

Twentieth Annual Thompson Awards for Western American Writing

Five \$500 prizes will be awarded to CU Boulder Students in the Spring of 2019 for writings on Western American topics.

We invite submissions from both graduate and undergraduate students in the following categories:

- Fiction: including short stories and excerpts of novels, plays, and screenplays
- Poetry: single poems only (no collections)
- Memoir: autobiographical essays
- Creative Nonfiction: journalism, journalistic essays, and writing aimed at a wide general audience
- Academic Nonfiction: research papers or other academic writing

Official Contest Rules

1. Eligibility: Contestants must be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program at CU Boulder for the duration of the Fall 2018 semester and/or the duration of the Spring 2019 semester, or have graduated from a degree program at CU Boulder in the Spring 2018 semester. Students may enter no more than one unique manuscript per prize category, and may not enter any manuscript into more than one category. If you have won a Thompson Award in the past, you may not resubmit an entry that won in a past contest. You may, however, resubmit a piece that did not win.

2. Entries must go in the appropriate category: We may change an entry's category if we find it is not correct, and if this results in two entries in one category for any contestant, we will keep the one that the contestant chose to enter to that category and reject the second entry.

3. Length limit: Entries should be no longer than 50 pages. If contestants want to submit an excerpt of a longer piece (dissertation, novel, play, etc.) we advise contestants to ensure the selection is a cohesive, stand alone, piece.

4. Criteria: Entries will be evaluated on relevance to an understanding of the American West*, and on the quality of the writing. Entries should be proofread carefully and, with the exception of poetry, should follow standard manuscript format (double-spaced, paragraphs indented five to eight spaces, page numbers included, etc.). Grammar and mechanics should be precise, and organization should be strong.

*It is no easy matter to define the West or the quality of "Westernness." In general, we think of the West as the territory between the 100th Meridian and the Pacific Coast, including Alaska and Hawaii. We recognize that the myth of the West has played a great role in history and still carries much influence in regional life today, and so we understand that some eligible writings will address the material reality of the West (cities, highways, ranches, mines, resorts, suburbs, national parks, dams, wildlife, etc.) and some equally eligible writings will address the West of dreams, expectations, hopes, and imaginings (factors which, in truth, shape material reality and human behavior in very concrete ways).

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Official Contest Rules (cont.)

5. Prizes and awards reception: Winners will be invited to an awards reception in their honor. First place winners will receive \$500 per winning category and honorable mention winners will receive \$100 per winning category. First place winners will be asked to read an excerpt of their winning entries.

6. Publication consent: Submission of material implies the author's guarantee that the work has not yet been published (with the exception of publication in any CU journals); is not scheduled for publication, and is the creative work and property of the contestant. Submission also implies consent for the Center of the American West to use the winning and honorable mention entries in marketing and for website posting. Winning authors will be required to sign a publication consent form before prize will be awarded, but authors will retain ownership of their winning entries.

7. Submission deadline and method: The entry deadline is 11:59 PM on Tuesday March 19, 2019. File upload size is limited to 31 MB. Please send an email to thompsonawards@centerwest.org for instructions on how to submit a larger entry.

8. Judging: Prizes will be awarded at the discretion of the judges. If the judges of a category do not deem any entries worthy of the prize, the prize may not be awarded in that category. All entries will be submitted to a plagiarism detection service.

9. Although the judging is "blind," contestants are not guaranteed anonymity: Judges will not be given authors' names during their review and decision-making process, but once the winners have been selected, judges may request and receive students' email addresses if they wish to send comments



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