

Editor's Column

With the present issue *Oral Tradition* enters the next millennium—as long as we forgo mathematical niceties, of course. Whatever the case, volume 15 unambiguously marks a decade and one-half of publication, enough time to see many changes take place in the field of research we serve.

Fifteen years of continuous publication didn't happen by accident, and so it seems appropriate to take a moment to thank those who have worked so hard—in the front lines and behind the scenes—to bring us to this point. In a real sense the history of *Oral Tradition*, and of the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition, begins and ends with the University of Missouri-Columbia. In 1985 then-Dean Milton Glick and then-Provost Gerald Brouder created the Center as a facility to serve the international community through editorial activities, lecturers, conferences, and seminars. It was Associate Dean Ted Tarkow's vision that moved the plan forward and helps maintain it to this day, ably abetted by former Dean Larry Clark and present Dean Richard Schwartz. We owe the journal's support on the MU campus to these stalwarts.

Equally instrumental from the planning of the first issue onward was Professor Charles E. Gribble, former president of Slavica Publishers, who signed onto this project when it was simply a (wide-eyed) idea. Under his guidance we passed through many technological stages and built an international audience for the comparative study of the world's oral traditions. Two years ago, Slavica, which was founded by Chuck Gribble, moved on to the stewardship of Professor George Fowler of the Slavic Department at Indiana University.

In editing *Oral Tradition* I have been lucky enough to benefit from the expertise and devotion of a long line of editorial assistants from the departments of Classical Studies, English, and Religious Studies at Missouri. I despair of naming them all here—their names are faithfully inscribed in the individual mastheads of the issues they helped to “birth”—but my gratitude is, as Homer would say, *aphthiton* (“undying”).

Finally, to our dozens of authors, who sent us their best work, and to our dozens of reviewers, who contributed both time and expertise to our ongoing joint project, I offer deep thanks. Your ideas are what made *Oral Tradition* the venue it is and aspires to be.

Any *envoi* worth the name also looks to the future, and so I close by taking advantage of this moment to ask our readership for two things. First of all, we want your manuscripts—whatever the tradition, whatever the perspective. We will try to continue our small tradition of fostering as broad a discussion as possible.

Second, we want your subscriptions. At a mere twenty dollars per year (for two issues of about 400 pages total), we feel *Oral Tradition* is perhaps the best value since the start-up days of that computer company identified by the fruit as a logo.

We welcome your ideas, contributions, and, of course, your subscriptions.

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