

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We collectively acknowledge that Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg—Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the University resides on Land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize, support, and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan's twelve federally recognized Indian nations, for historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, for Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and for those who were forcibly removed from their Homelands. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

Inquiries can be sent to Prof. Kristin Arola, Director of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program (arola@aiis.msu.edu).

## SSML PUBLICATIONS

### MidAmerica

*MidAmerica* is the peer-reviewed yearbook of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. We welcome submissions of scholarly essays from our members on any aspect of Midwestern literature and culture.

Submission Guidelines

4,000–8,000 words (including Works Cited and Notes), formatted according to the most recent edition of the MLA handbook.

Submit Word document to Patricia Oman (poman@hastings.edu). Do not include any personally identifying information in the Word file.

**Annual Deadline: July 1**

Review Essays

*MidAmerica* publishes a limited number of review essays in each issue. To propose a review essay or to request that *MidAmerica* review your recent publication, please contact Patricia Oman (poman@hastings.edu).

### Midwestern Miscellany

*Midwestern Miscellany* is published twice per year. A guest editor selects a theme or topic. Often essays selected for the special issue are presented on panels organized by the guest editor at SSML's annual meeting or at the Society's panels at MMLA, MLA, PCA, and/or ALA. See [ssml.org/resources](http://ssml.org/resources) for current calls.

Members who would like to be a guest editor for an issue of *Midwestern Miscellany* should contact Patricia Oman (poman@hastings.edu).

# Society for the Study of MIDWESTERN LITERATURE

MAY 28–29  
2026

## WRITING THE MIDWEST

2026 Symposium of Scholars and Creative Writers

Kellogg Hotel and Convention Center  
East Lansing, MI

THURSDAY, MAY 28

7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Registration South Lobby  
Book Display 104

SESSION A 9:00–10:15 AM

Criticism 103AB

Within and Without: Resistance, Exile, and Trauma in Midwestern Literature

Moderator: Patricia Oman, Hastings College

“‘The homeland from which he was exiled ...’ On the Midwestern Characters and Setting in Denis Johnson’s *Fiction*,” David Buehrer, Valdosta State University

“Fascism and the Frontier: Literary Resistance and Reaction in Sinclair Lewis and William Dudley Pelley,” Wesley R. Bishop, Jacksonville State University

“What the Hell Was Wrong with Nick? Drinking, Time, and Memory of the First World War in Hemingway’s ‘The End of Something’ and ‘The Three-Day Blow,’” Michael Schupska, University of Alabama

“We Keep Each of Us Safe: A Reflection on Minnesota Resistance,” Lisa DuRose, Inver Hills Community College

Prose and Poetry 105AB

Writing Place in the Midwest

Moderator: Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

“Selections from *Drift*,” Patrick Kindig, United States Naval Academy

“Scenes from Buchanan Street,” Cornelius Fortune, Lake Michigan College

“Apparently I’m a Midwesterner Now,” Gretchen Lida, Gateway Technical College

“A Young Chicagoan Discovers the UP,” Edward Morin, College for Creative Studies

Prose and Poetry 102

Beyond Midwestern Nice: Literary Resistance and Rage

Moderator: Michelle Campbell, University of Michigan

“You Know Nothing,” Yasmina Din Madden, Drake University

“Women’s Rage at a Ren Faire of the Future: A Reading of *Fiction*,” Zoe Zolbrod

“Amber Alert,” Sharon Bippus

“Poetry as a Form of Activism and Rage,” Laura Apol, Michigan State University

“Legend,” Lisa Slage Robinson

SESSION B 10:30–11:45 AM

Prose and Poetry 103AB

Small and Independent: Publishing Midwest Authors

Moderator: Wesley R. Bishop, Jacksonville State University

“Water the Bones” and “Cat and Fox,” M. J. Wegert

“The Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Fantasy of Running an Independent Bookstore,” Scott Harris, Everybody Reads

Criticism 105AB

Is the Midwest Innocent? A Roundtable Discussion

Moderator: Marcia Noe, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

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Roger J. Bresnahan, Michigan State University

Robert Dunne, Central Connecticut State University

William Barillas, Independent Scholar

John Rohrkemper, Elizabethtown College

Edward Morin, College for Creative Studies

Scott Emmert, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Jon K. Lauck, *Middle West Review*

Jeffrey Hotz, East Stroudsburg University

Criticism 102

Midwestern Feminist Rage: When Will Our Stories Be Heard?

Moderator: Michelle Campbell, University of Michigan

“‘The Women’ from *Tell It Right: Serve the Sentence*,” Sarah Layden, Indiana University Indianapolis

“Energy Fix,” Rhonda Collins

“‘Tell Me a Riddle’: Images of Jewish Discomfort in Tillie Olson’s *Anchorless Midwest*,” Marilyn J. Atlas, Ohio University

LUNCH BREAK & MEETINGS 12:00–1:00 PM

Editorial Committee Brody Square

Student Mentoring Cafe Brody Square

**THURSDAY, MAY 28 (CONT.)**

**SESSION C 1:15–2:30 PM**

**Criticism 103AB**

Women and Stereotypes in Midwestern Literature

Moderator: Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

“Post-COVID Frontier Gothic: The Anxiety of White Womanhood in *Hold Your Breath*,” Patricia Oman, Hastings College

“Emily’s Mother: A Midwestern Working-Class Icon of Depression-Era Motherhood,” Kane Kijek, Ohio University

“Ambivalence as Political Aesthetic in *The Dollmaker*,” Charles Cunningham, Eastern Michigan University

“Gaping Possibilities: Embracing Mexican Stereotypes in Erika Sanchez’s *Yo no soy tu perfecta hija mexicana*,” Chris T. Schulenburg, University of Wisconsin-Platteville

**Poetry 105AB**

Interactive Poetry Workshop: Collaborating with Theodore Roethke

Moderator: John Rohrkemper, Elizabethtown College

John Rohrkemper, Elizabethtown College

Anita Skeen, Michigan State University, Friends of Roethke Foundation

Sherrin Frances, Saginaw Valley State University, Friends of Roethke Foundation

**Prose 102**

Living Here, Exploring Elsewheres: Emerging Fiction Writers Discuss Growing Alternate Worlds from MI Roots

Moderator: Caitlin Horrocks, Grand Valley State University

Taylor Oberhausen, Grand Valley State University

Caitlin Horrocks, Grand Valley State University

Brandon Smith, Grand Valley State University

Aaron Ponce, Grand Valley State University

Kassidi Mott, Grand Valley State University

**SESSION D 2:45–4:00 PM**

**Prose 103AB**

On an Inland Sea: Writing the Great Lakes

Moderator: Raymond Deeren, Austin Peay State University

“Accents on the Horizon,” Antonio Diaz Oliva, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

“Tree World,” Raymond Deeren, Austin Peay State University

“Smelt,” Dawn Burns, Michigan State University

“Gibraltar Bay, Lake Erie,” Cal Freeman, Oakland University

“Rituals and Revelations at Days at the Lake Bar and Grill,” Sarah Pazur, CS Partners

**Criticism 105AB**

Memory, Melancholy, and Legacy in Midwestern Literature

Moderator: Jeffrey Hotz, East Stroudsburg University

“Equilibrium and Memory-Making in Ted Kooser’s *Raft*,” Jeffrey Hotz, East Stroudsburg State University

“Why Sherwood Anderson Still Matters,” Robert Dunne, Central Connecticut State University

“A ‘Lost’ Michigan Novel: Rediscovering *The Spring Flight* by Lee J. Smits,” Scott Emmert, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

“‘In a Dark Time’: Depression and Agency in the Poetry of Robert Frost and Theodore Roethke,” John Rohrkemper, Elizabethtown College

**SESSION E 4:15–5:30 PM**

**Prose and Poetry 103AB**

Unburdened: Clawing Away the Caregiver Yoke in Poetry and Prose”

Moderator: Michelle Campbell, University of Michigan

“Algernon,” Joyce Meier

“Hospice” and “Reconstructing the Tower of Babel,” Bex Miller

“On Remaining Hopeful While Caring for Troubled Family Members,” Mary Catherine Harper, Defiance College

“The Roswell Diaries” from *A Green Glow on the Horizon*, Dawn Burns, Michigan State University

“Mercy,” Amy Wise

**Criticism 105AB**

In Memoriam: A Roundtable Celebrating the Life of Philip Greasley

Moderator: Jeffrey Hotz, East Stroudsburg University

Marcia Noe, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Scott Emmert, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Mary DeJong Obuchowski, Central Michigan University

Roger J. Bresnahan, Michigan State University

William Barillas, Independent Scholar

**MEETINGS 5:45–6:45 PM**

**Executive Advisory Council Meeting 105AB**

Light Meal

**PLENARY 7:00–8:00 PM**

**David D. Anderson Plenary Presentation 103AB**

Paul W. Burch, Rice University

**READING 8:15–9:15 PM**

**Bonnie Jo Campbell 103AB**

**FRIDAY, MAY 29**

**7:30 AM – 4:00 PM**

**Registration South Lobby**

**Book Display 104**

**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING 8:00–9:00 AM**

**Meeting and Continental Breakfast 104**

**SESSION F 9:00–10:15 AM**

**Prose and Poetry 103AB**

Creativity, Praxis, and Multimodality

Moderator: Dawn Burns, Michigan State University

“Turning Memory into Haibun,” Mary Catherine Harper, Defiance College

“Writing Within and Without Formulas: How a Fiction Is,” Jane Carman, Bradley University

“Do Right, Mr. President: Poems and Songs,” Edward Morin, College for Creative Studies

**Criticism 105AB**

The Geography of Grit: Mapping Midwestern Feminist Rage in Literature and Poetry

Moderator: Michelle Campbell, University of Michigan

“Flipping the Table: Poetry and Prose of Midwestern Feminist Rage and Hunger,” Michelle Campbell, University of Michigan

“Smashing the Gilded Cage: Negotiating Space in Heather Colley’s *The Gilded Butterfly Effect*,” Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College,

“Poems on Midwestern Feminist Rage,” Emilee Kinney

**SESSION G 10:30–11:45 AM**

**Criticism 103AB**

Midwestern Gothic

Moderator: Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

“Tether,” Millie Frankel, Northern Michigan University

“All the Dead-Long Day,” Tyler Sookralli, University of Chicago

“The Girl in the Dumbwaiter; or, The Woman in the Fur Coat,” Sophia Craig, University of Iowa

**Prose and Poetry 105AB**

Changing Times: A Creative Panel in Honor of Janet Ruth Heller

Moderator: Dawn Burns, Michigan State University

Linda Neme Foster, Aquinas College, Contemporary Writers Series

Mary Catherine Harper, Defiance College

Dawn Burns, Michigan State University

**LUNCHEON 12:00–1:30 PM**

**Awards Room**

**MARK TWAIN AWARD READING 1:45–3:00 PM**

**Margaret Rozga 105AB**

**SESSION H 3:15–5:15 PM**

**Prose and Poetry 103AB**

Reckoning with Loss in Writing

Moderator: Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

“Seeking Kenny: A Wrestler’s Journey,” Michael Copperman, Michigan State University

“The C Word Has No Answer,” Jane L. Carman, Bradley University

“Bones,” Jane L. Carman, Bradley University

“Food Desert,” Rachael Price, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

**MEETING 5:30–7:00 PM**

**Board of Directors Olympus Room**

**UPCOMING MISCELLANY TOPICS**

**New Perspectives on Midwestern Working-Class Literature**

Guest Editor: Marilyn Atlas (atlas@ohio.edu)

**The Innocent Midwest**

Guest Editor: Marcia Noe (Marcia-Noe@utc.edu)

**Midwestern Drama**

Guest Editor: Marilyn Atlas (atlas@ohio.edu)

**Reading and Writing the Midwest**

Guest Editors: Rachael Price (rprice@abac.edu)

For complete Calls for Proposals, see [ssml.org/resources](http://ssml.org/resources).