

Introduction

This inaugural issue of *The Raymond Carver Review* marks a significant development in Carver studies: an annual journal devoted to making available the best in new scholarship on the work and life of Raymond Carver. While the first wave of Carver studies was mainly biographical and focused on his fiction, especially its minimalism, working class portraits, and sojourns into Carver Country and Hopelessville, the second wave shifted its focus to dismissing the minimalism of his fiction and discussing his expanded stories and the initial discussions of his large and significant body of poetry. What is emerging now is the third wave of Carver studies: discussions of the process of creating the Carver stories we know, both those under the influence of Gordon Lish and those out from that influence, and bringing a new set of lenses to view the body of Carver's work, that is, feminist studies, culture studies, textual studies, interdisciplinary studies, often discussed within an international context. Recent scholarship that is leading this new wave begins with G. P. Lainsbury's *The Carver Chronotope* which initiated culture studies; has expanded with the special issue of *Journal of the Short Story in English* on Raymond Carver, edited by Vasiliki Fachard; and continues with *New Paths to Raymond Carver: Essays on His Poetry, Fiction, and Life*, edited by Sandra Lee Kleppe and Robert Miltner, forthcoming from the University of South Carolina Press. Additionally, the founding of The International Raymond Carver Society, and its affiliation with The American Literature Association, supports this emerging scholarship through its regular sponsorship of papers and panels at conferences and symposia. In short, this is an exciting time for Carver studies world-wide.

The idea for this journal grew from my discussions with Sandra Lee Kleppe at the ALA in Boston in 2005 when we established The International Raymond Carver Society. We felt that, in order to best promote the new wave of Carver scholarship, a society would promote presentations, conferences, and international dialogue, while a journal would publish quality, peer-reviewed essays from emerging and established scholars.

This first issue offers five essays from emerging international scholars. In “The Glass Half Empty: The Poetics of Raymond Carver’s *Vitamins*,” Eileen Abrahams considers how Carver’s use of lexical repetition, as a manifestation of Roman Jakobson’s “dominant,” operates as the primary element through which readers may decode this text. In “Raymond Carver and the Temperance Tradition,” Angela Sorby considers how John B. Gough, a Washingtonian Temperance writer, established the popular figure of the recovered alcoholic, an historical context in which Carver’s poems about alcoholism can be read. “‘I don’t do motion shots’: Photography, Movement, and Change in Raymond Carver’s Stories” by Ayala Amir discusses Carver’s representation of movement, linking it to the snapshot and eye-of-the-camera metaphors commonly used to describe Carver’s poetics, concentrating on “Viewfinder” and “Feathers.” Enrico Monti, in “*Il miglior fabbro?* On Lish’s Editing of Carver’s *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*,” investigates the extent of Gordon Lish’s editing at the syntactical, lexical and plot level in order to reconstruct his editorial strategy, exposing the role he played in shaping the minimalist quality of that collection. In “Existential Connections: The Influence of Raymond Carver on Haruki Murikami,” Brian Seemann compares Carver’s early stories with Murikami’s early stories, discussing how Murikami’s characters, as influenced by his reading of Carver, break from Sartre’s existential dilemmas.

This journal would not exist without the fine essays from the contributors, whose work was rigorously peer-reviewed, and by the dedication and commitment of the editorial board who performed this task: Tamas Dobozy from Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada; Jo Angela Edwins from Francis Marion University in South Carolina; Claire Fabre-Clark from University of Paris XII, France; Vasiliki Fachard, independent scholar from Switzerland; Chad Wriglesworth from the University of Iowa; William Wright from Mesa State College in Colorado; and Libe García Zarranz from the University of Zaragoza, Spain. I am grateful as well to the Advisory Board for their support, and to those whom I contacted for advice while in the process of launching this first issue. Thanks also to editorial assistant Lisa Vargas of Kent State University who scrutinized and proofread these essays. This journal might not exist without the ever-available technical talent of Liz Weglendowski of Kent State University who designed the journal and launched *The Raymond Carver Review*. Additionally, I would like to

thank Sandra Lee Kleppe, Associate Editor and Director for The International Raymond Carver Society, with which this journal is affiliated, for ideas, advice, and constant support. Lastly, I need to thank Kent State University Stark for course reductions to develop the journal and for providing technical support as needed, and to New Media at Kent State University for helping to design and develop this journal.

I am pleased to announce that two of the current contributors, Enrico Monti and Angela Sorby, will be joining the editorial board beginning with the second issue, a special issue on Carver and Feminism which will be guest-edited by Claire Fabre-Clark and Libe García Zarranz. Further, I am delighted that Randolph Paul Runyon, author of *Reading Raymond Carver* and eminent Carver scholar, has accepted a position on the Advisory Board. Additionally, I am excited that Vasiliki Fachard will be moving from the editorial board to her new role as Associate Editor beginning with the second issue; this journal will now have the benefit of her exceptional editorial talent.

The Raymond Carver Review is enriched by its bounty of talented individuals, both those who have supported the journal since its inception and those who are joining as it grows, and to its valued contributors, all of whom are committed to the common goal of advancing Carver scholarship. We all do so because of our common belief in the importance and artistry of Raymond Carver's stories and poems. On behalf of everyone associated with *The Raymond Carver Review*, I hope you enjoy this first issue.

Robert Miltner

Editor, *The Raymond Carver Review*