

# ENG 1700: The Michigan Reader

Syllabus Fall 2009 Oakland Community College

Instructor Gina Fournier

STATE MOTTO:

*Si quaeris peninsulam amoenam circumspice.*

"If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you."



Class location and meeting time: SF 109 11:00am-1:55pm

Instructor: Gina Fournier

Office: RO B238

Check website for office hours: <http://www.oaklandcc.edu/seen/GFournier/>

Best method of contact outside of class is through e-mail: [gmfourni@oaklandcc.edu](mailto:gmfourni@oaklandcc.edu)

*Please talk to me about your coursework and your experience as a student in my class,  
not merely about your absences.*

- e-mails answered in 24 hours to one week's time
- include a subject like "MI Reader"
- office phone messages checked once weekly: 248.246.2679

**Hi! Welcome to my classroom.** I teach at both the Southfield and Royal Oak locations. I'm on campus on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Also, I teach online. As a full-timer, I work with many students and teach a full load of classes each semester, mostly ENG 1510 and ENG 1520, Composition I and II. Since you are one of many students, it is important to do your part, which means (among other things): read closely all materials, think before you ask questions, remain calm, optimistic, and energetic in your studies, and communicate fruitfully—with me and your classmates. Realize that the rules are designed to manage hundreds of deserving students each semester, so please abide by all guidelines and expectations, or simply drop the class. On behalf of taxpayers who foot the bill for community college and the other students enrolled in the class, thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. Let's all have a great semester together! *Sincerely, GMF*

OCC Catalogue Description:

**ENG 1700 Reading in Areas of Interest** 3 Credits GE Outcomes: Aesthetic Awareness

The student will experience critical reading for pleasure and information in order to develop his or her ability to evaluate an author's purpose, thesis, competence and performance, and to synthesize and draw conclusions from two or more works about the same facet of human experience. The student will practice and develop all the communication skills concomitantly with these readings.

About The Michigan Reader:

Students will read fiction and nonfiction about the Great Lake State, focusing on topics including the auto industry, great lakes conservation, the city of Detroit and "up north," in an effort to better understand what it means to be a Michigander.

A cross section of reading material will be explored including graphs, charts, poems, short stories, novels, novellas, cookbooks, reports, essays, journal entries, big time and small town journalism, cinema, graffiti, children's books, young adults novels, and native America writings.

The group will read and discuss two selections together, Paul Clemens' memoir *Made in Detroit* and the biography *Rosa Parks: A Life* by historian Douglas Brinkley. In addition, individually students will pick an area of interest, select an additional book-length text (must okay selection with instructor) and contribute to a group presentation (groups finalized by instructor). Additional shorter reading material will be supplied by the instructor throughout the semester (see schedule for reading materials, topics and themes).

Each class meeting the group will share readings, discuss subject matter and work on group projects, which will be delivered in the last weeks of class. Hopefully, **The Michigan Reader** will become an opportunity to improve attitudes and practices surrounding reading. Ideally, our time and efforts will result in enthusiastic exploration and greater thoughtfulness. Let's have a fun and rewarding experience.

#### Grading:

25 % **book review** of individual reading selection (3-5 pages)

25% **take home essay test *Made in Detroit*** (3-5 pages)

25% **take home essay test *Rosa Parks: A Life*** (3-5 pages)

25% **community action/ work ethic** includes **group project**, attendance, preparedness and participation in full group discussion and small group presentation. (NOTE: Students will be graded based on their own individual efforts. Strongest attribute leads.)

Also required but not graded traditionally:

#### **entrance essay (two page typed response)**

Prompt: What does it mean to be Michigander? **Due Week Three.**

Used as introduction and warm-up.

#### **exit essay (two page typed response)**

Prompt: Michigan: To Stay or to go? Composed during the last day of class as **final exam on Week Fifteen.** Used to determine grades that fall on a line between grades.

#### Grading scale:

(no point system)

<b>A</b>	<b>excellent</b>
A-	almost excellent
B+	very good
<b>B</b>	<b>good</b>
B-	almost good
C+	slightly above average (seek tutoring at this point and below)
<b>C</b>	<b>average</b>
C-	slightly below average
D+	seriously below average
<b>D</b>	<b>below average and in danger of failing</b>
D-	work contains many serious problems and will not pass

Note: All written work can be revised throughout the semester for a higher grade.

For more specific information about **grading** student writing (and writing instruction) see instructor's composition coursepacks available online <http://www.oaklandcc.edu/seen/GFournier/>

#### Revision:

**Revision of take home tests is optional.** Revised grades completely replace original grades. On the last day of class, Week Fifteen, submit printed revisions of take home tests in a writing portfolio (folder), which should be clearly marked and neatly organized. **Important:** To receive consideration, inside your portfolio, be sure to include the original graded version and ONE final revision of take home tests. No revised grades can be given otherwise.

A new grade will given for revisions *after* the final exit essay (Week Fifteen). The new grade will then be calculated into the student's final grade for the semester in place of the original grade. No revisions can be submitted after the last class meeting.

**There isn't any time to revise book reviews.** Instead, share drafts for feedback prior to submission on Week Fourteen. If desired, share drafts and revised drafts of the book review with the instructor throughout the semester prior to submission through e-mail. Provide a specific subject line (ex. The MI Reader book review) and a clear cover letter (ex. What do you think of my intro?).

#### Three Required Texts:

1. *Made in Detroit* by Paul Clemens
2. *Rosa Parks: A Life* by Douglas Brinkley
3. One additional book-length text of your choice off the fyi list or one you discover (must okay with instructor first) connected to our Michigan theme

#### Attendance:

Attendance is important as students enrolled in **The Michigan Reader** will share reading material and compare ideas to create a learning community in the classroom. Students who can't commit to course policies, including attendance, should officially drop.

At four absences according to the instructor's records, students automatically fail and should expect to receive a WF or F on their report card. There is no system of excused or unexcused absences, just four and you're out. Furthermore, there is no need to explain the reason for absences to the instructor, though sometimes it may make sense or a student may feel inclined to do so. Try to focus on reading and writing, however, since I can be of help in those areas.

If you must miss class, it is wise to use your limited allotment judiciously, keep count and assume full responsibility. Do not ask the instructor what transpired while you were absent; consult with another student instead. At the college level, it is inappropriate to misuse an instructor's time with talk of absences. Instead, talk to the instructor about coursework. Hence, all students should obtain contact information from other classmates, as well as group project members.

#### Late Arrivals:

Coming into class late causes a disruption. The instructor has to stop whatever she's doing with other students, mark a student tardy instead of absent, which in the very least interrupts her train of thought, so please avoid late arrivals. Same thing with leaving early. Late arrivals and leaving early will each equal one half absence.

#### Online Resources:

Michigan Writers Series hosted by MSU (featuring interviews you can listen to):

<http://www.lib.msu.edu/services/dmc/vincent/writers/index.htm>

Michigan Writers Collection hosted by MSU (list of authors with links):

<http://specialcollections.lib.msu.edu/html/materials/collections/michcoll/index.htm>

about OCC's own David James, English instructor at OR:

<http://specialcollections.lib.msu.edu/html/materials/collections/michcoll/james.htm>

from Michigan.gov:

- 50 Essential Michigan History Books

[http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-18835\\_18897-57682--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-18835_18897-57682--,00.html)

- Michigan Children and Young Adult Books and Authors

[http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-17451\\_18670-77702--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-17451_18670-77702--,00.html)

- Michigan Notable Books (2009, 2008, etc.)

[http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-17447\\_39583---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/o,1607,7-160-17447_39583---,00.html)

from the private sector:

- Michigan in Brief: 1998-1999 by the Michigan Nonprofit Association

<http://www.michiganinbrief.org/edition06/>

- Michigan in Brief: 2002-2003 by the Michigan Nonprofit Association

<http://www.michiganinbrief.org/>

Writing Portfolio/Folders – submit a simple, paper, two pocket folder, with your name written on it, on last day of class, Week Fifteen. The folder should contain your entrance essay, exit essay, and any revisions of take home tests. (Remember, there is no time in the schedule for revising book reviews, so plan ahead. Instead, share drafts prior to submission for feedback.) Students can pick up their folders the next semester during RO office hours. Work in folder is not commented upon, since most students do not ask for it back.

Note: Some student work will be kept for educational purposes. No work will be used in full without the author's permission. Shorter anonymous passages may be used in the classroom and related writing.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA):

Students requiring special assistance (including those affected by the Americans with Disabilities Act) should contact the PASS office, which will inform the instructor of any special conditions pertaining to their learning.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (FERPA):

Due to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), no information regarding a student's grades or class standing will be given out over the phone or via e-mail or to someone other than the student, unless the student gives prior consent in writing. Students may access the website at [students.oaklandcc.edu](http://students.oaklandcc.edu) for final grades.

Tentative Schedule: (fill in the corresponding dates and stay tuned in)

**Week One**-INTRODUCTION TO COURSE. Meet and greet. Begin group formations. Launch individual book selections. Investigate subjects and book titles.

*What does it mean to be a Michigander? (Do you prefer Michiganian?)*

**Week Two**-DETROIT VS SUBURBIA. MOTOWN VS. NOTOWN. Race relations, city versus suburb, are discussed in our paired required reading by Paul Clemens and about Rosa Parks. Clemens says there's "... a good deal of sense to be found in prejudice" (*Made in Detroit* 65). Do you agree?

In class reading: Berry Gordy *To Be Loved* and Coleman Young (with Lonnie Wheeler) *Hard Stuff* memoir vs biography  
(perhaps with some music listening thrown-into the mix)  
*If Detroit is no longer Motown, what is it?*

**Week Three**- AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY. Has it been both a blessing and a curse to the area? What lessons can be learned from our experience with "the shop," the car and Motor City roads?

**Submit Entrance Essay**

In class reading: Ben Hamper *Rivthead: Tales from the Assembly Line*. Screen Michael Moore *Roger and Me* (selected scenes)  
memoir vs. docu-movie

*Are the working class and places like Flint portrayed fairly outside those communities?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: Rosa Parks p. 1-61**

**Week Four**- ECONOMICS & BUSINESS. In the past Michiganders mined, logged, built automobiles. What else? What's next?

In class reading: Bruce Catton *Waiting for the Morning Train*  
Academics can be personable and informative. Note the differences in styles we've seen so far among writers telling life stories.

*Will Michigan learn the lesson of limited resources?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: Rosa Parks p. 62-97**

**Week Five**- CASE STUDY: MICHIGAN FILMMAKERS AND THE NEW FILM COMMUNITY. JEFFREY EUGENIDES AND SOFIA COPPOLA. Four sisters dead in Grosse Pointe. *Eight Mile*. HBO's *Hung*. Are these images indicative of the Michigan you know?

In class reading: Jeffrey Eugenides' *The Virgin Suicides* and screen Sofia Coppola's film (excerpt)  
novel vs. film

*How does Michigan play on the big screen?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: Rosa Parks p. 98-156**

**Week Six**- SPORTS & BOWLING. PASTIMES VS. WORK. What do you do for fun?

In class reading: Philip Levine's *What Is Work?* and screen films of Sam Raimi (clips from *Evil Dead, Quick and the Dead, Spider Man*)

poetry vs. Hollywood blockbusters

*What should visitors do while they're in town/the state?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: Rosa Parks p. 157-206**

**Week Seven**-GENDER ISSUES IN MICHIGAN. There is still a need for feminism.

In class reading: Louise Erdrich *The Birch Bark House* and "She Who Finishes Grieving" by Ann

Linnea from *The Great Lakes Women's Reader*  
children's novel vs travel narrative  
*Race gets a lot coverage but what about gender? Is there balance in Michigan?*  
**Read for this week's class meeting: *Rosa Parks* p. 207-231**

**Week Eight-** UP NORTH: FISHING, HUNTING, MUSHROOMING MORELS. Have you been? Do you love the great outdoors in Michigan? How much of our large state have you visited?

**Submit Rosa Parks take home test**

In class reading: Ernest Hemingway "Indian Camp" from *The Nick Adams Stories* and Jim Harrison "Westwood Ho!" from *The Beast God Forgot to Invent* and "Going Places" from *Just Before Dark*. Plus, the art of Gwen Frostic.

Short story, novella, essays, prints

*What does "up north" mean?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: *Made in Detroit* p. 1-52**

**Week Nine-** GREAT LAKES WATER CONSERVATION. How much do you know about our greatest natural resource?

In-class reading: *The Great Lakes Water Wars* by Peter Annin and Sleeping Bear Press *The Legend of the Sleeping Bear*

investigative journalism vs. children's picture books

*Who is responsible for great lakes protection?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: *Made in Detroit* p. 53-116**

**Return graded *Rose Parks* take home test**

**Week Ten-**HEALTH HABITS OR LACK THEREOF. Family and ethnic issues are numerous and complicated by all sorts of health issues: intellectual, physical and emotional. Why do Michigianians tend to be overweight and undereducated?

In- class reading: Michael Eric Dyson *Is Bill Cosby Right?* Review Bill Cosby's activism in Detroit.

academics vs. media personalities

formal writing vs. talk

*Who is responsible for the welfare of children?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: *Made in Detroit* p. 117-152**

**Week Eleven-**CASE STUDY: MADONNA. People make their own success.

In class reading: Christopher Ciccone *Life with My Sister Madonna* and Lucy O'Brien *Madonna: Like An Icon*.

kiss and tell gossip vs. celebrity journalism

*Getting the hell out of Michigan: Should I stay or should I go?*

**Read for this week's class meeting: *Made in Detroit* p. 153-239**

**Week Twelve-**group presentations (schedule set by instructor)

**Submit *Made in Detroit* take home test**

**Week Thirteen-**group presentations

**Return graded *Made in Detroit* take home test**

**Week Fourteen-** group presentations *and party?* (group decision)

**Submit book review**

## **Week Fifteen-final exit essay written during class**

### **Return graded book review**

**Submit final exit essay** in a simple two-pocket paper **folder** along with any revisions of take home tests and a **copy of your entrance essay**.

### Semester's Assignments:

#### **ENTRANCE ESSAY- due Week Three**

Prompt: *What does it mean to be a Michigander?* Write a 2 page essay (typed/ MLA format) in response, which will jump start your thinking and serve as an all-around introduction. Students will *not* be forced to read their work aloud in class but will be encouraged to share. This assignment is required but not graded traditionally. Students must complete the assignment in order to pass the course. Include a copy of this piece in your final writing folder.

#### **ROSA PARKS TAKE HOME TEST – due Week Eight (returned Week Nine)**

Prompt: *What lesson does Rosa Parks' story, as told by Douglas Brinkley, offer readers?* Connect the biography to elements in the greater culture in 3-5 pages. I am not looking for one set answer (repeated in similar style and form by thirty-seven students; no, please!) but instead want individualized responses, so be sure to read actively and remain open to your own creativity and thoughtfulness. Pick one main idea and stick closely to it. To support your main idea, be sure to cite the text specifically using both quote and paraphrase. Explain your idea in detail. Range outside of the book to the real world and back. Imagine an audience that has not read the book. However, your response to the prompt should demonstrate that you have read the book—closely, thoughtfully and in full. Limit or avoid personal narration (“I”) unless you have a really good reason. Feel free to consult outside sources. In fact, “A” and “B” students may decide that outside sources help support essays, build detail and reinforce thesis statements. If outside sources are used, include a MLA Works Cited page.

#### **MADE IN DETROIT TAKE HOME TEST - due Week Twelve (returned Week Thirteen)**

Prompt: *What picture of the author and the city does Made in Detroit offer readers?* Connect the memoir to elements in the greater culture in 3-5 pages. I am not looking for one set answer but instead want individualized responses, so be sure to read actively and remain open to your own creativity and thoughtfulness. Pick one main idea and stick closely to it. To support your main idea, be sure to cite the text specifically using both quote and paraphrase. Explain your idea in detail. Range outside of the book to the real world and back. Imagine an audience that has not read the book. However, your response to the prompt should demonstrate that you have read the book— closely, thoughtfully and in full. Limit or avoid personal narration (“I”) unless you have a really good reason. Feel free to consult outside sources. In fact, “A” and “B” students may decide that outside sources help support essays, build detail and reinforce and thesis statements. If outside sources are used, include a MLA Works Cited page.

#### **BOOK REVIEW- due Week Fourteen (returned Week Fifteen)**

Students are urged to send early drafts to the instructor via e-mail for feedback, utilize the Academic Student Support Center and consult library resources.

journalistic in style and most aspects of approach—like popular newspapers and magazines  
persuasive—write a cultural commentary  
3-5 pages in length

**Pick books by reading.** There is simply no other way for the individual to choose well. Test run authors like you would test run a car or inspect a home. Check for excerpts on amazon.com or other bookseller sites. Go to libraries and book stores, have a seat and read. Pick a selection that pleases you. Not a chore but a delight. You can do it because reading is for everyone. The choices are endless, even

given the restrictions of theme. Students who make hasty, poor choices set themselves up for difficulties and sometimes failure, so relax, be smart and have fun!

**Be sure to run your book by me and get an okay.** I can only allow a limited number of individuals read the same selection. In addition, book selections will influence group project group formations.

**Begin:**

*Check items of this list as you proceed:*

- select book and determine thesis statement (must discuss book selection with instructor in advance)

**Research and read:**

- uncover biographical information about the author (other books written, professional credentials, relevant personal details)
- be sure to circle your subject matter from multiple vantage points, not just one source, not just the author's homepage
- conduct as much research as helpful in order to connect the book to the wider culture
- plan to incorporate one to three published, professional reviews of the book in your essay
- include amateur book reviews, if you'd like

**Prepare to write by prewriting:**

- select tone and target audience (default setting: general adult)
- generate material in sentence and paragraph form that can be developed into the final essay
- to find your thesis, write clear sentences that express your ideas; use the **basic sentence template** for help getting started:

**Subject + verb + completed idea = complete sentence**

Book + accomplishes + the unlikely feat of appealing to both parents and teenagers.

Author + reminds + readers that no childhood is perfect.

People + need + serious journalism in order to stay connected and exert control over their lives.

- build paragraphs by supporting your ideas with quotation, paraphrase, research and reflection
- create some sort of outline or plan for the essay to successfully integrate your thoughts about the book and your research

**I strongly suggest the use of simple sentence outlines beginning with the complete thesis statement at the top followed by numbered complete topic sentences.**

**Write the essay:**

- be sure to stick closely to a clear thesis statement expressed it in one or two sentences usually contained inside the introduction
- make sure your introduction contains only your hook and thesis statement
- stick closely to your thesis throughout the beginning, middle and end of your essay
- don't forget a distinct conclusion
- follow special format guideline:

Directly after the first mention of the book's full title, inside the sentence within parentheses include the name of publisher, the year the book was published, and the number of pages

Example: "In *Thelma & Louise and Women in Hollywood* (McFarland Publishers Inc., 2007, 400 pgs.), Gina Fournier invites readers to focus on the neglected gender: women."

- provide a brief summary of the book as a whole, including a classification or a label (Ex. "childhood memoir" or "critical analysis")
- discuss the book's design and layout (such as the name of chapter titles, narrative timeline and voice, production values like illustrations or pictures, etc.), especially if noteworthy and relevant

- explain the title's meaning, if not clear
- in very limited instances, personal narration can be helpful if it meets the brevity and relevance test, but be careful!!! If you use personal narration, I suggest you run your draft by me before submission via e-mail.
- quote the book enough to share the author's voice and illustrate the book's ideas (but don't over quote)
- inside sentences, like journalists use signal phrases to credit all outside sources, including the author and book, whether quoted or paraphrased

**Don't Forget:**

- include an MLA Works Cited page to document all outside sources; aim for at least 4-6 sources listed, including the book reviewed
- "A" and "B" students will utilize the OCC Library Database

**GROUP PRESENTATION:**

- **Each class meeting, class time will be devoted to working on group presentations (research, discussion, etc.). Create a multi-media presentation (such as Powerpoint) with links, images and sound that can be posted online and shared in class.**
- Plan 5-10 minutes presentation time per group member. Total length of presentation= number of group members x 5-10 minutes.
- The instructor will guide individuals into groups based on similar or related interests. Students can also initiate group formation, though instructor reserves all rights.
- Each group will determine with the help of the instructor a specific theme or concept.
- Each group member should individually focus on one important person, place, thing or event relevant to the group theme or concept.
- Group members should look for a connection between members' topics.
- Individual group members will be graded based solely on their own contributions to the group effort.
- Time can be used outside of class, if the group chooses.

Helpful:

Try to somehow connect individual reading self-selections to your group's presentation. What patterns and themes emerge to unite your group? Name your group's presentation.

Designate and delegate a leader, secretary, etc. Function well together.

Plan goals and individual assignments. Move forward in a positive fashion.

Utilize the class time provided. Schedule. Set mini deadlines. Make progress.

Be creative. Put on skits, make videos, conduct and record interviews, gather objects and images, wear costumes, create a website. *Go for it!*

**EXIT ESSAY – written during class Week Fifteen (submitted inside writing portfolio/folder)**

Prompt: *Michigan: Should I Stay or Should I Go?* Many of the subjects/writers found on the FYI reading list, like Madonna and others, have left the state. What do you think of Michigan's future? Write a 2 page essay response during the last class meeting as final exam. This assignment is required by not graded traditionally. Students must complete the assignment in order to pass the course. This final written work will be used to determine final grades that hover between marks, so go for it! Weak responses may result in a lower final grade.

### Possible Subjects for Group Presentations:

Be creative! This list is certainly not exhaustive. It's short, reflects my bias and is merely designed to get you thinking. Remember: the more specific a topic, the better and easier to research and present.

#### **Agriculture**

corn as biofuel  
apple orchards  
blueberries  
cherries

#### **Arts**

The Heidelberg Project  
DIA  
The Interlochen Center for the Arts  
Hopwood Awards at University of Michigan  
Gwen Frostic  
The Purple Rose Theatre (Jeff Daniels)  
The Hillbery Theater (Wayne State University)  
"Spirit of Detroit" by Marshall Fredericks which sits in front of the City-County Building

#### **Athletes and sports dynasties**

Magic Johnson  
Derek Jeter  
Joe Louis  
Piston Bad Boys  
losing Lions  
Stanley Cup champion Red Wings  
1968 Detroit Tigers

#### **Auto industry and transportation**

American Motor Company's past  
General Motor's bankruptcy  
Chrysler's future  
Ford River Rouge Plant  
Ypsilanti Transmission (Willow Run's WWII effort)  
union leaders like Walter Reuther and Jimmy Hoffa  
Lee Iococca  
1937 GM sit-down strike  
domestic car quality  
8 Mile Road  
driving in the D, metro area, Michigan  
motor love  
specific models like Ford Model T, Mustang, Pinto  
foreign competition  
hybrids  
trolley cars  
People Mover  
North American Auto show  
Detroit Windsor tunnel  
Ambassador Bridge  
Mackinac Bridge  
freeways  
"turn right to turn left" (Paul Clemmens)  
pot holes

**Business**

Saunders  
Vernors  
Strohs  
Bell's Brewery  
Hudson's  
Kellogs  
marketing Michigan in the global economy  
tourism  
western Michigan furniture  
Amish products  
logging  
shipping  
agriculture

**Crime**

Devils Night/Angels Night  
murder capital  
hate crimes  
death penalty  
scandals

**Actors and Musicians**

Anita Baker  
Sony Bono  
Alice Cooper  
Sippie Wallace  
Stevie Wonder  
Diana Ross and the Supremes  
Martha Reeves  
Aretha Franklin  
Bob Seeger  
Ted Nugent  
Madonna  
Berry Gordy  
Mitch Ryder  
The Romantics  
Jack White  
Christine Lahti  
Ellen Burstyn  
James Caan  
Ed McMahon  
Gilda Radner  
Lilly Tomlin  
William Hurt  
David Spade  
Burt Reynolds  
Jeff Daniels

**Government and historic figures**

Kwame Kilpatrick  
Coleman Young  
Jennifer Granholm  
Jerome P. Cavanaugh  
Lewis Cass  
Henry Ford  
Gerald Ford

Jacques Marquette  
Louis Jolliet  
Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac  
Henry Rowe Schoolcraft  
Father Coughlin  
Sojourner Truth  
Chief Pontiac  
George Armstrong Custer

### **Health Issues**

cigarette smoking  
obesity

### **Entertainment**

casinos  
Bozo the clown  
Soupy Sales  
Bob-lo  
Edgewater  
Belle Isle  
films about or filmed in Michigan  
bowling  
Woodward Dream Cruise  
boating  
hunting  
sailing  
sledding  
ice fishing  
mushrooming

### **Filmmakers and journalists connected to Michigan**

Sam Raimi  
Lawrence Kasdan  
Adam Sandler  
John Hughes  
Jerry Bruckheimer  
Helen Thomas  
Mike Wallace  
Desiree Cooper  
Mitch Albom

### **Land use**

great lakes conservation  
water rights  
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments  
Council of Great Lakes Governors  
Rouge River  
Hines Park  
suburban sprawl  
“save our farms”  
“only farmers grow food”  
concrete jungle  
urban farming  
graffiti

### **Migration and ethnicity**

away from Michigan

to Michigan  
pioneer Western migration from eastern states like New York and Massachusetts  
European immigration (Italians, Poles, Slavs, etc.)  
Middle East immigration (Chaldeans)  
Southern migration (Appalachians)  
specific ethnic groups  
Underground Railroad in Michigan

### **Museums**

Museum of African-American History  
Fort Wayne  
The Henry Ford  
Holocaust Memorial Center  
Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park  
Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways

### **Native Americans**

Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi  
legends  
transitions from native ways to civilization  
mound builders  
birch bark canoes

### **Nature**

Morels  
White Pines  
Trillium  
white tailed deer  
iron  
copper  
Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes  
Hartwick Pines  
Lake Superior shipwrecks

### **Organized labor**

rise and decline of unions  
UAW  
“The shop”  
factory work

### **Race relations and divisions**

1863 Detroit race riot  
1943 Detroit race riot  
1967 Detroit race riot  
Black Bottom  
busing  
NAACP funeral for the n word  
New Detroit

### **Religion**

Michigan Catholics/ parochial school

### **War**

Michigan involvement in world wars  
auto factories for war production  
civil war

## FYI Booklist

The following is a list of readings somehow connected to Michigan, either by birth or other means. Like the list of possible subjects above, it is definitely not exhaustive. Feel free to range beyond this list. Use resources like amazon.com, the OCC library, your town library, friends and family, and your own bookshelf to find additional titles. But be sure to okay your selection with the instructor before proceeding too far. A limited number of students can read any one title. Mostly, follow your interests and curiosity and have fun. Note: Students interest in children's lit may have to pick multiple titles to meet book review assignment.

### **Memoirs/Biography/Autobiography**

*The Autobiography of Malcom X* by Malcolm X

*Front Row at the White House: My Life and Times* by Helen Thomas (White house correspondent)

*The Life and Wisdom of Gwen Frostic* by Sheryl James (artist and west Michigan business woman)

*Life with My Sister Madonna* by Christopher Ciccone with Wendy Leigh

*Hard Stuff: The Autobiography of Mayor Coleman Young* by Coleman Young

*Iacocca: An Autobiography* by Lee Iacocca with William Novak

*Low Road: The Life and the Legacy of Donald Goines* by Eddie B. Allen, Jr. (native Detroit writes about same)

#### **Made in Detroit by Paul Clemens (required reading)**

*Madonna: Like An Icon* by Lucy O'Brien

*Rivthead: Tales from the Assembly Line* by Ben Hamper (bad boy line worker tell all)

#### **Rosa Parks: A Life (Paperback) by Douglas Brinkley (required reading)**

*Schoolcraft's Narrative Journal of Travels* (Schoolcraft Series) by Henry R. Schoolcraft (Schoolcraft College namesake)

*The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft* by Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Author), Robert Dale Parker (Editor) (native wife of famous explorer)

*Sweets: Soul Food Desserts & Memories* by Patty Pinner (Author), Sheri Giblin (Photographer) (African American experience in 1950s Saginaw via recipes and pictures)

*Stealing Buddha's Dinner: A Memoir* by Bich Minh Nguyen (growing up Vietnamese in 1970 Grand Rapids)

*Summer on the Lakes, in 1843* by Margaret Fuller (New Englander visits the western frontier)

*To Be Loved: The Music, the Magic, the Memories of Motown* by Berry Gordy

*Waiting on the Morning Train: An American Boyhood* by Bruce Catton (civil war historian's recollections of early 1900's Benzonia, Michigan, with great perspective)

### **Essays/Collections**

*Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African-American Fiction* by Terry McMillan and John Edgar Wideman

*I-94 A Collection of Southwestern Michigan Writers* edited by Bret Van Emst (fact, fiction and poetry)

*Just Before Dark* (and others) by Jim Harrison (mostly about hunting and food)

*Peninsula: Essays and Memoirs from Michigan* by Michael Steinberg

*The Undertaking: Life Studies from the Dismal Trade* by Thomas Lynch (Milford, Michigan funeral director) (also *Bodies in Rest and Motion*; intellectual reflections)

*So Cold A Sky: Upper Michigan Weather Stories* by Karl Bohnak (weather forecaster's true historical tales)

*The Women's Great Lakes Reader* by Victoria Brehm (travel narratives and other accounts from 1700-1900s; Grand Valley State prof)

### **Short Stories**

*Autopsy of an Engine* by Lolita Hernandez (auto worker/writer)

*Detroit Noir* (Akashic Noir) by E.J. Olsen (Editor), John C. Hocking (Editor) (collection of various authors such as Desiree Cooper and Michael Zadoorian representing Detroit in a series that travels the country)

*Downriver* by Jeanne M. Leiby (local; up and coming)  
*Eight Dogs Named Jack* by Joe Borri (local; up and coming)  
*Gallatin Canyon: Stories* by Thomas McGuane (many titles; novels, short stories, essays)  
*Grass Fires: Stories* by Dan Gerber (also poet and novelist; born in western Michigan and attended MSU)  
*The Lost Tiki Palaces of Detroit* by Michael Zadoorian (local; up and coming)  
*A Near-Perfect Gift* by Rose Marie Kinder (Michigan Literary Fiction award)  
*The Nick Adams Stories* by Ernest Hemingway (classic)

## Novels

*The Cadence of Grass* by Thomas McGuane (born in Wynadotte, attended MSU, lives in Montana)  
*Dalva* by Jim Harrison (prolific writer of novels, novellas and poems; follow-up novel *The Road Home*)  
*Dopefiend* by Donald Goines (urban) (also *Whoreson* and others)  
*Drives Like a Dream* by Porter Shreve (new)  
*If I Don't Six: A Novel* by Elwood Reid (football)  
*Independence Day* by Richard Ford (Pulitzer Prize winner; attended MSU)  
*The Leisure Seeker: A Novel* by Michael Zadoorian (local; up and coming)  
*The Life Before Her Eyes* by Laura Kasischke (U of M prof; movie)  
*Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides (Oprah's Book club)  
*Ordinary People* by Judith Guest (movie)  
*Please Don't Come Back from the Moon* by Dean Bakopoulos (local; up and coming)  
*Saul and Patsy* by Charles Baxter (one time Wayne State and U of M prof; additional titles; writes essays and short stories)  
*Second Hand* by Michael Zadoorian  
*Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison (set in Michigan with far more universal concerns; Nobel Prize-winning author of *Beloved*)  
*Them* by Joyce Carol Oates (set in Detroit 1937-67 based on real people; widely lauded author born in Detroit)  
*Virgin Suicides* by Jeffrey Eugenides (Sofia Coppola directed movie)  
*Waiting to Exhale* by Terry McMillan (born in Port Huron; moved to LA)  
*What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day* by Pearl Cleage (Oprah's Book club; coming home to Michigan)

## Novellas

*A Woman Lit by Fireflies* by Jim Harrison (contains a Brown Dog tale; character appears in later work)  
*Women and Men* by Richard Ford (acclaimed writer of novels and novellas; attended MSU)  
*Last Year's Jesus: A Novella and Nine Stories* by Ellen Slezak (local; up and coming)

## Crime/Mystery

*Cold: A Novel* by John Smolens (crime in UP; Northern Michigan University prof)  
*Get Shorty* by Elmore Leonard (prolific Oakland County Michigan crime writer; movie)  
*Motor City Blue* (The Amos Walker Series #1) by Loren D. Estleman (one of many titles; also prolific)  
*Starvation Lake: A Mystery* by Bryan Gruley (mystery compared to Dennis Lehane's *Mystic River*)

## Poetry and Poets

*I Dance Back* (March Street Press, 2002) by David James (OCC English instructor at OR; also a playwright)  
*The Song of Hiawatha* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (from Wikipedia: "1855 [epic poem](#) by [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) based on the legends of the [Ojibway Indians](#). Longfellow credited as his source the work of pioneering ethnographer [Henry Rowe Schoolcraft](#), specifically Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches* and *History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*). (Always check multiple sources for a broader picture; Longfellow was a Harvard Professor and popular poet)  
Text available online at: <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/pulic/LonHiaw.html>

*What is Work?* by Philip Levine (born 1928 Detroit, MI)

Carolyn Forché (MI/MSA alum; now English prof at Georgetown University)

Dan Gerber (MI/MSU alum, now in California and Idaho; edited poetry journal with Jim Harrison 1968-1972)

Jim Harrison (yes, poetry, too) try *Saving Daylight* (latest collection by septuagenarian who, in the summer of 2009, was working on his 32 book at home in Montana)

Diane Wakoski (2003 Michigan Author Award and MSU distinguished Professor of English)

### **Plays, Playwrights and Theaters**

Arthur Miller (spent time at U of M)

Purple Rose Theater in Chelsea, MI

### **Children's Novels and Picture Books**

*The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich (set in 1847, story narrated by 7 year old Omakayas, a Anishinabe or Ojibwa Native American girl)

*Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis (young adult) (African American boy in 1930s Michigan)

*Dinosaurs Destroy Detroit* (Michigan Chillers) by Johnathan Rand (successful series)

*Eighty Acres* by Ronald Jager (growing up on Michigan farm during the Great Depression)

*The English Roses* by Madonna

*Knucklehead: Tall Tales and Almost True Stories of Growing up Scieszka* by Jon Scieszka (children's book author writes memoir for his audience)

*The Legend of the Sleeping Bear* by Kathy-jo Wargin (Sleeping Bear Press)

*Lotsa de Casha* by Madonna (ironic?)

*M is for Mitten: A Michigan Alphabet* by Annie Appleford, Kathy-jo Wargin and illustrated by Michael G. Monroe (one of many titles from the Sleeping Bear Press)

*Only Passing Through* by Anne Rockwell (author), R. Gregory Gregory Christie (illustrator) (Sojourner Truth's story)

*The Pathless Woods: Ernest Hemingway's Sixteenth Summer in Northern Michigan (Ernest Hemingway's Great Lakes Connection)* by Gloria Whelan (imaginary Hemingway biography; prolific Michigan author)

*A Pitch in Time* by Robert A. Lytle (boy travels in time; baseball)

*The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg (Grand Rapids born writer and illustrator, attended U of M and Rhode Island School of Design and now lives in Rhode Island; long list of titles and impressive wide body of work displayed on his website)

*The True Story of Three Little Pigs* by writer Jon Scieszka and illustrator Lane Smith (Scieszka is kooky guy born in Flint; team responsible for numerous picture books and organization Guys Read; now lives in Brooklyn)

### **Nature**

*Great Lakes Nature: An Outdoor Year, Revised and in Color* by Mary Blocksma (diary form)

*The Great Lakes Water Wars* by Peter Annin (*Newsweek* reporter)

*The Living Great Lakes: Searching for the Heart of the Inland Seas* by Jerry Dennis (circumnavigates all great lakes)

### **History/Culture**

*Connecting the Dots: Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project* by Tyree Guyton (installation art in Detroit)

*Crossing Hoffa: A Teamster's Story* by Steven J. Harper (one of many titles on this subject)

*Devil's Night and Other True Tales of Detroit* by Ze'Ev Chafets (published in 1991; out of print but some used copies available;)

*The History of the Wolverine State* by Willis F. Dunbar, revised by George S. May (1980)

*Hoffa* by Arthur A. Sloane (investigate all possible titles; remember to choose by reading)

*"I Heard You Paint Houses": Frank "The Irishman" Sheeran and the Inside Story of the Mafia, the Teamsters, and the Last Ride of Jimmy Hoffa* by Charles Brandt (journalistic)

*I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.* by Michael Eric Dyson (prolific academic, writer, speaker and African American activist)

*Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle class Lost Its Mind?* Michael Eric Dyson (other titles available by same author)

*Life for Us Is What We Make It (Blacks in the Diaspora)* by Richard Walter Thomas

*Lumberjack: Inside an Era in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan : 50th Anniversary Edition* by William S. Crowe (Author), Lynn McGlothlin Emerick (Author, Editor), Ann McGlothlin Weller (Author, Editor)

*The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit: Walter Reuther and the Fate of American Labor* by Nelson Lichtenstein (recommended by the state of Michigan)

*My Years with General Motors* by Alfred P. Sloan (published in 1964)

*The Mystic Symbol: Mark of the Michigan Mound Builders* by Henriette Mertz (early Michigan people)

*The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* by Thomas J. Sugrue (academic study)

*Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan's Native Americans* by Charles E. Cleland (recommended by Jim Harrison; MSU prof)

## **Sports**

*Greg Kelsner's Tales from Michigan State Basketball* by Steve Grinczel and Greg Kelsner  
Mitch Albom