

Note from the Editors

As *American Studies in Scandinavia* moves into its 36th year, there has been a changing of the editorial guard. In keeping with the best traditions of the parent organization – the Nordic Association for American Studies – this involves a rotation not only of personnel but of countries. For the past 8 years journal editors have been David Nye and Carl Pedersen (University of Southern Denmark), while Dale Carter (Aarhus University) has served as book review editor. The new journal editor is Per Winther (University of Oslo), joined by Arne Neset (Stavanger University College) as book review editor.

The new editors note with keen satisfaction that the journal is in very good shape indeed, and would like to express sincere thanks to the outgoing editors for their splendid stewardship. In addition to maintaining high editorial standards throughout, they have modernized *American Studies in Scandinavia* in ways that have made the journal more attractive than ever: general, multidisciplinary issues have alternated with Special Issues, guest-edited by scholars from the Nordic countries; the book review section has been expanded, keeping the readers updated about recent developments in American Studies from a Nordic as well as an international perspective; in recent years the journal has been given a new and pleasing design; and, not least important, the former editors have developed very sound organizational and business relations with the publishers, The University Press of Southern Denmark.

As new editors we wish to build on all this good work. We are very happy that UPSD will stay on as publishers, looking after printing, finances and circulation; special thanks go to David Nye for setting this up and for assisting liberally in the transition from Danish to Norwegian editorship. Furthermore, Charlotte Granly of the Department of English

at the University of Southern Denmark has kindly agreed to remain in charge of layout, which we are very grateful for.

Continuity is a priority, but the new editors will also seek to stay abreast of developments in the world of journal editing. One move in this direction is the establishing of a new editorial board, to be made up of experienced international scholars with distinguished publication careers of their own, who can offer advice on general journal policy as well as on the editing of individual submissions. This idea, which as new editors we applaud, was suggested to us by David Nye and we are grateful to him for agreeing to chair this new board. Another step which we hope will enhance the professional profile of the journal is systematic peer reviewing. While peer reviews have been used also in the past, the outgoing editors tell us this has happened on an ad hoc basis; we now wish to establish peer reviewing as official journal policy.

One of the challenges of editing a journal like *American Studies in Scandinavia* is the multi- and interdisciplinary makeup of the readership; our readers have varied backgrounds and expectations that one must try to balance against each other – if not in every issue, then over time. One suggestion which came up at the recent Business Meeting of the Nordic Association for American Studies in Trondheim was to open up the pages of the journal also to less strictly academic/more creative contributions: poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, interviews. While we definitely want to uphold the scholarly profile, the new editors would like also to invite submissions that break the traditional mold perhaps a little. A case in point is Robert Baehr's contribution to the present issue, mixing the genre expectations of academic address with those of the personal essay; we welcome other, similarly inventive contributions in the future.

A journal is only as good as its readers. We invite your suggestions – certainly in the form of submissions, but also in terms of hints about books that deserve reviewing, plans for special issues, or simply ideas that you think may improve the journal's profile. Circulation is a most crucial factor when it comes to the health of any journal. We encourage you to be creative also in this area. Is the library of your institution a subscriber? Are your immediate colleagues aware of the journal? How about

visiting scholars? Fulbrighters? Let us all work together to keep producing the kind of journal we as dynamic professionals in the field of American Studies deserve.

Oslo and Stavanger February, 2004

Per Winther
Editor

Arne Neset
Book review editor