The Complete Poems of Charlotte Wilder: Issues in Editing

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24
12:30 PM - 1:30PM
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Charlotte Elizabeth Wilder (1898-1980) was an award-winning modernist poet with two published volumes and many individual poem publications when she experienced a schizophrenic break in February 1941 and entered hospitals, with a brief period of freedom in the early 1950s, for the rest of her life. Wilder’s poetry holds interest for her engagement with themes of sexuality, her formal innovations, and for her near-invisibility after the onset of her hospitalization and subsequent disability from psychological treatments, including a prefrontal lobotomy. Her poetry and biography are equally compelling. I will discuss specific issues that have arisen in editing the archive of a writer who was often separated from her papers and whose own ambivalence about writing became pronounced. I’ll also provide background about the specific pressures she faced as one of a family of talented writers, and I will share some of the newly edited poetry.

Caroline Maun is an associate professor in the Department of English at Wayne State University who teaches American Literature and creative writing. She is the editor of The Collected Poems of Evelyn Scott (2005), the author of Mosaic of Fire: The Work of Lola Ridge, Evelyn Scott, Charlotte Wilder, and Kay Boyle (2012), and her most recent collection of poetry, What Remains, will be published in July of 2013.