

Editor's Introduction

Just as the early springtime atmosphere brings with it mixed feelings of slight uneasiness and yet growing expectation, so, too, did my first view of the galley proofs for the latest issue of *The Japanese Journal of American Studies*. On the one hand, the printing process of the *Journal* is now mostly carried out electronically, so mechanical errors may occur at any stage of the production and in most unexpected places. On the other hand, the substantial content of this issue makes me feel quite confident that the papers included will have a great impact on many of the current debates surrounding American Studies. In the first article entitled "Class and Ethnicity in American History: Studies of American Labor and Immigrant Histories in Japan," the former President of the Japanese Association for American Studies (JAAS) Tatsuro Nomura introduces the history of our association since its founding in 1966. He also touches upon the historiography of American social history studies in Japan, and ends with a brief discussion of his own work on Jewish people in New York. This paper was first presented as the Presidential address at the JAAS annual meeting held at the University of Tokyo in June 1996.

"The Nature and Environmental Issues in America" has been selected as the main theme of this issue. A session on the same topic at the 1996 annual meeting attracted much interest and three of the panelists contributed their papers. Koichiro Fujikura's article, "Standing for Nature in the United States Supreme Court: A Japanese Perspective," focuses on two environmental cases brought before the Supreme Court. While the author expresses some doubts about these recent judg-

ments, his primary concern seems to be the Japanese legal climate surrounding environmental issues. Kazuto Oshio's article, "Who Pays and Who Benefits? Metropolitan Water Politics in Twentieth-Century Southern California," deals with the struggle over water politics and administration which Los Angeles and its adjacent municipalities have fought for almost a century. Particular emphasis is placed on the dilemmas Los Angeles faced in getting along with other, smaller communities. In "Environmental Politics in the United States," Toyoki Hosono takes as case studies the Nixon administration and the U.S. Senatorial election in Oregon in 1996. A number of new key words and phrases appear in the article, including "permissive consensus," "issue attention cycle," and "the environment-education link," which help us to conceptualize the internal dynamics of recent political debate over environmental issues in the United States. In addition to the three panelists, Sheila Honess contributed the article "'Everything Hastens Where It Belongs': Nature and Narrative Structure in *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1880-84." She explores some of the cultural implications of one particular late nineteenth-century American understanding of nature, as revealed in magazine contributions from a variety of writers including Henry James.

There are three more articles, submitted by the members of the JAAS, on a number of topics. In "The Samuel D. Hochstetler Case (1948)," Mami Hiraike Okawara presents a new interpretation of the relationship between the Amish and mainstream society. Kaeko Mochizuki reviews recent native American literary works in "The Native American Renaissance: Its Prospect and Retrospect." Joshua Dale directs his attention to the cruising ocean liners and throws light upon the theme of postmodernity in "Cruising the Love Boat: American Tourism and the Postmodern Sublime."

The *Journal* has now become annual, thanks to the efforts of former editor Shinichi Shigihara. The publication is in part supported by a Grant-in-Aid for the Publication of Scientific Research Results from the Japanese Ministry of Education, for which we are grateful. We welcome active responses from our readers and hope they will be encouraged to submit their work to future issues, so that the *Journal* will continue to be an important arena for American Studies across both disciplinary and national boundaries.

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Editor