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I'm a professor of English and Environmental Studies at Beloit College with a specialty in creative writing. I also edit the *Beloit Fiction Journal*. I am the author of *Farmer's Almanac*, a novel-in-stories set in fictional Odette County, Wisconsin. My creative work tends to be influenced by two things in particular: my rural, working class background and my deep affection for the natural world. I took my first trip to the boundary waters as a college student, and after many trips with family and friends, I led my first extended student trip into the BWCAW in 2014. I look forward to sharing my passion and experience with students.

Like many environmental writers, including Annie Dillard and Scott Russell Sanders, I understand that one doesn't need to travel to the wilderness to experience *wildness*. (My four-year-old daughter Iris is as wild as a river otter). That doesn't mean I'll ever pass up a wilderness experience. I simply feel more alive and awake to my life when I'm travelling in a wilderness area than I do otherwise. Besides reading and writing, most of my pastimes involve the outdoors. I'm an avid fisherman, in all seasons, and I also love mushroom hunting, hiking, trail running, cross-country skiing and bird watching. Every year in late winter I tap my maple trees and make syrup. Many of these experiences have been the subjects of my creative work.

As a professor, I love helping students understand and exploit in writing their own unique perspectives on the world. What do you have to say that the person next to you could never say? Willa Cather teaches us that writers should "labor in the range of our deepest sympathies." What do you care most about? Or, what do you pay most attention to? The art of creative writing begins with paying attention to what you pay attention to.