

A Wichita Mountains Ontology



How do you write a place? Ontology is mapmaking, tyranny of boundary. Elk heighten the browsline with their grazing, border as appetite. Eating away indigenous place names till few are left. In the smoky winter air, boundaries open up, bony fingers waving as they shag off all their red & yellow leaves. In a hot prairie spring, goldasters, tickseed, the young bison who molt in grassy retreats. You clamor along Lost Lake, see a collared lizard sunning, and write in your head: *a mountain boomer sprawls like a gash on the forehead of a rock.* Summer. Winter. Ontology is a symbol not on the key.

This rather barren area up here - I say, barren, I should say open area -"

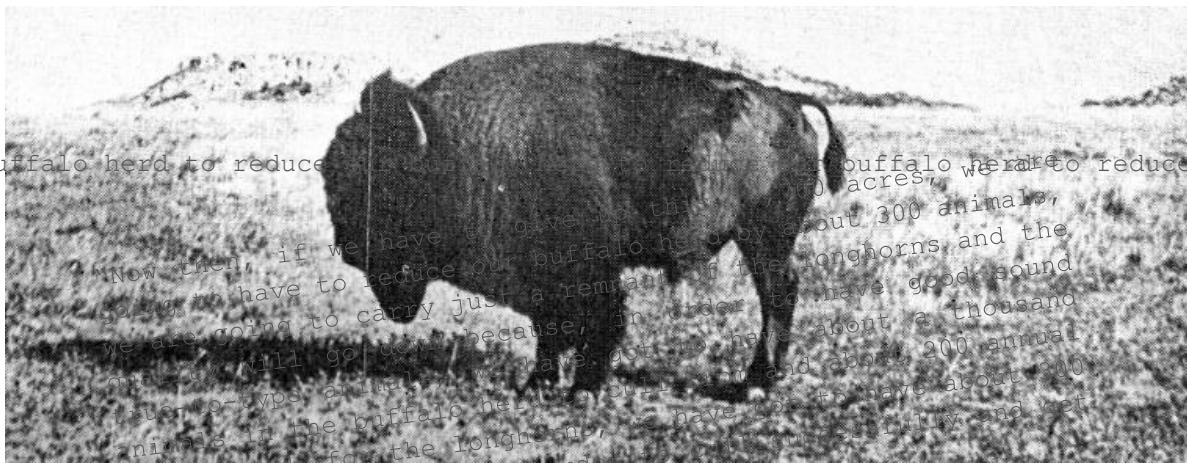
Low in

a col,

you hold a **bobwhite** (fallen, slightly stunned,
like when a **cat bats** a mouse) in your hand.

Scanning the gap, you lack a **snake's** scent sight,
and so **head to** higher ground's light,
dumping **sand from** your burred brown hiking boots.

The quail twitches. Cold **for them**, and not right
for the season. Our **sin of** nothing done,
not **striking** when we should have will leave us
stunned, too, looking **at it** as if it were
something curious, **something** we did not
coax **out of** the earth, burning it against
its will.



reduce our buffalo herd to reduce the number of acres we have to reduce our buffalo

Now then, if we have to give up this, we would have to have to reduce our buffalo herd by about 300 animals, we are going to carry just a remnant of the longhorns, and the country will go down because, in order to have good sound two-type animals, we have got to have about a thousand animals in the buffalo herd to produce about 200 annual calves, and, for the longhorns, we have got to have about 300 adults and 8200 calves in order to have the country and get the proper confirmation in the animals.

Incidentally, the longhorns were preserved there by Act of Congress."

slaughtered blue over gray mountain manes
canyon echoes a valley of splinters gone

crumbling to a trillionth of dust

*plaque at the
trailhead —*

the Meers Fault a jaggy smile like true crime,
rictus in the Richter, *the body was discovered*

*two days later by two Oklahoma City hikers who were
walking along what is known as Parallel Forest —*

| *Ragged terrains hampered rescue efforts and MAST
helicopter at Fort Sill does not remove bodies*

“DON’T EVER GO ALONE”
IN MEMORY OF
DR. PHILIP MITCHELL, M. D.
1963 – 1992

sheer face of the Zoo Wall over the Narrows
rappelers delight
tempter

and those names they give the routes: side saddle slap roof the dihedral crazy alice yellow corner
sweet jesus squeeze play larin has balls ...

Doom Cave on Widowmaker
deep in Charon’s Garden.

quartz
malachite
egirine
orthoclase
barite
bornite

These are hills I will play dead on.



br e e zy
r a sp
o v e
he a d
f r o m
fe ryb o id
s ne un
ce d of ar
la b r n ta
ti d onr on
m a o op s
r ow t o s
be fo e
c e u da r
cr e p e k t
a h a
unt to t
h ill s

Hiker finds human remains at Wildlife Refuge

The investigation by our law enforcement officers has been closed as there is no indication in which they have not been successful in locating the missing person.

Public affairs specialists say they are appreciative of the help they received from these partners in the investigation, but as of June 21, the search is no longer active.

Together, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, numerous local fire departments, Comanche County Sheriff's office, and several search and rescue TEAMS launched a search of the area in which they have not been successful in locating the missing person.

Notes

Photographs on pages 1 and 5 by the author.

Photograph on page 4 from Art Halloran's *The Nature Man's Stories of the Wichita Mountains*, independently published in 1972. Text from the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries proceedings on transferring part of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge to Fort Sill in 1956.

Pages 4 and 5 contain fragments from articles by KSWO News. The memorial on page 4 is a real one at a trailhead in the Wichitas. Dr. Mitchell died while climbing in the Rock Rooms on Elk Mountain. The rappelling sites listed are real.

The Wichita Mountains belong to the Indigenous nations who have lived and continue to live in the area now designated as southwestern Oklahoma, including the Wichita, Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne-Arapaho nations.