

Sarah E. Clere

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EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC

Ph. D. (English) (May 2011)

Major: Twentieth-Century American Literature; *Minor:* Early American Literature
Additional Areas of Specialization and Interest: Southern Literature, African American Literature, Literature of the American West, Children's Literature.

Dissertation: "Troubling Bodies in the Fiction of Willa Cather"

Director: Joseph Flora

Readers: Connie Eble, Minrose Gwin, Fred Hobson, Linda Wagner-Martin

"Troubling Bodies" examines Willa Cather's use of the human body as a means of foregrounding a range of economic and social concerns. I argue that for Cather the body provides a vehicle through which she explores potentially volatile issues that both the restrictive cultural climate in which she wrote and her own aesthetic sensibilities made it difficult to pursue rhetorically. In locating these issues on and around characters' mutable bodies, Cather subtly demonstrates a significant engagement with contemporary culture. At the same time, she avoids didactic and discursive rhetoric that might have cluttered her famously smooth prose and overt political stances that could have bound her fiction too closely to contemporary events, rendering it irrelevant and anachronistic to later audiences. Ultimately, Cather's treatment of the body contributes substantially to her status as a modernist, allowing her to resist enclosure within such potentially limiting frameworks as regionalism or local color. Tracing this idea across an array of novels, I consider Cather's treatment of bodies in *The Song of the Lark*, *One of Ours*, *The Professor's House*, *My Ántonia*, and *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*.

M.A. (English) May 2004

Thesis: "'And How Shall I Get to See You?': Figurative Language and its Function in the Letters of Molly Goodrich"

Director: Connie Eble; *Reader:* Philip Gura

University of North Carolina at Asheville, Asheville, NC

B.A. (Literature and Classics) May 2001

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

"Cather's Editorial Shaping of *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*." *Willa Cather and Textual History*. Ed. Andrew Jewell. Spec. Issue of *Studies in the Novel*. (forthcoming 2013).

"The Trajectory of Benevolence: Progressivism in The Little Colonel Books." *Children and Youth in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era*. James Marten. New York UP. (forthcoming 2013).

"Thea's 'Indian Play' in *The Song of the Lark*." *Cather Studies 9: Willa Cather and Modern Cultures*. Ed. Melissa Homestead and Guy Reynolds. U of Nebraska P, 2011: 21-44. (Choice Highly Recommended Book)

"Locating Mexicans in *The Song of the Lark*." *The Song of the Lark*. Ed. Debra L. Cumberland. *Dialogue Series*. Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2010: 149-63.

"Faulkner's Appropriation of 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' in *The Hamlet*" *Mississippi Quarterly* 62.3 (2009): 443-56. [issue did not appear until 2010].

With co-author Jennifer Larson. "David Walker's Vision: Constituting Black National Identity, Re-Constituting America in the *Appeal*." *Loopholes and Retreats: African American Writing and the Nineteenth Century*. Ed. John Gruesser and Hanna Wallinger. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2009: 17-30.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

"June 28, 1938" *The Willa Cather Newsletter and Review* (forthcoming 2013).

"Recalling Northampton: Elisabeth Bayley and Sarah Clere Discuss the 2011 Willa Cather International Seminar." *The Willa Cather Newsletter and Review* 55.2 (2011): 14-16.

"Alan Massie." *Dictionary of Literary Biography: British and Irish Novelists Since 1960. Vol 271*. Ed. Merritt Moseley. Detroit: Gale, 2002.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

"Testing the Body's Limits in *The Sharp Teeth of Love*." Panel Honoring Doris Betts. South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Durham, NC. November 9-11, 2012.

"The Homestead Act and Frederick Jackson Turner's Closed Frontier in Willa Cather's *One of Ours*." Center for Great Plains Studies 2012 Symposium: *1862 and the Making of the Great Plains: A Year of Sesquicentennials*. University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE. March 28-30, 2012.

"'It Was the Happiest Face I Had Seen Since I Left Virginia': Race and Southern

Identity in *My Ántonia*." The Center for the Study of the American South. *Lunchtime Conversations at the Center*. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, September 10, 2008.

"Gender and Power in Three 1930s Strike Novels." Southern Research Circle, The Center for the Study of the American South. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, November, 2006.

GRANTS

Center for Great Plains Studies Travel Grant, 2012

James and Roberta Woodress Summer Research Fellowship at the University of Nebraska, 2011 (awarded 2010)

Willa Cather Foundation Travel Grant, 2011

Center for the Study of the American South Summer Research Fellowship, 2006

UNC-CH English Department Travel Grants, 2005, 2007

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Class, Labor, and the Body in *The Professor's House*." Willa Cather International Seminar, Northampton, MA. June 2011.

"Interlocking Games in Willa Cather and William Faulkner." Panel sponsored by the Willa Cather and William Faulkner Societies. American Literature Association, Boston, MA. May 2011.

"Corporeal Absence in Willa Cather's *The Professor's House*." The Philological Association of the Carolinas, Charleston, SC. March 2010.

"Playing Indian in *The Song of the Lark*." American Literature Association, Boston, MA. May 2009.

"*Jindabyne* as Counterpoint to Raymond Carver's 'So Much Water So Close to Home.'" Western Literature Association, Tacoma, WA, October, 2007.

"The Iconography of Dailiness in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*." American Literature Association, Boston, MA, May 2007.

"Outsiders in Willa Cather's South." South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Charlotte, NC, November 2006.

“Gene Stratton Porter’s Anxious Progressivism.” Popular Culture Association in the South, Jacksonville, FL, October 2005

“Significant Domestic Spaces in Thomas Wolfe’s *O Lost*.” The Thomas Wolfe Society, Portland, ME, May 2005

“‘And How Shall I Get to See You?’: Figurative Language and its Functions in the Letters of Molly Goodrich.” The Philological Association of the Carolinas. Myrtle Beach, SC, March 2005

“The Frontier as Pastoral in Thomas Wolfe’s *O Lost*.” The Thomas Wolfe Society, Asheville, NC, May 2004.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

The Willa Cather Foundation

The American Literature Association

TEACHING

Visiting Assistant Professor, English Department, The Citadel, August 2008-May 2009 and August 2011-present.

Courses taught:

Masterpieces of American Literature (1 section), Fall 2011. This course is very similar to the survey I taught at UNC; however, The Citadel requires a particular anthology, and multiple authors and selections changed as a result. Masterpieces of American Literature includes many masterpieces, covering a broad swathe of territory from the seventeenth to the late twentieth centuries. The syllabus begins with the poetry of Anne Bradstreet and ends with *Fences*, by August Wilson, with authors such as Rowlandson, Irving, Dickinson, James, Chesnut, Cather, Eliot, R. Wright, and O’Connor coming in between. Throughout the course I emphasize the development of a self-conscious national literature and the ways it both reflects and influences shifts in majority and minority opinions of what it means to be (or not be) American.

Major British Writers II (4 sections), “Romantic to Postcolonial.” Fall 2008, Spring 2009. As the title indicates, this is the second course in The Citadel’s two part British Literature sequence. Beginning with William Blake and ending with Salman Rushdie, we analyze a diverse range of authors from the Romantic, Victorian and Modern periods. The course pays particular attention to Britain’s imperialism and its influence on canonical British writers. Awareness of the influences of colonialism—both overt and subtle—prepares students for the end of the course when we explore the phenomenon of Commonwealth Literature.

English Rhetoric and Composition (5 sections), "Introduction to Literature." Spring 2009, Fall 2011. Introduction to Literature is the second course of the Citadel's composition requirement. In this class students learn to speak and write about three different genres of literature: poetry, short stories, and drama. English 102 combines an emphasis on literary analysis with attention to more sophisticated aspects of writing, particularly organization and tone. Significant attention is paid to revision, and to that end students begin each paper with a substantive rough draft.

English Rhetoric and Composition (2 sections), "Getting Your Point Across." Fall 2008. In this first section of the Department's composition requirement, students learn the basics of college-level writing. The class emphasizes process with required rough drafts, peer review, and modeling. Students also read and discuss *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, by Anne Fadiman, ultimately writing a final research paper on an issue from the book. In addition to being a central thematic text in the course, Fadiman's book works well as a professional model of clear, interesting prose geared toward a wide audience.

Teaching Fellow, English Department, UNC-Chapel Hill, August 2003-May 2008.

Courses taught:

American Literature Survey (two sections, full responsibility), "Creating a National Literature: from John Winthrop to Rita Dove." Fall 2007. The Department's basic survey of American literature moves from its colonial beginnings to the late twentieth century. In this class I combine canonical authors Franklin, Douglass, and Faulkner with less-studied writers including Sarah Kemble Knight, Harriet Jacobs, and Zitkala Sa, focusing on the ever-widening cultural and geographical sweep of American literature.

Introduction to Poetry (one section, full responsibility), "Poetry and Poetics" Spring 2007. Students read numerous British and American poets, including Philip Sidney, John Donne, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, T.S. Eliot, Langston Hughes, W.H. Auden, Gwendolyn Brooks, Anthony Hecht, Elizabeth Bishop, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Charles Wright. Rather than work within a strictly chronological framework, the class spent the first half of the semester focused on form and poetics, enabling the comparison of poems from different historical periods. Understanding scansion, lineation, rhyme scheme, and other formal poetic elements enabled students to analyze poems with greater precision and clarity. In the second half of the semester, the analytical focus shifted to each poem's cultural and historical context, and students were encouraged to read poems as produced by and producing the environments in which they were written.

English Rhetoric and Composition "Writing About Literature" (two sections, full responsibility), Spring 2006. In this course, part of UNC's interdisciplinary "Writing in the Disciplines" program, a group of freshmen took my writing class in conjunction with a

section of Introduction to Fiction. I worked closely with the literature instructor to create assignments that would deepen students' understanding of the material as well as refine their analytical writing skills. This course had the additional benefit of allowing me to learn from a tenured professor's course materials and teaching.

Film Analysis (one discussion section), Fall 2005. This class consisted of film screenings and small discussion group meetings. The goal of the course was to give students a critical and technically-specific vocabulary for talking about both the aesthetic and thematic qualities of film. The class encouraged the dual examination of films as both art objects and cultural artifacts.

English Rhetoric and Composition "Writing in Academic Disciplines" (six sections, full responsibility), Spring 2004, Fall 2004, Spring 2005, Fall 2006, Spring 2008. In this course, the second semester of the English Department's composition requirement, students practice research writing in the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Humanities. The course is focused on helping students assimilate the discourse conventions of each academic discipline while strengthening their writing ability.

English Rhetoric and Composition (one section, full responsibility), "From Thesis to Research," Fall 2003. This course, the first semester of the English Department's composition sequence, concentrates on introducing students to the most basic elements of academic writing. Particular attention is given to drafting and revision, and the semester culminates in a formal research paper.

SERVICE

Coordinating Group Leader, 2006-7, Writing Program, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Led a group of graduate student writing teachers in meetings which emphasized Pedagogical development.

Creative Speakers Chair, 2004-5. Association of Graduate Students in English.

Arranged for authors to give readings to interested members of the UNC community

Conference volunteer: New Directions in American Indian Research, UNC-Chapel Hill, 2005.

Conference volunteer: Society for the Study of Southern Literature, UNC Chapel Hill, 2004.

REFERENCES

Joseph M. Flora, Atlanta Professor of Southern Culture,
Department of English, UNC-CH, Campus Box 3520, Chapel Hill, NC 27516,
jflora@email.unc.edu.

Connie C. Eble, Professor of English

Department of English, UNC-CH, Campus Box 3520, Chapel Hill, NC 27516,
cceble@email.unc.edu

Fred Hobson, Lineberger Professor in the Humanities
Department of English, UNC-CH, Campus Box 3520, Chapel Hill, NC 27516,
fhobson@email.unc.edu.

Guy Reynolds, Professor of English, Director of the Cather Project
Department of English, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 337 D Andrews Hall, Lincoln,
NE 68588, greynolds2@unl.edu