Lynching, 1896, Jefferson, LA (Crime: Miscegenation: Living w/ white “husband”)

Chanel Clarke
Michener Center for Writers, The University of Texas at Austin

hands tied
behind her back

hands that worked once
held the earned coin

hands that waved hello
hemmed skirts

hands that scraped
mud from stockings

hands that rested
on a child’s stomach

lit the fire
gave a man his plate

hands with fingers
thin and brown

neck that knew
strain, that held

a head up high:
pieces sent away now

full lips cut off
tip of the nose cut off

thumbs cut off
nipples cut off
given to the crowd
taped to postcards

placed in plastic bags
and mailed to cousins