

Home Ground: Language for an American Landscape

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Barry Lopez asked 45 poets and writers to define terms that describe America's land and water forms phrases like flatiron, bayou, monadnock, kiss tank, meander bar, and everglade. The result is a major enterprise comprising over 850 descriptions, 100 line drawings, and 70 quotations from works by Willa Cather, Truman Capote, John Updike, Cormac McCarthy, and others. Carefully researched and exquisitely written by talents such as Barbara Kingsolver, Lan Samantha Chang, Robert Hass, Terry Tempest Williams, Jon Krakauer, Gretel Ehrlich, Luis Alberto Urrea, Antonya Nelson, Charles Frazier, Linda Hogan, and Bill McKibben, Home Ground is a striking composite portrait of the landscape. At the heart of this expansive work is a community of writers in service to their country, emphasizing a language that suggests the vastness and mystery that lie beyond our everyday words.

Barry Lopez is the author of *Arctic Dreams*, *Of Wolves and Men*, *Resistance*, *Light Action in the Caribbean*, and eleven other works of fiction and nonfiction. His essays are collected in two books, *Crossing Open Ground* and *About This Life*. He contributes regularly to *Granta*, the *Georgia Review*, *Orion*, *Outside*, the *Paris Review*, *Manoa*, and other publications in the United States and abroad. In addition to the National Book Award, he is the recipient of an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as fellowships from the Guggenheim, Lannan, and National Science Foundations. He lives in western Oregon.

Debra Gwartney is the author of the memoir *Live Through This*, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in February 2009. She teaches creative writing at Portland State University and lives in western Oregon.

Molly O'Halloran is an illustrator and cartographer whose work has appeared in volumes of fiction, travel writing, essays, and archaeological editions. She has lived and worked in Chicago, the Upper Sonoran Desert, the northern Sierra Nevada, and the Great Basin and now calls Austin, TX, home.

Starred Review. How to define an arroyo, badlands, eddy, a muskeg? What is a desire path, a kiss tank, a nubble? These words, many forgotten today, refer to various aspects of a landscape to which many of us have lost our connection. Drawing on the polyglot richness of American English, National Book Award-winning author Lopez (*Arctic Dreams*) assembles 45 writers, known for their intimate connection to particular places, to collectively create a unique American dictionary. Barbara Kingsolver, William Kittredge, Arturo Longoria, Jon Krakauer, Bill McKibben, Antonya Nelson, Luis Alberto Urrea and Joy Williams, among others, vividly describe land and water forms. What is a cofferdam? "Imagine a decorative wishing well, then imagine that well writ large," notes Antonya Nelson. And Patricia Hampl tells us that the Dutch word *vly* (marshy headwaters of a stream) "may have occasioned the name of New York's rowdy Fly Market" in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Many entries quote American explorers and writers such as Herman Melville, Willa Cather, Mark Twain, John Steinbeck and Cormac McCarthy, as they uncover layers of etymology and American regional difference. Line drawings enhance geographic understanding; marginal quotations further evoke period and place. This marvelous book enlivens readers to the rich diversity of Americans' complex relationship to the land. (Oct. 4)

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Other Books

This Is the Place, A thought-provoking collection of personal essays about home What makes a home? What do equality, safety, and politics have to do with it? And why is it so important to us to feel like we belong? In this collection, 30 women writers explore the theme in personal essays about neighbors, marriage, kids, sentimental objects, homelessness, domestic violence, solitude, immigration, gentrification, geography, and more. Contributors -- including Amanda Petrusich, Naomi Jackson, Jane Wong, and Jennifer Finney Boylan -- lend a diverse range of voices to this subject that remains at the core of our national conversations. Engaging, insightful, and full of hope, This is the Place will make you laugh, cry, and think hard about home, wherever you may find it. "This collection, encompassing a spectrum of races, ethnicities, religions, sexualities, political beliefs and classes, could not be timelier . . . open this book, hear its chorus of voices and remember that we are a nation of individuals, bound to each other by our humanity." -- The New York Times Book Review " . . . an honest portrait of the U.S., pieced together like an imperfect American quilt. We need more books like this." -- BUST

👤 👤 👤 👤 👤 . Women Writing About Home Margot Kahn ... The next day the same vet called me at home, arguing, calling me cold, calling me callous. ... Debra was co-editor, along with Barry Lopez, of Home Ground : Language for an American Landscape ."