

Editor's Corner

Back in 2004, the bicentennial year of the Lewis and Clark expedition, we published a special issue of *Heritage of the Great Plains* on that remarkable feat of exploration, a two-year journey over thousands of miles of previously uncharted territory in which only one member of the Corps of Discovery died. That was a popular issue, which was even adopted as a text for a history class in a Missouri university. The interest spurred by the Lewis and Clark bicentennial has continued only slightly abated, and we continue to receive submissions on the topic. One of those submissions is included in the current issue, an article by Brad Tennant that provides an interesting human-interest follow up on some of the members of the expedition and the natives they encountered.

Human interest is the essential ingredient in the novel, and Willa Cather is among the best in exploring the human condition. My personal favorite of her works is *My Antonia*, three of whose major characters are examined in the article by Angela Glover. One of the major characters in that book is not human, however, but is the town of Black Hawk itself (i.e., Red Cloud, Cather's actual Nebraska home). The people and atmosphere of her hometown were exposed so mercilessly that only after Cather's death and growing fame did its citizens forgive the author and now celebrate her. Interestingly, Cather's insight into small-town life, particularly the pernicious effects of gossip, is depicted only in her Nebraska novels, as authors Margaret Doane and Joseph Nieto point out.

In addition to enjoying and learning from the articles herein, I hope that readers will notice and enjoy the new cover design of *Heritage of the Great Plains*.