



that's not critically acclaimed anymore and probably shouldn't be but it's a woman who's arrived from Germany and she's carried this plant with her all the way from Germany across the country to get to Iowa. And then she passes on cuttings of the plant to other pioneer women who have arrived there. And it's kind of a way to establish a community and a culture and tame the land that's already there and subjugate it and make it feel more like the place you come from.

How did this literature and this self-identity which was starting to construct, how did that interact with the land? And what sort of land was it crucially it interacted with? Is it prairie land or farmland or mountain land?

So this in the Midwest is primarily prairie land, so big wide open spaces that were really easy to farm. I mean, not easy, but they were productive farmlands. The Midwest at this time I think is really interesting because the frontier had moved on, so for a really long time in American history, the places around Ohio and Indiana, that area was the frontier. So if you're from the East Coast, you were from established, civilized land. And if you're from a little bit farther on, you're from the wilds. But by the time the turn of the century rolls around, the frontier has moved all the way out to the West. And so the Midwest had to redefine itself as a place that was in between the really established, civilized, cultural area of New England and the Wild West that was so mythologized in the American mind. And the Midwest is stuck in the middle in this weird liminal space. And they had to figure out what their new self-identity was in terms of having tamed the land, but still being considered to be from a more remote, uncivilized place than New England.

So if we think about taming the land, how did that come about? What was the process in which people constructed their ideas around the land? And if they self-identified from it, or was it a case of, this is the land, I work the land and I profit from the land? Or does there seem to be in the literature, sort of almost Romanti

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people's construction of the idea of self and that you can be in an urban environment but still idealize the natural world around you.

Do you think this idea of nature was shared throughout America in the sense that this humans versus nature frontier mentality, is that something which you think was found both in the frontiers and across to the east?

I mean, where I've found most evidence of it is not in the frontier, you had less time and less





