

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

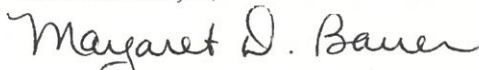
I first learned about the *North Carolina Literary Review* when I saw a call for submissions from graduate students sent out by Alex Albright before the magazine's first issue. A graduate student at the University of Tennessee at the time, I submitted a paper on Lee Smith's novel *Oral History*, and although Alex didn't accept it, he did send me a copy of the first issue. Little did I know then that I would end up editing this remarkable publication! I plan to continue many of the practices of the *NCLR* established by Alex, including his interest in publishing the work of new scholars of North Carolina literature, history, and culture, evidenced by his call for papers from graduate students. Hence, this issue includes a paper by a current graduate student at the University of Tennessee – on *Oral History* – as well as the oral history project of a UNC-CH PhD candidate.

My first year serving as Editor of *NCLR* has been a busy one, so I am taking this opportunity to thank the numerous people who have helped me through it. To start, Alex Albright, founding Editor of *NCLR*, has been an invaluable source of information and encouragement. The *NCLR* staff, beginning with Graduate Assistants Jennifer Baines and Crystal Wade, Senior Editor Lorraine Robinson, and Art Director Mary Thiesen, and including several undergraduate ECU student interns (see list in front matter), have worked very hard all year to help me put this issue together as well as moving and setting up the new *NCLR* office. Several of my other ECU colleagues have read manuscripts for us this year (please see Editorial Board for list); I thank them all, but I will mention in particular Pat Bizzaro, for helping to select and edit the papers for the Fiction of Fred Chappell special feature section, and Julie Fay, *NCLR*'s new Poetry Editor. I also thank W. Keats Sparrow, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at ECU; Bruce Southard, Acting Chair of the English Department; the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association for their support of the *NCLR*; Tom Douglass, Editor of the 1997 issue of *NCLR*, for teaching me *NCLR*'s editing process, and *NCLR*'s former Art Director Eva Roberts for her advice. And I express special thanks to Angel Savage, Assistant to the Chair of the English Department, for her patience and hand-holding as I learned the bureaucratic ropes of managing the *NCLR*.

With regards to the content of my first issue of *NCLR*, I express my deep appreciation to Lee Smith and Fred Chappell for responding so quickly to my requests for stories. It is appropriate that my first issue have stories by these two North Carolina literary stars. The same Lee Smith novel on which I submitted a paper back when I first heard about this publication inspired my decision to feature *Oral History* in North Carolina in this issue. And on my way to interview for my position here at ECU, I read Fred Chappell for the first time. I am a scholar of Southern Literature in general and was working on increasing my repertoire of North Carolina writers in hopeful anticipation of being offered the position at ECU, which would involve editing this North Carolina-centered publication and teaching classes in North Carolina Literature. So I read *I Am One of You Forever* during my flight to Greenville. Like Hal McDonald's students (see his paper with-in on the magic realism in Chappell's fiction), I got to the chapter on "The Beard" and was mystified, intrigued, and hooked. I believe our readers will enjoy these two special feature sections of this issue of *NCLR*.

My final expressions of appreciation go out to this issue's other contributors – writers, photographers, and artists – and the many *NCLR* readers whom I have already had the opportunity to meet in person or via letter, phone call, or e-mail. I appreciate the good wishes that have been offered to me as we strive to maintain the high standards set by Alex Albright. Although I am sure readers will notice changes that occur with any editorial transition, it is my hope that our readers will enjoy the traditions we continue, as well the new and expanded sections we offer, as much as I am enjoying editing the *NCLR*.

Let us hear from you,



Margaret D. Bauer, Editor