

New Voices Exploring Old Territory

by Margaret D. Bauer, Editor

In this section, Savannah Paige Murray and John Hanley provide fresh perspectives on works by some of North Carolina's western writers – John Ehle, Charles Frazier, and Ron Rash. I hope they will inspire other new literary scholars to submit essays on North Carolina literature. Notice that Savannah's essay received this year's John Ehle Prize, which goes to the author of an essay on or an interview with a North Carolina writer who deserves more critical attention. As noted in the announcement of the award in *NCLR Online 2021*, this is the first time the prize has been given for a work on its inspiration, John Ehle. I hope not the last time, as there is still so much to be written about this author's work.

In addition to encouraging more critical attention on neglected writers of the past, we also encourage interviews (and essays) that introduce North Carolina writers who might not be on our radar, and now we have an award for the best such interview or essay in each issue. Named for Randall Kenan, who was a new writer when I took the helm of *NCLR*, this award is sponsored by the Creative Writing program at UNC Chapel Hill, which will fund the \$250 prize. I thank Daniel Wallace, Director of the program, for agreeing to help *NCLR* memorialize Randall Kenan in this capacity. The first winner of this prize is Jim Coby, for his interview with Nathan Ballingrud, whose speculative fiction is reminiscent of Manly Wade Wellman, featured in *NCLR* 1993. Hence the interview's placement in this section.

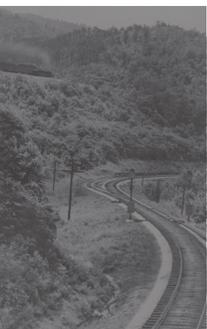
This section also includes an analysis of one of Randall Kenan's short stories, reminding us that while he has recently passed on, his writing lives on. Thanks go to Timothy Nixon for sending his examination of Kenan's "Cornsilk" to add to the previous examinations of this beloved (and much missed) author's work in *NCLR*. You can also read more about Kenan and a review of his 2020 collection of short stories in *NCLR Online 2021*.

The three poems in this section, are from the 2020 James Applewhite Poetry Prize. These poems "flash back" with their "echoes of past issues" – 2010, 2017, 2018, and 2019, in particular. ■

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