

Annotated Doig Bibliography

By Jan Zauha

This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind (1978), Nonfiction

A memoir of growing up in hardscrabble Montana along the Rocky Mountain Front, Doig ponders the nature of memory, loss, hard work, and family while he relates stories of his father and grandmother and finding his own path in the world.

Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America (1980), Nonfiction

Doig spends a season on the coast of Puget Sound tracing the words and steps of James Gilchrist Swan, his own diary mirroring that of this 19th century settler. The result is a blend of history and memoir, rich in observations of the natural world and time past.

The Sea Runners (1982), Novel

Inspired by events in 1853, Doig here imagines the daring of four Scandinavian canoe men on their escape from Russian imprisonment in New Archangel, Alaska. Navigating 1,200 miles of the Pacific coast from Alaska to Oregon, their tale of survival on water and land speaks of dangers within and without.

English Creek (1984), Novel

This first book in the Two Medicine trilogy is set in 1939 Montana. Jick McCaskill, son of forest ranger Varick McCaskill, makes his way through the world of his 14th summer learning about ornery horses, family life and love, hard work, history, and so much more about himself.

Dancing at the Rascal Fair (1987), Novel

Prequel to English Creek, this second book in the trilogy relates the tumultuous lives of two Scottish immigrants, Rob Barclay and Angus McCaskill, from 1889-1919. New to Montana at the dawn of statehood, these young sheepmen witness tremendous change in their friendship and the Two Medicine country.

Ride With Me, Mariah Montana (1990), Novel

The third title in the Two Medicine trilogy finds Jick McCaskill widowed and hitting the road with his journalist daughter and ex-son-in-law in search of "real" Montana stories. Their journey reveals a changed Montana on the eve of its state centennial.

Heart Earth (1993), Nonfiction

Made possible by access to long lost letters from Doig's mother who died when he was six, this memoir fills in the outlines of Berneta Doig and the family's quest to improve her health, moving from Montana to Arizona and back to Montana, their "heart earth."

Bucking the Sun (1996), Novel

Mysterious deaths, family drama, and one of the largest construction projects ever come together in this novel set in New Deal era Montana.

Mountain Time (1999), Novel

This novel spans Seattle, San Francisco, Alaska, and Montana, bringing together far flung sisters Lexa and Mariah McCaskill (of *Two Medicine* fame), Lexa's partner Mitch, and Mitch's dying father. The resolution of relationships past and present forms the story's focus against a magnificent mountain backdrop.

Prairie Nocturne (2003), Novel

A widely-scoped story, set in 1920's Montana, New York, France, and Scotland, centered on the extraordinary voice of Monty Rathbun, an African American chauffeur and native Montanan, and on his patron and mentor. As they seek to launch Monty's career, all three struggle to come to terms with their own passions, prejudices, and limitations.

The Whistling Season (2006), Novel

The community around a one-room school in rural Montana forms the core of this novel, anchored by a newly arrived teacher and his unsinkable sister. The story is remembered through the voice of former student Paul Milliron looking back on his season as a precocious 13-year-old with an extraordinary teacher.

The Eleventh Man (2008), Novel

The fate of a Montana college football team in World War II and the "eleventh man" who is tasked with chronicling them are Doig's focus in this novel. Ben Reinking's assignment is to serve the war propagandist machine by writing of his former teammates. In the process, issues of integrity, romance, and history unfold.

Work Song (2010), Novel

Itinerant teacher Morrie Morgan of *The Whistling Season* wends his way to boomtown Butte in 1919. There he characteristically slips in and out of roles, from funeral "cryer" to librarian to union activist, while fending off Chicago gangsters and pursuing romance.

The Bartender's Tale (2012), Novel

Doig returns to 1960 and Gros Ventre, his fictional northern Montana town, where bar owner Tom Harry finds himself hosting his "accidental" son, 12-year-old Rusty. Thanks to the wonders of the Medicine Lodge saloon and visiting characters from Tom's past, both father and son have a summer of discovery.

Sweet Thunder (2013), Novel

In his third appearance, character Morrie Morgan from *Work Song* resurfaces in Butte after a honeymoon hiatus. Now a newspaper man, Morgan's talents with language and encyclopedic knowledge are put to use on the *Thunder* in editorial warfare with the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

Last Bus to Wisdom (2015), Novel

This picaresque story of an 11-year-old Montana boy's solo bus journey from Montana to Wisconsin and back is set in 1951 and evokes a lost time of innocence and discovery. Donel's

adventures provide brushes with mild criminals, beat poets, helpful hoboes, and iconic American wonders like rodeos and geysers.