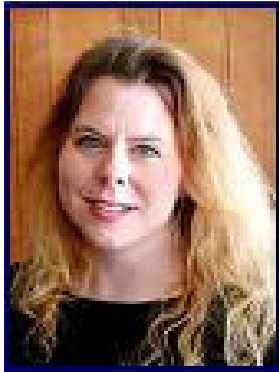


AMY FLEURY (1970 -)



Amy Fleury was born and raised in Seneca, attended Kansas State University, and taught at Washburn University for more than ten years. She visited many area arts centers and colleges for readings and conferences. Her writing has a fresh quality, conveyed by a narrator who has a quiet excitement about the surroundings. Even this elegy, "At Cather's Grave," set in a forest cemetery, has a brightness. Like Cather, the narrator is displaced from western plains. Monadnock in the poem is an isolated New Hampshire mountain that rises over pine forests, and it emphasizes the sense of shadow at the gravesite. The prairie skies become the contrasting life in the poem.

Here Fleury turns to landscape as eternity, like Cather's novels about the prairie create a literary heritage that continues. Fleury writes that "the prairie/ is like a page," and so she joins the author with her own writings. She contrasts the dark New Hampshire woods with "sun-doused sedge" and also graveside and life. The last stanza integrates opposites with affirmation of the continuity of wind, which tells stories everywhere, and the land, which "will take us in," whether in forests or on the plains. Fleury herself recently moved to Louisiana, but will never truly leave Kansas.

At Cather's Grave

**Veiled in deep New Hampshire pines,
you rest in a bed of mast and loam.
A pilgrim from the plains, I've come in homage
to your open-skied and earth-turned words.
Monadnock will not shadow you.**

**We both know that the prairie
is like a page, our living and dying
written in every tuck and swell.
I wish we could walk out together,
arms linked, toward the sun-doused sedge.**

**But everywhere, whether here
or there, the wind stories us
and the land will take us in.
We are all happy to be dissolved
into something so complete and great.**

Education: Amy Fleury graduated from Seneca High School. She received two English degrees from Kansas State University (B.S. 1991, M.A. 1994) and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing (McNeese State University, 1997). At KSU she received the William H. Hickok Graduate Fellowship in Fiction.

Career: Amy Fleury taught at Highland Community College (1997-1998), Washburn University (1998-2008), and McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana (2008 -). She received the Crab Orchard First Book Award for *Beautiful Trouble* (Southern Illinois University Press 2004), and she has a chapbook *Reliquaries of the Lesser Saints*, RopeWalk Press, University of Southern Indiana.