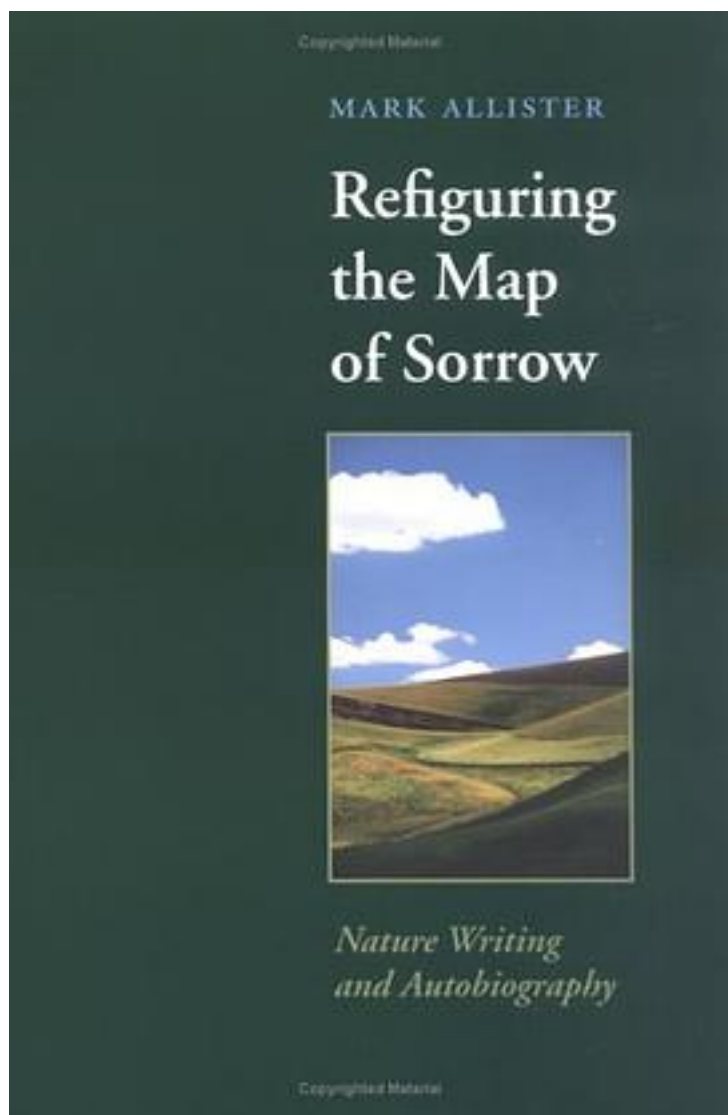


Refiguring the Map of Sorrow



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Recent decades have witnessed an explosion of interest in both autobiography and environmental literature. In *Refiguring the Map of Sorrow*, Mark Allister brings these two genres together by examining a distinct form of grief narrative, in which the writers deal with mourning by standing explicitly both outside and inside the text: outside in writing about the natural world; inside in making that exposition part of the grieving process. Building on Peter Fritzell's thesis in *Nature Writing and America* that the best American nature writing blends Aristotelian natural history and Augustinian confession, this work of literary interpretation draws on psychoanalytical narrative theory, studies of grieving, autobiography theory, and ecocriticism for its insights into how nature writing can become an autobiographical, healing act. Allister examines works by Terry Tempest Williams, Sue Hubbell, Peter Matthiessen, Bill Barich, William Least Heat-Moon, and Gretel Ehrlich in order to demonstrate the difficulty of hearing nature speak, and of translating terrain and self into language and form. As he focuses on the many ways in which humans connect -- often deeply and urgently -- to animals or the land, Allister vastly extends our understanding of "relational" autobiography.

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