ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: The Western Suburbs Have Failed Me Again

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In this collection of linked short stories, I explore the lives of several characters in Chicagoland, an area where I was born and raised, and their relationships through several coming-of-age stories. This project adds to the rich tradition of the short story cycle in the Midwest, from Sherwood Anderson’s canonical Winesburg, Ohio, to more contemporary examples, such as Murmuration by Ryan Werner, a collection billed explicitly as a “Midwestern short story cycle, and The Coast of Chicago by Stuart Dybek. Furthermore, in writing about Chicago, I proudly add to the literary tradition that has celebrated this city through Carl Sandburg’s Chicago Poems to contemporary writing in publications such as Another Chicago Magazine and the novels, short story collections, and other books published by the Chicago-based publisher Curbside Splendor. These short stories present Chicagoland as a liminal space between city and suburb and show this setting’s effects on the characters in the collection as they too explore the liminality between adolescence and adulthood.