

Sue Hart
Lit 342-1 Montana Writers
Fall Semester 2009
Tuesdays, 4:11- 7:11 P.M.
LA 430

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Office Hours:
Tuesdays: 2-4
Wednesdays- 9:30-10:30
M/F: By appointment

Welcome to the wonderful world of Montana literature! Our state has a rich literary history which shows no signs of abating. In fact, just the opposite is true. As Tom McGuane has observed, “You can’t toss a stone in Montana without hitting a writer.” And the marvel is, so many of those writers are very gifted, very good at what they do. It’s always hard to limit the books for this class because there are so many fine writers who should be included, but the realities of time and money (books do cost money, but many if not all on our reading list can be found at secondhand book store or checked out of a library) necessitate making some hard choices. We’ll also be talking about several people we won’t be reading this semester. My hope is that you’ll be so impressed by the works we do read you’ll want to read more of the books produced by your fellow Montanans—books that attract readers all across the country and around the world, and garner honors and awards for their authors.

First class meeting: Introduction to and overview of the class. Discussion of expectations on both sides of the desk, grading, etc. Then we will move on to the books we will be discussing, in this order:

The Big Sky, A.B. Guthrie, Jr.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance & Other Stories- Dorothy M. Johnson

The Pass, Thomas Savage

The Surrounded, Darcy McNickle

Letters From Yellowstone, Diane Smith

A River Runs Through It, Norman Maclean

Winter Wheat, Mildred Walker.

English Creek, Ivan Doig.

Winter in the Blood, James Welch

Red Rover, Deirdre McNamer

High Country, Willard Wyman

Some Montana Poets (Student Choices)

Each student will prepare a talk on a second book by an author we have read—or on a book by a Montana writer (prose or poetry) we did not cover, to be shared at our last meeting. Some additional authors: Will James, Dan Cushman, Charles M. Russell, Elizabeth Savage, Rick Bass, Debra Earling, Patricia Nell Warren, Hughie Call, Thomas McGuane, William Hjortsberg, Tim Cahill, Walter Kirn, Spike Van Cleve, Mary Clearman Blew, Dale Eunson, Terry C. Johnston, Lynda Sexson, Gary Svee, Craig Lancaster, Ben Mikaelson, Richard Hugo, Wally McRae, Myron Brinig, Tami Haaland, Melissa Kwasny, Peter Bowen, and many, many others.