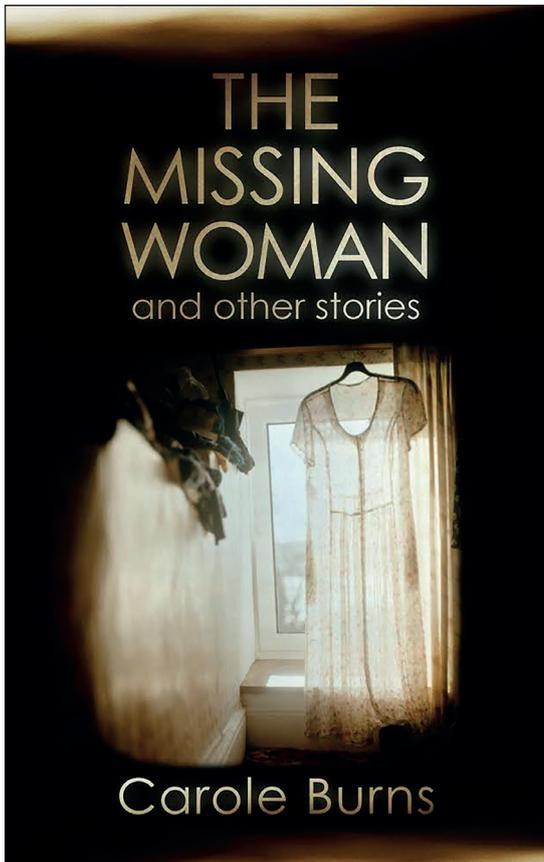


**WINNER: The John C. Zacharis First Book Award
Announced in the new issue of *Ploughshares* (15 January 2016)**

ISBN: 9781910409664 (Distributed in the US by IPG)



Parthian are delighted to announce that *The Missing Woman and Other Stories* (Parthian Books, 2015), the debut short story collection by Carole Burns, Head of Creative Writing at the University of Southampton, writer and reviewer for *The Washington Post* and author of the globally acclaimed how-to writing manual, *O the Page: Writers Talk About Beginnings, Endings, and Everything in Between* (Norton, 2008), has won the John C. Zacharis First Book Award, *Ploughshares*, announced in their new issue on the 15th of January 2016. *Ploughshares* is consistently ranked among the top literary journals in the USA, publishing authors and poets such as Helen Oyeyemi, Kevin Wilson, Alex Epstein, John Burnside and Pascale Petit.

In announcing the prize, Ladette Randolphe, editor-in-chief at *Ploughshares*, said:

“Carole Burns’ stories are beautifully written accounts of seemingly small moments that are in fact immeasurably important turning points in a character’s life. Taken together, the stories in this collection are delicately-faceted observations of those precise moments upon which a life hinges.”

Since 1991, the John C. Zacharis First Book Award has honoured the best first book published by an author who has already published work in *Ploughshares*. The \$1,500 award, which is named after Emerson College’s former president, is judged by the *Ploughshares* staff editors: <https://www.pshares.org/about/awards/john-c-zacharis-award> *Ploughshares* has published quality literature since 1971. Best known for their award-winning *Ploughshares* literary journal, they also publish *Ploughshares Solos*—digital-first long stories and essays—and a lively literary blog. Since 1989, they have been based at Emerson College in downtown Boston.

Though she is originally from America, Burns lives in Cardiff and will be doing readings and book signings in both the UK and the US.

“...a precise, almost clinical look at the emotional landscape of womanhood in the contemporary world.... This is a strong first collection.” – **American Book Review**

Stories in *The Missing Woman* circle around women who are either literally missing – a mother in rehab, a daughter never born – or who are missing some metaphorical piece of themselves.

A father tries to convince his uncompromising, anorexic daughter to want to live, a single woman lures men to her bed only to abandon them, and a marriage is shaken by a search party for a woman who’s disappeared. Burns asks questions about balance – safety with adventure – dreams with practicality – grief with joy – and challenges the reader to take a journey, make choices...

Former publication

Off the Page: Writers Talk About Beginnings, Endings, and Everything in Between (W.W. Norton, 2008, ISBN 978-0-393330-88-5)

Off the Page was reviewed or featured in *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, the BBC, Irish Public Radio, *The Irish Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Bookseller*, and *Publishing News* in the UK; and in *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, *NPR's Here and Now*, *The Bloomsbury Review*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Hartford Courant*, *The Connecticut Post* and *The Boston Globe* in the US.

Also reviewed in *Woman & Home*, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, numerous blogs, and had 135 community reviews on GoodReads.

Reviews of *Off the Page*

“... this treat for avid readers and writers.” *Publishers Weekly*

“...the contributions...are well turned and illuminating.” *The Daily Telegraph*

“Whether or not you’re familiar with the books that result from such struggles, this is a fascinating and enjoyable read.” *Financial Times*

“Quite fascinating on the art of authors.” *The Bookseller*

“...this intriguing book...” *The Guardian*

“Richard Ford, Colm Tóibín and Joyce Carol Oates are among those interviewed by Carole Burns in *Off the Page*, in skilfully edited extracts that cover ‘beginning and endings and everything in between’...” Aifric Campbell, *The Irish Times*, Memorable Reads from a Good Vintage 2008

“As a manual on how to write fiction, *Off the Page* is pretty excellent—and it comes pretty much from the horse’s (or rather, horses’) mouth.” www.compulsivereader.com

“... how to bring characters to life, how to write about love, are the concerns of interviews by Carole Burns, host of washingtonpost.com’s “Off the Page,” which are artfully edited into thematic chapters.” *The Chicago Tribune*

Endorsements for *Off the Page*

“Anyone who thinks all writers dip from the same stewpot should read Carole Burns’ *Off the Page*... That writers don’t agree about everything will come as no surprise. That they disagree so fundamentally is oddly reassuring.” - C. Michael Curtis, *The Atlantic Monthly*

“Addictive reading for beginning to established writers or anyone interested in how writers think.” Betsy Lerner, author of *The Forest for the Trees: An Editor’s Advice to Writers*



“It is continually and delightfully surprising to open *Off the Page* in any part or to any page and suddenly feel enlightened and inspired.” – Lee Gutkind, Editor, *Best Creative Nonfiction*

”In *Off the Page*, Carole Burns has gathered a few dozen of our most celebrated fiction writers for a conversation about the art and craft of telling stories, and we get to eavesdrop. What a treat it is!”
John Dufresne, author, *The Lie That Tells the Truth*

Carole Burns is available for interview. Contact Susie Wild (susieparthian@gmail.com) to arrange.

Notes for editors and fact list

- Author bio: Carole Burns is an American author and lecturer from Washington, DC, who now lives in Cardiff. Born in Danbury, Connecticut, she also lived in Connecticut where she worked as a journalist. Her book of interviews with writers, *Off the Page: Writers Talk About Beginnings, Endings, and Everything in Between*, was published by Norton in 2008; her first collection of stories, *The Missing Woman*, was published by Parthian in 2015. She is Head of Creative Writing at the University of Southampton and a co-organiser of the XX Women’s Writing Festival.

She has been previously shortlisted for the 2012, 2013 and 2014 Bridport Prize in Short Fiction; and awarded the Mary Roberts Rinehart Award in Fiction. She has recently had stories published in *Ploughshares*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Folio* and *Two Rivers Review*.

- ISBN 978-1-910409-66-4 | Trade paperback | £8.99 (US \$13.99) (CA \$16.99) | 160pp

- BIC code: FYB (Fiction: Short Stories)

- Why to buy?: Burns’s stories hit the right balance between literary and commercial – they are well-written and accessible, with varied characters (journalists, teachers, mothers, prosecutors, mechanics), and unified by a strong theme of women (and men) who are “missing” something in their lives – an emotion felt by many in this over-busy world.

Burns’s work with *The Washington Post* – she interviews authors monthly and also writes book reviews – gives her a visibility that not many authors have. Her *Off the Page* book, reviewed and featured in numerous places globally, including *The Guardian*, *NPR* and the BBC, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Chicago Tribune*, should make her name familiar to lovers of fiction.

www.caroleburns.com

www.ipgbook.com/the-missing-woman-and-other-stories-products-9781910409664.php

A carnival of voices in independent publishing, Parthian Books is based in Cardigan/Aberteifi on the west coast of Wales, and was established in 1993 by Publishing Director Richard Lewis Davies. We also publish the Library of Wales series. Find out more about us at www.parthianbooks.com

(ENDS)

