



**SOCIETY** FOR  
THE  
**STUDY** OF  
**MIDWESTERN**  
**LITERATURE**

**THE**  
**CULTURAL HERITAGE**  
OF  
THE **MIDWEST:**  
**A SYMPOSIUM**

*43rd Annual Meeting*

Kellogg Conference Center  
219 South Harrison Rd.  
East Lansing, MI

May 9–11, 2013

[www.ssml.org](http://www.ssml.org)

## Thursday, May 9, 2013

Registration 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

### Session A

12:30 – 2:00 PM

Criticism  
Moderator: Ron Primeau Centennial AB

Nancy Bunge (Michigan State University) "Carl Jung and Jim Harrison"  
Kenneth Grant (University of Wisconsin, Baraboo/Sauk County) "August Derleth and the Comics: From Little Nemo to Pogo"  
Hasnul Djohar (Central Michigan University) "The Power of Hegemonic Groups in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*"

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Creative Nonfiction  
Moderator: Mary Minock Centennial C

Keith Tookey (Eureka College) "Story Discussion Exercises: Teaching Liberal Arts Through Science Fiction"  
Paul A. Crutcher (Michigan State University) "The Cultural Capital of Tofu, For Example, in Rural Missouri"  
Brian Gilmore (Michigan State University College of Law) "Letter from Lansing"

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Poetry:  
Moderator: Dawn Comer Riverside Room

Janet Heller (Michigan College English Association) Selections from *Exodus*  
Skaidrite Stelzer (University of Toledo) "Remembering Roundness"  
Bobbi Byrd (Osseo, MI) Selections of recent poems  
Brianna Carpenter (Purdue University) "Winter of Vigilance: Constructing the Subnivean Self"

### Session B

2:15 – 3:45 PM

Criticism:  
Moderator: Ken Grant Centennial AB

Catherine Chen (Columbia University) "Reclaiming Female Agency in *The Garden of Eden*"  
Vicki Morrison (Troy University) "Still Waters Run Deep: Ruth Suckow's Life and Legacy"  
Jennifer Heinert (University of Wisconsin, Washington County) "The Most Wretched Business: Capitalism in Toni Morrison's Novels"

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Fiction  
Moderator: Ed Morin Centennial C

Rebecca McKanna (Purdue University) "Watch Out for Lions"  
Jane L. Carman (Illinois State University) Stories  
Dawn Comer (Defiance College) "Evangalina Prays for Downton"

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Drama: In the Valley of the Shadow of the North: Year Four Michigamme Room  
Moderator: Matthew L.M. Fletcher

Gordon Henry (Michigan State University) "Title TK"  
Matthew L.M. Fletcher (Michigan State University) "Leonard and the Senator"  
Paul Stebleton (Lake Ann, Michigan) "Bigfoot Pie"

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Panel: Midwesterners Write Civil Rights Literature  
Moderator: Margaret Rozga

Riverside Room

Sandra Seaton (East Lansing) A reading of scenes from *Music History*  
Deborah Adelman (College of DuPage) "The Longest Bridge in the World"  
Margaret Rozga (University of Wisconsin, Waukesha) "From *March On Milwaukee* to *We Are the Drum*"

**Session C 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

Criticism: Centennial AB  
Moderator: Nancy Bunge

Sarah Warren-Riley (Central Michigan University) "Monster DeCoded: Science vs. Humanity in the Post-Human Genome Project Memoir Narrative of Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex*"  
Keith Tookey (Eureka College) "Science Fiction as Preparation for the Future: Teaching Liberal Arts Through Science Fiction"  
Douglas Sheldon (Kent State University) "Transnational Grotesques: The Reality of Place from Ohio to Osaka"  
Michael Maune (Purdue University) "Nature as Index, Metaphor, and Aesthetic in Rich Mullins' Lyricism and Prose"

Creative Prose (Fiction and Nonfiction} Centennial C  
Moderator: Mary Obuchowski

Marie Lannen (Central Michigan University) "I Asked for Ballet Lessons"  
Mary Minock (Madonna University) "Coed, a Memoir"  
Susan A. Schiller (Central Michigan University) "Escape to Blue Lagoon Marina 1968-1971"  
Saul Lemerond (Central Michigan University) "Kayfabe"

Poetry Riverside Room  
Moderator: Janet Heller

Martha Modena Vertreace-Doody (Kennedy King College) "The Way Hope Shapes Itself"  
Mary Catherine Harper (Defiance College) "Pulling Wings Off Onions"  
Christian Knoeller (Purdue University) "From Now On"  
Sarah Busse (Madison, WI) Selections from *Somewhere Piano*

Criticism: Theodore Roethke Michigamme Room  
Moderator: Ron Primeau

Aparna Zambare (Central Michigan University) "Archiving Theodore Roethke's Legacy in the Digital Medium"  
Dustin Bissell (Central Michigan University) "Finding Theodore Roethke"  
Michelle Marie Campbell (Central Michigan University) "A House for Wisdom; a Field for Revelation: Theodore Roethke as a Poet of Space and Place"  
Melissa Klamer (Central Michigan University) "Competing with Papa: Roethke's Roots and the Influence of Tradition"

**Dinner Break 5:30 PM**

**Editorial Committee Meeting**

Marcia Noe, chair  
Robert Beasecker  
Nancy McKinney  
Rob Dunne  
Marilyn Atlas  
Philip Greasley  
James Seaton  
Jeff Swenson

**State Room Private Dining Room**

Ronald Primeau  
Roger Bresnahan  
Bill Barillas  
Sara Kosiba  
Mary Obuchowski  
Scott Emmert

**7:00 PM**

Don Evans, Chicago Literary Hall of Fame

Centennial A-C

Don Evans, head of the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame, discusses and shows video from the 2012 induction ceremony. In a moving ceremony, Jane Addams, Sherwood Anderson, James T. Farrell, Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, and Carolyn Rodgers were inducted into the Literary Hall of Fame with their descendants accepting the awards on their behalf.

**Friday, May 10, 2013**

Registration 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Session D****8:30 – 10:00 AM**

Criticism

Centennial AB

Moderator: Christian Knoeller

Lawrence Moe (Metropolitan State University) "Aaron McGaffey Beede"

Loren Logsdon (Eureka College) "The Mystery of Death in the Fiction of Ray Bradbury"

Jeffrey Swenson (Hiram College) "The Chosen and the Self-Made: The Conflicted American Dream in Jim Tully's *Jarnegan*"

Jordan Horvath (Purdue University) "Defining and Subverting the Midwestern Ethos: Gene Stratton-Porter and Louise Erdrich as Wary Educators."

Prose Fiction:

Centennial C

Moderator: Scott Emmert

Jim Marlow (Providence) "The Trembling"

Leonora Smith (Michigan State University) Selections from *Steam Heat*

Eric Tucker (Hastings College) "Pareidolia"

Kate M Carey (Otterbein University) "Mother's Day"

Panel:

Michigamme Room

Re-Imagining the Region: New Voices and New Audiences in Midwestern Literature

Moderator: Ken Grant

Katie Kalish, Leokadia Dexter, Paul Grosskopf, Maa Vue, and Hmongzong Yang (University of Wisconsin, Marathon County) "The Hmong Ghost Stories Project"

Wendy Vardaman and Sarah Busse (Madison, WI) "Working Towards Definition through Diversity"

Creative Multi-Genre

Riverside Room

A reading eXperiment presented by the Festival of Language

Moderator: Jane L. Carman

Ryan Clark, creative (Illinois State University)

Mary Minock, creative (Madonna University)

Anita Schmaltz, creative (Festival of Language)

Members of the audience are invited to bring at least 3 minutes of creative or critical work.

**Session E****10:15 – 11: 45 AM**

Criticism: Ted Kooser

Centennial AB

Moderator: Jeffrey Hotz

Mary K. Stillwell (University of Nebraska, Lincoln) "Cosmic Consciousness and the Education of Ted Kooser"

Phillip Howerton (Missouri State University, West Plains) "The Poetry of Ted Kooser and the Politics of Diminishment"

Margaret Rozga (University of Wisconsin, Waukesha) "Repairing Poems with Ted Kooser's *Poetry Home Repair Manual*"

Jeffrey Hotz (East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania) "Environmental Ethics and Community Vision in Ted Kooser's Children's Fiction"

Criticism

Centennial C

Moderator: Mary Catherine Harper

Ellyn Lem (University of Wisconsin, Waukesha) "Beyond the Boundaries of the Baseball Novel: *The Art of Fielding's* Refusal to Conform to Literary Genre"

Jennifer Holly Wells (Drew University) "Conversation Within Louise Erdrich's Communities: A Midwestern Polyphonic Discourse"

Sara Kosiba (Troy University) "Defining the Midwest in the Modernist Era"

Andrea England (Western Michigan University) "Release and Return, the Search for Unity through Lyric: James Wright, Adrienne Rich, Louise Gluck, and Jorie Graham"

Creative Mixed Genre Poetry and Drama

Riverside Room

Moderator: Leonora Smith

Janet Heller (Michigan College English Association), Jennifer Marinelli, Carolyne Rex, Andrew Marks (Michigan State University) "The Cell Phone"

Nancy Genevieve (University of Illinois, Springfield) and Anna Roseboro (Michigan) "Poetry as Story and How it Transcends Distances in Time, Place, and Everything Else"

Christina Kubasta (Marian University) "I Have Some Issues with the Final Line"

Ed Morin (College for Creative Studies) "Hearing Bird Calls"

Panel:

Michigamme Room

Re-Imagining the Region: New Voices and New Audiences in Midwestern Literature II

Moderator: Lylanne Musselman

Michelle Menting (University of Nebraska, Lincoln) "*Within This Local Space*: Poems from the Great Lakes to the Great Plains"

Sarah Busse and Wendy Vardaman (co-editors, *Verse Wisconsin*) "Voicing the Map: Creating Place Through Poetry"

Kenyon Gradert (Washington University) "*The Art of the Rural*: New Media Expanding and Democratizing Scholarship"

Jon Lauck (Sioux Falls, SD / Washington, DC) "The Myth of the Midwestern 'Revolt from the Village'"

**Awards Luncheon****12:00 NOON – 1: 30 PM**

Red Cedar Room

2013 Mark Twain Award presented to Ted Kooser

2013 Mid-America Award presented to William Barillas

2012 writing prizes

**Session F 1:45 – 3:15 PM**

Panel: MidAmerica Award Panel: Midwester Pastoral Centennial AB  
Moderator: William Barillas

Mark Buechsel (University of Saint Francis) "The Middle West and the Middle Ages: Willa Cather's Neo-Sacramental Revision of the Pastoral Myth in *O Pioneers!*"  
Christian Knoeller (Purdue University) "'To One Who Loves Marshes': Naturalist Paul Errington's Pastoral Turn"  
Zach Sutter (Minneapolis, MN) "A Means to an End: Midwestern Pastoralism and John Steuart Curry's Residency at the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture"  
William Barillas (University of Wisconsin, La Crosse) "'Your Homeland Is Where You Live and Where You Work': Challenging Midwestern Pastoral(ism) in Tomás Rivera's . . . *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*"

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Criticism Centennial C  
Moderator: Sara Kosiba

Ron Primeau (Central Michigan University) "Fiction Born of Leaving: Re-imagining Chicago"  
Phil Greasley (University of Kentucky) "The Great Lakes, Carl Sandburg's 'Picnic Boat,' and the *Eastland* Disaster"  
Marilyn Atlas (Ohio University) "Flipping around in Chicago's Jewish Memory: Talk and Home and Talk in Peter Orner's Experimental Novel *Love and Shame and Love* (2011)"

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Poetry: Riverside Room  
Moderator: Marc Seals

Terry Blackhawk (Detroit) Selections from *The Light Between*  
Mary Minock (Madonna University) "I'm Calling Them Ballads"  
Wendy Vardaman (Madison, Wisconsin) "*Obstructed View* and Other Poems about Performance"  
Nancy Genevieve Perkins (University of Illinois, Springfield) Selections from *NYX: Sister of Erebus: A Memoir of My Mother's Alzheimer's*

**Session G 3:30 – 5:00 PM**

Informal Conversation with Ted Kooser Centennial AB  
Moderator: Jeff Hotz

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Creative Nonfiction Centennial C  
Moderator: Kate Carey

Nancy Bunge (Michigan State University) "Aunt Helen"  
Eva English (University of Toledo) "The House My Father Built"  
Regan Schaeffer (Central Michigan University) "Centrifugal Force"

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Criticism: Noir Panel I Midwestern "Country Noir" Michigamme Room  
Moderator: Marcia Noe

Marcia Noe, reading the late Joseph J. Wydeven's paper, "Myth and Sense of Place in 'Country Noir': Daniel Woodrell's *Winter's Bone*"  
Marcia Noe and Mollee Shannon (University of Tennessee, Chattanooga) "The Dark Fairy Tale in the Fiction of Bonnie Jo Campbell"  
Scott Emmert (University of Wisconsin, Fox Valley) "The Horror of a Simple Man: Midwestern Evil in Scott Smith's *A Simple Plan*"

**5:15 PM**

Mentoring Café Riverside  
An informal discussion of how to launch a successful academic career

**6:00 – 8:00 PM****Executive Advisory Committee**Corniche (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)**Elected Executive Advisory Council:**

Scott Emmert, 2010-2013

Dawn Comer, 2012-2015

Sandra Seaton, 2010-2013

Jeffrey Swenson, 2012-2015

Lylanne Musselman, 2011-2014

Mary Catherine Harper, 2013-2016

Marc Seals, 2011-2014

James Marlow, 2013-2016

**Other Officers:**

Roger Bresnahan, secretary-treasurer

Philip Greasley, recording secretary

Robert Beasecker, bibliographer

Marc Van Wormer, conference planner

Marcia Noe, editorial committee chair

Marilyn Atlas, awards coordinator

Mary Obuchowski, corporate board

Laura Julier, website manager

Christian Knoeller, president

Sara Kosiba, president-elect

Nancy Bunge, past president

Margaret Rozga, program &amp; scholarship chair

**8:00 PM**Drama: *Chances*

Centennial A-C

Two one-act plays by Sandra Seaton, adaptations of two short stories by Cyrus Colter: "A Chance Meeting" and "The Lookout"

**Saturday, May 11, 2013****8:00 – 9:00 AM**

Annual Business Meeting

Location TBA

All are invited. A continental breakfast will be served.

**Session H****9:00 – 10:30 AM**

Presidential Panel: "A Twelve Year Retrospective"

Centennial AB

Moderator: Christian Knoeller

Christian Knoeller (Purdue University) "The Making of a Conservationist: Audubon's Ecological Memory"

Lawrence Moe (Metropolitan State University) "Memoir Time"

John Rohrkemper (Elizabethtown College) "Something Rotten in the State of Missouri: Hamlet, Claudius, and Huckleberry Finn"

Criticism: Noir Panel II Midwestern Urban Noir

Centennial C

Moderator: Marcia Noe

Guy Szuberla (University of Toledo) "*Little Caesar*: Tough Guys Don't Dream—Do They?"Arvid F. Sponberg (Valparaiso University) "Noir on the Chicago Stage: Keith Huff's *A Steady Rain*"

Marc Seals (University of Wisconsin, Baraboo/Sauk County) "No Place to Hide: Examining the Struggle between Urban and Rural in Midwestern Noir"

Poetry

Riverside Room

Moderator: Martha Vertreace-Doody

Phillip Howerton (Missouri State University, West Plains) "Bloodroot: Poems of Rural Missouri"

Lylanne Musselman (Terra State Community College) Selections from *Filling in the Blanks: A Poetry Memoir*

Kristin LaTour (Joliet Junior College) "My Media, My Poetry"

Kenyon Gradert (Washington University) "'Benauwd' and Other Poems"

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Creative Mixed Genre

Michigamme Room

Moderator: Terry Blackhawk

Ronald Parsons (Sioux Falls, SD) Selections from *The Sense of Touch*

Kristin Bratt (University of Minnesota, St. Cloud) "Sonnets for the Lost and Surviving"

Cary Waterman (Augsburg College) "Writing Back: Women in Myth and Narrative"

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**Session I**

**10:45 – 12:15 PM**

Panel: Midwest Writers and Rural Decline

Centennial AB

Moderator: Andy Oler

Patricia Oman (Hastings College) "'The Moving Was Over and Done': Willa Cather's *The Professor's House* and Middle America"

Rachel Price (University of Arkansas) "'To Honor a Man': The Decline of Hegemonic Masculinity in Henry Bellamann's *Kings Row*"

Ross K. Tangedal (Kent State University) "The Agrarian Divide and Inevitable Decline: The Redefined Rural in Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*"

Andy Oler (Indiana University) "Rethinking Rural Decline: 'Boar Taint,' Genre, and the Entrepreneurial Farm"

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Panel: The Law and Literature

Centennial C

Moderator: James Seaton

Mae Kuykendall (Michigan State University College of Law) "Pressing the Mute Button: The University of Michigan Diversity Cases, Supreme Court Jurisprudence, and the Legacy of Racial Silence."

James Seaton (Michigan State University) "Is the Law Just?"

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Criticism: Richard Wright

Red Cedar B

Moderator: Maureen Eke

Erin Lewis (Central Michigan University) "Race in Richard Wright's Rural and Urban Space"

Jason A. Harvey (Central Michigan University) "Double-Consciousness in Richard Wright's Haiku"

Maureen N. Eke (Central Michigan University): "Writing Difference, Writing Chicago"

Elyse Laurelle Nelmark (Central Michigan University) "Black Chicago: Richard Wright and the Urban Poetics of Midwestern Literature"

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Creative Mixed Genre

Riverside Room

A reading eXperiment presented by the Festival of Language

Moderator: Jane L. Carman

Evan Nave, creative (Illinois State University)

Anita Schmaltz, critical (Festival of Language)

Irene Taylor, creative (Illinois State University)

Members of the audience are invited to bring at least 3 minutes of creative or critical work.

The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature encourages you to revise your conference paper as a publishable essay and submit one hard copy by September 1, 2013, to Marcia Noe, 535 Elinor Street, Chattanooga, TN 37405. Find details at [www.ssml.org/publications](http://www.ssml.org/publications) (click on the *MidAmerica* link).



# 2012 SSML Conference Prizes

## David D. Anderson Prize for Literary Criticism

Alex Engebretson, CUNY Graduate Center

"Midwestern Mysticism: The Place of Religion in Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead*"

## Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize

Mary Minock, Madonna University

"Georgia Plates"

## David Diamond Student Writing Prize

Michelle M. Campbell, Central Michigan University

"The Freedom to Try: Voltairine de Cleyre in Postmodern Pedagogy"

We encourage members to nominate a fellow member of SSML for the 2014 MidAmerica Award for distinguished contributions to the study of Midwestern literature.

Give your nomination to Roger Bresnahan here at the conference, leave it at the registration table, or e-mail it to rogerbres@gmail.com by **July 1, 2013**.

We also encourage members to nominate a living creative writer for the 2013 Mark Twain Award for distinguished contributions to Midwestern Literature. The Mark Twain honoree need not be a member of SSML.