

MIDAMERICA VI

*The Yearbook of the Society
for the Study of Midwestern Literature*

Edited by
DAVID D. ANDERSON

The Midwestern Press

The Center for the Study of
Midwestern Literature and Culture

Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

1979

In Honor of
RUSSEL B. NYE

Copyright 1979

By the Society for the Study
of Midwestern Literature

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

PREFACE

The appearance of *MidAmerica VI* marks the ninth year of the Society's existence, and it marks, too, several important advances in the Society's growth: the accelerated evolution of the Center for the Study of Midwestern Literature and Culture; the success of the first of a series of symposia on "The Cultural Heritage of the Midwest"; the growing membership; and the increase in scholarly and creative activity suggested by the greater number of essays and the longer bibliography in this volume. Current efforts to increase the numbers of life and institutional members of the Society will, if successful, provide a financial foundation strong enough to support continued growth.

During the coming year the Society will pass another milestone with the retirement of Russel B. Nye, founding member of the Society, author of such seminal works as *Midwestern Progressive Politics* and *The Unembarrassed Muse*, Distinguished Professor of English at Michigan State University, and recipient of the *MidAmerica* Award for 1978. The dedication of this volume to him is testimony to his past contributions to the Society and to scholarship, and it anticipates his continued contributions in the future.

DAVID D. ANDERSON

November, 1978

Contents

Preface	4
Grass/Grassroots—American Metaphor/ American Cliché Emma S. Thornton and Pauline Adams	7
The Midwestern Town in Midwestern Fiction David D. Anderson	27
The Genteel Poetry of William Dean Howells Bernard F. Engel	44
Image of Womanhood in the Spoon River Portraits Evelyn Schroth	62
The Popular Writer, Professors, and the Making of a Reputation: The Case of Carl Sandburg Paul Ferlazzo	72
Myth and Midwestern Landscape: Sherwood Anderson's <i>Mid-American Chants</i> Philip Greasley	79
The Family in Booth Tarkington's <i>Growth</i> Trilogy Charlotte LeGates	88
Two Regional Stories by Don Marquis John E. Hallwas	100
Fitzgerald's Midwest: "Something Gorgeous Somewhere"—Somewhere Else Barry Gross	111
Penman for the People: Justice Voelker (Robert Traver) John C. Hepler	127
Evan S. Connell Jr.'s <i>Mrs. Bridge</i> and <i>Mr. Bridge</i> : A Critical Documentary Ray Lewis White	141
The Annual Bibliography of Midwestern Literature: 1977 Donald S. Pady and Robert Beasecker, Editors	160