

# Story<sup>the</sup> Catcher

Summer 2019 Issue

A publication of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society

## ★ POPULISM ★

### 2019 Sandoz Symposium Focuses on Populism

The 2019 Pilster Lecture and Mari Sandoz Symposium will be held September 19-21, 2019, at Chadron State College. All Thursday and Friday events take place on the college campus in Chadron, Nebraska and Saturday morning's session will be held in downtown Chadron at the Bean Broker Coffee House & Pub.

On Thursday night at 7:30 pm (Mountain), Dr. Charles Postel will deliver the annual Pilster Lecture on late nineteenth and early twentieth century Populism in the United States. Modern populism is often thought to be unthinking rage, the politics of the gut rather than the head. However, Postel says, that has no correlation to the Populist Party of history, which was known in its day as "a reading party," and a "writing and talking party." Postel explores what the populists were thinking. As an intellectual enterprise, Populism shaped the environment in which Mari Sandoz emerged as a writer, and much of its legacy remains as vital as ever.

A historian of American political ideas and social movements, Postel studied at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his BA and PhD in history. He is a professor at San Francisco State University, and he has also taught at Berkeley and Sacramento State University. He has been a fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center and the Center for American Studies at the University of Heidelberg, and a Fulbright fellow at the Roosevelt Study

Center in the Netherlands. He has written a number of articles, chapters, and essays about the Populist and Progressive movements, as well as the conservative movement.

Symposium events begin Friday Sept. 20 at 8:30 am at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Center on campus. Dr. Jeff Wells leads the opening session at 9 am with "The Populism of Jules Sandoz and Mari Sandoz." Wells, associate professor and chair of the History Department at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, will explore Jules's activities in the context of the Populist movement in Nebraska and beyond. He will also discuss other examples of how Mari Sandoz engaged with populist themes. In *Old Jules*, Mari Sandoz offers glimpses of her father's politics and involvement with the Populist movement. Through his attendance at Farmers' Alliance and People's Party meetings, correspondence with Populist newspapers, and a brief campaign for elected office as a Populist, Jules Sandoz joined with the millions of Americans expressing discontent in the late nineteenth century.

During Session Two, at 10:10am, Sandoz' book *Capital City* will be Viewed Through Two Lenses. Mari Sandoz published *Capital City* in 1939, and the novel is generally considered her most political work. As with all her

(continued on page 2)

More information about the 2019 Sandoz Symposium and online registration is available on our website at

<https://www.marisandoz.org>

A mail in registration form for the symposium can be found inside this newsletter

## Symposium continued...

writings, Sandoz mixed fact and fiction to create compelling narratives. In this session, Mary Clai Jones – an assistant professor of literature at Chadron State College – and Chris Steinke – an assistant professor of history at the University of Nebraska-Kearney and a Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Board member – unpack the fictive and historical elements and meanings of Sandoz’s efforts. They will also discuss the book’s publication history and reception in the city of Lincoln.

In Session 3, at 11 am, "The People's Populism: The Shaping and Reshaping of Populism in Latin America, 1950s-2010s" will be discussed by Dr. Maria L.O. Munoz, chair of the history department at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. She is a historian of constructions of race and the "other," political identities, violence, social movements, indigenous mobilizations and concepts of self-determination and liberation. The literature on populism in Latin America during the 20th Century tends to focus on its leaders, often public officials and visible political figures such as presidents, governors, and mayors. The analysis of populism as a process, movement and/or phenomenon, tends to be focused on these high-ranking figures. However, recent scholarship points to those who support populists as having a role in shaping populism discourse and projects. She says that in examining the sectors that support populists we can move beyond an analysis that frames populists as demagogues and their support base as naive and unintelligent to try and understand the motivations of "the people."

The noon luncheon at the Chadron State College Student Center will include the presentation of the 2019 "In the Spirit of Mari Sandoz Award," and lively table networking and conversation among attendees.

In session 4, at 1:30 pm, Graham Christensen will discuss "RegeNERate Nebraska: Growing Nebraska Communities from The Ground Up." He will explain regenerative agriculture, why soil health practices must be adopted by farmers and ranchers holistically, and give highlights of recent activities surrounding regenerative agriculture in Nebraska. Christensen was born in Omaha and grew up nearby on his family’s farm. He said he first opened his eyes to activism during the 1980’s Farm Crisis in which many family farmers were losing their farms. Graham and his brother would often tag along with their parents to Washington DC and across the country during those years in an effort to better the lives of struggling farmers. A Midland Lutheran College graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism, Christensen has done political organizing and is a member of the Nebraska Farmers Union. He is actively involved with the family farm.

In session 5, at 3 pm, Chadron State College History Department Chairman and Sandoz Board member Dr. David Nesheim leads a panel discussion on "Populism in the Panhandle: Something Less Than a Movement." While the Populist Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century swept across agrarian America speaking out against economic injustice, it found receptive audiences on the Great Plains, in the Midwest, and in the Deep South. Nebraska was home to some of its most prominent figures – William Jennings Bryan being a case in point. Out in Sandoz country, however, the reception of the Populist agenda was mixed.

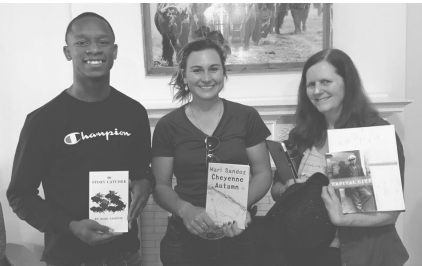
The symposium concludes Saturday morning with a 9:30 am session, free and open to the general public at the Bean Broker Coffee House and Pub in downtown Chadron. Dr. Lisa Pollard of Lincoln will be the presenter.



photos L-R 2019 Pilster Lecturer Dr. Charles Postel, and Sandoz Symposium presenters Dr. Jeff Wells, Dr. Maria Munoz, and Graham Christensen

# 2019 Storycatcher Workshop Far and Away, Most Memorable

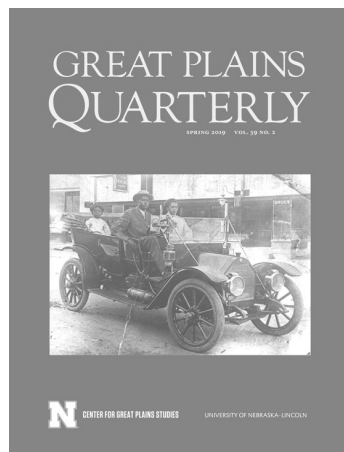
The 2019 Story Catcher Writing Workshop was “Far and Away” a most unusual event... and most of it in the best of ways. Workshop Director Dr. Matt Evertson said the Frontier And Remote (FAR) location at Northwest Nebraska’s Fort Robinson encourages participants from far and away to learn from instructors who have also come from far and away. Evertson, a Sandoz board member and Chadron State College professor, said the weather and transportation challenges and an on-going construction project at the Fort combined to provide challenges that only Mari Sandoz could have relished. A tornado warning, flight cancellations and reduced hours at the restaurant, made for extra work. Filled to capacity, there were participants ranging in age from 9-year-old Lillian to 84-year-old Jim. Folks came from Alaska, Colorado, Oregon, Wisconsin, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. Instructors were from California and Kentucky and Nebraska. Sandoz often wrote about her environment and its influences on everyday life. She’d be proud of the travails of this year’s Story Catcher participants and how it can shape their writing for years to come.



Brad Aaron Modlin performs poetry, short fiction and essays to cap off the first day (top photo); “Winners” of the Open Mic competition--Davon Johnson (Baldwin MO), Kaycee Monnens (Hulett WY) & Lee Friederich (Sarona WI) (bottom photo)—photos courtesy Chadron State College

## Sandoz Featured in Latest Issue of the Great Plains Quarterly

A trip to Colorado to interview Mari Sandoz niece, Mary Ann Pifer Anderson, yielded a great story in the Spring 2019 issue of *Great Plains Quarterly* for Sandoz board member and University of Nebraska at Omaha assistant professor of history Elaine Marie Nelson. The piece, “Draft by Draft: The Battle of Sandoz and Her Bighorn Manuscript,” chronicles what Sandoz scholars have known all along. Mari produced multiple drafts and scrutinized the work of her editors and publishers. In fact, that’s why she left her beloved Nebraska for New York City later in life so she could be near the editors and publishers. Nelson’s piece focuses on Pifer Anderson’s own temporary relocation to help Sandoz with those manuscripts and inevitable rewrites. It was also a time that Sandoz was dealing with the deaths of several close friends and her own struggle with an aggressive form of bone cancer. For Nelson, the attraction to Sandoz was obvious. She teaches and publishes on the American West, Native American studies and women and gender history. In 2017, she became executive director of the Western History Association. If you aren’t a subscriber to *Great Plains Quarterly*, the article can be accessed through Project Muse: <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/723272/pdf>



## The StoryCatcher

The “StoryCatcher” is the title of a book by Mari Sandoz and it is the title of Helen Winter Stauffer’s biography of Mari, *Mari Sandoz: The Story Catcher of the Plains*. The StoryCatcher is published four times a year by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, a 501©(3) non-profit organization. The vision of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is to perpetuate and foster an understanding of the literary and historical works of Mari Sandoz and to honor the land and the people about which she wrote; Native Americans, ranchers, farmers, and the people who settled the High Plains country. The Society hosts an annual conference, the Pilster Great Plains Lecture Series, and a writer’s workshop. Additionally, the Society provides collections on loan to the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

### Address Changes

Address changes should be mailed to:  
P.O. Box 6808, Lincoln, NE 68506

Contributions to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society are tax-deductible. To join the Society contact visit our website at [www.marisandoz.org](http://www.marisandoz.org)

## Mari Sandoz

The feats, the passions, and the distinctive speech of the West come alive in the writings of Mari Sandoz (1896-1966). As the author of 23 books, including *Old Jules*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, and *Crazy Horse, the Strange Man of the Oglalas*, Sandoz was a tireless researcher, a true storyteller and artist passionately dedicated to the land. With her vivid stories of the last days of the American frontier, Mari Sandoz has achieved a secure place as one of the finest authors in American literature and one of Nebraska’s most important writers. As a historian and as a novelist, Sandoz was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame in 1976 and posthumously received the coveted Wrangler Award from the Hall of Great Westerners.

## A Look Back from the Past...

### The Writing of Crazy Horse by Helen Winter Stauffer *from the Winter 1972 issue of Mari Sandoz Heritage Newsletter*

When Mari Sandoz won the Atlantic Non-Fiction prize in 1935 with *Old Jules*, she established her reputation as a writer and vindicated her many years of dedication to her art, years in which she had received innumerable rejection slips. (*Old Jules* itself had been returned by thirteen publishers before its acceptance.) But her life did not automatically become smooth because of this success, as we can see by her experience in the writing of *Crazy Horse*, the "strange man of the Oglalas," the Teton Sioux War Chief who is generally considered the finest war leader of the Plains Indians in their battles with the United States Army in the 1800's.

Miss Sandoz did not originally set out to write that biography. It is true that she was very much interested in the Sioux, having known them since childhood, and in the summer of 1930 she and a University friend, Eleanor Hinman, made a 3000 mile trek through the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations in a Model T Ford and camped out, locating famous Indian sites and interviewing the ancient survivors of the Indian Wars. But it was Miss Hinman who planned to write the story of Crazy Horse; Miss Sandoz was interested particularly in the Man-Afraid-of-His-Horse family. However, Young-Man-Afraid was a fellow tribesman and contemporary of both Crazy Horse and Red Cloud, the subject her friend A.E. Sheldon hoped to write about, so Miss Sandoz planned to wait with this book until her two friends had finished theirs. [Neither finished his book. After Dr. Sheldon's death, Miss Sandoz persuaded Dr. James Olson to write Red Cloud's biography.]

Instead, she planned to write various articles about the Plains Indians, her first major work to deal with the flight of a small band of Northern Cheyenne from Oklahoma, where they had been exiled, back to their reservation in Montana, pursued by thousands of U.S. troops, in the

winter of 1878-79, the flight that ended in death at Fort Robinson for many of them.

However, late in 1939, after she had spent three years and much of her *Old Jules* earnings on research in government archives and in various libraries and museums for the Cheyenne background, she learned that Simon and Schuster, a New York publishing company, had commissioned Howard Fast, a writer of popular novels, to research and write the Cheyenne story and publish it before she could finish hers. She felt this was unethical because it was well known that she was researching this particular material, but an author or researcher has no legal recourse before publication, so she felt she would have to shelve the book for at least ten years, until Fast's was long forgotten. "In the garbage dumps." As she wrote a friend. [Howard Fast's *The Last Frontier* was published in 1941, but by Duell, Sloan and Pearce. Simon and Schuster probably recognized their actions would tarnish their reputation; Miss Sandoz's publisher wrote them to protest the commissioning of Fast for this work.]

At this point, Miss Sandoz's good friend Eleanor Hinman came to her rescue. It had been 10 years since their trip to the reservations, and she still did not have the time or money to do the research needed to authenticate her material, so when she heard about the situation she offered to the author her claim to the Crazy Horse story and turned over all her Indian interview and research notes. Not only did she share her information, she also encouraged her friend to feel that the material was hers and that she was the right person to use it. With this encouragement Miss Sandoz put aside her Cheyenne material and began to concentrate on *Crazy Horse*. [The Cheyenne research material was later used for *Cheyenne Autumn*, published in 1953.]

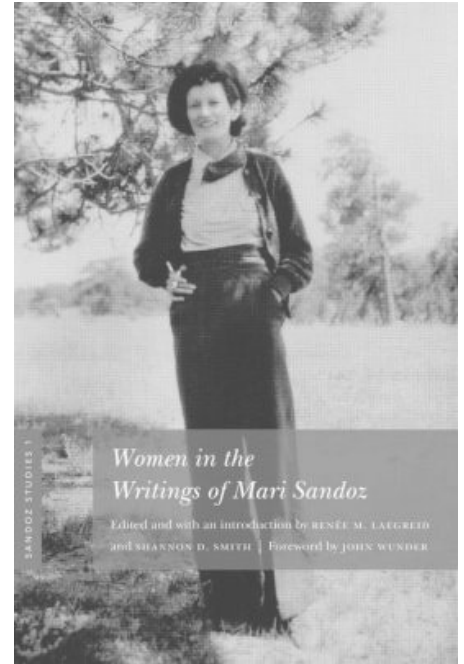


# Revised Release Sandoz Studies Volume 1— *Women in the Writings of Mari Sandoz*

*Women in the Writings of Mari Sandoz* is the first volume of the Sandoz Studies series, a collection of thematically grouped essays that feature writing by and about Mari Sandoz and her work. When Sandoz wrote about the women she knew and studied, she did not shy away from drawing attention to the sacrifices, hardships, and disappointments they endured to forge a life in the harsh Great Plains environment. But she also wrote about moments of joy, friendship, and—for some—a connection to the land that encouraged them to carry on.

Mari Sandoz, born on Mirage Flats, south of Hay Springs, Nebraska, on May 11, 1896, was the eldest daughter of Swiss immigrants. She experienced firsthand the difficulties and pleasures of the family's remote plains existence and early on developed a strong desire to write. Her keen eye for detail combined with meticulous research enabled her to become one of the most valued authorities of her time on the history of the plains and the culture of Native Americans.

The scholarly essays and writings of Sandoz contained in this book help place her work into broader contexts, enriching our understanding of her as an author and as a woman deeply connected to the Sandhills of Nebraska. The book is currently available through the University of Nebraska Press and can be ordered online at [www.nebraskapress.unl.edu](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu). Sandoz Heritage Society board members Renee M. Laegreid, Shannon Smith and retired board member Dr. John Wunder are collaborators on the book.



Laegreid is a professor of history at the University of Wyoming. She is the author of *Riding Pretty: Rodeo Queens in the American West* (Nebraska, 2006) and the coauthor, with Sandra K. Mathews, of *Women's Experiences on the North American Plains*. Smith is the executive director for the Wyoming Humanities Council and an author focusing on women in the West. She is the author of *Give Me Eighty Men: Women and the Myth of the Fetterman Fight* (Nebraska, 2008). Smith taught at Oglala Lakota College on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation for seven years. Wunder is a professor emeritus of history at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Echo of Its Time: The History of the Federal District Court of Nebraska, 1867–1933* (Nebraska, 2018).

## Sandoz Exhibit Available for Libraries and Others

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society has a traveling display that is available for use. The display includes two floor stand 6-foot full-color banners, two tabletop spinner cubes with words and pictures about Sandoz and a digital photo frame as well as tabletop brochure racks. A colorful table cover and runner are also included. You provide the table.

The display was designed for use by libraries, local history museums, visitors centers, conference centers and school classrooms. Rental can be for a matter of weeks or months depending on scheduling.

Interested? Contact the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society at [info@marisandoz.org](mailto:info@marisandoz.org)



# Schedule of Exhibits at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center in Chadron

Count on the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center to bring you unique and exciting displays of art and history throughout the year. Currently showing at the Center on the Chadron State College campus is "Come See What I Saw." It features paintings on saw blades by Sandy Redden and photographs of Nebraska agriculture and local industry submitted by the public. Also on display are U.S. Cavalry insignias from the private collection of Chadron's Mark Hunt, who has been actively collecting and researching the U.S. military insignia for more than 30 years. He has authored numerous articles on United States military shoulder patches. Hunt taught high school social sciences for 32 years before accepting his current position as the Director of Security at Chadron State College. Both shows are open through August 23rd.

Other upcoming shows include:

- "The Sand in Our Art," unique sand paintings on display from September 7 through October 25.
- The Center will be closed October 26 through November 3 for the installation of new carpet. Then the shows resume on November 4 with Amos Bad Heart Bull's Ledger Art through December 13, 2019.
- On January 20, 2020, comes the exciting "Hindsight is 20/20" which runs through March 27.
- "Soldiering for Victory" runs April 6 through May 30 and the 3rd Annual Public Photo Show opens on June 8 and runs through August 29, 2020.

For more information about the shows, contact the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at 308-432-6401 or check them out on Facebook.



The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society welcomes scholarly writing and news contributions to our newsletter. If you have something you would like to share, please contact our public relations coordinator J.L. Schmidt at [jlschmidt67@gmail.com](mailto:jlschmidt67@gmail.com)

# Support the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Through Membership!

Thank you for your support! Your membership is important to the Society's programs and activities. Each dollar helps us preserve and share the important work of Mari Sandoz. Members receive our newsletter, advanced notice of special events, and discounted registration for the annual Story Catcher Writers Workshop and the annual Fall Sandoz Symposium.

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The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Membership is annual.

MAIL THIS COMPLETED FORM WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO:

**Mari Sandoz Heritage Society**  
**P.O. Box 6808**  
**Lincoln, NE 68506**

# 2019 Mari Sandoz Symposium Registration

*Please copy and use a separate registration form for each person*

Registration includes all refreshments, all educational sessions, symposium materials and lunch

**DEADLINE FOR DISCOUNTED EARLY REGISTRATION IS SEPTEMBER 2, 2019**

Please direct any questions about the symposium or registration to [info@marisandoz.org](mailto:info@marisandoz.org) or 402-499-3703

FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>\$50</b>	MARI SANDOZ HERITAGE SOCIETY MEMBER EARLY REGISTRATION ( <i>Before Sept 2, 2019</i> )	\$ _____
<b>\$60</b>	NON-MEMBER EARLY REGISTRATION ( <i>Before Sept 2, 2019</i> )	\$ _____
<b>\$65</b>	MARI SANDOZ HERITAGE SOCIETY MEMBER LATE REGISTRATION ( <i>After Sept 2, 2019 &amp; on-site</i> )	\$ _____
<b>\$75</b>	NON-MEMBER LATE REGISTRATION ( <i>After Sept 2, 2019 &amp; on-site</i> )	\$ _____

Please note any dietary restrictions, allergies, accessibility needs, or special requests here: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Sandoz Society Membership

Non-member symposium attendees are encouraged to join the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society to help us honor and preserve the legacy of Mari Sandoz and support the programs and work of the Society including this annual symposium. To join the society, please indicate your membership level below and include your membership payment with your symposium registration.

<b>\$100+</b>	Sustaining Member	\$ _____
<b>\$50</b>	Member	\$ _____
<b>\$20</b>	Student	\$ _____

<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
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**Please return the completed form and payment to:**

Mari Sandoz Heritage Society  
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Lincoln, NE 68506

REFUND POLICY: A full refund is available with notice by September 16, 2019. A letter or email requesting the refund should state the registrant's name and address. No refunds will be made after September 16, 2019. Weather related refunds will be made on an individual basis.

For more detailed conference information and to register online, visit [www.marisandoz.org](http://www.marisandoz.org)

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# Mari Sandoz

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