The Art of Writing
An Interview with Wallace Stegner
by James R. Hepworth

on June 12, 1987, Tom Watkins, the vice president of the Wilderness Society in Washington, D.C., submitted Stegner's name in nomination to the Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy, Professor Lars Gyllensten, in Stockholm. Whether the Nobel Prize for literature remains within or beyond the grasp of any American writer in this century, however, is beside the point here. It is past time that readers in the United States (critics in particular) stop thinking of Stegner in regional terms and recognize him for what he is—a world-class American writer in the tradition of Henry James, Mark Twain, and William Faulkner.

For one thing, as Nancy Colberg's forthcoming Wallace Stegner: A Life in Discipleship (Confluence Press, 1990) reveals, Stegner's books have traveled in an international circuit. In England, Stegner has enjoyed a strong following for nearly thirty years. As early as 1961, for example, one of the century's greatest stylists, C.S. Snow, wrote of Stegner as follows: "You are in the presence of a master ... One of the deepest, most intimate, and most likable writers in America."

Meanwhile, Stegner's books have translated at a steady clip into French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Swedish, and Japanese.

For another thing, as Wendell Berry observes, Wallace Stegner has become a new kind of American writer, "one who not only writes about his region, but also does his best to protect it, by writing and in other ways, from its would-be exploiters and destroyers." During those times in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, for example, when other American writers slipped away into metafiction, magical realism, mysticism, fantasy, and historical romance, away from what Thomas Walters calls the "tragically distorted emotional landscape of Wild America," Stegner "lowered his voice to be heard charged." Among other things, he wrote a series of powerful novels whose complex themes confronted the social problems of the day: race and gender, the annihilation of the American family, the realities of marriage and divorce, sexuality and promiscuity, cancer, and spectral, racial, and political violence. And, like his environmental and political chess. Three of the novels—Angle of Repose (1971), Fawcett, 1985), The Spectator Bird (1976, University of Nebraska, 1979), and Crossing to Safety (Random House, 1987)—incorporated transcontinental settings, most notably Mexico, Denmark, and Italy.

The other two novels—All the Little Live Things (1967, University of Nebraska, 1967), and Recapitulation (University of Iowa, 1979)—made use of cosmopolitan settings: San Francisco and Salt Lake City, two of the most worldly and materialistic cities in the United States. What goes on trial in all five novels, however, has most to do with the profound questions left along the staggering but not without the complicated course of modern civilization. Who is this New Man? And this New Woman? Indeed, who are these Americans? And what, if anything, do they hold sacred?

If Stegner were only a novelist, of course, then we might more easily accept the defensive chest-beating of his regional champions and the persistent but grudging acknowledgement on the part of a more elite corps of critics. But to reject the latter is to ignore the New York Times into publishing a review of Angle of Repose. Six years later, the Times completely ignored The Spectator Bird, although the same novel earned the National Book Award in fiction. But as his readers know, Stegner is also a master of the short story, an American form if ever there was one. This spring, Random House will release Stegner's collected opus in that genre. Among the thirty stories in the book are four that won O. Henry Awards and seven that ended up in Best American Short Stories.

In fact, Stegner has always been a highly regarded fiction writer, beginning with his first novel, Remembering Laughter (OP), which won a Little Brown Prize in 1937, and culminating perhaps in Crossing to Safety fifty years later, a book that was short-listed by the National Book Critics for their Circle Award. At any rate, at the age of eighty-one, Stegner says he plans to write no more novels—but then, that's no surprise, for he has written four or five another novel in me," he said, as he looked out into the oats that surround his hilltop home. "Maybe. But I think I'm finished." Those pale blue eyes, combined with his natural reticence, can be very convincing.

Let's turn to them, few people might guess that in addition to his career as a fiction writer, Stegner has distinguished himself in at least four other careers: those of historian, biographer, conservationist, and teacher. As historian, his primary achievements may

The Bloomsbury Review: Could you say anything about the dichotomy that is said to exist between creative writing and literature? Writing is important. It seems to me—and I accept the exaggeration in what I may be about to say—that many of the people teaching writing at the colleges that I know are teaching more about literature, about how to read, even, than the people who pretend to teach literature courses and put you through their own version of it. Is that the best you have to offer, and the other clutter that you get when you undertake a graduate degree. It used to be literary history, and now it is literary theory in the English departments. Both of them seem to me moderately pernicious.

Writing classes are something else. When you sit down to write a story—whether under guidance or by yourself—you're putting everything you know into that one little paste tube, and you're squeezing it out at the end. That's good. That's what's working in the best sense. It's not analytic. It's putting things together rather than taking them apart. English departments seem to me to have it exactly the opposite: to be doing exactly the opposite of what they claim to be doing. They're putting things together and the other clutter that you get when you undertake a graduate degree. It used to be literary history, and now it is literary theory in the English departments. Both of them seem to me moderately pernicious.

TBR: But you've edited and written English department textbooks, haven't you?

W: No. Naturally, no. Two or three courses that I gave at Stanford I put into books from the notes. One of them is in a Rinehart Edition, The Rise of Realism in American Literature. I had a hand in it, let me say, in writing texts, but they don't really amount to much. I much prefer teaching writing without a text. People ought to have some time when they're doing something or while they are learning to write, because they are going to learn a lot of what they write from other writers. That's the only place you can learn how and how language is used plastically to make new things. I don't think you can learn it as rules or anything of the kind.

TBR: What's the most difficult thing to teach about writing? And what is the most difficult thing for students to learn?

W: That's a hard question. I can guess. Assuming that the student is still teaching, then there is a time when you shouldn't try to teach him, when he is as technically proficient and subtle as you are, or more, when he has his own ways of going about what he wants to say, and what he wants to say may not be what you would say—one of the hardest things to teach him as a writer. And then you revise, often. Many of them would rather write a new book than revise the old one. Revision is what separates the men from the boys. Sooner or later, you've got to learn to revise.

If you aren't a reader you might as well forget trying to be a writer.

TBR: If you were to outline a course of study for a writer at the outset of an undergraduate career, what would it include? Or is the question too broad?

W: That's pretty broad. It might be different for every individual. I would ask some questions. I suppose I would say, "Are you a reader?" If you aren't a reader, you might as well forget trying to be a writer. I don't think that it's ever too late to take a lot of courses in English literature. I sound prejudiced against the English departments, but in a sense, if you had some kind of guidance, you had a tutor who could suggest books for you to read, it would be better, I think, than taking regular English department courses. And to know something substantial, to have some kind of skill, some body of knowledge, is terribly useful.

I don't care what it is. It will be useful in writing sooner or later. If you only play tennis well, if you're a doctor—whatever you do. I know what I would do if I were doing it again. I would take courses in biology and anthropology, but that's not really my cup of tea. I don't think as much as I do biology. Whatever your choice, there's no substitute for some basic training. As Benet DeVoto once said in a dour maritain-like moment, "Literary people always tend to overlook their knowledge." At the same time, while you're learning something, you should be sure you keep writing. Use it or lose it. Creation is a knack which is improved by practice, and like any skill, it can be lost if you don't practice it.

So you have to write and read, you should spend quite a lot of time learning some substantial body of knowledge, breaking your brain upon a problem which will let you incorporate in your own head much that is known about some little corner of the literary tradition. With a whole university at your command, you can do it any way you want. You're very fortunate to have the university. A lot of people don't think of Tillie Olsen.

I don't know whether you know Tillie Olsen or not. She's written only a few things in her life, but she's made those few things carry her farther than a whole string of camels. She has ridden fifteen or twenty years on those few tales. Each of her short stories is a small gem, and her signature is so small you have to read it with a magnifying glass. Strange, intense, indrawn person. Well, she didn't have the university. She was the wife of a labor organizer in San Francisco in Harry Bridges' Longshoremen's Union. Eventually her husband quarreled with Harry, and Harry gooned him off the waterfront. He had to leave the labor movement, and so he apprenticed his daughters on an apprentice printer's wages, and for years she had no way of making contact with the literary world at all. She just had the San Francisco Public Library, essentially, and she became what the IWW's used to call a "bughouse philosopher." A bughouse philosopher was somebody who spent a lot of time
whether to secure permission to use copy- righted material, protect their ideas, persuade government agencies to surrender important documents, or stem clear of libel actions.

Surprisingly few writers ever master the laws that affect their work, perhaps because of the mind-numbing arcane language in which they're written. The Writer's Lawyer offers itself as a plain-language guide to such tricky issues as copyright, libel law, publication contracts, and the Freedom of Information Act, among others, that a working writer simply has to know. The authors: two Washington attorneys, write with common sense and wit, and their book belongs on every writer's shelf.

—Gregory McNamara

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the value of being able to put words

—Patricia Dubrava Keuning
Regardless, Stegner's publicist at Random House has one thing right: "Stegner is perhaps the premier teacher of novelists in America." Between the time he came to Stanford in 1946 and the year he retired (1971), more than 100 writers passed through the program he directed, including Edward Abbey, Wendell Berry, Raymond Carver, Eugene Burdick, Max Apple, Max Crawford, Tillie Olsen, Charlotte Painter, Al Young, Nancy Packer, Tom McGuane, Judith Rascoe, Ed McClanahan, Ernest Gaines, Bill Kittridge, Larry McMurtry, N. Scott Momaday, Robert Stone...too many names to list here. While these writers all had what the writer of Uncommon Touch, "other Stegner fellows have become foreign correspondents, teachers, and editors. In some ways that list may be more important than the much abbreviated one above. As for the writers, despite Stegner's refusal to take any credit for their success, we must assume that even a wild man like Ken Kesey learned something in Stegner's classroom. The teachers and editors, however, are out there doing what Stegner did, for Stegner did more than teach. He secured an endowment to finance the fellowships that still bear his name. He also developed a curriculum and ambience that have been models for creative writing programs across the nation.

To face Stegner in a series of interviews across the course of ten years (1977-1987), however, requires patience and persistence. He bolts away quickly from talk about his own accomplishments. His academic vita takes up barely a page and lists none of his honorary degrees. Books fill the walls of his study from floor nearly to the ceiling. He refuses to drink, although he sneaks an occasional cigar that he lights from the woodburning stove. His tranquil voice reads like a biography and might remind a listener of actor Robert Young's. Stegner speaks in the same quiet, level tones. And his movements are deliberate. Seeing him shoveling horse manure onto his lemon trees, you might never guess that he can still outwalk the horse. And he could put a barberry at ease with his grandfatherly smile, but he looks that tells you he will take no fools for prisoners. He likes to rise before bird-light and write after breakfast. He keeps no copies of his letters and writes at a manual typewriter while his wife, Mary, screens calls and visitors. By 11:00 a.m., he has usually put in a full day. At lunch, he appears so tall and gracious that you wonder how alone his age could possibly spend another day. He is intensely engaged, and then beat you to the dinner table, ready to greet guests and entertain. Shouldn't he have taken a nap—or something? But at 5:30 a.m. the next day, there he is waiting for you to stumble into the house. He is laid out with Texas pink grapefruit, skim milk, and Stegner's K. "I hope you're hungry," he says. "You feeling all right? You look a little ill."

[Editor's Note: Portions of this interview are taken from a more in-depth interview to be published in a future issue of The Paris Review. For subscription information, contact The Paris Review, 55 E. 73rd St., New York, NY 10021. TBR thanks The Paris Review for their permission to reprint the following excerpts from Jim Hapworth's extensive interviews with Wallace Stegner.]

I suppose I associate originality with some element of the unexpected, or some element, at least, of the—what would you call it?—profound.

and the French Lieutenant's Woman, for example, and I see very traditional novels, extremely traditional novels.

I think they are traditional, which doesn’t bother me one bit. I don’t really believe in one novel which can be read backwards as well as forward, which turns chronology on its head and has no continuity and is creative, which is a novel by throwing all the pieces in the bag and shaking the bag. It doesn’t seem to me to be worth doing.

If you have to do that to be original, then I don’t care about being original. In fact, I don’t think originality as it’s usually used is a criterion that means much because it usually serves as a pretense for innovation which often turns out to be frivolous or essentially unimportant, and which disappears. An awful lot of nonsense, which is what these things are, turn out to be monsters that can’t live. I’m content with the species, with turning out two-legged animals with one head.

TBR: When did you decide that you had to be a writer? WS: I’m a writer by the sheerest accident. Nobody

(Continued on page 10)
THE WRITING LIFE
Wallace Stegner

(Continued from page 9)

In my family had ever gone to college, and I was totally
unprepared. At college they said, "You've got to major in
something," and so, after I had done the best I could, I
took one course in economics and that cured that.

Then, my freshman English teacher, who was Vardis
Fishback in that year, would have nothing to do with me
so he let me go out of two quarters of freshman English and put me
in an advanced class, which gave me the notion that I could
stay in college and do the work. When I was 18, I went away
and I got another teacher who taught short story.
I wrote some undergraduate short stories, went
to editing and writing for the campus paper. I was selling
woods and linoleum for a living, and, as
far as I knew, I would go on selling woods and linoleum for
the rest of my life. I was living in the novel. I'm writing now because it seems to me
nobody above the stage of a cretin could have been so
unrepentant, so self-enclosed, so unscrupulous,
unlighted, going away any way he was pushed. I was
silly putty.

I think more circularly than linearly. I don't
think there are beginnings and destinations so much
as embers that close the circle and start again.

When I graduated from college finally, the head
of the professor says, "You want to go to
graduate school?" I said, "Sure, where? How?
In what?"
He said, "I'll give you a fellowship in
psychology, and you to go in English." So
I went to the English department, the head of the
English department said, "You're out of your mind.
You're not going to be a writer." I was a major
psychologist. "You're going to be a major
English major. If you go to graduate school, you ought to go
in English." I said, "But the man offered me a fellowship.
All right, I want to study English. I can't get
something." I got me a fellowship at the University
of Iowa, so I dutifully trotted off to the University
of Iowa to get an M.A. in English, and when I got there I
found Norman Foerster, who had just come from
the University of North Carolina or somewhere and
was just founding the School of Letters, which
became the mother of the Iowa writing program. Paul
Engle and I were the first two, I suppose, who went
through that shop. I liked writing short stories better
than studying Beowulf. I had to study Beowulf,
too, unhappily. But I took a M.A. in creative writing
and wrote some short stories, published one or two of them in
a couple of little places.

I had a choice at that point about what I was going
to do with the fellowship. I could stay there. The
fellowship was over. Or I could do anything. There was
nothing to do. If you were in college during the
Depression, you were lucky, because you didn't
starve in college. There weren't many jobs outside, so instead
of going back to Salt Lake and selling woods and linoleum
again—or whatever I was going to do—I just stayed in
college for a year. I couldn't get a job with a degree in
writing, which, at that point, was looked down upon
as a very low-life degree. So I took a Ph.D. in
sciences, and I went back to Salt Lake
to teach, and after two years of recovering from the
Ph.D., I sat down one afternoon and wrote a story
just to see if I could do it. It was a story about
two hours and sent it out to somebody—Virginia
Quarterm, I think—and they published it. And,
you know, it was just, by that time I had published
couple or six or twenty-seven, but I hadn't been grinding away
at a literary apprenticeship except for the M.A., and
I had never considered writing as a possible career. I
never considered to me that there was a possibility
of making a living at it. So it was all pure, brutal accident,
with no sense that I had ever encouraged me along the
way. That's probably the way it is. You do get encouraged,
when you're young and malleable, by people who think
they can do it, and I think I was more relied upon than Larry
Morgan is me. They have some real people,
real people would begin to say, "Well, you did
me wrong," and they would have every reason to say so.
As long as you're not established, you'll be felt to
be such, I have only borrowed, shall we say, some characteristics and experience for fictional purposes—and I hope transformed them.

"My own limited experience in creating fiction
means that I have no choice but to draw upon my own experience
as well as that of my friends, parents, children, if I am
going to shape character. Almost everything I write seems
literally to be coming right down to what I am stealing.
You can't steal anything that isn't already yours—in
a literary way. If you can surround it, understand it,
and make it your own, then you've learned how to
get out of simplicity, never to be obvious. It's impos-
sed, of course, is imposed. But the author's view of his
own characters is as much a case of inductive thinking
as it may be of deductive thinking. You won't be
surprised at my high regard for writing as a way to
arrive at truth insofar as you can see it, so far as your capacity
to unearth it permits. Truth is to be handled gingerly.

There's nothing more convincing than an
impossible fables—where the moral is literally
part of the form. I'm writing something from which the reader
is supposed to know the moral, or at least to be
supposed to know the moral. The moral value ought to be
hiding in the material. I think you have to be careful not to manipulate
the material so obviously that the reader will go completely
to the piano and lift up the lid and find the moral
you've hidden there for him to find. Any book that's
worth anything has a structure.

And when you think that over there ought to be something
in it by way of truth. I wouldn't go any further than
"Truth."
A Hero to His Biographer

Jackson J. Benson argues vigorously that Wallace Stegner has been unjustly neglected.

By James R. Kincaid

Certain lives of Jesus excepted, a less judicious biography has not appeared since Thomas Hardy ghostwrote his own. Jackson J. Benson, author of critical studies of Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck and a 1984 Steinbeck biography, was befriended by Wallace Stegner — "he insisted I call him Wally" — and found in him "simply, by far, the brightest man I’ve ever known," one who "never missed the point," who invariably "cut away the dross to get to the heart of the matter." Stegner had an "incredible memory" and "a vast storehouse of general knowledge." In a world full of blowhards and show-offs, Mr. Benson says, here was "the real thing — someone a person could really look up to and admire."

These epic pronouncements, coming at us full blast in the preface to "Wallace Stegner: His Life and Work," might not constitute the best way to influence a reader not in on the worship. But Mr. Benson does not stop with the preface or with the inner man; he finds Stegner’s exterior just as admirable: possessed of "a beautiful voice," Stegner was "a strikingly handsome man — one is tempted to add that he ‘glittered when he walked.’" That’s a temptation one should resist, as the allusion to "Richard Cory" suggests not only a suicidal darkness beneath the glitter but a superficiality in those who mistake the glitter for the man.

Not that there is not much to admire in Wallace Stegner. His fiction, honored by both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, can be witty and moving, poised and subtle. He was all his life a passionate enemy of land developers and an effective worker and writer for conservation and environmental causes; he founded a great writing program at Stanford and taught a host of excellent novelists how to do it; he could be an unshakably loyal friend. He was also pugnacious, hostile to writing different from his own, a staunch and not always interesting traditionalist, and so obsessively annoyed by youth, rebellion, hippies, drugs, post-structuralism, free love, divorce, loud music and scruffiness that he could ride his crankiness to the point of being blaringly obtuse about several recent decades he seems to have made no effort to understand.

Mr. Benson regards Stegner as "possibly the most accomplished man of American letters in our time," and possibly there is a case to be made there. I cannot tell, since Mr. Benson is so clearly not the person to make it. He says, "Stegner hoped for his Malcolm Cowley, who would take him out of the category of regional writer," but Mr. Benson seems to feel the charge too keenly. Writing with a passionate commitment to his subject, Mr. Benson seems almost too aware that everyone may not share this commitment, that, as he says at the start, many "may never have heard of him" and some who have heard of him and read him do not think much of him. Mr. Benson keeps his mind so

Wallace Stegner, about 1943.

Thus, there is something wrong with a man who has been married to the same woman for almost 60 years."

We are told that, unlike Stegner, we value "experimentation for its own sake"; Stegner is boldly old-fashioned in having "something to say." When Mr. Benson tires of flogging the general reader he invents more specific enmities: feminists and "many teachers of creative writing today."

Though Stegner himself can be cruelly reactionary, railing, for instance, about "the number of functional illiterates that our free public education produces," he is more often possessed by a sharp double awareness of how ugly and illiberal such stuff is and how little it accords with other parts of his life and writing. But Mr. Benson, who seems to have glued himself to the worst part of his subject, is free of this irony: Stegner’s life might seem comparatively dull to some — particularly those conditioned by a National Enquirer public mentality. Mr. Benson cannot keep himself from insulting the person reading him, whom he often seems to construe as a Stegner-hating, hippiejudging, experimental-fiction-writing, post-structural-minded, victim-sympathizing, Eastern-establishment-joining feminist who is also a part-time condominium builder.

There is no need for such defensive ness, which obscures not only Wallace Stegner’s virtues but Jackson Benson’s as well. When he forgets, as he seldom does, that he is nursing grievances against the rest of the nation, he can produce a lucid narrative, a clear and well-researched chronicle of events, and quite sharp plot summaries. However, by defending to the death rather than analyzing Stegner’s values and by focusing on Stegner’s public life and so simplifying his ideas, Mr. Benson does sometimes create the impression that there is nothing much going on, that Stegner forged his pioneer values in small-town Saskatchewan and stuck to them, by gum, whatever feminists might say and hippies think.

The result may not be "dull," as Mr. Benson seems to fear, though some of the more lively parts have to do with department meetings and curriculum battles at Stanford, which is not a good sign. Mr. Benson does dwell on Stegner’s writing, and seems to me quite effective in talking about the histories and about the public prose written in environmental battles. The literary criticism is not, however, distinguished. When it is positive, it either gurgles — "to read this description is itself an experience" — or soars — Stegner raised himself "above most other writers" by being "simply different — more genuine" — or work somehow, and broader in outlook.

When it is discriminating, it collapses: the failed fictions are "told in a thin way that does not compel the reader’s involvement," since Stegner "had to escape the peripheral in order to embrace the organic." There are many fascinating things about Wallace Stegner and his often brilliant writings: his relationship with his father and with his son, his marriage, his youthful sense of lacking "any capacity for culture," his ironic self-awareness, his politics, his idea of literary realism, his complex relation to the idea of "the West": did he demystify or simply sophisticate the Louis L’Amour vision? Mr. Benson opens up many of these issues but then is drawn off on what he, for me, is hopeless quests to bully us into revering Mr. Stegner and adopting as our own his least compelling values. This is a biography that gives a more convincing view of Stegner’s pettiness than of his loyalty and courage; more of his crotchets than of his art. At the close, we may feel we have just been shown not Wallace Stegner but John Wayne with an itchy writing finger.
Just Speculating

How much financial risk is reasonable and how much is foolish?

Because of their popularity, bonds were selling for crazy prices, so they yielded a pitance (3 percent) at a time when inflation was on the rise. Not surprisingly (at least not to Mr. Grant), stocks produced spectacular returns in the third quarter because the bondholders got clobbered. Bonds lost roughly 80 percent of their value from 1948 to 1981.

Neither book is an investment guide per se, but both reviewers can’t help noticing their critics. For example, Mr. Grant finds people paying unreasonable prices for whatever’s popular, the least popular alternative (stocks in the 50’s, gold in the 70’s, bonds in the 80’s) becomes the source of great wealth for the oddballs who invest in it. Today, the oddball choice would be raw materials, because in the 14 years during which stocks have gone up, commodity prices have gone sideways or down, which to a Grant disciple means they’ll make up lost ground in the next cycle. Naturally, Mr. Mandel predicts the opposite: because commodities have done nothing for 15 years, they will continue to do nothing.

In the high-risk society, Mr. Mandel sees government in retreat: less regulation, less consumer protection, big holes in the safety net. He is alternately thrilled and disturbed that people are being left to succeed or fail on their own. But what irks Mr. Grant about today’s high-finance society is that the financiers aren’t allowed to fail. By lowering interest rates in the early 90’s and providing the easy credit that saved the likes of Citicorp and the Federal Reserve built the flood of cash that has lifted stocks to a precarious height.

X the readability scale, Mr. Mandel’s book is low-risk and low-gain, short on anecdote and long on generality and annoying repetition. In one painful stretch of 30 lines, we find “uncertainty,” “high levels of uncertainty,” “far less certainty,” “a rise in uncertainty,” “the certain career path,” “increasingly uncertain alternatives,” “such uncertainty,” “economic uncertainty” and “the certainty,” along with “the old rules for success do not work,” in an economy where the source of growth are also the sources of uncertainty.” Mr. Grant’s book is demanding in spots, because it requires a working knowledge of Wall Street mechanics, but witty and informative throughout. Lord knows of his popular newsletter, Grant’s Interest Rate Observer, will recognize the prose. In recent years, Mr. Grant’s chronic bearishness on stocks hasn’t helped his readers get any richer, but who else can make interest rates interesting, not to mention downtown real estate, the bond market, Federal Reserve policy and other subjects dear to Wall Street?

A recurring theme in his narrative is the skyscraper Mr. Grant can see from the window of his own office. Built in 1929 during the lower Manhattan boom, 40 Wall Street was expected to produce $3.9 million in revenues, a yield that did not materialize until the mid-1930’s. Mr. Grant’s account of his purchase and the tenants and debts at 40 Wall is 67 years’ worth of cyclical history crammed into one building. There was never an Age of Security at 40 Wall.

Mr. Grant notes the astounding popularity of mutual funds—2.7 trillion in assets—making the fund industry as overbuilt and overcrowded as lower Manhattan before the great crash of 1929. “Like the Manhattan skyscrapers of the 1920’s and the Texas oil rig of the 1890’s, the white elephants of the 1990’s,” he writes, “will bring grief to their sponsors and drama to the next recession.”

By John Rothchild

These two books are so completely at odds, it’s remarkable that they were published in the same month by the same house. Americans are angry and worried is the “Call me Ishmael” that leads off “The High-Risk Society.” With pink slips flying and Social Security in doubt, says Michael J. Mandel, the economics editor of Business Week, the mood is to inherit the condo at Lake Tahoe. To get anywhere in this high-risk society, we all have to run risks: take the demanding job over the cushy one, put money in stocks instead of a bank.

“The Troubles With Prosperity,” couldn’t agree less. As far as most stocks are concerned, James Grant, the author of “Money of the Mind,” prefers money in the bank. His first line might as well be “Americans are giddy and deluded.” In particular they are deluded about stocks, which these days are being snapped up at crazy prices. As Mr. Grant describes the rise of speculation in the 1990’s, it sounds as though he’s talking about Mr. Mandel: “America was becoming financially bolder. It was coming around to the philosophy that there were more to be feared in not making money than in risking its loss. Such, of course, is the psychological hallmark of every boom.”

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A bloodhound ordered to find cliché and mythic pretension in the work of the late Wallace Stegner would soon return home, tail between its legs. As the patron saint of the New

Wallace Stegner: His Life and Work
by Jack J. Benson
Viking, $32.95

West, Stegner spent a lifetime debunking some of the most cherished fairy tales we Americans tell about ourselves in the land west of the 100th meridian. He applied a rock-salt layer of realism to the layer of bluff provided by such writers as Owen Wister and Louis L’Amour. But he didn’t just scrape and deconstruct. In place of cowboy homilies, Stegner offered an aphorism that will likely outlive most of his fiction. The West, he said in his most famous phrase, offered “the geography of hope.”

He arrived at that conclusion the hard way, for Stegner was a product of the boom-and-bust West. The towns that he called home during his childhood could form a road map of American social pathology. His father was invariably out of work, down on his luck, gambling away what money he did have and keeping a sharp eye out for creditors—all at the same time. Young Stegner spent time in places such as Redmond, when it was a dank stumptown full of three-fingered loggers, and the Montana front range, where the isolation was more painful than the unrelenting wind. It is a wonder that Stegner himself did not end up telling his tales over fortified wine, in one of those rooms where the smell of a larded hot plate is ever-present.

The story of how Stegner went from a product of a drifting, hardscrabble family to one of America’s most respected writers, encamped in the reverence of personal anecdotes at Stanford University, forms perhaps the best part of Jackson J. Benson’s biography, Wallace Stegner: His Life and Work. The author is less successful defending Stegner’s work, which was prolific and uneven. He produced an astonishing volume—novels, short stories, biographies, histories, essays—and it is inevitable that some of it reads better than others.

Stegner, though he won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, could never quite escape the tag of a Western writer. Eastern critics, in general, snubbed him. There is no small irony in the fact that some of Stegner’s masterworks, Wolf Willow and Angle of Repose among them, were relegated to back-of-the-book residency in The New York Times Book Review, while the great man himself merited a Page One obituary in the Times when he died in 1993.

Benson spends too much of this lengthy book acting insecure on behalf of his subject, whom he called “perhaps the greatest of our non-celebrity writers.” The fact that some of Stegner’s students at Stanford became more famous than he—Ken Kesey and Larry McMurtry heading the list—also seems to disturb the author.

But the notion that the Eastern media elite didn’t get Stegner, or that the marital infidelities of Norman Mailer got more attention than some of Stegner’s best novels, is nothing to lose hair over. So what? The West was Stegner’s great passion, the main character of most of his work, and the place he most often called home. He did it well. Clint Eastwood, in his best Western, The Unforgiven, finally arrived at a place where Stegner had been all along—the de-
mythologized West, the pig farmer on the prairie. Tributes don’t always have to come from book reviewers.

What’s more, Stegner did much more than write about the West. Big parts of God’s country, from Dinosaur National Monument to Arches National Park, are intact, preserved for the ages, in part because Stegner put his passion into action. Along with Teddy Roosevekt, he belongs on the Mount Rushmore of American conservation. Long before it was Gore-Tex-trendy or public television-safe to argue that the best place for America’s natural wonders is out of the hands of people who pay for Slade Gorton’s campaigns, Stegner was in there with his sleeves rolled up, a pamphleteer who wasn’t afraid of drawing blood.

In his youth, Stegner saw the broken families, the poisoned rivers, the leveled forests, the foreclosed homes that were the by-products of booming Western economies. In novels such as The Big Rock Candy Mountain, he wrote about the footloose dream under open skies; it was a fraud, he told us, a ticket to despair. And then, in nonfiction books such as Crossing the Hundredth Meridian: John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the American West, Stegner drew on lesser-known shapers of Western historical narrative to offer a way to live more lightly on the land.

His fault, to a biographer, was that old Wally lived a pretty clean life, married to the same woman for 60 years, never drinking away an advance or missing a deadline. He built much of his own home in California, was a faithful letter-writer, and had friends on several continents. His adoring students practically fitted him for a statue mold. Even Ken Kesey, who had unresolved disagreements with Stegner, later came to compare him to a great football coach. “It was like playing football under Vince Lombardi,” he said of being part of Stegner’s writing seminar.

There are neo-Stegnerians and neo-Powellians out there today, chipping away at what has already become New West orthodoxy. Maybe Butte wasn’t so bad after all, they seem to be saying, even if 50 percent of the residents had black lung disease. Hey, it’s better than a bunch of yuppie scum in Lycra and rollerblades.

This is a silly argument, with about as much staying power as a Mountain Dew commercial from the lip of the Grand Canyon. It can stay on the college campuses, where it belongs.

Most of the American West is public land, run in large part by the Interior Department. Three years ago, when Stegner died at the age of 84, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt had a day of mourning at the department; he called his top staff together to read from selected works. It didn’t matter that some of them, Easterners from the best schools, were being exposed to Stegner for the first time. His work had already become institutionalized, in the way that Interior manages more than $500 million acres of the geography of hope.

The Stanford University Libraries announce the publication of

CATCHING THE LIGHT:
REMEMBERING WALLACE STEGNER

a limited edition, fine press book of tributes to Stegner by fellow writers, environmentalists, former students, and family members. The book was designed by Carolyn and James Robertson and printed by letterpress at The Yolla Bolly Press. It includes nine photographs, reproduced by duotone lithography, and an uncollected essay by Wallace Stegner.

The price of the volume is $185.

Call or write for a prospectus:
Portia Leet, University Librarian’s Office
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(415) 723-6985
In honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the Stanford Creative Writing Program, University Librarian Michael A. Keller invites you to a reception celebrating the publication of Catching the Light: Remembering Wallace Stegner.

Monday, May 20, 1996, at 4 p.m.
Koret Park, adjacent to Green Library
Acceptances only by May 16 to 415-723-6985 or via email to pleet@sulmail.stanford.edu
IN ANOTHER TIME

A BLOODY DAY FOR S.L.'S FINEST

Cafe Robbery Ends With 2 Officers Dead, Thief Killing Himself

By Robert Kirby

STOCKTON, Calif. — The robbery

Every day hundreds of people in Salt

Lake City pass the above by Jeff S. Man

H., unaware that it is where the bloodshed
day in the history of the city police de-

On the night of Feb. 29, 2004, William

Lee, a 20-year-old student from Cali-

nia, died in the darkness of the above.

But on Main Street, one officer tried to

Lee's head had been split and the other

officer was also shot. The bullet that hit

Lee's head had been split and the other

officer was also shot. The bullet that hit

was a single bullet, but according to

police, the shooter had been left-handed.

The bullet that hit Lee in the head was

a single bullet, but according to

police, the shooter had been left-handed.

The bullet that hit Lee in the head was

a single bullet, but according to

police, the shooter had been left-handed.
Here I Sit
All Broken Hearted...  

'Library' Floors Show Penchant for Reading

By Wayne Lawton

It is time that reading rooms be intro-
ed, et, that.
One of the most disturbing facts in a long line of alarming facts to hit the news lately is that the amount of adults reading has steadily dropped through the years.

As someone whose bread depends on readers, that kind of news hurts.

But the more I sit at a government bureau, and the more other people sit and semi-

public, and the more old people listen to the television, the more of our readers are littered with sentences that sound like.

And so they're really reading, after all. They're just too afraid to admit it.

I've been spending quality time with everything from Library of America's Big Book of America to Boring Days in my bathroom. I've read out loud, with you. So do other things the you do in the bathroom.

Only problem is, there's still lint in my pockets. I've been known to leave a little too muchPhoenix

For a long time ago, I found myself in a room where there was no one but me and Tree and holding against the side of the door. I was watching out for a notice during that long trip to the bathroom.

At least I now know I'm not alone in this. It's a problem that has been facing us for some time. We've been working on it. It's a matter of some weight.

There's no shortage of studies to prove it. Many of the reading habits of the people we are called upon to serve are lost. Books are considered a "library."

God. Fine. Our People. That's fine.

There's no shortage of studies to prove it. Many of the reading habits of the people we are called upon to serve are lost. Books are considered a "library."

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2. Name of the company or individual to whom the check should be made payable and the address to which the check is to be mailed.
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6. Complete the account number(s) and amount(s).
7. An unlimited number of invoices for the same payee may be processed on one form. If you do not have a dated invoice leave the invoice date blank. Begin the description with a one or two word description for the reason for payment. Provide further descriptions as necessary.

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Supporting documentation should be stapled to the back of the Check Request. Proper documentation is the original and one copy of the invoice or order form which states the price and the payee’s name or copy of approved contract. One copy is delivered with the check the other copy is kept in Accounts Payable for audit purposes.

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APPROVAL DATE:
I am writing on behalf of Stanford University to request permission to use your essay "West of the Hudson, Pronounced 'Wallace' " in a special forthcoming publication.

This year Stanford will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Creative Writing Program. As you know, the program was conceived by Wallace Stegner, who also directed it for 25 years. Stanford will mark the anniversary with several events – among them the publication by The Stanford University Libraries of a limited edition book of tributes to Stegner by alumni of the program and others who knew Wally. We hope you will allow us to use your essay in the book.

Both Page and Mary Stegner know about this project and have given us their enthusiastic support. We have discussed our intentions with staff at Sierra Club Books, who see no conflict with the forthcoming paperback, The Geography of Hope. Peter Beren, the publisher, has provided us with the list of contributors, contributor statements, and copies of the essays Sierra Club Books intends to include in its edition. We will use many of the same essays, as well as some additional material.

Our fine press edition, as yet untitled, will be limited to not more than 400 copies. It will be designed by James and Carolyn Robertson (who also are designing the Sierra Club book) and will be printed by letterpress at their Yolla Bolly Press. Copies will be sold by the Libraries at or near our cost.
In exchange for this one-time, nonexclusive use of your work, we will provide you with one copy of the letterpress edition. You will also have, of course, the sincere appreciation of the Stanford community for your generous participation in this anniversary.

If you have any questions, please contact Maggie Kimball, Head of Special Collections, at (415) 725-1161.*

Thank you for considering this request to include your essay in a book of tributes to a remarkable man. If you agree, please indicate your approval on the enclosed form and return one copy of it in the stamped addressed envelope provided – if possible by February 1, 1996.

Sincerely yours,

Michael A. Keller
University Librarian
and Director of Academic Information Resources

* or call Becky Fischbach, at 415 725-1020.
Welcome home.
I agree to have my essay,

'West of the Hudson, Pronounced 'Wallace'"

printed in the Stanford University Libraries'

limited edition book of tributes to Wallace Stegner,

to be published in 1996, one-time and non-exclusive use

only, with the title copyrighted "Copyright ©1995 by

Ivan Doig" at the front of the book, in consideration

for one copy of the letterpress edition.

Ivan Doig

28 Feb. '96

Date

Becky, I hope this faxed signature is sufficient for you. If not, have someone call me tomorrow for a mail version.

regards,
Dear Barbara--

My bio for the Stegner omnium gatherum:

Ivan Doig's latest novel is *Bucking the Sun*. He is the author of four other works of fiction and three of non-fiction, including the National Book Award finalist *This House of Sky*. Born in Montana in 1939, he has worked as a ranch hand, newspaperman, magazine editor and writer, and holds a Ph.D. in American Western history. In 1989 the Western Literature Association honored him with its Distinguished Achievement Award for his body of work.

By the way, thanks for sending the copy of *Listening to the Land*, which my wife the Western Lit prof and defender of the environment has read and admired and which I'm looking forward to as a Christmastime treat, as I get this *Bucking the Sun* novel launched at Simon & Schuster. Looking forward to the memories of Wally book.

sincerely,
October 10, 1995

TO: Contributors to the Wallace Stegner Tribute Book
FROM: Sierra Club Books
RE: Contributors Notes

Dear Folks:

We would like to know how you want yourself identified in the contributor notes at the back of this collection. None of you needs identification, but it seems traditional and therefore appropriate. At the same time, we need to be somewhat concise, 8 or 10 lines, something roughly like the Stegner sample below.

Page Stegner is Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He is the author of two volumes of literary criticism, three novels, and four works of non-fiction. His most recent book, Grand Canyon: The Great Abyss was published by Harper Collins in spring of 1995. He lives with his wife and 7 year old daughter in Santa Cruz, California.

Use the back of this sheet, if you like, and return it to Barbara Ras in the envelope provided. Many many thanks for all your help.
Ivan

17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

October 4, 1995

Dear Ivan,

Enclosed please find manuscript proof for your article to be included in the volume of essays on Wallace Stegner and published by the University of New Mexico Press.

UNM Press has used an outside editor to produce this manuscript proof. Corrections of typos and minor punctuation have not been marked. Suggested editing changes are indicated thus: deletions with strike-outs, and insertions with a line of spaced dots under them.

Please read through the manuscript carefully for meaning and context. If you would respond to all queries from the copy editor, check quoted material for accuracy, and doublecheck sequence of notes to make sure note numbers and notes correspond.

Time is of the essence. The book is on UNM Press’s fall 1996 list, but the press still hopes to have it out in summer. If you could proof the enclosed as quickly as possible and return it to me no later than October 20, it would be a great help.

In addition, would you provide a paragraph about yourself that we can include in an “About the Contributors” section for the book (institutional affiliation, pertinent publications, etc.).

Many thanks for your help with the enclosed and for participating in a terrific project. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Rankin
Editor
Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98177  

October 4, 1995  

Dear Ivan,  

Enclosed please find manuscript proof for your article to be included in the volume of essays on Wallace Stegner and published by the University of New Mexico Press. UNM Press has used an outside editor to produce this manuscript proof. Corrections of typos and minor punctuation have not been marked. Suggested editing changes are indicated thus: deletions with strike-outs, and insertions with a line of spaced dots under them.  

Please read through the manuscript carefully for meaning and context. If you would, respond to all queries from the copy editor, check quoted material for accuracy, and doublecheck sequence of notes to make sure note numbers and notes correspond.  

Time is of the essence. The book is on UNM Press’s fall 1996 list, but the press still hopes to have it out in summer. If you could proof the enclosed as quickly as possible and return it to me no later than October 20, it would be a great help.  

In addition, would you provide a paragraph about yourself that we can include in an “About the Contributors” section for the book (institutional affiliation, pertinent publications, etc.).  

Many thanks for your help with the enclosed and for participating in a terrific project. I hope to hear from you soon.  

Sincerely,  

Charles E. Rankin  
Editor
Dear Chuck—

Here you go, the UNM Stegner piece with one clunky line deleted and one winsome one inserted.

As for a bio graf, I'm attaching a beefed-up version of the back flap copy of my last book, with mention of my Fort Peck novel coming (May '96 publication!). You can un-beef it to fit your "Contributors" format if necessary, okay?

Hope you're thriving, and I appreciate your perseverance with the Stegner stuff and UNM Press.

regards,
"About the Contributors"—Ivan Doig.

Acclaim for the work of Ivan Doig began with his 1978 book, This House of Sky, a finalist for the National Book Award in contemporary thought. "The language begins in western territory and experience but in the hands of an artist it touches all landscape and all life," wrote Robert Kirsch in the Los Angeles Times. "Doig is such an artist." His books since then have been the nonfiction Winter Brothers, the memoir Heart Earth, and the novels The Sea Runners, English Creek, Dancing at the Rascal Fair, Ride with Me, Mariah Montana and the just-published Bucking the Sun. Born in 1939 in the Montana mountain country he writes of, Doig has worked as a ranch hand, newspaperman, magazine editor and writer, and holds a Ph.D. in American Western history. In 1989 the Western Literature Association honored him with its Distinguished Achievement Award for his body of work.
"About the Contributors"—Ivan Doig

Acclaim for the work of Ivan Doig began with his 1978 book, This House of Sky, a finalist for the National Book Award in contemporary thought. "The language begins in western territory and experience but in the hands of an artist it touches all landscape and all life," wrote Robert Kirsch in the Los Angeles Times. "Doig is such an artist." His books since then have been the nonfiction Winter Brothers, the memoir Heart Earth, and the novels The Sea Runners, English Creek, Dancing at the Rascal Fair, Ride with Me, Mariah Montana and the just-published Bucking the Sun. Born in 1939 in the Montana mountain country he writes of, Doig has worked as a ranch hand, newspaperman, magazine editor and writer, and holds a Ph.D. in American Western history. In 1989 the Western Literature Association honored him with its Distinguished Achievement Award for his body of work.
Thoughts on Wallace Stegner

Ivan Doig

Salt Lake next Tuesday for a speech, and then we can escape to Vermont, which from here looks like a cool green sanctuary. Ah wilderness. There is too much frenzy and noise around here. Give me my scallop shell of quiet/My staff of faith to lean upon. And nine bean rows.

See you in December, I hope.


Not the least of Wallace Stegner’s miraculous qualities was that the December of his life ended in springtime.

Age and illness, he had wintered past like the sturdy square-cut Westerner he was; it took accident to do him in, and when the injuries from a Santa Fe car wreck claimed him, Stegner left amid a late, luminous blossoming of public and critical appreciation for his life’s worth of books—twenty-nine of them across the spectrum of essay and history and fiction and biography, and at last people were seeing his work as the vast natural resource it is.

Better late than never, I suppose is the thing to say next. Wally Stegner himself, born in 1909 and thus a witness to every haywire development in the American West since then, maintained an almost preternatural patience with his fellow humanity—"the West ... is the native home of hope," one of his most memorable sentences sang. But temper is a western commodity too, and right
now mine can't help saying that in undervaluing for so long such an important body of work as Stegner's, the American literary establishment and the American reading public and the western states of America collectively shot themselves in their tangled trio of feet.

<bp> Pray up a little rain for all of us, if you know the chants. We're starting our seventh dry year, and God knows what Egyptian plagues will come down on us if we don't get some rain this winter. God knows how many Californians will flee off to the better-watered Northwest, too. It's in your own best interest. Pray, man. (Stegner in a letter to Doig in Seattle, November 10, 1992)

Over and over he said it, compellingly, passionately, honestly—"ad nauseam for fifty years," he chuckled in his final book and then said it one more time: "The whole west, including much of California, is arid country." In trying to review that last book of Stegner's, Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs, I swiped from the Greek poet Archilocus and the philosopher Isaiah Berlin the notion that strong writers, the enduring hedgehog type, are said to know one big thing, and Stegner powerfully always knew his:

"I really only want to say that we may love a place and still be dangerous to it."

He and his irrefutable voice for the land made the right enemies. Ronald Reagan saw fit to bestow the Presidential Medal of
Freedom on Frank Sinatra and Whittaker Chambers, but not on the most distinguished voice for the natural glory of his own California. Nor did the Jefferson Award, the National Endowment for the Humanities’ distinguished career award, ever find its way to this most obvious candidate during the regimes of Lynn Cheney and William Bennett.

<bq>Good stand of wavy gray hair, rugged square-cut face, bifocals in either horn rims like mine or what used to be called tortoise-shells; I don’t know what western genes account for the two of us standing there in don’t-give-a-damn heavyframe glasses. (Doig’s diary entry on crossing paths with Stegner at the American Booksellers’ convention, May 1988)

<txt> In person, he looked like a one-man Mount Rushmore.

That solidity, Stegner’s Scandinavian-Saskatchewan-Montana-Utah-etcetera mien of flatfooted common sense and endurance, went much more than skin-deep. He knew his stuff, and he knew that he knew it. An academic interviewer once tried to get him to pontificate on “what it is that western writers will have to do to produce a crop of distinguished novels.” Stegner looked at him and said drily:

“Write good books.”

It took a little self-prodding, but Stegner could laugh at himself. I remember hearing from both him (ruefully) and A. B. Guthrie, Jr., (indignantly) the tale of the Stegners making an overnight stay at the Guthries’ near Choteau. Trying to be helpful about breakfast-time logistics, Stegner said: “We get up around
seven." Guthrie, to whom morning existed only to ameliorate the night before, glowered at him and rasped: "Well, we don't."

Stegner once tallied up that in his hyper-western boyhood, he lived in "twenty places in eight states and Canada," and one of my regrets is that my home state of Montana was among his less fond memories. His main recollection of the Stegner family's short time in Great Falls was "humiliation," he told me with a wry face but obviously meaning it. Fresh from a Saskatchewan homestead, he'd started junior high school there wearing moccasinlike elkskin shoes and a sweater with a broad band around it which he suspected made him, a pudgy boy at the time, look like a striped pig. Oddly but honestly, Stegner always bore an unnecessary burden on himself from his family's peripatetic pattern: "We turned tail and disappeared, and I never got over the faint residual shame of quitting. I admired the stickers, and I still do." Maybe it was out of that iron tumbleweed past that he himself learned the stick-to-itiveness of his writing and thinking.


None of us is going to replace him, and it's just about as doubtful whether any half-dozen current writers and thinkers at this end of the country can produce a combined rainbow of work to equal his.

So, in the West, this ever-old, ever-new part of the American
land, we resort to the lessons that shaped Wallace Stegner and that he wrote so long and eloquently about. Go on with what you got. Start over when you have to. Our advantage is that we have his lifework to draw on. In his last years, when the national best-sellerdom of Crossing to Safety and his Collected Stories inspired paperback publishers to pour his earlier books back onto the bookstore shelves, Wallace Stegner was a bit bemused at getting mined as a new literary resource. "I'm a land of opportunity," he laughed, "just like the West." Was he ever.
TO: Contributors to Wallace Stegner: Man and Writer

FROM: University of New Mexico Press

DATE: April 24, 1995

RE: Permission to include your essay in the book Wallace Stegner: Man and Writer

The University of New Mexico Press seeks to secure your permission to include “Thoughts on Wallace Stegner” in a proposed volume titled Wallace Stegner: Man and Writer. According to the terms of the current copyright law, which became effective in January, 1978, you retain the copyright to the material requested although you grant us permission to use it for this book and publicity associated with its promotion, and the contract allows us to grant other publishers, institutions, and copy shops permission to reproduce it. As a courtesy to the Press and the other contributors, we ask that you also agree to not allow this requested material to be included in any other book on Wallace Stegner for three years after the publication of this volume.

Please sign and return the form to Charles E. Rankin. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Ivan Doig

29 April 1995

(date)

Please return to:

Charles E. Rankin
Montana Historical Society
225 N. Roberts Street
Box 201201
Helena, MT 59620-1201
April 24, 1995

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan:

Enclosed please find the standard permission form requested by the University of New Mexico Press regarding your essay contribution to the edited volume, Wallace Stegner: Man and Writer. If you could sign and return it to us at your earliest convenience, it would be a great help.

Thanks for your attention to the above and for a terrific contribution to the volume.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Rankin
Editor

Enc.
Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98177

January 20, 1995

Dear Ivan,

Thanks for your letter of reminder. Your stipulations as to price reflect what we discussed some time ago now, and I will ensure that they are honored.

I’ve discussed your specification for “one-time use” restriction on the material for the anthology with the people at the University of New Mexico Press, and they have no problem with that, nor with your specifications for noting copyright.

They did balk at the number of books you have requested, but I think I can handle that separately.

The introduction is not finished yet, so I don’t know if we’ll use the “good leave” wording. I’ll let you know if we do.

So, all would seem set. I’ll keep you posted on timetable and such. As of now, we’re still shooting for a spring 1996 pub date. Meantime, all the best as always.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Rankin
Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98177  

December 28, 1994  

Dear Ivan,  

I had hoped to provide some definite word before now, but suffice it to say that the anthology of essays on Wallace Stegner that I have been attempting to pull together these past several months, and which includes your fine contribution, has received formal approval for publication by the University of New Mexico Press.  

I was delighted with the book having found a home with UNM Press. I am familiar with the people there, and know they are eager to make this project a success.  

We have set a target publication date of spring 1996, which means that a completed manuscript will need to be in to the press no later than early this coming spring.  

The press has asked for revisions on a few essays, yours not among them. Whatever final changes there might be with your essay would be strictly stylistic, and I will try to be in touch with you on these (if there are any) sometime next month (January).  

In the meantime, many thanks again for your fine contribution to what I can’t help but feel is a most worthwhile project. All best wishes for the new year.  

Sincerely,  

Charles E. Rankin
Dear Chuck--

Congrats on persevering the Stegner pieces toward publication.

As regards my own piece, I will need some paperwork from the UNM Press stipulating that my article (and the little "bad leaves" item if that's used) is being obtained for one-time use only, in the anthology, for a permission fee of $250, with the copyright on the piece(s) in my name, and that I'm to be provided a dozen copies of the book. I hope nobody finds this onerous; it's about the only way I can justify letting material of this sort be used--I think it'll be the only non-book material of mine that's ever been in an anthology.

Best wishes for '95.
Dear Chuck—

lest our phone conversation of a few days ago get away from me any more than it already has, here's the Stegner material you requested and my understanding of the "Stegner symposium book" situation:

-- The Stegner appreciation piece that you already have in type can be used in the symposium book, for a permission fee of $250 and 12 copies of the book.

-- The excerpt I'm enclosing with this, from my presentation at the symposium, you may use within the preface to the symposium book.

-- Please copyright, separately, on the book's attributions/copyrights page, both the appreciation piece and the excerpt, thusly:

  copyright c 1993 by Ivan Doig, "Wallace Stegner"
  copyright c 1993 by Ivan Doig, "Bad Leaves"

I hope this covers it okay, for both of us; good luck with the book and all.

regards,
"Bad Leaves" material from Stegner symposium, to be quoted in preface to symposium book:

I once heard a stone mason use the term "a bad leave." A bad leave, he said, means that the previous stones had been forced to git together, brak in such a way that they left trouble when the next stone had to be inserted. The West has had more than its share of "bad leaves" — the damage done and left behind by the fur and hide rushes, the mining rushes, the agricultural rushes, the energy rushes, all the booms and busts.

Typically, Wallace Stegner did things a little differently than the region with which he had such a passionate lover's quarrel for 84 years. In his writings, his voice for the land, his battalion of students — honorary and otherwise — he gave us the best "leave" he could, to build on.
Ivan Doig  
17021 10th Avenue NW  
Seattle, WA 98177

August 16, 1993

Dear Ivan,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the symposium in tribute to Wallace Stegner September 17-18. By now, you should have received a copy of the announcement-program we have distributed to several mailing lists, including the Western History Association and Western Literature Association. Just in case not, I enclose one here.

As you probably know, the major airlines are offering special discounted fares and are even offering refunds if you made your travel plans to Missoula earlier. If you have not made travel arrangements, we would ask that you might do so as soon as possible. (You will be reimbursed for these.)

When you have your itinerary, it would be helpful if you could either photocopy the flight numbers and times or jot them down on the return postcard provided and send them to us. We can then be sure to have transportation from the airport to the conference headquarters hotel arranged for you ahead of time.

In addition, it would be helpful if you could note whether you will require a single or double occupancy room while in Missoula, and for what nights you will need hotel accommodations. We are prepared to provide hotel accommodations at the Red Lion Inn, across the river from the University of Montana campus, for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night, September 16-18. The Center for the Rocky Mountain West will also take care of all meals. On those meals not pre-arranged, it would help if you could keep receipts for reimbursement.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me at (406) 444-4708 or Bill Farr, History Department, University of Montana (406) 243-2231.
Dear Chuck

I'm being some combination of secretary and editorial assistant to Ivan today and am responding to your letter of August 16.

We will be driving up from Jackson and so have no need of airline transportation or airport pickup. Also, we have our reservations made at the Village Red Lion.

I believe Ivan already has mentioned his need for a parking permit close to the symposium site, so that he can dash off to other parts of the city for his book events when necessary.

Also, we'd be grateful for reserved seating for each of us. I intend to be there for the whole of the program; it's a great opportunity for someone who teaches Lit of the American West.

Thanks, Chuck, and we look forward to seeing you again.

Regards

Carol Doig
Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

June 17, 1993

Dear Ivan,

Sorry to not have gotten back to you sooner in response to your letter of May 27 (ouch!). Been out of town, swamped, and all that rot, but enclosed is the state form we need to have you sign and return to us to get you your money. Same thing as we did before, OK?

Meantime, we have scheduled the Stegner symposium in Missoula on the UM campus for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 17-18. The thing will kick off with a panel presentation on Friday afternoon, say 2 to 4:30, then adjourn to a reception. Conference participants and significant others then will be invited to dinner at the university president's house, then we'll all go back to campus for an hour or so of lecture/presentation by Jackson Benson, who is completing a biography of Stegner. Next morning we'll have another panel session from about 9:30 to 11:30 and that'll be it, save for invitations all the way around for a sophisticated tail-gate party at the president's in advance of the football game that afternoon.

If you can just be there, that would be delight enough, Ivan. If we could get you to say a few words, nothing onerous, that would be beyond delight, and if we had you to offer a few comments on Stegner from the perspective of a fellow man of western letters, that would be beyond ideal.

Hope there's a chance. Trust all goes well otherwise and that your tour was a good one. Wish you could do the reading here this fall--have you perfected a clone of yourself yet? If not, drat.

In any event, all the best. Essay should appear in the Autumn issue.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Charles E. Rankin
Editor
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Ivan Doig grants permission to publish "West of the Hudson, Pronounced 'Wallace'" in the forthcoming book tentatively entitled A TRIBUTE TO WALLACE STEGNER, to be published by Sierra Club Books in the spring of 1996.

The author grants non-exclusive North American rights to the use of this material in all editions of the work, including rights for serialization, book clubs, and translations.

Upon publication, the author will receive five free copies of the book.

Author

Address 17021 10th Ave. NW

Seattle WA 98177

Date July 17, 1995
June 28, 1995

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Ave. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan Doig:

Thank you for sending the manuscript of your talk and for letting us include it in our proposed tribute to Wallace Stegner. I was at the event at Herbst Theater, and I was strongly moved by your remarks. Reading them in manuscript, I'm struck with the beauty and elegance of your writing and touched by the devotion they express. Thank you.

I'm enclosing a book from our spring list that I hope you'll find of interest. It's one that I feel particularly proud of.

Best regards,

Barbara Ras
Editor-in-Chief
(415) 291-1635
Dear Barbara Ras--

As per Page Stegner's request, here's a copy of my remarks at the "Geography of Hope" occasion at the Herbst Theater, for inclusion in the memorial volume dedicated to Wallace Stegner, pending the permission form which Page says is on the way to me. I put my copyright on the piece, but it can run in the front matter rather than with the article, if you prefer. I'm also enclosing a rather makeshift bio, if needed.

Good luck with the volume.

sincerely,

[Signature]
Barbara Ross, ed-in-chef
Scenia Club Box
100 Bruin St
SF 13 06
94104

Alison - 2nd grade
the GEOGRAPHY of HOPE
Post-Lecture Dinner with the Writers

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Ivan Doig

HOSTED BY AGNES BOURNE & JIM LUEBBERS
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Dinner begins at 8:30 p.m. Valet parking will be provided.
An evening to benefit
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Ivan Doig  Gretel Ehrlich
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“...THE REMAINING WESTERN WILDERNESS IS THE GEOGRAPHY OF HOPE.”

WALLACE STEGNER
The Wallace Stegner Environmental Center at the New Main Library will be a unique public resource for environmental awareness, scholarship, advocacy and activism. In addition to collections and electronic resources, the Center will work in partnership with local environmental groups to provide lectures, conferences and exhibits -- to educate, empower and enrich our community and environment. The Center is inspired by author and environmentalist Wallace Stegner, and his vision of nature and deep sense of responsibility for bringing human activities in harmony with the earth.

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For more information about the Stegner Environmental Center or the New Main Library, please call the Library Foundation at (415) 391-5582.

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*Stegner Center Founding Committee

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THE STEGNER FAMILY
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IVAN DOIG
GRETEL EHRlich
WILLIAM KITTEDGE
BARRY LOPEZ
PAGE STEGNER
TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS

DANIEL ANISFELD
STEVEN BARCLAY
MICHAEL BONNICI AT SHOWPLACE FLOWERS
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ELISSA ANDERMAN
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IVAN DOIG  Since the publication of his first book, *This House of Sky*, Ivan Doig has been praised and celebrated as an American original, bringing to vivid life the people and the lands of western America, in particular the Montana of his birth and childhood. Mr. Doig was born in White Sulphur Springs, Montana in 1939 and grew up along the Rocky Mountain Front where his trilogy of novels -- *Dancing at the Rascal Fair*, *English Creek* and *Ride With Me, Mariah Montana* -- takes place. His most recent book is *Heart Earth*, a sequel to his memoir, *This House of Sky*.

GRETEL EHRLICH  Born and raised in California, Gretel Ehrlich started in the arts as a documentary filmmaker. At the age of 30, she moved to Wyoming and discovered her passion for literature, writing her first collection of essays, *The Solace of Open Spaces*. This first book was greeted with wide praise; critic Annie Dillard proclaimed, "Wyoming has found its Whitman."  Ms. Ehrlich's other works include...
Heart Mountain, Drinking Dry Clouds, Islands, the Universe, Home and A Match to the Heart. Her prose is lyrical, muscular and evocative; she writes of isolation and wonder, pain and grace, and in doing so illuminates the relationship between the human and the natural worlds.

**WILLIAM KITTREDGE** grew up on a dryland cattle farm outside Klamath Falls, Oregon. He published several short stories in his youth, but it wasn’t until age 35 that he enrolled in the Writer’s Workshop at the University of Iowa. He is now a full professor at the University of Montana. Mr. Kittredge was the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts’ grants, a Stegner Fellowship at Stanford, the Montana Governor’s award for Literature and a PEN/West Award in non-fiction. Mr. Kittredge has published two collections of stories, *The Van Gogh Field* and *We Are Not in This Together*; a book of essays, *Owning It All*; and an award-winning memoir, *Hole In The Sky*. Additionally, he wrote the screenplay of Norman Maclean’s *A River Runs Through It*.

**BARRY LOPEZ** Through his works, which are shaped by his unique and worldly perspective, Barry Lopez illuminates the mystery of the natural world with the imagination and emotion of the human observer. He has received several awards for his nonfiction work including *Arctic Dreams* and *Of Wolves and Men*. Other books include *Crossing Open Ground, Desert Notes* and *Winter Count*. His best-seller, *Crow and Weasel*, is an illustrated fable for all ages and uses the Native American culture to examine some of Lopez’s concerns: our spiritual relationship to the landscape and our obligations to the inhabitants of the earth.

**TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS** The 1993 recipient of the Lannan Foundation Fellowship for non-fiction, Terry Tempest Williams has emerged as one of the most powerful and unique writers of the West. *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*, an inspiring narrative about dying, accommodation, renewal and grace, was published in 1991 to impassioned critical praise. Wallace Stegner wrote of this book, “Terry Williams is too
full of life herself and too fascinated by all its manifestations to write a
gloomy book. There isn’t a page in Refuge that doesn’t whistle the song of
wings.” Williams’ other critically acclaimed works include, Pieces of
White Shell: A Journey to Navajoland, Coyote’s Canyon and Unspoken
Hunger.

CHRISTINA DESSER is Project Director for the Migratory Species
Project, an environmental education project aimed at demonstrating the
interdependence and interconnectedness of life by linking communities
based upon the migratory species that pass through them. She was the
Executive Director of Earth Day 1990 and a co-founder of the Muir
Investment Trust. Ms. Desser serves on several boards including Mother
Jones Magazine and Rainforest Action Network.

PAGE STEGNER is the author of numerous volumes of literary
criticism, fiction and non-fiction including The Viking Portable Nabokov
and the award-winning Outposts of Eden. He has been the recipient of
fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National
Endowment for the Humanities and the Guggenheim Foundation. Mr.
Stegner is currently living in Santa Cruz where he is a professor of
literature and the Director of Creative Writing at the University of
California at Santa Cruz.

WALLACE STEGNER
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
AT THE NEW MAIN

c/o Library Foundation of San Francisco
220 Montgomery Street, Suite 406
San Francisco, CA 94104
WALLACE STEGNER In over fifty years of writing, Wallace Stegner accumulated many awards -- the Pulitzer Prize in 1972 for *Angle of Repose*, the National Book Award for the *Spectator Bird* -- and he received prestigious fellowships. Most importantly, he created a body of work which was highly esteemed by critics and the public alike. Mr. Stegner established a reputation for capturing the essential spirit where people and place meet. He was a prolific writer, but equally impressive was his work in guiding and inspiring the younger generations of writers. The Wallace Stegner Environmental Center honors his vision and hopes to continue his legacy.

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PLEASE SEND ME INFORMATION ABOUT BECOMING A SUPPORTER OF THE WALLACE STEGNER ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER AT THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY:

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PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER
February 16, 1995

Dear Ivan,

On behalf of the Library Foundation and the Friends of Stegner, I would like to thank you for participating in the Writers Tribute to Wallace Stegner on Thursday, April 27th. All of us are extremely excited about the event and appreciate having you as part of our evening's program.

Joining you on the 27th will be writers Barry Lopez, Gretel Ehrlich, William Kittredge and Terry Tempest Williams. The program will begin at 7 p.m., and after a brief introduction, each of you will have fifteen minutes to speak or read. You can either read a short passage from one of your works or one from Wally's works. Another possibility would be to share your impressions and memories about him. Our hope is that the piece will in some way express your spiritual and intellectual kinship with Wally.

After the Tribute, we hope that you will join us at the home of Agnes Bourne for the Post-Lecture Dinner. We are asking each of the participating writers to try and be at the dinner so that the supporters of the Stegner Center will have an opportunity to meet you and thank you for your participation in the evening’s program.

Finally, I wanted to let you know that Sydney Goldstein and Steven Barclay of City Arts & Lectures have been engaged by us to produce the event. They will be handling the stage production of the lecture, in addition to your airline reservations, ground transportation and accommodations in San Francisco. They will be contacting you regarding these matters and will also be sending you a precise itinerary for the evening.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions at 415-567-6328 (please leave a message if I'm not home) or call Gabrielle Anderman at the Library Foundation at 415-391-5582. Again, thank you for your participation. All of us are looking forward to great evening!

Best regards,

Christina Desser
Dear Chris--

Home now, and about to go back to work. Thanks for inviting me to the Stegner shindig; I hope everyone else was as pleased as the writers were.

Two stray items: one is a packet of printing-press work done by Peter Koch of Berkeley, which I left in the cloakroom at Agnes Bourne's party. It's a large envelope, probably something like 9" x 12", and plump, with no name or address on it but something in the upper left corner, possibly Peter's return address. It's not greatly valuable, but if anybody turned it in after the party, I would appreciate getting it back. The other detail is merely the $22 I spent on an airport shuttle and airport parking here in Seattle; I submitted those receipts to Steven Barclay at City Arts & Lectures, which is the way I understood the procedure in one of Steven's letters of instruction to me.

Lastly, I want to say how much I appreciated your impeccable work as M.C. in the Stegner event; good job.

Best wishes,

[Signature]
Mary Stegner & Christina Desser

December 12, 1994

Mr. Ivan Doig
17021 10th Avenue, N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan,

We are writing to invite you to participate in a "Writers' Tribute to Wallace Stegner", an evening to celebrate the legacy of Wallace Stegner. Proceeds from the evening will help to fund the Wallace Stegner Environmental Center at the magnificent new Main Library in downtown San Francisco.

The Tribute will begin with a series of readings by writers who admired or were influenced by Wally's writings and teaching. The readings will be held on April 27, 1995 at the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco from 6 to 8 pm. The theatre seats approximately 900 guests and tickets will be priced at a rate that is affordable to the general public ($25-$35).

After the large public event, the Friends of the Wallace Stegner Environmental Center are hosting a small dinner at the home of Agnes Bourne for individuals contributing $500 or more to the Center. These funds will enable the Friends to expand the library's environmental collections, staffing and resources in preparation for the opening of the New Main in the Spring of 1996. The Friends have raised over $600,000 and have approximately $200,000 more to raise to meet their budget of $800,000.

The idea of building an environmental center at the New Main grew out of a gathering of environmental activists on Earth Day, 1993, less than two weeks after Wally's death. Although Wally was involved in the campaign for the New Main (see attached article), he died before he had the opportunity to learn about this exciting new center. We believe he would have been proud to have his name associated with this center which has adopted as its mission statement "not only to provide a focal point for environmental information but to inspire understanding and appreciation of the human dependence on natural systems and to encourage individual and group responsibility toward the community of life on Earth."

Wallace Stegner Environmental Center, c/o Library Foundation of San Francisco
220 Montgomery Street, Suite 406 San Francisco, CA 94104
Tel: 415-391-5582 Fax: 415-677-0396
As one of the 6 to 8 writers participating in the Tribute, you would be expected to read a short passage from one of your works (it could also be a piece prepared especially for the Tribute) which in some way expresses your spiritual and intellectual kinship with Wally. Each writer will have 8 to 12 minutes to speak. Following the Tribute, we are asking each of the participating writers to join the Friends for dinner so that the supporters of the Stegner Center will have an opportunity to meet you and thank you for your participation in the evening’s program. Although our funds are limited, Friends of the Stegner Center would be happy to underwrite your travel expenses to/from San Francisco (up to $300) and your lodging on the evening of the Tribute.

We would like to confirm your interest and availability to participate in the Tribute by **Wednesday, January 4th**. Please respond as soon as you can to Mary at 415-948-5348 (please leave a message if I’m not home) or Tricia Foster at the Library Foundation at 415-391-5582.

Thank you for considering this invitation. We hope you will be able to be with us on the 27th for what promises to be a very special evening.

Best wishes,

Mary Stegner

Christina Desser
Friends of the Stegner Environmental Center

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Dear Joan,

These Friends are an inspiring group of young men and women who are wholely dedicated to the environment and to the Library. They call themselves the 
Fabulous 15 and have already raised $610,000 and need $80,000. In addition they are working with the librarians to make the Stegner Environmental Center a fine addition to the New Main Library.

Thank you for your Xmas greetings. 

Fondly,

Mary
They say that in Africa, when an old man dies, it is as if a great library has burned. That is because in non-literate societies the whole cultural tradition must be carried in human memories. Literate cultures are luckier. From the clay tablets of Ur and the great doomed library of Alexandria to the rich collections of the present—the Morgan, the Bodleian, the Huntington, the Beinecke, the New York Public, the great books of Berkeley, Stanford, UCLA, even Texas, where oil money has accumulated priceless treasures—libraries have been the principal organs of cultural memory, repositories and renewers of traditions, aspirations, and inventions that might otherwise have perished in the first great human disaster.

One of the best ideas in American history was the one that Andrew Carnegie had, whether out of gratitude, pride, or penance doesn’t matter, that put free public libraries in scores of American cities and towns, and opened up intellectual opportunities for tens of thousands of young and not-so-young Americans, anyone with a hungry mind.

I can remember when I was hungry. I was a child in a little raw prairie town in Canada, a town not only without a library but virtually without a library but with books—a place where there was no drama except grade-school cantatas at Christmas, no music except folk-songs, most of them held to be too dirty for childish mouths and ears, no architecture except grain elevators, no painting or sculpture, no arts, no crafts. A few of us kids traded books as modern kids trade baseball cards, and were always wanting more. I remember what a revelation it was for me to move to Salt Lake City at the age of eleven and find an imposing stone Carnegie library packed with books. I forgot that I was in a strange town where I knew no one. I forgot everything but the riches on those shelves. I took home six books at a time, and I reloaded twice a week. That library was my haunt, my playground, my second home, the beginning of a lifelong addiction.

My experience was surely like that of millions of youngsters brought up on civilization’s fringes and eager to become part of what they had only heard about, and also millions of the underprivileged and under-advantaged who aspired to strengthen what they lacked. I think of Eric Hoffer, an authentic

continued on page 16

"There is nothing in San Francisco's past or present that becomes it more than this great building, this idea, and these books.”
Wallace Stegner

Bibliomusings continued from page 13
San Franciscan, longshoreman and philosopher. Born in a German village, brought to America as a child, blind for many years of his youth, and with a first-class mind, he was so starved for learning that when he recovered his sight he read everything he could lay hands on. He picked fruits in the orchards of California with a copy of Pascal's Pensées in his overalls pocket—a book probably overdue at the San Francisco Public Library. Winter days he spent in that same library where it was warm and dry and where everything that fascinated him was available. The IWW, who enlisted a good many people like Eric Hoffer, called those library winterers "bughouse philosophers."

Not so bughouse. Eager, culturally and intellectually hungry. And blessed with access to an institution created to open up opportunity even for the dispossessed and disgruntled. The future of the San Francisco Public Library will surely be even more distinguished than its past. I hope that all sorts of people—neighborhood book clubs, students writing term papers, bughouse philosophers, children, immigrants trying to find their way way in a new country, the whole mix that shares this bewildering culture—will find a home there, and be inspired not only by the books in it and the grand idea that begot it, but by the splendid architectural space that will house this cultural treasure house.

There is nothing in San Francisco's past or present that becomes it more than this great building, this idea, and these books.
February 15, 1995

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan,

City Arts & Lectures has been engaged by the San Francisco Library Foundation to handle the production of the Thursday, April 27, 1995 program which will inaugurate the Wallace Stegner Environmental Center. We are all grateful that you have accepted to participate, and Sydney and I look forward to working with you once again.

This event, which will begin at 7PM, will also include Gretel Ehrlich, William Kittridge, Barry Lopez, and Terry Tempest Williams—you’ll be in good company. Our proposed format for the evening is to give each of you fifteen minutes during which to talk or read on Wallace Stegner. This could include a short reading of his work (your choice), or an informal talk on your impressions of his work, or both. We’re flexible as to the exact format, but are restricted on the fifteen minutes, since there are five of you and we need to end no later than 8:30.

We would like to send you your airline tickets and need only your preferred departure and return dates. Naturally, we will cover your ground transportation, and accommodations in San Francisco will be provided.

Please write or call with any questions; we certainly look forward to the April 27th program and seeing you again.

Sincerely,

Steven Barclay

29 April 1995

Dear Steve--

As far as I know, everything went fine at the Stegner shindig. Thanks for handling the plane tix, and gratitude to Sydney end Jenny and Elissa for their part in it all. I’m attaching the receipts for my ground transportation costs—$ll apiece for the airport shuttle on Friday morning and my overnight parking at the Seattle airport, total $22.

Best wishes all around.
Dear Steve—

Well, good; glad your fine hand—and no doubt Sydney's—will be guiding us through the Stegner shindig.

I'll need to fly down from Seattle on the day of the event, Steve, and back the next morning. So, would you please book me these Alaska Airline flights (my frequent flyer number is 34773852, if that applies), an aisle seat, as far forward as possible:

Th, Apr 27—Alaska #84, dep Seattle 12:05, arr SF 2:06 pm
Fri, Apr 28—Alaska #85, dep SF 8:55 am, arr Seattle 11.

What's your preference on transportation from the airport—have me take a cab and submit the receipt? I don't mind doing that, or I don't mind being fetched by you or Sydney or somebody works with you; I do mind shuttle buses and volunteers who aren't used to airports and the traffic patterns. Cabbies are fine with me, honest. In any case, I want to get to the hotel by about 3, hole up and rest for a while, and be ready for the 5 o'clock start. And I am mindful of the 15-min. time allotment, not to mention the audience's patience, and will tailor my talk to that and a little less if I can.

Looking forward to it; hi to Sydney.

best,

[Signature]

p.s. Am I right that there's to be a 5 o'clock sound check, some food, etc.?
April 11, 1995

Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan:

By now you should have received your airline ticket. We will be at the airport to pick you up and take you to the hotel. You will be staying at the Abigail Hotel, 246 McAllister Street, San Francisco. Their telephone number is 415-972-9728.

We’re looking forward to seeing you.

All best,

Steven Barclay
February 22, 1995

Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan,

Those Alaska Airline flights are just fine. I have purchased the tickets and will forward them to you in the next ten days. A real person--most likely Sydney--will pick you up at the airport, not to worry.

You are right about the 5PM sound check followed by a little food break with the other four participants.

Looking forward...

Best,

Steven
Impermeably embedded in a microchip in the computer of a major West Coast newspaper is the news that, along with Edward Abbey and N. Scott Momaday and Larry McMurtry and Robert Stone and Ernest Gaines and Max Apple and Tom McGuane and Ken Kesey and Wendell Berry and Tillie Olsen and plenty of other writers who could be named, I was a student of Wallace Stegner's in the writing program at Stanford. This was particularly news to Stegner and me. Wouldn't you think one or the other of us would have remembered that?
This went on, enough, that after a lecture-tour talk by Wally which had been prefaced by my being singled out in the front row as a former you-know-what of you-know-who, Wally afterward gave me a Stegnerian look—furrows across that Mount Rushmore forehead—and said he was sorry about my being mis-introduced in his introduction, he didn't know how that story had got started. Hey, don't worry, I told him, we're probably both better off with this erroneous version—this way, he didn't have to put up with me as a student, and it saved me all that Stanford tuition.
That kind of inexplicable bonus to me, that because I am a writer of and about the West, I must have spent time at the Stegnerian elbow—that's pretty much the way I do feel about Wallace Stegner, that there was a general benefit to me just being in his region of the country and line of work. And, along that line, of merging the white space of writing with the landscape expanses of the West, I want to take you traveling into a particular piece of Stegner work now.
In 1987, two books of his were published. One was his last novel, Crossing to Safety—"as he described it, "Of all the books I ever wrote... the most personal... Deliberately close to my own experience, opinions, and feelings... refracted through a narrator not too different from myself."

The front-flap copy of Crossing to Safety describes it this way: "In the mid-thirties, in mid-Depression, a bright, nice, open couple from the West with gifts and dreams but no prospects or connections meets a bright, nice, open couple from the East with wealth, lakeside cottages, long lines of family certainties in manners, tastes, and opinions, and the generosity
to share all they have of good fortune. The friendship that forms and flowers in a single evening binds them together all their days."

Back to Stegner's own description of the book: "The themes of the novel are love, friendship, and survival. The villains are willfulness, polio, cancer, and blind chance. The tensions are the tensions between and among people who love each other at least as much as they resist each other. It is all very quiet. I intended it to be true. I wrote my guts out trying to make it as moving on the page as it was to me while I was living and reliving it."
Quiet though it was, Crossing to Safety caught on. People in publishing
are skittish about numbers even when they have good news to report, but my
phone calls to Crossing to Safety's hardback and paperback publishers add up
to the evident fact that it has sold somewhere over 150,000 copies. Friends
in the bookstore business frankly tell me it's been a favorite of theirs to
sell—as one of them put it, "You don't get very many novels you can tell
your customers are about friendship."
The other Stegner book of 1987 was a mere 86 pages of text, and five or six of those were given over to photos. The book's set of three essays had been delivered as the William W. Cook Lectures at the Law School of the University of Michigan in the fall of 1986—
one of those endowed lecture series with what sounds like the up-and-down results you get out of an academic selection committee—
Arthur Danto of Columbia talking about philosophy one year, and Bartlett Giamatti of Yale and major league baseball talking about "Americans and
their Games" another year. The acquiring editor for the University of Michigan Press, Mary Irwin, tells me the publication rights to Stegner's set of talks was "fairly easy" to lay hold of—she believes he "felt some kind of loyalty" to the U. of Michigan because it provided the occasion for the lectures. The U. of Michigan Press went ahead and published the essay trio, to little fanfare and almost no reviews. I have the appalled memory of being at the American Booksellers convention three years later, at a lunch with the book review editors of most of the major U.S. newspapers, when
Stegner's name came up, I chipped in something about the University of
Michigan Press book—and there was a puzzled general silence as it
became clear that none of the book review editors were familiar with it.

I will always credit Jack Miles, of the Los Angeles Times, for pulling out
a notebook and in honest amends, jotting down the title. As to sales
of that book, if Wally thought Crossing to Safety was a quiet piece of
work, he must have thought this one was mighty near mute—555 sold in hardback,
five-thousand five-hundred in the University of Michigan paperback.
The three essays that formed the book now have been subsumed into the larger and more general collection of Stegner essays, Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs. And though it's true that Where the Bluebird Sings... is attracting a much greater readership, the "Michigan trio" of essays are now sandwiched in a "Habitat" section of the book, between a couple of magazine pieces--so that it's not apparent, any more, that the "Ann Arbor three" represent a unified summary of Stegner and his West, by Stegner: what he wanted to say, when offered the chance to say whatever he wanted, three nights in a row.
The title, of that little book, that went down in Jack Miles' notebook and in thin ranks on bookstore shelves was The American West as Living Space—to give it the emphasis Stegner himself stressed in its preface: "the living region, with its country and its people, its splendors and its limitations, its facts and its fantasies, its opportunities and its problems, its romantic past and booming present and dubious future, all suggested—and I may be in as sharp a minority as the disparity of those sales figures—this small set of essays selling less than one/twenty-fifth as many copies as Crossing to Safety—when I say that, for my money, The American West as Living Space is the grander finale of Stegner work."
Here's his opening paragraph:

"The West is a region of extraordinary variety within its abiding unity, and of an iron immutability beneath its surface of change. The most splendid part of the American habitat, it is also the most fragile. It has been misinterpreted and mistreated because, coming to it from earlier frontiers where conditions were not unlike those of northern Europe, Anglo-Americans found it different, daunting, exhilarating, dangerous, and unpredictable, and entered it carrying habits that were often inappropriate and expectations that were surely excessive. The
dreams they brought to it were recognizable American dreams—a new chance, a little gray house in the West, adventure, danger, bonanza, total freedom from constraint and law and obligation, the Big Rock Candy Mountain, the New Jerusalem. Those dreams had often paid off in parts of America settled earlier, and they paid off for some in the West. For the majority, no. The West has had a way of warping well-carpentered habits, and raising the grain on exposed dreams."
Lots of lessons in that one paragraph, an impressive number of them about the art of writing. Parallel constructions, alliteration, deft change of sentence rhythm from that to-wonder which crescentoes in "the Big Rock Candy Mountain, the New Jerusalem" down to the honest power of that four-word dreambreaker: "For the majority, no." More vitally, though, he sweeps us at once into his exploration of the great theme of the West, the clash of its ecologies and its cultures.
This first essay carries the title "Living West," and the second is called "Striking the Rock." Elsewhere, Stegner once wrote with a bit of a sigh that "the whole West, including much of California, is arid country, as I've been reiterating ad nauseam for fifty years." In this pair of essays he is, unabashedly, on what he believes is the main set of tracks in the West.

Investigative reporters, certainly since Watergate, and Woodward and Bernstein, have spoken openly of the principle: "follow the money." Stegner is telling us here that if we want to savvy the West, follow the water. To me, this has the ringing sound of Stegner hitting the nail on the head, as usual—the truest (that I know of)
cliche about the West is that, out here, water flows uphill toward money.
This first essay carries the title "Living Dry," and the second is called "Striking the Rock." Elsewhere, Stegner once said with a bit of a sigh that "the whole West, including much of California, is arid country, as I've been reiterating ad nauseam for fifty years." In this pair of essays he is, unabashedly, on what he believes is the main set of tracks in the West.

Investigative reporters, certainly since Watergate, and Woodward and Bernstein, have spoken openly of the principle: "follow the money." Stegner is telling us here that if we want to savvy the West, follow the water. To me, this has the ringing sound of Stegner hitting the nail on the head, as usual—the truest (that I know of) cliche about the West is that, out here, water flows uphill toward money.
The "Living Dry" essay is an overview of western climate and geography, and the explorations and settlement patterns and water laws that the Anglo-American immigrants brought in. He covers a lot of territory, fast, and even an academic on an off-day could encyclopedify him into a corner on some of his assertions. Even I, as a sometime magazine writer, can catch freelance virtuoso him at giving an inconvenient fact a quick elbow in the ribs and waltzing away while it's still catching its breath—he calls "the northwest corner of the West, on the Pacific side of the Cascades...a narrow exception" to western aridity; as a current resident of that area, I would point out to Wally
that the arc of the raincoast from Oregon up through Washington and British Columbia and Alaska is at least as long and strong as the usual "West-defining" "dry line" of the 98th meridian from North Dakota to Texas.

But Stegner had said frankly near the start of this "Living Dry" essay that "I can't come to even tentative conclusions about the West without coming to some conclusions about myself," and so if he scampers a bit in his historical overview, he has a place he is hungry to get to. Here, I think, is how he begins to merge his conclusions about the West and himself as a Westerner:
"Our migratoriness has hindered us from becoming a people of communities and traditions, especially in the West. It has robbed us of the gods who make places holy. It has cut off individuals and families from memory and the continuum of time. It has left as least some of us with a kind of spiritual pellagra, a deficiency disease—a hungering for the ties of a rich and stable social order."
There are a couple more pages of assertions and examples, scholarly and reflective, then all of a sudden Wallace Stegner, son of the West, just lets rip:
For the moment, forget the Pacific Coast, furiously bent on becoming Conurbia from Portland to San Diego. Forget the metropolitan sprawl of Denver, Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque, Dallas–Fort Worth, and Salt Lake City, growing to the limits of their water and beyond, like bacterial cultures overflowing the edges of their agar dishes and beginning to sicken on their own wastes. If we want characteristic western towns we must look for them, paradoxically, beyond the West’s prevailing urbanism, out in
the boondocks where the interstates do not reach, mainline planes do not fly, and branch plants do not locate. The towns that are most western have had to strike a balance between mobility and stability, and the law of sparseness has kept them from growing too big. They are the places where the stickers stuck, and perhaps were stuck; the places where adaptation has gone furthest.
Whether they are winter wheat towns on the subhumid edge, whose elevators and bulbous silver water towers announce them miles away, or county towns in ranch country, or intensely green towns in irrigated desert valleys, they have a sort of forlorn, proud rightness. They look at once lost and self-sufficient, scruffy and indispensable. A road leads in out of wide emptiness, threads a fringe of service stations, taverns, and a motel or two, widens to a couple of blocks of commercial buildings, some still false-fronted, with glimpses of side streets and green lawns, narrows to another strip of automotive roadside, and disappears into more wide emptiness.
The loneliness and vulnerability of those towns always moves me, for I have lived in them. I know how the world of a child in one of them is bounded by weedy prairie, or the spine of the nearest dry range, or by flats where plugged tin cans lie rusting and the wind has pasted paper and plastic against the sagebrush. I know how precious is the safety of a few known streets and vacant lots and familiar houses. I know how the road in both directions both threatens and beckons. I know that most of the children in such a town will sooner or later take that road, and that only a few will take it back.
That outburst of...longing, I think it has to be called, Stegner and we will come back to, in his final part of The American West as Living Space.

But first he closes off this "Living Dry" essay with a potent final paragraph:
And what do you do about aridity, if you are a nation inured to plenty and impatient of restrictions and led westward by pillars of fire and cloud? You may deny it for a while. Then you must either adapt to it or try to engineer it out of existence.
"Striking the Rock" is his essay about our attempts to "engineer away" the fact of Western dryness, and it's a wicked-sharp recounting of environmental battles, and of the historically checkered personalities of both westerners and government agencies. The dam-building Bureau of Reclamation of the 1930s, 40s and 50s, he turns every way but loose. He cites to us other writers, such as Donald Worster, Marc Reisner and Philip Fradkin, who've taken scathing looks at "the hydraulic society" of dam-building and irrigation, and then, once again, he personally cuts loose.
Stegner has written elsewhere of his fondness for the Salt Lake City where he spent his adolescence and young manhood, and of the Mormon society there which he said generously "welcomed even such gentile waifs as my brother and me." But making the desert "blossom as the rose" is at the heart of his skepticism about engineering away aridity, and he quotes a Mormon hierarch, John Widtsoe, who advocated irrigation projects thusly:

"The destiny of man is to possess the whole earth; the destiny of the earth is to be subject to man. There can be no full conquest of the earth, and no real satisfaction to humanity, if large portions of the earth remain beyond his highest control."
Stegner takes that head-on:

"That doctrine offends me to the bottom of my not-very-Christian soul. It is related to the spirit that builds castles of incongruous luxury in the desert. It is the same spirit that between 1930 and the present has so dammed, diverted, used, and re-used the Colorado River that its saline waters now never reach the Gulf of California, but die in the sand miles from the sea; that has set the Columbia, a far mightier river, to tamely turning turbines; that has reduced the Missouri, the greatest river on the continent, to a string of ponds; that has recklessly pumped down the water table of every western valley and threatens to dry up even so prolific a source as the Ogallala Aquifer; that has made the Salt River Valley of
Arizona, and the Imperial, Coachella, and great Central valleys of California into gardens of fabulous but deceptive richness; that has promoted a new rush to the West fated, like the beaver and grass and gold rushes, to recede after doing great environmental damage."
That splendid shout of Stegner's, echoes and echoes away in the face of the fact—as he too well knew—that the dams exist, the rivers pool behind them, the cities and suburbs grow and grow by suckling on their tapwater and electricity. He ends this chapter, this essay, this way:

"Sad to say... the West is no more the Eden that I once thought it than the Garden of the World that the boosters and engineers tried to make; it; and that neither nostalgia nor boosterism can any longer make a case for it as the geography of hope."
Then, the finale chapter of a finale book: "Variations on a Theme by Crevecoeur"--by which Stegner of course is westernifying the famous rhetorical question Crevecoeur asked in his Letters from an American Farmer more than two hundred years ago--"Who is the American, this new man?"

Stegner knew better than to give a hard and fast answer to his version, our version, of that thumping question, "Who is the Westerner?" Those two biting essays on aridity and the denial-by-engineering of course add up, to something like this Stegnerian summary:
"We are not so far from our models, real and fictional, as we think. As on a wild river, the water passes, the waves remain. A high degree of mobility, a degree of ruthlessness, a large component of both self-sufficiency and self-righteousness mark the historical pioneer, the lone-riding folk hero, and the modern businessman intent on opening new industrial frontiers and getting his own in the process. The same qualities inform the extreme individualists who believe that they belong to nothing except what they choose to belong to, those who try on life-styles as some try on clothes...
One reason why it is so difficult to isolate any definitely western culture is that so many Westerners, like other Americans only more so, shy away from commitment."

To radically summarize a chapter which deserves careful reading, I'll tell you that Stegner found a resurgence of hope, for his native geography, in certain western "tastes, attitudes and skills," as he put it. In interests of full disclosure, I have to tell you, too, he mentions—in this connection—certain writers, with names like Kittredge and Welch and Erdrich and Doig.
Add on all the writers in and about the West who were his actual students, and my hope is that we can find a strength, in this loss of him. That instead of Wallace Stegner's long-familiar and often lonely eloquence for the West, the rest of the country may now have to hear from us as a tribe of western writers, a swarm of us.
Back to what Stegner saw, in the conclusion of The American West as Living Space, as hopeful western attributes. In person-by-person terms, he phrased this as—"the individual who transcends his culture without abandoning it, who leaves for a while in search of opportunity and enlargement but never forgets where he left his heart."
In societal terms, he put his hope this way—"towns and cities still close to
the earth, intimate and interdependent in their shared community, shared
optimism, and shared memory." Missoula, need I point out, he figured was
one such a place. Elsewhere in this final chapter of his, Stegner makes a
backtrack that I'm very glad to see him make—away from that wonderful peroration
about "characteristic western towns," to mention that Los Angeles is the West,
too. This is Doig now, rather than Stegner, "striking a rock" to see what
will flow, but I think the Wallace Stegner who came around from his 1979
self-description as "a pretty straightforward, realistic story teller from
the West," to his 1990 praise for Maxine Hong Kingston's wonderfully wild
stylised novel "Tripmaster Monkey"--I think that adaptable Stegner would agree
with me that as we keep trying to figure out the West, we have to include not
only the farms and ranches and towns where we grew up, but the cities and
suburbs that drew us away.
I once heard a stone mason use the term "a bad leave" (l-e-a-v-e). A bad leave, he said, means that the previous stones had been forced to fit together, but in such a way that they left trouble when the next stone had to be inserted. The West has had more than its share of "bad leaves"--the damage done, and left behind, by the fur and hide rushes, the mining rushes, the agricultural rushes, the energy rushes, all the booms and busts.
Typically, though, Wallace Stegner did things a little differently than
the region with which he had such a passionate lover's quarrel for 84 years.
In his writings, his voice for the land, his battalion of students—honorary
and otherwise—he gave us the best "leave" he could, to build on.
Wallace Stegner chronicled the West

Injuries from car crash prove fatal

By Nancy Scott

Wallace Stegner, novelist, historian, essayist, teacher and inspiration to generations of American writers, has died in Santa Fe, N.M., from injuries suffered in an automobile accident last month. He was 84.

A hospital spokesman at St. Vincent’s Hospital in Santa Fe said Wednesday that Mr. Stegner died at about 10 p.m. PDT Tuesday. He was hurt in a March 26 crash.

The appeal, “Bring me men to watch my mountains” could have been invented for Mr. Stegner, though he was the antithesis of an optimist.

His strength was in the word, rather than the ax, the plow, or the building of railroad; his belief was in the preservation and salvation of the land; he was one of

[See STEGNER, back page]

Wallace Stegner died at 10 p.m. Tuesday at St. Vincent’s Hospital in Santa Fe, where he had been hospitali- zed after he was injured in an automobile accident.

He was the author of 26 books, including novels, short stories, essays, biographies and nature writing. His work, which was recognized with numerous awards, was widely praised for its lyrical prose and its focus on the American West.

Stegner was born on July 30, 1913, in soldiers’ barracks in Portland, Ore., where his father was a railroad engineer. He grew up in Mountain View, Calif., and was educated at the University of Iowa, where he studied with John Dos Passos, a prominent writer of the time.

Stegner’s first book, “The Short Column,” was published in 1948. It was a collection of short stories that focused on the lives of working-class people in the American West. The book was well-received and helped establish Stegner as a major voice in American literature.

His next major work was “The Mountains of the Moon,” published in 1950. This novel is considered a classic of American literature and is widely regarded as one of Stegner’s greatest achievements.

Stegner’s later work included the novel “Angle of Repose,” which was a Pulitzer Prize final in 1971, and the novel “The Ranchers,” which was a National Book Award finalist in 1979.

Stegner was a influential figure in the literary world, and his work has had a lasting impact on American literature.

He died on April 17, 1993, at his home in Santa Fe, N.M. He was 84.
Out the Sense of Place Is a Sense of Mobility
by WALLACE STEIGER

Wallace Steiger

was not getting into literature, or not finding responsive readers if it did. Like most of my fellows in the 1930s and 1940s, I was a sort of regionalist. People in provincial or unadventureous places were not supposed to feel a sort of colonial complex, and one response to that feeling of inferiority is an ingendent assertion of superiority.

But poor poetry is not the way to achieve stature. You achieve stature only by being good enough to deserve it, by forcing even the indifferent or contemptuous to pay attention and to acknowledge that human relations and human emotions are of inestimable interest wherever they occur. My anguish is potentially as valid as that of Oedipus, my love may be as tragic as Tristan's, my bond with the Earth may have as lasting a significance as Wordsworth's in my work, even if it is with cows, may have as much dignity as honest work anywhere. If a writer is good enough and takes his gift seriously enough, he ought to be able to see as far into the universe or into the human mind from a California promontory or a Montana mountain as Paulkner could from a hunting camp in Mississippi, or Mark Twain from a Mississippi river raft, or Melville from the deck of the Pequod.

Though it has had notable writers, literature has never been a strong point in the West. Perhaps this is because the West has only very recently developed the support structures of the East. This may also have produced a group of writers home-grown enough to be called a school. Why should it have been that when I was a child, even in the small towns of the Pacific Northwest, people talked about writing? How do you find a unity among the Pacific Northwest woods, the Great Basin deserts, the Rocky Mountains, the high plains, the plateaus, the plains and Indian Southwestern, and the hurricanes of the Pacific? What kind of school can you discern in writers as various as Ivan Doig, Frank Himes, Scott Momaday, Ed Abbey, Tom McQuaig, Larry McMurtry, Joan Didion and Maxine Hong Kingston? California is a separate problem, but the Pacific Northwest West at all. One anthology recently put it, it is west of the West. But there are a few common characteristics in Western writing and Western life. For one thing, the whole West, including California, is a sort of country, and aridly forces existence, which in turn enforces mobility. In an oasis civilization, especially one that has been periodically raided for its extractive resources, you don't find the degree of settled community life that you would find in New England, the South, or the Middle West. Space does something to the vision. It makes the country itself, for lack of human cultivation and illusions of human importance, into something formidably and ever-present, and it tends to make man as migratory as antelope. Their—out—

literature rests on the uncertainty of the

Look at any novel or book that strikes you as somehow Western in its feel—"Roughing It," "The Grapes of Wrath," "The Big Sky," "The Big Rock Candy Mountain," "On the Road," "The Way to Rainy Mountain," and you will likely find that it is a book not about place but about movement, not about situation but about desire. Whether the formula is the upper-crust writer who gets rich, rich, get out—

The West doesn't need good writers. It has them. It could use some critics capable, by experience or intuition, of giving Western literature the same sort of literary treatment in the terms of Western life. So far, I can't think of a critic who has read Western books in the same spirit as its author writ.

The country is a very prominent actor in much Western writing. It is big and impressive, it is often empty, it is unforgiving, it is fragile. Mobility puts us in touch with it, but sometimes it leaves us cold, and loss of the home and the land of birth could congratulate themselves as proscriptions of the West. Between the two, our wars have gone anywhere and every trade, some of our religious searchings and a lot of our apprehensions are involved.

Western writing comes from Denver or Palm Springs, Missoula or Santa Fe, San Francisco or Los Angeles or Salt Lake City, his book will probably be remote, in spirit as well as in style, from Europe. Long ago, Emerson declared that we have lost too long to a voice of Europe. Out West, his warning has finally been taken. That too makes most books true to Western experience and the Westem mind—more or less opaque to critics whose training has come unfurled from across the Atlantic.

Western literature, especially that written in the inland West, is closer to the outdoors and the big news. Closer to the aggressive American Dream, closer too to the native inhabitants of the continent, who survive in greater numbers, and with more social and cultural tone, both of west and of hinterland. Descendants of Pueblo or Hispanic or the last generations of Bowies, or Tecumsehs, would Ansel, along with much more muted, defeated distance, but Scott Momaday, James Welch, Leslie Marmon Silko, Michael Dorris, and other Western Indians speak from the present, from the very battlefields of cultures. But there are other voices in Western literature that do not speak with authority to the East because of its geographic or its tempo or and open new roads.

On July 20, 1969, William Gilpin, the first territorial governor of Colorado, made a Fourth of July speech to the Senate on the bank of the Cherry Creek, where Denver now stands. Gilpin's speech was an erudite and mis-leading boosting of Western oppor-
tunities, but one thing he said was prophetic. "Ana," he said, "is found, and has become our neighbor. Five years or so ago, the historic West was an abstraction, marked to Bernard DeVoto that all the West as a whole was not arid as a desert, and that he would congratulate themselves as proscriptions of the West. Between the two, our wars have gone anywhere and every trade, some of our religious searchings and a lot of our apprehensions are involved. The West doesn't need good writers. It has them. It could use some critics capable, by experience or intuition, of given Western literature the same sort of literary treatment in the terms of Western life. So far, I can't think of a critic who has read Western books in the same spirit as its author writ. However, it is about for it to breed up some critics capable, by experience in intuition, of evaluating Western literature in the terms of Western life. So far, I can't think of a critic who has read Western books "the way he would write, and judged them according to their intentions. Such critics will come. I can remember when every book by a white writer was published, including all five of his greatest, was greeted with incredible laughter and ribbing. In the days of the Young Fathers and the Youngers of the New Yorker. As Faulk

ern himself might have said, the thought of killing him but they didn't. The fact of the matter is that Paulkner's eminence was the books themselves, some appliance of the time for his peculiar variety of genius to stick in, and one perceptive and auton-

ative critic, Malcolm Cowley. When we await the day, we can set back and enjoy the fact that Western writers are bringing us

On April 27, novelist Wallace Steiger received the National Book Award for his novel "Plitvicer Monkey." The novel was praised for its searing portrayal of the 1960s era and its themes of alienation and identity. It was a strong contender for the award, and Steiger was deservedly honored for his achievement. The book, which explores the life of a young boy growing up in a small town during the turbulent 1960s, was praised for its raw and honest depiction of the challenges facing young people in that era. The novel's themes of alienation, confusion, and disillusionment resonated powerfully with readers, and Steiger was commended for his ability to capture the essence of the era in a way that was both compelling and true-to-life.
Stagnar: Am West

5. indulge 4th - personal testament

5. dating: West (in: Am W @ MURSINR, p. 4)

6. missed becoming a Canadian y 2nd of rain

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8. dry cates of states

- aridity alone

10. water sites: prior appropriation

12. only drainage channels (political)

17. aridity & win character

18. Oregon Trail emigrants

19. border of strangeness

22. bungering for... and a stable social order

24. Am young!

- gls, 24-5 on young?

27. - engineering aridity out of existence... or. closing quote

Sliding, Rock, 31.

32. limits of desirable

33. instead of adopting...

36. water engineering "original sin"

37. feel presence

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46. mad w/a compartment: next on Virgin R.

49. 4 "miser" led

50. Glen Canyon: quote

51. hydric race & dwell

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Stagner. Am West - Variations
65 - um culture's character exist & make-believe
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66 - N Mexico adapt
69 - W as mighty pot
70 - Am cities decline in settings
H James: ch. 19, t...
71 - Concorde
75 - "Wm" aggressive energy
77 - Vm
78 - + writers than cowboys: quote
80 - country stereotype: space as permanent
81 - Stay childhood
- tastes, attitudes = skills 72 W new to myth
85-6 - Miramichi & Cornwall

Lag West, LAT
- plots long, but you know what chapter is, physically
- "entirely novel in" quality

Sense of Motion
- if got enough: quote
- appear for Trig medical Monday