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EDITOR'S NOTE

Richard Poirier, founder of this magazine and a great American man of letters, died on 15 August 2009. He combined fierce, deeply informed conviction with open-minded curiosity and extraordinary generosity. I experienced the last trait directly when he passed the editorship of *Raritan* along to me in 2002.

His core commitment was to the free play of the imagination; that was probably the only tradition that won his full respect. A pragmatist in the truest sense of that worn word, he was skeptical toward any uncritical reverence for established precedent. Even as we at *Raritan* keep his sensibility alive in our pages, we realize that the surest way to honor his restless intellect is to take the magazine—at least from time to time—in directions he might never have imagined.

We plan a more extended tribute to Richard Poirier in our Spring 2010 issue. Meanwhile we mourn the loss of this remarkable man, who was a dear friend to so many of us.

*Jackson Lears*  
*New Brunswick, New Jersey*  
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