

From the Editor . . .

Our Spring 2018 issue of *Nineteenth-Century Prose* as usual has a wide range of subject matter. The articles begin with Patrick Thomas Morgan's essay on Henry David Thoreau's "Biological Aesthetics," which picks up where the previous issue – a special issue dedicated to the celebration of the bicentennial of Thoreau's birth – left off. And the following essay by Douglass Madison Furrh on the historical and cultural backgrounds of Herman Melville's "Bartleby," expands to include important trans-Atlantic currents including the European revolutions of 1848 and the works of Karl Marx, who was a prolific editorial writer for Horace Greely's *New-York Tribune* during the period leading up to the publication of Melville's otherwise enigmatic story. *Nineteenth-Century Prose* generally doesn't publish essays on prose fiction unless the predominant emphasis is on cultural and historical background or the history of ideas, and in this case the intersection of Herman Melville and Karl Marx provides a context that enriches the story and expands its significance to shed light on economic history and Ante-Bellum culture in the United States, including abolition debates during the period. In short, it's just the kind of international and interdisciplinary essay that is most suited to *Nineteenth-Century Prose*. And Furrh's essay is followed by Kevin A. Morrison's essay on French perceptions John Morley, whose Parliamentary work included support for home rule in Ireland, which thus introduces additional international intersections that raise questions of British imperialism and British-French cultural relations.

The review essays in this issue are also wide ranging. Li-Hui Tsai's review essay explores ideas that play out on the cusp between Enlightenment and Romanticism, with special attention to William Godwin – a nice supplement to the special double issue of *Nineteenth-Century Prose*, Vol. 41, Nos. 1/2: Spring/Fall 2014, on William Godwin. Of course the usual suspects are addressed, including Wordsworth, Coleridge, Mary Shelley, Rousseau, Hume, Adam Smith, and a host of

German philosophers. And in Joanne Wilkes' review essay on "Women and Nineteenth-Century Periodicals," we're given a broad social history that goes beyond gender criticism. Finally, as a former Emersonian, I especially enjoyed Steven G. Affeldt's essay on "Metaphysical Emerson," which echoes some of my own attitudes from decades past. These three very different essays are nice examples of wide-ranging intensive and extensive critical exercises that are especially appropriate to *Nineteenth-Century Prose*.

The remainder of the issue consists of 14 reviews, generally arranged according to chronology and from broad, wide-ranging topics to more narrow and intensive topics – from consideration of aspects of Victorian civilization, popular culture, travel writing, the politics of American Transcendentalism, a really fine review of Laura Dassow Walls' recent biography of Henry David Thoreau (my measure of a 'fine review' is whether it makes me buy the book under review), and a cluster of excellent reviews of recent work on John Ruskin, spear-headed by Sara Atwood, who is no stranger to *Nineteenth-Century Prose*. The review section concludes with a late Victorian and 'post'-late Victorian review on Conan Doyle and *The Strand Magazine*. Normally we take the nineteenth century to begin somewhere around 1776 or 1789, extending to around 1914 with the outbreak of World War I. However, writers and ideas often refuse to conform to our chronological periods.

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