



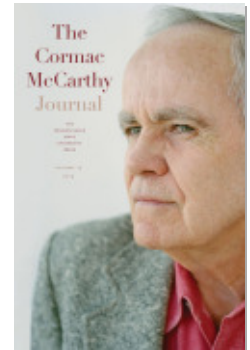
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Editor's Introduction

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Editor's Introduction

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The first hard-copy issue of *The Cormac McCarthy Journal* appeared in the spring of 2001, after having existed online since 1998. Edited by John Wegner, the journal included several articles on *The Crossing*, Marty Priola's review of the film adaptation of *All the Pretty Horses*, and Jay Ellis' short but illuminating note on "The Rape of Rawlins." It also included remarks from Dianne Luce, then the President of The Cormac McCarthy Society, "The State of Cormac McCarthy Scholarship." Luce noted, as many have, that 1992 was a watershed year, marking the publication of *All the Pretty Horses* and McCarthy's new status as a popular and widely acclaimed author, and she reviewed the many scholarly approaches that were then yet to be undertaken in the rapidly growing field of McCarthy studies.

Some of Luce's comments remind us of the how much has changed in the intervening years. Because no archive of McCarthy's papers yet existed, she wrote that "the opportunities currently are small to study McCarthy's working methods and the textual evolution of his works using techniques that have been so productive for such writers as William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald, for instance." (In May 2009, the Cormac McCarthy Papers were made available to researchers as part of the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University, San Marcos, rectifying—and then some!—that scholarly stumbling block.) But other comments remind us what has stayed the same. Luce made mention of McCarthy's "new, New Orleans novel" that readers were eagerly awaiting. In fact, readers are still eagerly awaiting that novel, likely a long-term project called *The Passenger*.

I like to think that the publication of this issue of *The Cormac McCarthy Journal*, our thirteenth and the first to appear as the product of our partnership with Penn State University Press, is a similar watershed. The journal has gone from existing as a forum for a small community of like-minded scholars to a full-fledged academic publication, complete with all the support that a press like Penn State has to offer. At PSUP, we join other journals devoted to authors like Edgar Allan Poe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Mark Twain, and Edith Wharton, and McCarthy's inclusion here is a testament both to the value and estimation of his work as well as the work of the scholars who have continued to push the critical conversation forward.

And to that end, this issue features some excellent new work in the field. Lucas Thompson extends the discussion of McCarthy and influence in a new direction, to David Foster Wallace's reading, understanding, and absorbing of McCarthy, and Julius Greve offers an innovative reading of *Blood Meridian* that manages to "part the waters" of ecological and deconstructive interpretations of that novel by using McCarthy's knowledge of the German naturalist Lorenz Oken. Joshua Comyn lays out an "ethics of reading" based on that same novel, and Woods Nash tracks down some historical sources relating to McCarthy's portrayal of Eastern State Hospital in *Child of God* and *Suttree*. Cameron MacKenzie and Christopher White discuss the concept of "the real" in *The Crossing* and dreaming in the Border Trilogy, respectively. Finally, Christopher Jenkins integrates theology and psychoanalysis in his reading of *Child of God*, and Jordan Dominy unpacks a history of representations of cannibalism to reveal *The Road's* vision of a world resulting from an insatiable drive to consume. Rounding out the issue are reviews of recent books by Manuel Broncano and Peter Josyph.

These articles showcase approaches to McCarthy's work that are archival, historical, theoretical; that put McCarthy up against another contemporary American author as well as a nineteenth-century philosopher and recent anthropological studies, just to name a few; and that have been undertaken by scholars working in the United States, Australia, Germany, and Canada. The result is an issue that is a great example (though far from the only one) of how robust this critical conversation continues to be. Thanks to everyone who has been a part of it over the years.

Stacey Peebles