectively. On Friday night, the New Woman roundtable featuring Teresa Mangum, Sally Mitchell, and Ann Ardis initiated a fascinating discussion of our roles as scholars and teachers of British Women

Writers, a discussion that gained especial significance from a Special Collections exhibition of correspondence, first editions, original manuscripts by British women writers. Finally, Yolanda Pierce’s presentation on Saartjie Baartman (the woman known as the “Hottentot Venus” in the nineteenth century) served as an appropriate denouement of a conference that always seeks to give voice to the many female historical figures who have been denied such a right in the traditional canon.

—Katherine D. Osborne  
(University of Kentucky)

### **Invitation to the 2008 BWWC: Indiana University**

Indiana University warmly invites you to the Sixteenth Annual Eighteenth-and Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers Conference March 27-30, 2008. The conference theme, “Female Marginalia: Annotating Empire,” invites us to investigate the shifting site of margins and the act of marginalia. Over the course of the conference we hope to encourage a timely discussion not only of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women’s writing, but also the role our scholarship plays in continually defining and redefining the very margins of the field we study.

To help spark this very conversation, at our opening night event Susan Fraiman (University of Virginia) and Ann Cvetkovich (University of Texas, Austin) will head up a provocative round table discussion, moderated by Susan Gubar, on feminism in the field today. We are also pleased to announce our distinguished keynote speakers: Helen Deutsch (UCLA), Richard Menke (University of Georgia), and Claudia Johnson (Princeton University).

In addition to these talented and gracious scholars, we will also be hosting

three exiting exhibits: the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction—created by IU’s famous Alfred Kinsey—will offer a glimpse into the risqué world of Victorian sexuality and colonial erotica; the Mathers Museum will take us to regions across the globe to trek the voyages and display the cultures that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women travel writers explored; and the Lilly Library will offer us, through their rare book collection, insight into the English parlor, the London street scene, and the transatlantic realm of correspondence.

The Indiana Memorial Union, where we will host the 2008 conference, is located in the heart of IU Bloomington’s campus. From the hotel and conference rooms, attendees can gaze out across the busy campus and see the daily student life of this Big 10 University. More importantly, the IMU houses two coffee shops (including a Starbucks), a food court, a restaurant, a game room, cozy places to prepare papers, and is a quick walk to downtown Bloomington—a full-fledged university town of shopping, restaurants, and coffee shops. Be sure to check our website for the call for papers, updates, and further information:

<<http://www.indiana.edu/~bwwc/index.htm>>.

We look forward to seeing you in Bloomington!

—Miranda M. Yaggi  
(Indiana University)

### **BWWA Website Has a New Home**

This summer, the BWWA homepage and email address moved from the University of Kansas to Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne corresponding to the migration of its webmaster from the Sunflower State to the Crossroads of America. Thank you to the University of Kansas for hosting our website for the last five years!

The new addresses are: <<http://www.ipfw.edu/bwwa>> and <[bwwa@ipfw.edu](mailto:bwwa@ipfw.edu)>. Please update your links accordingly.

### **Call for Chicago-Area Brontë Scholar**

Looking for a Chicago-area Brontë scholar who can participate in various activities (December 2007–February 2008) related to the presentation of “Written on the Body,” a modern dance work which uses the story of the literary Brontë sisters as a point of departure in its exploration of gender roles and stereotypes. Using images of power, strength, vulnerability and intimacy, and exploring how each attribute can be related through movement; TDC Artistic Director Margi Cole interprets the Brontës’ masculine and feminine personas. This work will be presented at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago in February 2008. If interested, please contact Margi Cole, Artistic Director, The Dance COLEctive, 300 N. State, Suite DD, Chicago, IL 60610; (773) 604-8452; <[www.dancecollective.com](http://www.dancecollective.com)>.

### **Art Exhibit Explores the Creativity of Women Writers**

Between the Lines (accessible on-line at <<http://www.arinfay.ca>>) combines visual and textual works to explore the creativity of women authors. The exhibit is about the impossibility of objectivity, the idea that without influence, without subjectivity, there can be no creativity. Such concepts are reflected in the highly stylized, yet impressionistic, forms, and images that are presented. The lines build character even while they evoke fragmentation; they suggest that all details are fundamentally distractions, and prone to variance; details can build, they can erode, and they can destroy. The work questions the authority of ownership and the construction of creation in the light of such

disorder and proposes a perspective that rejects the ‘typical’ and the ‘traditional’ even while it works within a recognizable framework; a perspective that lends itself well to female expression. The work, while intended as a tribute to specific female writers (Iris Murdoch, Jean Rhys, George Eliot, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Charlotte Bronte, Ethel Wilson, Flannery O’Connor, Alice Munro, and Toni Morrison) also explores the liminal space between the creator and the created, the superseding but by no means authoritative perspective of the observer, and the overarching influences of society and time, both past and present. In the creation of art, every line, every nuance has a history (language has luggage; colours have context; personalities have precedent) and it is the recognition and use of these factors that makes for emotive art, interesting individuals, and compelling contradictions. The writers that are depicted have become, by their own acts of creation, creations in themselves, a process that is infinite and ever-changing. They, like all artists, stand alongside their work like indistinct architects, integral to every aspect, and yet, distanced by factors both fathomlessly large and excruciatingly small.

Between the Lines is a work in progress, an ongoing attempt to challenge the obstinate undercurrent of academic assumption that there are only a handful of ‘memorable’ or ‘worthy’ female writers within the literary canon. I believe strongly that ‘their’ work is made all the more remarkable for the historical omissions and androcentric ignorance that works to obscure it. It is both enlightening and empowering to focus my artistic lens upon these awe-inspiring women and I hope to continue to do so, as the list of deserving women is long, and always growing...

—Arin Fay

## **From the Editor**

In a future issue, we will be featuring information about past conference co-chairs and committee members in a “Where Are They Now” article. If you were involved in a past conference, send us an update on your latest successes to <bwwa@ku.edu>.

We encourage all members to pass along information about conferences, publications, and awards so that they can be shared with everyone (shameless self-promotion strongly encouraged!). Submissions may be sent to <bwwa@ku.edu> by February 15 for inclusion in the spring issue and by August 15 for inclusion in the fall issue.