

MidAmerica XXXV

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

DAVID D. ANDERSON, FOUNDING EDITOR
MARCIA NOE, EDITOR

The Midwestern Press
The Center for the Study of
Midwestern Literature and Culture
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1033

2008

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF
MIDWESTERN LITERATURE

<http://www.ssml.org/home>

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

David D. Anderson, Founding Editor, *MidAmerica*

Marcia Noe, Editor, *MidAmerica*

Marilyn Judith Atlas	Ohio University
William Barillas	University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse
Robert Beasecker	Grand Valley State University
Roger Bresnahan	Michigan State University
Robert Dunne	Central Connecticut State University
Philip Greasley	University of Kentucky
Nancy McKinney	Illinois State University
Mary DeJong Obuchowski	Central Michigan University
Ronald Primeau	Central Michigan University
James Seaton	Michigan State University

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

Lauren Brown	Paige Keown
Victoria Bryan	Jen Litton
Ashley Hopkins	Gale Mauk
Emily Hurst	Heather Palmer
Michael Jaynes	

MidAmerica, a peer-reviewed journal of the Society for the Study of
Midwestern Literature, is published annually. We welcome scholarly con-
tributions from our members on any aspect of Midwestern literature and
culture. Except for winners of our annual poetry and prose contests, we
do not publish poems, short stories, or creative non fiction.

If you would like to submit a scholarly essay to be considered for publica-
tion in *MidAmerica*, please send a hard copy of your essay to Marcia Noe,
535 Elinor Street, Chattanooga, TN 37405. If your essay is selected for pub-
lication, you will then send your manuscript by electronic attachment to
marcia-noe@utc.edu after making any required and/or desired changes.

Please follow the most recent edition of the MLA Handbook. In docu-
menting sources, use parenthetical citations within your essay and a list of
works cited. If you include discursive notes, they should be endnotes that
use Arabic, not Roman, numerals.

Use no headers, footers, or page numbers. Do not put your name on your
essay. Include your contact information in your cover letter to Marcia. Be

Copyright 2008
by the Society for the Study of
Midwestern Literature
All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

No part of this work may be
reproduced without permission of
the publisher

MidAmerica (ISSN: 0190-2911) is a peer-reviewed journal of the Society for the Study of
Midwestern Literature.

This journal is a member of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals



The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature
congratulates

David D. Anderson

founding member of SSML and
founding editor of *MidAmerica*

who received the 2009

**Ohioana Career Award for
Outstanding Contributions
to the Arts**

at the statehouse in Columbus on Ohioana Day
Saturday, October 17, 2009

In Honor of
James Seaton

PREFACE

On May 8, 2008, members of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature gathered in East Lansing for the thirty-eighth annual meeting of the Society. Highlights included several special panels on creative nonfiction, the third annual SSML Festival of Films, and an open mike session where participants shared their creative writing. At the awards banquet on Friday night, Christian Knoeller received the Jill Barnum Midwestern Heritage Prize for his essay, "Native on Native." The David Diamond Student Writing Prize went to Nicholas Kowalczyk for "Murder in Rustbelt City." Todd E. Davis received the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize for "Tree of Heaven." James Seaton received the MidAmerica Award and the Mark Twain Award went to Jonis Agee.

SSML is currently operating at a loss due to increased expenses in publishing its journals and convening the annual Symposium on Midwestern Literature and Midwest Poetry Festival. A major gift from our longtime active member, the late Jane S. Bakerman, has enabled us to continue our work while we seek to establish a more stable financial footing for the work ahead. SSML is also grateful to the following members and friends who have made contributions in addition to their dues. As more such contributions are received, and earlier ones are discovered in searching the archives, we will add more names to this Honor Roll: Walter Adams, David D. Anderson, Robert Beasecker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ray B. Browne, Mary Ellen Caldwell, Louis J. Cantoni, G.B. Crump, David Diamond, Bernard F. Engel, Kenneth B. Grant, Philip A. Greasley, Theodore Haddin, Janet Ruth Heller, Ted Kennedy, Jean Laming, Loren Logsdon, Bud Narveson, Marcia Noe, Mary Obuchowski, Tom Page, E. Elizabeth Raymond, Herbert K. Russell, James Seaton, Guy Szuberla, Doug Wixson, Melody Zajdel, and the family and friends of Paul Somers.

CONTENTS

Preface		
Yes		
The Gwendolyn Brooks Prize Poem	Edward Morin	8
Diminishing Returns		
The Gwendolyn Brooks Prize Poem	Roy Seeger	10
Raised in a Corn Palace		
The Paul Somers Prize for Creative Prose	Dawn Comer	12
Doctor and Patient		
The David Diamond Student Writing Prize	Stephanie Carpenter	23
John Neihardt Writes: Textual Appropriations of Indigenous Storytelling		
The David Diamond Student Writing Prize	Matthew Low	34
Steve Tesich's <i>Four Friends</i> and <i>Summer Crossing</i>	Guy Szuberla	44
The "Middle" in Diane Johnson's <i>MidAmerica</i> : The Space in Between	Carolyn A. Durham	57
The Art of Atonement: The Emergence of the Jewish Character in William Maxwell's Short Fiction	Gretchen Comba	66
Music and the Spirit of Tragedy in Hamlin Garland's "Up the Coolly": A Nietzschean Reading	Mark Buechsel	80
Romancing the Desiring-Machine: Edna Ferber's <i>Cimarron</i> and Sanora Babb's <i>The Lost Traveler</i>	Douglas Wixson	92
A Mystical Midwest: Louise Erdrich's <i>Tracks</i> and the Midwestern Tradition	Nancy Bunge	106
Annual Bibliography of Midwestern Literature 2006	Robert Beasecker	115
Recipients of the Mark Twain Award		175
Recipients of the MidAmerica Award		Back Cover