



**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS**



This event is part of The Big Read, an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest.



**THE BIG
READ**

If you like **My Ántonia**,
check these out!



Other Books by Cather

Alexander's Bridge (CAT)

Cather's first novel is a charming period piece, a love story, and a fatalistic fable about a doomed love affair and the lives it destroys.

Death Comes for the Archbishop (CAT)

Cather's best-known novel recounts a life lived simply in the silence of the southwestern desert.

A Lost Lady (CAT)

This Cather classic depicts the encroachment of the civilization that supplanted the pioneer spirit of Nebraska's frontier.

My Mortal Enemy (CAT)

First published in 1926, this is Cather's sparest and most dramatic novel, a dark and oddly prescient portrait of a marriage that subverts our oldest notions about the nature of happiness and the sanctity of the hearth.

One of Ours (CAT)

Alienated from his parents and rejected by his wife, Claude Wheeler finally finds his destiny on the bloody battlefields of World War I.

O Pioneers! (CAT)

Willa Cather's second novel, a timeless tale of a strong pioneer woman facing great challenges, shines a light on the immigrant experience.

The Professor's House (CAT)

Godfrey St. Peter grew up on the prairie, entered academia, and in his fifties has attained professional success and domestic happiness. But we learn St. Peter's success is hollow, his relations with his wife and children are passionless and embittered.

Shadows on the Rock (CAT)

This historical novel reflects Cather's fascination with finding a little piece of France in eastern Canada. Set in the late 17th century, the novel centers on the activities of the widowed apothecary Euclide Auclair and his young daughter Cecile.

Song of the Lark (CAT)

Cather's beautiful and lyrical third novel follows the life of Thea Kronberg from her childhood in 19th-century Nebraska to her career as a renowned opera singer.

About Willa Cather

Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice

by Sharon O'Brien (920 CATHER, W.)

Willa Cather: A Literary Life

by James Leslie Woodress (920 CATHER, W.)

Willa Cather: The Writer and her World

by Janis P. Stout (920 CATHER, W.)

Willa Cather: The Road is All

(920 DVD CATHER, W.)



*"The history of every country begins
in the heart of man or a woman."*

– Willa Cather (1873-1947)

Read-Alike Authors

Willa Cather is one of the most important American authors of the first half of the 20th century. While her best known works are those set in the early years of the settlement of Nebraska, she also published historical novels set in the southwest, Quebec and Virginia.

Though her works are very much rooted in a particular place and time, they deal with universal themes.

If you enjoy Willa Cather's writing style, you may like books by these authors:

Annie Dillard

The Living (DIL)

This historical novel of the American northwest in the late 19th century focuses on the settlement at Whatcom on Bellingham Bay (near Puget Sound). Dillard offers a compelling portrait of frontier life.

Edna Ferber

So Big (FER)

The heartfelt story of a woman's life and her struggle to raise her only son and teach him what is valuable in life is set in the late 1800s and early 1900s in rural and urban Chicago.



Kent Haruf

The Tie That Binds (HAR)

Edith, the courageous daughter of western homesteaders, finds herself bound by duty, love, and obligation to her crippled father and, by strength and determination, learns to live within the constraints of that responsibility. The story is as bleak and stark as its Colorado-plains setting.

Henry James

The Portrait of a Lady (JAM)

James delves into the psychological impact of European culture upon an American girl, Isabel Archer, and of her unfortunate marriage.



Sarah Orne Jewett

The Country of the Pointed Firs (JEW)

A wandering writer, who boards at an herbalist's house in Maine, finds herself becoming more and more involved in the lives of the villagers.

Books About the Prairie Landscape

The Whistling Season by Ivan Doig (DOI)

Hired as a housekeeper to work on the early 1900s Montana homestead of widower Oliver Milliron, the irreverent Rose and her brother Morris endeavor to educate the widower's sons while witnessing local efforts on a massive irrigation project.

Plainsong by Kent Haruf (HAR)

An unlikely extended family is formed when a high school teacher helps a pregnant student make a home with two elderly bachelor ranchers.

Land of the Fragile Giants: Landscapes, Environments and Peoples of the Loess Hills edited by Cornelia F. Mutel and Mary Swander (977.7 LAN)

The Horizontal World: Growing Up Wild in the Middle of Nowhere: A Memoir

by Debra K. Marquart (920 MARQUART, D. 2006)
Marquart has an interesting bio: she's a North Dakota farm girl, former rock-and-roll band member, college dropout, professor, and Pushcart Prize-winning writer. Born into a dairy-farm family, like many young people she flees as soon as she is able, taking with her the experiences that have determined the line of her backbone.

A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley (SMI)

A moving and engrossing retelling of Shakespeare's King Lear set on an Iowa farm.

Dakota: A Spiritual Geography

by Kathleen Norris (978.3 NOR)

A native of South Dakota, Norris maps the cultural and spiritual landscape of life on the High Plains.

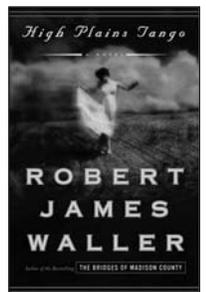
Growing Up with the Town: Faith & Community on the Great Plains by Dorothy Hubbard Schwieder (978.3 SCH)

Interweaving the story of her family with the history of her hometown, Schwieder creates a colorful tapestry of small-town life.

High Plains Tango

by Robert James Waller (WAL)

A drifter with a passion for solitude and carpentry purchases land near Wolf Butte, a region considered sacred by the Sioux, and sets out to build a life for himself among the locals.



Books About the Immigrant Experience

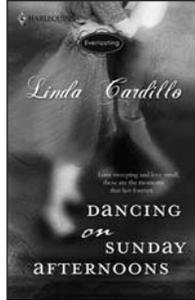
Daughter of Fortune by Isabel Allende (ALL)

This novel tells the story of a young woman's quest for love and fortune during the California Gold Rush.

Dancing on Sunday Afternoons

by Linda Cardillo (CAR)

Through reminiscences, photographs, and letters, Giulia shares her experiences with her granddaughter Cara, reliving her immigrant experience to America where she met Paolo, her first husband, who was the great love of her life.



The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri (LAH)

A portrait of the immigrant experience follows the Ganguli family from their traditional life in India through their arrival in Massachusetts in the late 1960s and their difficult melding into an American way of life.

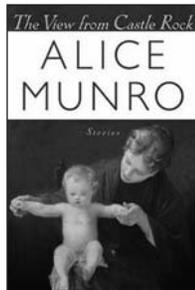
The Emigrants by Vilhelm Moberg (MOB)

In the summer of 1850, Karl Oskar Nilsson and his family leave Sweden for America.

The View from Castle Rock

by Alice Munro (MUN)

A compilation of short-fiction journeys from the Scotland of the author's own family heritage and a ship en route to the New World, to a family odyssey from Illinois to Canada and in and around Lake Huron.



Giants in the Earth by O. E. Rolvaag (ROL)

Per Hansa and his wife come to the Dakota prairie from Norway, each having a different reaction to the open expanse of land.

In America by Susan Sontag (SON)

This historical novel follows the efforts of a group of Polish people, led by a famous actress, to build a utopian commune in California in the 1870s.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan (TAN)

Encompassing two generations and a rich blend of Chinese and American history, the stories of four struggling, strong women also reveal their daughters' memories and feelings.

Books About Pioneer Life & Homesteading

Long Road Turning by Irene Bennett Brown (BRO)

This is the first book in a series called "The Women of Paragon Springs," Brown's vibrant and engaging tale of brave settlers in Eastern Kansas in the 1870s.

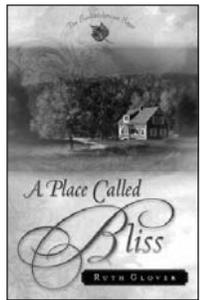
One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd by Jim Fergus (FER)

An Indian request in 1854 for 1,000 white brides to ensure peace is secretly approved by the U.S. government in this alternate-history novel. The experiment is described by May Dodd, a high-society woman released from an asylum where she was incarcerated by her family for an affair.

A Place Called Bliss

by Ruth Glover (GLO Sas V1)

Two women—one pampered, the other a servant—both dream about a new life in Canada and set out to make it happen, despite the risks.

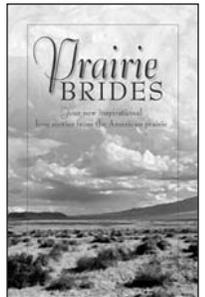


The Journal of Callie Wade by Dawn Miller (MIL)

Callie Wade writes letters telling of the difficulties for women traveling west, including childbirth between storms and the forlorn despair of Native Americans watching their world come to an end.

Prairie Brides: Four New Inspirational Love Stories from the North American Prairie (PRA)

These inspirational stories tell tales of love, faith, and survival against all odds on the untamed Great Plains.



The All-True Travels and Adventures of Lidie Newton by Jane Smiley (SMI)

In Quincy, Illinois, Lidie marries abolitionist Thomas Newton and goes with him to Kansas. But when Thomas is murdered, she disguises herself to get revenge.

Sarah's Quilt

by Nancy E. Turner (TUR)

Arizona Territory pioneer Sarah Prine struggles with drought, starving cattle, and a neighbor's unwelcome advances, a situation further complicated when her brother's family is devastated by the San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

