

## Small Town American Literature

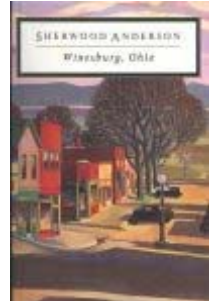
### Fiction:

*The Collected Short Works, 1920-1954* by Bess Streeter Aldrich

Aldrich's short stories tell of small town lives in mid twentieth century.

*Winesburg, Ohio* by Sherwood Anderson

This title profiles the people in a small Midwestern town in the early 1900s, revealing the consequences of human misunderstandings.



*River Season* by Jim Black

In a small Texas town in the summer of 1966, thirteen-year-old Jim befriends an older African American man who relates his experiences as a Negro League baseball player and as a black man in a racially strained community.

*Dandelion Wine* by Ray Bradbury

Boyhood, summer, and small town living makes this novel a delight to read. Douglas Spaulding is twelve years old; it is 1928; and summer has arrived in Green Town, Illinois.

*Cold Sassy Tree* by Olive Ann Burns

When the proprietor of the general store in a small Southern town elopes with a Yankee woman half his age, it causes quite a stir in town!

*Correcting the Landscape* by Marjorie Kowalski Cole

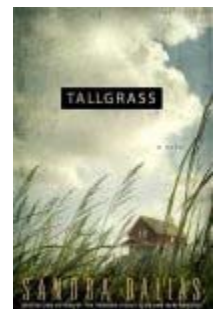
A local newspaper editor of a small Alaskan community fights against big business to save the environment and the town that he loves.

*All the Way Home* by Eileen Cooney

The women of a small town demoralized by declining industry are brought together and brought to life when they form a softball team to protect one woman's son from his father's murderous impulses.

*Tallgrass* by Sandra Dallas

When a Japanese internment camp is opened in her small Colorado town, Rennie's life is turned upside-down. She sees that suspicion falls on the newcomers when a young girl is found murdered.



*Ella Minnow Pea* by Mark Dunn

Citizens of a small island community must get creative in order to communicate when the government bans the use of one letter of the alphabet, then another, then another, etc.

*Welcome to the World, Baby Girl* by Fannie Flagg

This is a laugh out loud tale of small town living!

*The Chinchilla Farm* by Judith Freeman

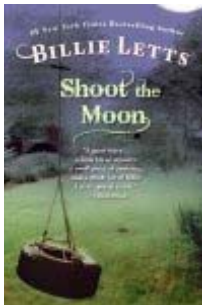
When her husband runs off with “Pinky,” a former beauty queen, Verna Flake leaves her small Utah town for Los Angeles and other regions. However, she retains her sense of place throughout her adventures.

*Bet Your Bottom Dollar* by Karin Gillespie

The local general store may soon be out of business unless Elizabeth and her friends can save the store from a rival. The story has all the fun and fury you can expect from the women in a small town in South Carolina.

*At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon

Small town life in North Carolina is seen through the eyes of the town’s Episcopalian minister. You will meet unforgettable characters to make you laugh and cry.



*Shoot the Moon* by Billie Letts

In 1972, Gaylene Harjo is murdered in DeClare, Oklahoma, and her ten-month-old son disappears. Thirty years later, Mark Albright, a veterinarian in California, finds out he is adopted. He arrives in DeClare to discover what he can about his mother and her murder.

*Dingley Falls* by Michael Malone

Dingley Falls, Connecticut is celebrating its founding 300 years ago and evil is afoot. Come meet a vast array of characters involved in an often hilarious soap opera of community living.

*Good Hope Road* by Lisa Wingate

This is the tale of the aftermath of a tornado that roars down Good Hope Road in Poetry, Missouri. It is a story of hope and second chances. It tells of the resilience of the human spirit and the ties that form community.

### **Teen Fiction:**

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie

Budding cartoonist junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

*When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* by Kimberly Willis Holt

During the summer of 1971 in a small Texas town, thirteen-year old Toby and his best friend Cal, meet the star of a sideshow, 600 pound Zachary Beaver, the fattest boy in the world.

*Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery

Eleven year old orphan, Anne, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm where she proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.

*A Long Way from Chicago* by Richard Peck

A boy tells of his annual summer visits to his grandma's home in rural Illinois during the Great Depression. He and his sister learn a lot from Grandma.



*Hallapoosa* by Robert Newton Peck

Twelve year old Thane and seven year old Alma Lee go to live with old Uncle Hiram in a small Florida town when they are orphaned during the Great Depression. Much of the town is involved in the rescue when Alma is kidnapped.

*Corky and the Brothers Cool* by P J Petersen

Thirteen year old Tim has never known anyone like Corky, a boy from the city that has just moved to Tim's small town in the California wine country, but Corky's practical jokes and pranks lead Tim into some uncomfortable situations.

*Bat 6* by Virginia Wolff

Sixth-grade girls on softball teams from two Oregon towns recount the annual game, which illustrates the towns' attempts to reclaim the pre-World War II lifestyles.

### **Nonfiction Titles:**

*Porch Talk* by Philip Gulley (242 G9518)

A nostalgic collection of personal anecdotes reflects on a time when porch-centered lives enabled greater family and community connections, remembering such simple pleasures as lemonade, chirping crickets, and bonding with a pet dog.

*Small Town America: A Narrative History, 1620-Present* by Richard R. Lingeman (307.762 L646)

Pieces of American history are seen through the author's narratives in this book about small towns throughout American History.



*Frenchtown Summer* by Robert Cormier (811 C8138)

This is a series of vignettes in free verse in which the writer reminisces about his life as a twelve-year-old boy in a small town during the summer of 1938.

*Our Town: A Play in Three Acts* by Thornton Wilder (812 W6457)

This Pulitzer Prize winning drama portrays life in a small New Hampshire town during the early 1900s.

*A Three Dog Life* by Abigail Thomas (813 T3612)

When her husband is institutionalized after an accident, the woman tells of her efforts to rebuild her life in a small country town with three dogs. She struggles with the very different relationship she now has with her husband while she seeks comfort in friendships.

*October Sky: A Memoir* by Homer H. Hickam (921 Hickam)

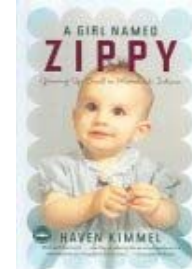
Homer and a few other boys learn how to turn scraps of metal into sophisticated rockets in the hope that they can get out of their small mining town.

*A House of Many Rooms* by Rodello Hunter (921 Hunter)

This memoir takes the reader to Heber Valley in the 1920s and 30s.

*A Girl Named Zippy: Growing Up Small in Moreland, Indiana* by Haven Kimmel (921 Kimmel)

Kimmel's witty memoir takes the reader back to small town America in a time when people helped their neighbors, went to church on Sunday, and often kept barnyard animals in their backyards.



*Hooligan: A Mormon Boyhood* by Douglas Thayer (921 Thayer)

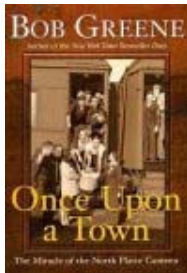
Thayer gives an often humorous account of growing up in Southeast Provo in the 1930s.

*Way Off the Road: Discovering the Peculiar Charms of Small Town America* by Bill Geist (973.924 G278)

The author describes his RV odyssey across America, along with the eccentric individuals, unusual places, and offbeat celebrations and events he encountered on his journey.

*Population 485: Meeting your Neighbors One Siren at a Time* by Michael Perry (977.544 P4297)

The reader travels with the paramedics and is introduced to the town's people in a unique way.



*Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of North Platte Canteen* by Bob Greene (978.282 G8303)

The community of North Platte comes together to treat the soldiers well when the troop trains stop on the way across the nation to the war in Europe. This is a delightful account of showing appreciation to those who most deserve it.

*If You Lived Here, I'd Know Your Name: News from Small-Town Alaska* by Heather Lende (979.82 L546)

Lende writes the social notes and the obituaries for the local paper in the small Alaskan town of Haines. This collection of twenty three essays will endear the people of Haines to the reader.