Reading the Midwest:  
Dr. Christian Knoeller

Engaging Place in Literature & Teaching

AMST 650, EDCI 613 & ENGL 696  
Fall 2014

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Office Hours  
Tuesday 3:00–4:30 & by appointment

Course Syllabus

WEEK ONE  
AUGUST 28

Introductions: degree programs, scholarly interests, personal aims for this course 
Distribute and discuss Course Description 
Overview of the contents and organization of our two-volume course reader 
Preview of book-length literary and critical titles for individual presentations

Prompt for writing and discussion: What is your personal connection to the Midwest?

WEEK TWO  
SEPTEMBER 4

Preview Course Syllabus, Confirm presentation dates

READINGS
David Anderson  
“The Origins and Development of Midwest Literature” from Dictionary of Midwestern Literature

William Barillas  
“Midwestern Pastoralism” from The Midwestern Pastoral

Mary Swander  
"My Midwest" from Prairie Gold (plus a few of Swander's poems)

SUPPLEMENTARY
Video Screening: "Distinct and Midwestern: David Anderson and the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature" by Ron Primeau

Indigenous Images: Paintings by Indiana artist George Winter of the Potawatomi immediately prior to relocation (from Purdue Libraries Electronic Archives)

WEEK THREE

SEPTEMBER 11

READINGS

Gene Stratton Porter  
*A Girl of the Limberlost* Chap 1, 3, 13 & 16 (Full text on-line)  
“Shall We Save Natural Beauty” from *Let Us Highly Resolve*

Cheryl Birkelo  
“Gene Stratton-Porter: Scholar of the Natural World in *A Girl of the Limberlost*”

Sydney Plum  
Introduction from *Coming Through the Swamp: The Nature Writings of Gene Stratton-Porter*

WEEK FOUR

SEPTEMBER 18

READINGS

Aldo Leopold  
*A Sand County Almanac* Parts I & II focusing on these essays:  
Good Oak, The Geese Return, Bur Oak, Marshland Elegy, and On a Monument to the Pigeon

Susan Flader  
"Thinking Like a Mountain"

Matt Low  
“The Lawrenceville Letters: Tracking the Origins of Aldo Leopold’s Environmental Education” from *ISLE*

James McClintock  
“Aldo Leopold: Mythmaker” from *Nature’s Kindred Spirits*

James Wright  
“Ohioan Pastoral” and poems selected (from *Above the River*)

Presentation  
Lauren Mallett: *James Wright’s collected Above the River*

WEEK FIVE

SEPTEMBER 25

READINGS

Aldo Leopold  
*A Sand County Almanac* Parts III focusing on these essays:
Conservation Ethic, Wilderness, and The Land Ethic

J. Baird Callicott  “Aldo Leopold on Education”

Peter Fritzell  “The Conflicts of Ecological Conscience”

Max Oelschlaeger  “Aldo Leopold and the Age of Ecology”

Theodore Roethke  “North American Sequence” from *The Far Field*

**Presentation**  *Michelle Campbell*: Theodore Roethke, *Collected Poems*

**WEEK SIX**  OCTOBER 2

**READINGS**
Scott Russell Sanders  (Focus on a few of Sanders' essays—the ones that interest you most)
  “Finding the Place” from *Wilderness Plots*
  “Imagining the Midwest” from *Writing from the Center*
  “After the Flood” from *Staying Put*
  “Fire” (an excerpt) from *A Private History of Awe*
  “Big Trees, Still Water, Tall Grass” from *A Conservationist Manifesto*

Paul Gruchow  
"Water, the Canoe, Rock Paintings" from *Boundary Waters*
"The Blue Mountains of Minnesota" from *Necessity of Empty Places*
"What time is it?" from *Grass Roots: The Universe of Home*

**Presentation**  *Chea Parton*: Paul Gruchow *Necessity of Empty Places & Grass Roots*

**WEEK SEVEN**  OCTOBER 9

**READINGS**
Jim Harrison  *Dalva*: Book I, "Dalva" (3-106)

Elizabeth Dodd  “Wapiti” from *Prospect*

Richard Manning  “Enclosure” from *Grassland*

Tom McHugh  “On the Way to Extinction” from *The Time of the Buffalo*

Jonathon Raban  “Fictions” from *Bad Land* (supplementary)
Presentation  

Elizabeth Cooley: Dodd, Prospect, Archetypal Light, and Like Caverns, Memory

WEEK EIGHT  
OCTOBER 16

READINGS  
Jim Harrison  Dalva: Book II, "Michael" (109-213)

William Cronon  “The View from Walden” from Changes in the Land
Shepard Krech  “Fire” from The Ecological Indian
William Stafford  Selected poems


WEEK NINE  
OCTOBER 23

READINGS  
Jim Harrison  Dalva: Book III, "Going Home" (217-334)

John Hudson  “The First Corn Belt” from Making the Corn Belt
Carolyn Merchant  "Nature and the Market Economy, 1750-1850"

Presentation  Jake Zucker: Jim Harrison, The Road Home

WEEK TEN  
OCTOBER 30

READINGS  
Lawrence Buell  “Pastoral Ideology” from The Environmental Imagination
Cheryl Glotfelty  “Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis”
David Lowenthal  “Introduction” to George Perkin Marsh’s Man and Nature
Mark Buechsel  "Protestantism, Literalism, and the Sacramental Body of the Midwest"

Presentation  Christina Stephens: Mark Bueschel, Sacred Land

Dr. Christian P. Knoeller  Purdue University
WEEK ELEVEN  NOVEMBER 6

READINGS
Linda Hogan  Solar Storms: Chapters 1-8 (pages 3-106)
Laura Castor  Claiming Place in Wor(l)ds: Linda Hogan’s Solar Storms

Presentations  Rachel Bonini: Louise Erdrich, The Place of Doves

WEEK TWELVE  NOVEMBER 13

READINGS
Linda Hogan  Solar Storms: Chapters 9-13 (pages 114-223)
Elizabeth Dodd  “In Such a Homecoming” from In the Mind’s Eye
Christa Volpp  The Ecological Indian vs. the Spiritually Corrupt White Man

Presentations  Wendy Wallace: Louise Erdrich, (a novel yet to be selected)

WEEK THIRTEEN  NOVEMBER 20

READINGS
Linda Hogan  Solar Storms: Chapters 14-20 (pages 224-340)
Jim Harrison  "The Theory and Practice of Rivers" from The Shape of the Journey
Schultermandl  Fighting for the Mother/Land:
An Ecofeminist Reading of Hogan’s Solar Storms

Presentations  Holiday Celebration: Bring food and/or beverages to share

WEEK FOURTEEN  NOVEMBER 27
** Thanksgiving Break / No Class **

WEEK FIFTEEN  
DECEMBER 4

Present Seminar Projects

WEEK SIXTEEN  
DECEMBER 11

Present Seminar Projects