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## Obituary--Susan J. Rosowski

Frederick M. Link

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

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# Susan J. Rosowski

Frederick M. Link

Susan J. Rosowski, Adele Hall Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, died on November 2, 2004, after a long and valiant battle with cancer. Professor Rosowski was general editor of the Willa Cather Scholarly Edition, director of the Cather Project and the Cather International Seminar, and editor-in-chief of *Cather Studies*. She was the major force in creating and sustaining all of them. Over some twenty years, she was instrumental in securing Cather's place as a major twentieth-century author. She won the University's highest awards for both teaching and scholarship, a rare achievement, and her professional life modeled excellence in both areas. Despite her many responsibilities, she was never too busy to meet with students and colleagues, and was as active in the profession as she was in her department and university. Her personal warmth and her enthusiasm for teaching and learning influenced students over two decades; she believed strongly in the community of scholars, and worked hard to create and broaden that community. She was the founding director of the Plains Humanities Alliance, one of nine regional humanities centers established by the NEH. Her vision of the future of scholarship and publishing led to the establishment of the Cather Electronic Archive.

Those of us who have worked on the Cather Scholarly Edition will remember Sue for her ability to get and keep the project going on a minimal budget, and to direct the large group of scholars contributing to the Edition with a light touch and with enthusiasm and appreciation for their efforts. She was not a micromanager, but she always knew what was important and what was peripheral, and she knew how to inspire quality as well as demand it. She brought her profound knowledge of Cather and her world to the Edition, and was as concerned about the technical problems of textual editing as she was about presenting Cather in her social and literary context. As an editor, she wanted a clear text established according to stated principles, an historical rather than a literary-critical introductory essay, full explanatory notes, first-class book design, useful illustrations relevant to the text, and a record of substantive variants in all authorial texts. She felt strongly that pro-

viding potential readers with full and accurate information was more important than any specific critical approach to a work an editor might take. The Cather Scholarly Edition, begun in 1985, is expected to be finished in 2008; it is a part of Susan Rosowski's legacy.

