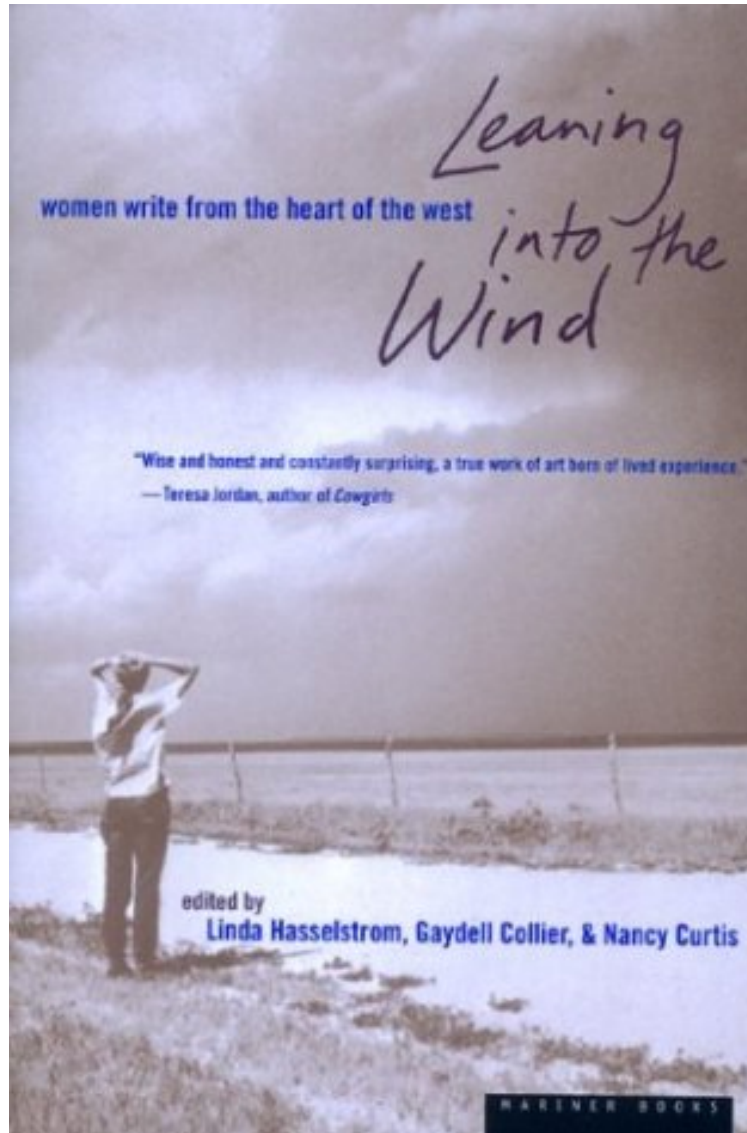


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Leaning into the Wind: Women Write from the Heart of the West

Linda M. Hasselstrom, Nancy Curtis, Gaydell Collier
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Linda M. Hasselstrom, Nancy Curtis, Gaydell Collier : Leaning into the Wind: Women Write from the Heart of the West before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leaning into the Wind: Women Write from the Heart of the West:

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Woodfriends keep friends sane, help deliver babies, cry when they learn she is pregnant once more. trying to love, nurture,, teach their kids to read, all with little knowledge, all while knowing as soon as that child can hold a tool he would be doing a man's job at a very early age..0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I love stories about womenBy TiggerI love stories about women, especially women living on the unforgiving prairie. It is well balanced with old and new stories.

In the true stories, essays, and poems of *Leaning into the Wind* we meet the real women of the High Plains today. Included are reflections on cowboys, tractor-driving lessons, outhouses, ranch marriages, and family legacies.

.com Hearts of the West are unburdened in *Leaning into the Wind*, an anthology encompassing a wealth of experiences from farmers, ranchers, rangers, and other women who live and work in America's oftentimes harsh, sometimes beautiful high plains states shoehorned between the Mississippi and the Rockies. A New York newspaper writer transplanted to a hog farm on the "baking brown plains" sees a sagging trailer, rubbish, and waist-high weeds where her exuberant husband sees only promise. Waking on a bed of sweet straw after sobbing hysterically, she finds "dozens of piglets curled around me, nestled against my hips, tucked under my outspread arms, piled like a halo around my head." Other contributors wax poetic, describing an old pickup truck that "wanders down the road like a drunken goose" or steam coming off a newborn lamb in the chill night air. The selections tend toward rough-edged and gritty, but all are heartfelt.From Library JournalThe editors of this anthology spent several years collecting writings by women of the High Plains states: North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming. The final product contains the work of over 200 authors. Poems and short prose fragments are gathered into chapters by general themes, such as working with livestock or family life. This collection showcases the voices of a wide variety of women of the Plains, allowing them to share their visions and experiences of the American West. The writing is generally good, but a smaller number of longer pieces would have given individual authors a chance to express themselves more fully. Recommended for regional collections.?Gwen Gregory, New Mexico State Univ. Lib., Las CrucesCopyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Kirkus sEssays, stories, poems, and a few recipes by women from the High Plains. Some years ago memoirist Hasselstrom, librarian/horsewoman Collier, and publisher Curtis, residents of Wyoming, put out a call throughout the northern plains, asking for "authentic" and "clear" views of women's lives there. Their emphasis was particularly on the authentic: Protesting perhaps a little too much, they opine that the West has been popularized to the point where "a New York stockbroker slips on pointy-toed boots in psychedelic colors to dine with a lady in a fringed skirt and mocassins," and real cowpokes are ashamed to be seen wearing cowboy hats for fear they'll be mistaken for these poseurs. They've turned up plenty of authentic work here. The collection suffers only from a predictable level of repetition, inasmuch as many of the 125 contributors (including teachers, housewives, cattle and sheep ranchers, and writers) turn to the same themes: the loneliness of ranch life, the smell of new-mown hay, the bitterness of an Alberta Clipper wind in the thick of winter. For all the sameness, though, many of the pieces--few by previously published writers--are very fine, among them NellieWesterskow's remembrance of her first year of marriage, in 1921, when she and her husband were so poor they "had to share the only fork until Nels found another at an abandoned homestead when he was out riding." Garnet Perman's "Evolution of a Country Woman" is a good-natured enumeration of all the things that a ranch wife has to know (such as the fact that "sheep have an IQ three points below that of wormwood"). Morgan Songi offers a lyrical account, noting that in the "crystal mornings after an ice storm" the beauty of the land makes up for the isolation of farm life. A fine example of regional anthologizing. -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.