

Call for Conference Papers: All Together Different: Reading Willa Cather Across Regions

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 25-27, 2025

Conference Co-Directors: Melissa J. Homestead, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Kelsey Squire, Ohio Dominican University

2025 is the centennial of the publication of Willa Cather's novel *The Professor's House*, a novel that traverses regions in action and in memory: a Midwestern university town in an unnamed state on Lake Michigan, cattle and mesa country in Northern New Mexico, and the grasslands of Kansas. We take our title and the conference's location from the titular professor's recollection of the difficulty of explaining Lake Michigan to his friends in France: "it is altogether different. It is a sea, and yet it is not salt. It is blue, but quite another blue. Yes, there are clouds and mists and sea-gulls, but—I don't know, il est toujours plus naïf." The Program Committee of the 2025 Cather Seminar invites proposals for papers on Cather's relationship to region, broadly construed, and especially papers that propose to read across region in Cather's works and life. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Blue humanities and Lake Michigan as an inland sea
- Bioregionalism and sustainability
- Industrialization and the Rustbelt
- Literary regionalism: Cather's relationship to earlier literary regionalism and to regional traditions of the twentieth century
- Geospatial humanities: using digital tools to explore region in Cather's life and works
- Settler colonial studies: displacement of indigenous peoples, land grant universities
- Ecocriticism and environmental humanities
- The rise of cultural anthropology and Cather's understanding of place

Graduate students and scholars new to Cather's work are encouraged to make proposals. Scholarships will be available for select student presenters from the National Willa Cather Center and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Scholars should submit a proposal of no more than 500 words by January 15, 2024. Proposals can be submitted by clicking "Submit Your Proposal" and completing the provided Google Form here: <https://www.willacather.org/events/19th-international-willa->

[cather-seminar](#). Decisions about acceptance to the conference will be communicated in early 2025.