Poe Studies on the Poe/tics of Reception

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SPEAKERS
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Rahne Alexander
Welcome to the Hopkins Press Podcast. My name is Rahne Alexander and I am the Senior Publicist for the Journals Division of Hopkins Press. Last January at the MLA Conference in New Orleans, the Journal of Poe Studies hosted a panel discussion about the influence of Eliza Richards' book, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*.

This is a book that has played an important role in the study of 19th-century women Ppets, as well as other minoritized poets, on print culture, and even Poe himself. Richards' book celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and the forthcoming issue of *Poe Studies* due out in Fall 2025 will be a special issue featuring new essays celebrating its impact and expanding on questions, exploring new inquiries that the book inspires. Today, we talk with Kelly Ross, the editor of *Poe Studies,* Elissa Zellinger, the guest editor of the forthcoming special issue, and of course, Eliza Richards herself.

Well, thank you everybody for joining us on the Hopkins Press Podcast today. Shall we go around and introduce everybody?

Eliza Richards
I'm Eliza Richards. I'm a professor at UNC Chapel Hill and I specialize in 19th century American poetry. And, in addition to being to TKStaedtler, Promising Young Scholars, these are also my former dissertation students.

Elissa Zellinger
Hi, I'm Elissa Zellinger. I'm an Associate Professor of English at Texas Tech University and I, work on 19th-century American poetry as well and I was Eliza's student, happily, and I am the editor for this special issue on the Poetics Of Reception because Kelly asked me to and I'm so glad she did.

Kelly Ross
Hi, I'm Kelly Ross. I'm an Associate Professor of English at Rider University. I'm doing a year as a visiting professor at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. I'm the editor of *Poe Studies* and I work on 19th-century American literature. I also had the pleasure to be Eliza's student in grad school.

Rahne Alexander
I'm excited to talk with you all about Edgar Allan Poe today. And as you know, Hopkins Press is based in Baltimore, and we're just one of several cities that get to

claim him with a little bit of hometown pride. But I guess we put him in his grave, so that must count for something.

Elissa Zellinger
Yeah, you win.
[Laughter]

Rahne Alexander
[Laughter] Yeah, come visit. He's here.

Elissa Zellinger
[Laughter]

Rahne Alexander
So, the next issue of *Poe Studies* celebrates the 20th anniversary of Eliza Richards book, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*. It's a book that has had a pretty significant impact, not just on Poe's legacy, but also on the study of 19th century American women poets, as well as other marginalized poets. And as you note in the introduction to the forthcoming issue on periodical culture as well. So for the uninitiated, can you give us synopsis about what this issue will be about? And in particular, what makes Poe such a fascinating character, alternately a hero and a villain when it comes to the publication of women poets in 19th-century America? And while we're talking about that, can we talk a little bit about the history of the book, how it was initially received? And was there a sense that it would have such a lasting impact?

Elissa Zellinger
I can start by explaining a little bit about what this issue is about. So Kelly reached out to me and noticed that it had been the 20th anniversary of Eliza's book coming out. And this book, as a colleague of ours said, that book's a banger.

Rahne Alexander
[Laughter]

Elissa Zellinger
So we wanted to do something to commemorate it. And rightfully so. And as Kelly and I were kind of going back and forth with ideas, we realized that this book has kind of spawned an entire field of research, but in creating that field of research, the focus on Poe went away because well, Poe's kind of a schmuck sometimes. And so maybe rightfully so he got left behind and the focus has been on recovering American women poets. And so the focus was on that, but not so much on Poe anymore. And what happens when we bring the focus back to Poe because Eliza's book is so focused on Poe, but we all forget about it.

So, that was kind of the impetus for the issue. And then I came up with the terrible pun, the POE-ETICS, so that's P-O-E slash T-I-C-S, the Poe-tics Of Reception. So, thinking about what the reception history of Poe has been, both in the time and now in current scholarship, how Poe's reception history kind of gets overlooked, but he's still there. Like anything you do with Eliza's book is gonna necessarily involve Poe and so we should all be cognizant of that. And whether we like him or not, think about it.

So that's a little bit about what the issue is about and I'll let other folks weigh in on Poe's legacy and the history of Eliza's book.

Eliza Richards
Well, I think this is common for a lot of people. It was my first book. It was my dissertation, but it was a shock. It seemed to sink like a stone. [Laughter] In the beginning, it's funny that there's this, that you're noting this strong dichotomy between Poe and women poets. That's what inspired me in the first place. I got sort of ferociously angry that Poe wrote a lot of reviews about women writers and that the biographers and critics of Poe just smacked them down pretty regularly and diminished them into Poe fanlets. So, in the beginning, I thought that I would make a contribution to Poe studies, but I do think that Poe studies has been resistant to the book. And that's part of why it hasn't had an influence on Poe studies. It had much more of an influence outside of Poe studies. So I was a little crushed in the beginning at the way it seemed to bear no trace on Poe criticism, at least in the first five to ten years. Except for, and I do want to make this exception as really, important except for *Poe Studies*, the journal, Jana Argersinger, was she the precursor to you, Kelly?

Kelly Ross
Emron was my immediate precursor, but I believe she was Emron's. Emron Esplin.

Eliza Richards
She was for a long time the editor of *Poe Studies* and she invited me. First of all, she was excited right away about the book. I think even before it came out and she asked me to write about women in *Poe Studies*. And I wrote a piece for that journal called "Women's Place in Poe Studies," complaining about the difficulty of a woman critic writing about women engaging with Poe and Poe studies. So that was the beginning. It was already bifurcated. And then I was not the first to be championing a history of women poets and recovery projects on women poets, but it was toward the beginning of what became a great wave of studies. And now the study of historical poetics has become really much more prominent than it was when I was embarking on my career. And so it's lovely to look back on this whole history of people picking up ideas from this book and from other early books on women's poetry and to see such a burgeoning field that includes popular poetry, working class poetry, poetry by artists of different ethnic backgrounds and different racial backgrounds. So, things have really, the study of poetry has really flourished.

Rahne Alexander
That's really heartening to hear. It suggests to me that, there can be such a great support relationship between a journal and a scholar.

Eliza Richards
Yes, she was through out. Jana was really a champion and I'm very proud of Kelly for taking for taking the torch and passing that forward.

Kelly Ross
Yeah, I think a lot of people have spoken about the impact that Jana had on them and how she's always been a champion of work that maybe is challenging some of the pre-conceived notions about Poe and making sure that that gets heard as well.

Eliza Richards
Yes, he's a villain, he does have a split personality and in popular culture as well as academic culture. But there are people, I think there's always been this bifurcated history. Zach Turpin talks a bit about this where Poe is both a villain and a hero and the dynamic is sort of, each side fuels the other. It's hard to find middle ground with Poe. So it's interesting and it has a long, long history of people defending Poe from disparagement and condemnation, moral condemnation. So it continues today.

Rahne Alexander
So at the MLA conference this past January, you hosted a panel discussion and sadly I had conflicting responsibilities and was unable to attend that panel. But in the light of my absence, can you tell us more about what that panel was and how it relates to the forthcoming issue?

Eliza Richards
Sure.

Kelly Ross
Do you want to talk about that, Elissa?

Elissa Zellinger
Yeah, I can start. So we arranged a special session at the MLA conference this past January in New Orleans, and it was called the Poetics of Perception. And we talked in the title somewhere, it was about how been twenty years of the Poetics of Perception. And we just had little, like, was kind of a little sneak peek of the forthcoming issues. So I read a little bit from the introduction, and other contributors gave little sneak peeks of their introduction, of their contributions and then Eliza gave kind of a summation of her thoughts and feelings and it was really special. It was really, really special. It was nice to like, this isn't so much about the content of, I'll tell you more about how I felt than what happened on the panel, but it was really special to be there with these scholars I've known for so long and so well and to have created something and to celebrate this book. I mean, it was like, you know, you this is completely off topic, but sometimes you think of academia as one way and then you find that it is actually this really supportive, loving place with awesome people in it. So, for me at least, like “Haha Poe, I found a community of women, amazing women who were all thinking and supporting each other.” The panel was just kind of, for that aspect, the panel was kind of mind blowing for me.

Rahne Alexander
Yeah, that's cool. Was it really easy to assemble your team of respondents when it came time to put this issue together and the panel together?

Elissa Zellinger
The assembling the panel, on paper it was easy but when it came time to like show up in January in New Orleans that was a little more difficult. Some folks couldn't make it and so we read some responses but yeah, assembling folks for the special issue was likewise like I think we, Kelly I don't know what the timeline is like but it seemed like we got it locked in pretty quickly because people are excited to support Eliza's work and to talk about this book and its influence and likewise the panel was pretty well attended for something like on the very last panel, the very last day. And I

was interested in the direction that the conversation went, because after Eliza gave her remarks and we had the Q &A, really, didn't everybody really start talking about Griswold? I would also like to point out that I am editing this special issue. I am not a Poe scholar. So I was like, oh, I am learning things all the time and feeling like a fraud.

So the Q &A was really interesting to me because I really learned a lot about the kind of network and constellations surrounding Poe.

Eliza Richards
I loved the panel and I'm very grateful and humbled by it. That sense that I mentioned in the beginning when the book just didn't seem to have any impact, it echoes what Elissa was saying about, you didn't articulate it. Elissa, but the sort of anonymity kind of professional competition and a certain measure of anxiety about our profession because it's so precarious in some ways, whether it matters really in times of crisis too, in times of, know, what is the meaning of our work and will there be a legacy to our work? I was just overwhelmed by the sense that I've been able to convey the gifts that I've received from my teachers to another generation of scholars and that the work they're doing is really innovative. And that's what this podcast is about. Like my work enabled a whole new generation. And I think, these scholars will pass that on as well, of thinking that, yes, as Elissa has in her introduction — voices ascends if she accuses herself of a kind, of mimicry or villainy by being something like Poe.

Elissa Zellinger
Or straight up, plagiarism? Yeah. [Laughter]

Eliza Richards
That's an anxiety of influence problem, but it's just not true. All the scholars in the issue are doing really original work and I'm really honored to be able to contribute to that. So I really love the genealogies of ideas. The contributors pick up different aspects of my argument. And I, once again, I don't claim, you know, I, also I'm working within a network, but, and then develop it in ways that were implicit and unexplored in the original work. And maybe it was impossible to write about those things at that time — too, just because there wasn't a field of discourse, a discursive field yet that is now expanding and developing.

Rahne Alexander
Can you tell me a little bit about what we can expect to see in this issue?

Kelly Ross
We have four contributors. Zachary Turpin is writing about basically a survey of women from during Poe's lifetime to 1968. And the reason he stops at 1968 is because Amy Branam Armiento has a recent chapter in a book called *Poe and Women* that covers Poe from 1968. So he's kind of doing the prelude to Amy's article or chapter, and he focuses on Sarah Josepha Hale as one of the earliest women to work with Poe to get his poetry in print. And then he goes through the women that were

important during Poe's lifetime and immediately after, and two of the people that I think are kind of newer to this conversation are Margaret Wilmer and Susan Archer Talley Weiss, who wrote about Poe right at the time of his death in order to counteract Griswold's negative portrayal of him. And then he gives us also a really nice bibliography of early women scholars of Poe. And then we have Alexandra Socarides, her article is titled, “Sin, Which In Poetry Is Not to be Forgiven: The Poe-Sigourney Correspondence.” So, she's looking at Poe and Lydia Sigourney's correspondence at two moments, the first in 1836 and the second from 1841-1842. She's arguing that that correspondence is an early testing ground for Poe's engagement with women's poetry. That really is the focus of Eliza's book. And that in that early correspondence, we can already see the emphasis on popularity and imitation and how that relates to gender. And then she ends by reading one of Sigourney's poems called, “To A Landbird At Sea”, as a meditation on Poe-tess Poetics. And then our -

Eliza Richards
Sorry, Sorry. [Laughter] No, “To A Landbird At Sea”r eminds me of, it just hit me, of “Whitman's: Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking”. So, I was wondering about that,, if Whitman, because Whitman secretly read Women's Poets and was, “I've wanted to write about that.” Anyway.
[Laughter]

Kelly Ross
And that actually was really cool at the MLA panel because Ed Whitley was there and he's primarily a Whitman scholar. He works on Poe as well, but he's done a lot of work on Whitman. And so, he was part of the conversation in the audience and he was talking about how important Eliza's work has been for Whitman scholars and, and that, you know, he was kind of a contemporary of Eliza and that her book really meant a lot to him. So, yeah, the Whitman crossover is really interesting.

Our third contributor is Christa Holm Vogelius, and she has an article titled, “Thinking with Love: Poe's Queer Mimicries”. And in that one, she reads, she focuses on a Poe short story called “The Oval Portrait” and is reading Poe's cross gendered imitation in that story, in order to argue that Poe is a conscious performer of a femme persona.

And I really love Crista's article because there's such a long history of thinking about Poe as if people think about him as queer or gay, they think about him as like a failure or as depressed in some way. And Crista’s really turning that on its head. And the other thing that's really cool about Crista's and our next contributor, Rebecka Rutledge Fisher, both of them are looking at Poe's prose, his short stories. And so I think that's.really nice because Eliza does focus mainly on poetry, but here we're getting that crossover into the short stories. And in Poe studies, I think a lot of times the people who focus on his poetry and the people who focus on his prose, there's a disjunction there as well. So, it's nice to see that bridge and to think about how Eliza's work could help those of us who don't always write about poetry.

So I mentioned Rebecka, Rebecka Rutledge Fisher's essay is called, “Toussaint the Sublime, Re-reading Poe and Hugo Through the Poe Ethics of W.E.B. Du Bois.” And Rebecka examines what she calls the sublime specter of Toussaint Louverture in Poe's work, focusing on “The Gold Bug.” And she puts that short story in conversation

with Victor Hugo's earlier novel, *Bug Jargal,* which was published in 1820 and 1826. Rebecka argues that Toussaint Louverture is a counter sublime black presence that shows up in “The Gold Bug” and forces Poe to kind of think about black revolutionary agency and resistance. And then of course we have Elissa's wonderful intro and Eliza's afterword responding to all of it.

Rahne Alexander
I am very excited to read this issue. I did get to read Elissa's introduction and, you know, I'm not a Poe scholar myself, but, you know, have read Poe off and on since I was a child, right? And there were some things in the introduction that just seemed to make intuitive sense that I hadn't considered the ways that his mimicry functioned, the ways that he mimicked the Poet's conventions of the time. I was particularly struck by the quote “Mimicry and genius are difficult to separate from one another and yet they are perpetually at odds.”

Elissa Zellinger
I think that's Eliza talking, actually. But what's great about however many years out of graduate school in my career, and I'm rereading Eliza's book for like the vajillionth time, and I'm still learning stuff, you know, because I was like, “Oh dang, I didn't quite realize that either,” you know, and Eliza has a section where she goes through the critical history of mimicry and originality. And I was like, “*I'm learning.*” [Laughter] You know. It's just remarkable how the book continues to teach me. Like a poem, like anytime you return to it, you learn something new. So, I cannot take credit for that quote. That's all, Eliza. And I invite her to speak about it.

Eliza Richards
Yes. I mean, I think this is far more widespread and I'm really glad that like Christa is taking this direction. How, is a — kind of, I think I used the term somewhere, “literary transvestite” in the book, which is now a sort of dated way of thinking about it. But the vampiric quality of Poe is similar. There is a definite weird valence to Poe and that is an element of his appeal for women poets. And now, increasingly there's work on Poe, queerness and male poets, homoerotic kind of exchanges. And it's taking ideas and expanding them now with new forms of critical discourse and new forms of engagement with sexuality and gender that I find completely compelling. Ben Bascom and Crista and Jordan Stein, they're working on queer poetics in the 19th Century and Poe is fully situated in that arena. And it's understudied in part because I do think that Poe critics have always kind of strongly asserted his hetero-masculinity as a kind of defensive reaction to the original formation, which is far more ambiguous in terms of gender.

Byron was similar in this way, the kind of dark outsider that was very appealing in Poe's own time. It was sexy. [Laughter]

Rahne Alexander
And arguably probably still is to so many readers, right?

Elissa Zellinger
I mentioned this in the introduction and I don't want to take us too far afield, but I talk about how I taught the first chapter of Eliza's book to advanced level

undergraduates in the fall who completely ran with the idea of Poe as a villain and I could never come back to it. But we were talking about, I was trying to explain Poe to them and I was like, it's like that lead singer of the band who's really moody and then you love them anyway because you think you can fix them. And not that any of us have had experience, having those feelings, you know, but, but that's what I love about studying the 19th Century is that it absolutely links up with experience today and emotional experiences today. So, yeah, Poe, it was sexy. I understand that.

Eliza Richards
And, and exactly that way, the way of, of Kurt Cobain. He was disillusioned. He didn't take care of himself. He didn't know how to take care of himself. So, he called to the desire in women to take care of him.

Elissa Zellinger
I also tried to point out to my students that they can do what they want, but this maybe isn't the best relationship style. [Laughter]

Elissa Zellinger
So, learn, learn from Poe and their partnerships, whatever partnerships they're having. Yeah, the life lessons in Eliza's book.

Eliza Richards
Yeah, and in terms of poetics, so we do, we turn to the person, but as Elissa made very clear, there's a difference between the persona, the poetess persona and the Poe persona and the way that print periodical culture affords that. And that's another element that people are picking up in the articles, in the shared issue and have in recent work in the field. So, the ways that people are employing kind of relicking interactive performances in periodicals through poetry, because poetry is more mobile. You can do that, situate conversations on the page with poems that are interacting. That happens a lot in 19th century periodical culture. So, that’s, that's definitely an element too, that these outside figures get, these celebrity figures emerge from interactions in print.

Rahne Alexander
Another piece that I learned from reading the introduction that I had not really considered was Poe's editorial behaviors. And so, I learned from this introduction that his editorial choices are serving his particular agenda. On one hand, he was publishing poems by Francis Sargent Osgood, which could on one hand maybe be seen as something of a feminist act, a liberal feminist act at very least. But his design, his layout of the publication was suggestive of flirtations, love affairs, which probably seemed to be a little more self-serving for Poe. Is that an accurate way of looking at it?

Elissa Zellinger
Yes, and I would say that also speaks to the archival work that Eliza's book does that's also notable because to me this is the first time someone, not only just my education, but chronologically it feels like this was one of the first times that somebody was like, Let's look at a random newspaper and let's actually look at it and let's look at how things are placed on the page and then was like, *Ding*, obviously this is what's going on. I know it's been really influential for my work thinking about print

placement and so just that aspect and then the actual finding of you know more ephemeral periodical print cultural texts and treating them on the same level as a bound, capital B book think has been really foundational for me and really important for the for the field. But, yeah, that kind of I don't what do you call this like graphic manipulation, typographical physical layout manipulation by Poe, on the one hand kind of brilliant, on the one hand like to me that evacuates any kind of feminist allyship and Poe for me. [Laughter]

Eliza Richards
Elissa feels strongly about that. [Laughter] And I agree. I do want to say about the work that I did reading the page. I feel now that it was irresponsible, though I didn't at the time, because I don't know about whether he laid out the individual pages of the Broadway Journal. But, it does seem quite unlikely that he didn't, he had full control of the journal at the time that he's playing around, that I think he's playing around with the, the nuzzling of the poems on the page and things like that. And he, you know, he was an important editor/printer, and that was the only journal that he had full control over. And that's where those poems appear in that way. But people are doing more work in terms of archival work, thinking about who the editor is, who is the printer. How are things arranged on the page? For what reasons? Meredith L. McGill is someone who's done a lot of work on that. So yeah, the flirtation does tend to gut Frances Sargent Osgood of her tremendous power that you see when in another chapter, the erotic voice of print, when she's unleashed on her own, she really has tremendous seductive power that is tamed. By the way that Poe claims her as his own girlfriend on the page, basically, as his own erotic object. The way Poe's feminist, yeah, feminist isn't the word, but he does take women poets. He deserves credit for taking women poets far more seriously than his own critics do. That's where I initially found those poets. He reviewed women poets widely and women fiction writers as well, women writers. He often denigrated them, but he denigrated everybody.
[Laughter]

So, that was part of his style that everyone was not as good as he was. He bore a hatchet when he wrote his criticism that he even attended to these women poets. It's rare to see his critics dismiss it as flirtation or as a form of chivalry that he paid attention to this nonsense because they were women. But I don't think that Poe himself, he was far more nervous, defensive, and competitive with women poets, which is a sign of their importance. That's why it's important that Poe be included in the study. That was something that I did rather than have a separate women's tradition because as Elissa notes in her introduction, the women clearly impacted male poets and that's been underestimated. They squirm, they compete, they try to overcome or overthrow. So all that is a sign of poetic power on the part of women that has kind of disappeared from literary history. People are busy trying to pull that back.

Rahne Alexander
Another thing out of the introduction that really is sticking with me, Elissa, as we've hinted about it a little earlier in this discussion, the passage on internalizing arguments. There are those moments where maybe you've been marinating on an idea for long enough that you kind of just think, it's your own. You say in the introduction, "I internalized Richard's arguments to the point where I think they are

my own in this way, I fear I have become the Poe, she figures." I mean, if this isn't a worry familiar to every ethically minded scholar artist, I don't know what is. [Laughter]
How do you counter such anxieties?

Elissa Zellinger
You cite, is what you do. [Laughter]

I mean, that is the only way I feel better about myself is just, you know, like in-text citation or a hot footnote. That's how, in the performing arts, I'm not sure how you would do that. But you know, it's literary, grading literary criticism, like we can definitely cite. So, yeah, I mean, it's terrifying. I have a little anecdote in the introduction about how I thought I had made this huge archival find in the New York Public Library archives. And then I went back to Eliza's book and I was like, it was there already. [Laughter] And like my interpretation of it is actually what Eliza said. And it's just funny how your brain works, know, seemingly appropriate, like, "Mimicry is the best form of flattery." I don't know, but it is striking how things will lodge in your brain and they seem like they're your own, which on the one hand, like you can kind of understand how this happens in other places. Like I'm thinking a lot about a poet.

Later in the century named Elizabeth Akers Allen whose famous Poem, "Rock Me To Sleep", is just straight up stolen by a man who claims it as his own and everybody kind of wonders how he did this and I think it's very sinister how he did it but, a part of me is like, I kind of understand how you can just take things and think they're your own. This is certainly a phenomenon for women's poetry across the 19th century and again like Jennifer Putzi does a wonderful job of talking about this in articles and books; just like women's poetry is designed to, kind of, as Eliza said, be mobile. But also be consumable and be adoptable, in a way that you forget that it was never yours in the first place. But, at least I'm trying to be aware of my Poe-like tendencies. And then I will just cite the hell out of everybody whose ideas — I wouldn't say steal, but you know, that, that helped me build my own ideas. So, I think Eliza mentioned like building a legacy and there's a fine line. But a bright line between being Poe-like, I would say, and then acknowledging your kind of like academic foundations and your influences and the legacy that's brought you here. So, I'm a fan of citations.

Eliza Richards
To Elissa's point, just in terms of practices today and my own experience of being under the shadow of the people, I admire most in terms of what I've inherited critically. For me, it's a source of anxiety and it's also just a huge source of gratitude and excitement that you can care about ideas that much, internalize them.

And another aspect of the book suggests in terms of the mimicry of different women poets, because they're all found mimicry is not a bad thing. That they, I guess, it depends on how you do it. And as Elizabeth said, "How you cite, how you acknowledge." But their mimicry makes them original in certain ways. They couldn't be any more different. That's part of why I chose them. It's a general trend, among men and women in the 19th century to imitate one another. And then some people want to put forward the idea of themselves as genius, but always genius operates through people as this kind of circulating current, I think. And some people want to

stop that current and claim it for themselves. And other people are okay with the current, funneling through people. But today I think a lot of people aren't citing and aren't reading. And I think that's a change in our culture and AI, is really gonna impact that really strongly. So I don't know how long citational practices will last in the form that they do, because I think they're eroding. But I do think that it's important for one's own work to acknowledge where you come from, myself too.

A shout out to Kerry Larson right here. He was my dissertation director. And, and these guys influence me now. I do want to say that it's not like here I am influencing everybody. The younger generation, is now influencing me. And I realized that I'm in a completely different place now as I reach the end of my career. And one of my, one of the things I think is most important is promoting the work of younger scholars and recognizing the contributions they make. That's hard sometimes as you age and see the stage. It's important to do gracefully as well.

Rahne Alexander
Fantastic! Well, there's so much to look forward to and this issue will be out in the Fall Of 2025. While we wait, do you have any reading suggestions for me and or can you tell me what you're working on next?

Kelly Ross
I can start with that. Elissa just had an article in J19 called —

Rahne Alexander
Another Hopkins Press Journal.

Kelly Ross
Exactly, yeah. And a wonderful journal! Her article is called, “Emma Lazarus, Professional Exile.” So, I would say check that out. And I imagine that's related to Elissa's forthcoming monograph, which maybe, Elissa can tell us more about. And then Christa Holm Vogelius just published a book called *Original Copy: Ekphrasis, Gender, and the National Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America Literature*, and that's UMass Press. And it develops a lot of the ideas that she talks about in her contribution to this special issue.

Eliza Richards
Why don't you mention your own book that just came out?

Kelly Ross
[Laughter] Thanks, Eliza. I just published with Oxford University Press a book called *Slavery, Surveillance, and Genre in Antebellum U.S. Literature*. And Poe is a central figure in that book and Eliza's work helped me think through how Poe is related to a larger field of print culture and genre.

Eliza Richards
And Elissa's book that's forthcoming and her work on, Lazarus, which I've read. Lazarus was, you know, “She's the give me your tired, your hungry, your poor” poem is on the Statue of Liberty. It's being ignored lately. [Laughter] Being rejected is what it's being. So, that makes Elissa's work important. And, so Lazarus, was a really, really

prominent Jewish woman poet, one of the first professional Jewish women poets in the United States.

Kelly Ross
So, Elissa, maybe you want to say a little bit about the book you're working on.

Elissa Zellinger
I'm working on it. It is not, Kelly, I love you. It's not forthcoming, yet. It's aspirationally forthcoming. But yeah, and again, going back to Eliza's work, which definitely had an influence on this second monograph that I'm working on, which is called, *The Poetics of Profession*, and I'm thinking about "The Sociology of Professionalism", which really develops at the at the end of the 19th century, like as sociology is developing at the end of the 19th century, this idea of professions and professionalism develops. And I thought, you know, like, well, "Why can't poets do that?" I like this idea of like a poetic profession. I'm speaking and then a poetic profession, like it's my job, which came from Eliza's book because these women writers have to act like they're not professionals. They have, you know, for a woman to be in public trying to get paid for her poetry is like horrifying, socially. So, you know, how we have this concept of professionalism, but it hasn't been gendered or raced or thought about with different ethnicities and how those, how those, what I call, minoritized poets have to adopt the trappings of professionalism in order to like gain a footing in the public sphere. So that's what I'm thinking about. I'm thinking with the Lazarus piece, I was thinking about how Lazarus, who kind of had a kind of built in on a ramp to becoming a poetic professional. She came from a very elite family. She was well connected. She was hooked up with Emerson at a very young age. She used her professionalism in order to call out to other elite, Jewish, assimilated Jewish American folks to address the crisis of Jewish refugees coming from Russia. That's what that piece is about. Speaking of reading recommendations, the other,book besides, Eliza's that has been really sticking with me is Jennifer Putzi's latest book, which is called, *Fair Copy: Relational Poetics and Antebellum American Women's Poetry* which is out from University of Pennsylvania Press. And I draw on that heavily actually when I write my introduction to the Special Issue because to really reduce, Jenny's argument very quickly, you know, she points out that like, hey, "No poems kind of written in a vacuum."

And they're all dependent on these relational networks. And especially for women writers, like those relational networks are both a blessing and a curse. And, so that is that any anything I do know, I'm thinking about that book. If you enjoyed *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, I highly recommend *Fair Copy*. So we've mentioned *Fair Copy* and we've mentioned Crista's book, which has a similar name. What was it again?

Eliza Richards
Original -

Elissa Zellinger
Original Copy. Right. So you can't go wrong with either whatever you stumble upon. [Laughter]

Rahne Alexander

[Laughter] Fair or Original, they're both excellent.

Eliza Richards
I have a piece on Emerson's poetry. I resisted, everybody hates Emerson's poetry.

Rahne Alexander
[Laughter]

Eliza Richards
No one will write about it. And there's this Oxford Handbook to Emerson where Chris Hanlon, the editor, it's a very good collection. The Oxford Handbooks are great. The new series of Oxford Handbooks are full of essays, critical essays. But I've always wanted to write about Emerson's poetry. And I tried to do that, about the whiteness of the oversoul basically over the course of the Civil War. The oversoul is supposed to be a kind of general collective as his genius, but he just cannot get over. I showed that he's sort of hung up in a way it's a bit like it's related to the kind of thing that Rebecka is talking about in her essay. You can't fathom the idea of an oversoul that's not white even though it's supposed to be completely inclusive. And so he bangs his head against the wall in a whole bunch of poems. [Laughter]

Then I have another thing on Poe and mesmerism and Emily Dickinson and out of body experiences, attempts to get outside the body. And then, then I'm working on a critical edition of George Moses Horton. I just do want to put a shout out for that collection of George Moses Horton poetry that will be published by UNC Press.

He's an enslaved poet who taught himself to read and write. He taught himself to write much later than he taught himself how to read and compose Poetry orally for the first 10 to 15 years of his life. He was a field hand near North Carolina who traveled back and forth to UNC campus and wrote poems on commission for the students and eventually became a kind of professional writer for them, even though he remained an enslaved field worker for a long time. And then he traveled with Union soldiers once he was emancipated at the end of the Civil War and wrote another book of poems then. So, his work has not been collected and it's a really significant and interesting body of work.

Rahne Alexander
This is exciting. Thank you for all of your participation, your contributions today. Is there anything else we should touch on before we head our separate ways?

Kelly Ross
I just want to say how grateful I am to Elissa, for Guest Editing and doing such an amazing job. She's been such a pleasure to work with. And to Eliza, for getting us started and giving us a chance to come together and celebrate her. And it's just been so fun to get to work with them.

Eliza Richards
Kelly and Elissa, have just, and I don't mean this to be a mutual admiration society, they have just done a lovely job. Kelly and Elissa, the introduction is wonderful, I think. And the essays are really strong. And Kelly has just done a beautiful job with the journal. I haven't written up my response yet, but I'm working through the various

contributions and, hey're really great contributions. So this is going to be, I think it's going to be a great issue. So, kudos to both of you.

Elissa Zellinger
Thank you.

Rahne Alexander
Well, thank you all for being on the Hopkins Press Podcast.

Kelly Ross
And thank you Rahne,

Elissa Zellinger
Thank you so much, it was really fun.

Rahne Alexander
Thank you for joining us on the Hopkins Press Podcast. For further reading, please visit the show notes on the Hopkins Press Multimedia Podcast page, where we will have links to the articles we discuss and we'll make them freely available to all listeners for a limited time.

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