Foundation Symposium:
Nonfiction Page Turners
Opening Lines: Beam by Beam
The Authors Guild Interview: Oscar Hijuelos
The Case Against Google
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Robert Creeley was one of our finest poets and deserved at the very least to have his name spelled correctly in the "Deaths" section of the Authors Guild Bulletin (Summer 2005).

William Hjortsberg McLeod, Montana

We certainly agree with you, and regret having missed the typo. Ed.

Years ago, in the late 1960s, most of my life, like Mr. Sammler, "unable to get a handle on things," I was on a bus outside D.C. with The Bellow I Didn't Know. I was a student, part-time, working three jobs in the District, and I missed my stop in Fairfax, Virginia. Outside, it was late, cold, and too cloudy for stars. Inside, on the bus, I was in the adventures of Saul Bellow, page after page, in the sea of his mind when suddenly—an epiphany! Like Emily Dickinson when she read a good poem and Ann Birstein on The Cape reading Augie, the top of my head whooshed open and in came the light. Soon I was back at GW, Bellow in my bag book with the Romantics, my favorite guys as an undergraduate. The Bellow I Didn't Know helped me write a paper on Coleridge's Fancy & Imagination, its title, a Bellow quote, Sudden Intrusion of Beauty, That's What Life Is. In the 1970s, married—blessedly!—on a train outside Chicago with my young daughter, I recalled the Bellow quote that brought tears when I read it as a student: "There will always be children with dirty faces, and there will always be mother’s spittle to wipe them with. Either these things matter, or they don’t."

Dear Saul Bellow—how very much you mattered to those of us who didn’t know you!

Laurie Newendorp
Houston, TX

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ALONG PUBLISHERS ROW

By Campbell Geeslin

Christopher Booker said he spent 34 years writing The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories. Booker is a British newspaper columnist. The plots, with a few examples, are the following:

Overcoming the Monster: Beowulf, Jaws, Jack and the Beanstalk.

Rags to Riches: David Copperfield, Jane Eyre, Cinderella, Superman, Pygmalion.

The Quest: Odyssey, Divine Comedy, Watership Down, Don Quixote, Babar and Father Christmas, Moby Dick.

Voyage and Return: Alice in Wonderland, Gone With the Wind, The Wizard of Oz, Robinson Crusoe, Candide.


Tragedy: Macbeth, The Picture of Dorian Gray, Anna Karenina, Madame Bovary, King Lear.


The author observed: "The most important thing we recognize from looking at the hidden structure of the basic plots is the extent to which they all revolve around the same fundamental conflict." He spent 728 pages explaining this.

SAMPLE: A. O. Scott, a critic for The New York Times, wrote, "The pervasive suspicion that serious reading is becoming a marginal pursuit contributes to the anxious, timid, supportive tone of much of what passes for literary criticism these days, and the timorousness of the enterprise is part of what makes [Joyce Carol] Oates's robust, painstaking and self-assured essays both exemplary and somewhat anomalous. Among novelists of large reputations, only she and [John Updike] seem to possess the confidence (in themselves and in the novel as a form), not to mention the stamina, to pass frequent judgment on the proliferating work of their precursors, contemporaries and junior colleagues."

A sample of Oates’s criticism is to be found in a recently published collection: Uncensored: Views and (Re)view.

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THE AUTHORS GUILD BULLETIN

President
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Martha Fay

Back of the Book
Karina Hidalgo

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About the Cover
Kevin Sanchez Walsh is a freelance artist in New York City.

Overheard

"The Google project broadly infringes the copyrights of numerous companies and individuals for Google's own commercial purposes."

—Raymond T. Nimmer of the University of Houston Law Center and author of twenty books and treatises on copyright, licensing and information technology law. Posted on his weblog, October 3, 2005.

Artwork by Kevin Sanchez Walsh.
From the President

BY NICK TAYLOR

The furor over the Guild’s lawsuit against Google will have died down a little bit by now. At the time the suit charging massive copyright infringement in Google Library was filed, on September 20, news outlets around the world ran stories. The very useful Google news alert system, keyed to “Google” and “Authors Guild,” produced lists of hundreds of stories. And that was just in the daily and continuous (Internet) media; news magazines followed up with their own stories. Meanwhile, bloggers and chat room visitors weighed in, expressing support, outrage, and the full gamut in between.

Now everyone has taken a deep breath. Watching it all, however, it’s clear that the debate continues, and that we must continue to make our intentions clear in the face of attempts to sow confusion.

First, the lawsuit is not aimed at Google Print, the program under which Google, with the permission of publishers, makes current books searchable (but not downloadable) and provides links to a variety of booksellers.

Our primary concern is with Google Library, a subset of Google Print. And even there, the Authors Guild does not object to what Google is attempting to do in scanning and making searchable the contents of important library collections. That is a valuable tool made possible by digitization and the Internet.

But neither Google nor anyone else has the right to do that without the permission of authors whose copyrights remain in force. The company is, in effect, stealing people’s property and providing others with access to it for its own gain. Arguments to the contrary are simply wrong.

Google says it has given authors and publishers a chance to opt out of the program. That’s not how it works. It is Google’s obligation to seek licenses to property it intends to copy for commercial gain. Google says its display of the copied books will be covered by “fair use,” the provision under copyright that allows limited use of protected works without seeking permission. That’s not the way it works either. Fair use applies to the way the end user—the researcher or writer—uses the material she finds, not to the copier who makes it available, again for its own commercial gain.

The usual arguments against copyright have been hoisted up the flagpole. It’s amazing how self-righteous they can be. Google put its nose in the air, lifted its pinkie, and sniffed, “We regret that this group has chosen litigation to try to stop a program that will make books and the information within them more discoverable to the world.” (Of course, we regret that this huge advertising and technology powerhouse forced us to resort to litigation.) The University of Michigan’s interim librarian—Michigan, Harvard, Stanford, Oxford, and the New York Public Library are the libraries involved in Google’s program—made it an argument between the rights of authors and the public’s access to information, implying that authors are standing in the way of progress.

No. The suggestion that we are impeding progress by insisting on long-established rights is tantamount to saying that traffic is moving too slowly, so let’s take down all the stop signs.

Some of the libraries are doing it right. Oxford’s Bodleian Library and the New York Public Library are limiting the books scanned to those that are out of copyright and in the public domain. This is a valuable initiative, preserving information that may be lost to physical deterioration, and it has the added benefit of being legal.

Whenever barons of whatever stripe encounter resistance to their grand plans—plans that they claim are all about benefiting humanity, and only incidentally will enrich them in the process—they wrap themselves in the cloak of altruism. John D. Rockefeller strong-armed the railroads and monopolized the oil business and excused it all by saying that God gave him his money intending him to “make money and still make more money and to use the money I make for the good of

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Opening Lines
Beam by Beam

BY NICHOLAS WEINSTOCK

Along with the many lofty literary methods of training a person to write a book, there are plenty of applicable lessons to be found in the non-writerly working world. While pricey extension school courses, gabbly visits to leafy colonies and pipe-smoking mentors can all be inspirational, less scholarly modes of employment can also provide useful guidance for a budding author considering when, what and how to write.

For John Abrams, 55, the “when” became clear in the winter of 2003, after nearly four decades spent as a carpenter, designer and builder of houses. After founding and running a home-building company on Martha’s Vineyard, and having not taken more than two weeks off work in 30 years, Abrams had reached a point of exhaustion—and creative inspiration. Before he knew it, he was heading to a rented mountainside house in Vermont with his wife and a stack of milk crates filled with his favorite books for a retreat that would last five months.

“It started with the impulse to write,” he says, “rather than to write about anything in particular. I thrive on clamor. I love having too much going on. But the company and the work brought me to a place where I needed a rest, and needed to turn myself off, and turn my brain on in a new way. There had never been a meeting, in 30 years, that I hadn’t been in. There had never been a build that I didn’t see. I loved books—always had—and so I planned a sabbatical in order to read and write. But I had no clue as to whether I could sit and think and contemplate one thing.”

At the time, Abrams’s writing resume consisted of a clutch of songs penned “during the hippie years” and several fierce letters to the editor of the Vineyard Gazette. Having grown up in northern California, Abrams dropped out of Wesleyan University to roam around British Columbia, Vermont, Oregon, and “parts unknown” from 1967 to 1973, as he learned carpentry and house building and developed a passion for the craft. In 1975 his parents bought a plot of land on the rural island of Martha’s Vineyard and asked him and his building partner to design and construct their house. Abrams, by now married with a son, instantly disliked the island. The construction dragged through the summer and into the fall. He put his son into the local school, got another offer to build another house, started South Mountain Company, and somehow never left.

It was the expansion of that business, and the evolution of his design-and-build company, that provided Abrams with a subject to address in his mountainside retreat. He began to work on a book about what he’d learned while running and growing a small business: about the management lessons he’d gleaned, about the principles he’d forged along the way, and in particular about the merits of sharing ownership of a company with its employees.

“When my partner left the business in 1985,” he recalls, “two employees came to me and said, ‘We want to stay with you and with the company—we just need more of a stake in what we’re doing.’ And I thought: that’s going to happen over and over. So I asked everyone at the company to put our heads together and figure out how to structure a company so that people could have a real stake in the work we’re all creating together, as well as a real reason to stay.” In order to make all employees shareholders and decision-makers, Abrams and his colleagues researched cooperative models in Spain, applied them to the capitalist realities of small-town America, and wound up with a workable model of how to build great houses, a strong and unified company, and a solid future for its employees in the process. “At the time,” Abrams confesses, “I thought that the whole shared-ownership thing was pretty symbolic. But suddenly I found that people were energized, and our employees went out to dinner with friends and said: ‘Yeah, I own this business.’ It dramatically changed and improved the dy-

Nicholas Weinstock is the author, most recently, of The Golden Hour. He has been a member of the Authors Guild Council since 1999.

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Dear Blog: Today I Worked on My Book

BY TANIA RALLI

When he has writer’s block, John Battelle, author of the forthcoming book The Search: The Inside Story of How Google and Its Rivals Changed Everything, keeps on writing. But not his book manuscript. Instead, he goes straight to his blog (battellemedia.com).

Mr. Battelle, a founder of Wired and The Industry Standard magazines, sometimes makes quick notes on the blog about a topic related to his book, and other times posts longer essays. “Writing for the blog is more like having a conversation,” Mr. Battelle said.

For years, book authors have used the Internet to publicize their work and to keep in touch with readers. Several, like Mr. Battelle, are now experimenting with maintaining blogs while still in the act of writing their books.

“It is very satisfying to write something and get an immediate response to it,” said Mr. Battelle, who calculated that last year he wrote 74,000 words for his book, and 125,000 words on his blog. “It is less satisfying to write a chapter and let it sit on the shelf for six months.”

Instead of simply being a relief from writerly solitude, these blogs have turned into part of the process. Mr. Battelle said that he was surprised by the number of people who read his journal and offered feedback, correcting mistakes, making suggestions of people to interview or articles to read and contributing ideas that are finding their way into his finished manuscript.

“It has provided such a wealth of sources,” he said. “The readers pointed me to things I might not have paid much attention to.”

Authors’ blogs also change the solitary mission of writing into something more closely resembling open-source software. Mistakes are corrected before they are eternalized in printed pages, and readers can take satisfaction that they contributed to a book’s creation. The blogs can also confer some authority: Aside from drawing on the collective intelligence of its readers, Mr. Battelle’s site has become a compendium of Google- and search-related issues.

Authors who have experimented with blogging in this way—and there are still only a handful—say they hope to create a sense of community around their work and to keep fans informed when a new book is percolating. The novelist Aaron Hamburger used his blog to write about research techniques he employed to set his coming book in Berlin (www.aaronhamburger.com). Poppy Z. Brite, another novelist, has written about her characters on her blog as though they have a life of their own, not just the one springing from her imagination (www.livejournal.com/users/docbrite).

Despite the encouragement some authors receive from their online readers, the steady stream of feedback can be paralyzing. For some, the open process invites criticism and self-doubt when there is research to be done.

David Weinberger, the author of “Small Pieces Loosely Joined,” a nonfiction book about the Internet, posted his daily progress online while writing that book. But as he frequently rewrote each section, Mr. Weinberger found it was not the best way to capture readers’ advice. For his new book—Everything Is Miscellaneous, about how information is organized in daily life—he is posting chapters only when they are complete, rather than in fragments (www.hyperorg.com). “And then I will beg for comments,” he said.

Chris Anderson, who is writing The Long Tail, a nonfiction book to be published next year by Hyperion, freely posts his ideas on his blog to solicit responses (longtail.typepad.com). His book grew out of an influential article he wrote—by the same title—last year for Wired magazine, where he is editor in chief.

The Long Tail examines the shift from mass markets to niche markets. Taking a cue from Mr. Battelle, Mr. Anderson has made his blog a source for anything related to the topic, whether written by him or someone else. The blog charts new applications for Mr. Anderson’s theory since the publication of his article, and helps him collect ideas for the book.

“The conversation is happening whether you like it or not,” he said. “To hope that it will pause for 18 months is unrealistic.”

By introducing new ideas through his blog and inviting responses, Mr. Anderson is operating on the notion that if you give something away, you will get more in return. “I very much want people to take the ideas and improve on them,” he said.

The question for these authors is this: By feeding and engaging their readers’ curiosity, are they destroying the market for the books that they, after all, are paid to write?

“Blogs are a way to listen in and find out what peo-

The Authors Guild Interview:  
**Oscar Hijuelos**

With Isabel Howe's interview of prize-winning author and Authors Guild Council Member Oscar Hijuelos, we inaugurate an occasional series on the working life of writers.

Your first novel, Our House in the Last World, was published in 1983 by Persea Books, a small independent press that was started in 1975. Your subsequent novels were published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux and HarperCollins. How did you make the move from Persea to Farrar, Straus & Giroux?

*Our House* was contracted by Karen Braziller, whom I knew as a fellow student in the graduate school writing program at City College of New York, in the mid-1970s. By the early 1980s, she had become an editor at E. P. Dutton, and at Persea, the house she started with her husband. It was about 1980 that she approached me about my own work for Persea. Since no agent was involved, and as my knowledge of the business was very limited in those days, it seemed a perfectly reasonable route to go. However, the contractual specifics, monetarily speaking, were (and remain) not very good from the author's point of view. Though money was not an issue to me at first—when I published *Our House* I had held a full-time job on Madison Avenue, at a transit advertising agency, for some eight years—once I made the decision to leave that job and write full-time, winging it financially with part-time jobs, the prospect of low advances and disadvantageous royalties did not hold much appeal to me.

In 1985, having won a fellowship in literature at the American Academy in Rome, I left for Europe, where I began *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*. When I came back in 1987, I had enough of a manuscript for my newly acquired agent, Harriet Wasserman, to show around. I met with several editors: Harvey Ginsberg, Corliss Smith, and finally Jonathan Galassi of FSG, all of whom seemed quite enchanted with it. I liked Harvey Ginsberg and Corliss Smith very much, as they seemed to represent the grand elegance of the old Max Perkins hands-on style of publishing (long since gone), but Jonathan's youthfulness, and the fact that he was a poet, as well as his connection to FSG—which was the publishing house of two of my former teachers, Donald Barthelme and Susan Sontag, as well as many other world-class authors—tipped the balance in his favor. The *Mambo Kings* excerpt was sent to Galassi on a Monday, as I remember; by the next Friday FSG made an offer, which I turned down; they came back the next week with an offer that I found acceptable—meaning I could earn enough money to pay my bills while finishing the book.

All along, FSG could not have been more professional or efficient in their treatment of me. I loved the ambience of that house—the long library stack-like shelves of books that lined their halls, the whole business of copy editors and proofreaders with pencils stuck behind their ears, who worked off proofs, instead of computer screens. Roger Straus Jr.'s own glamorous and somewhat tough but paternal take on publishing was also inspiring. I did two books with them, *Mambo Kings* (1989) and *The Fourteen Sisters of Emilio Montez O'Brien* (1992). If I eventually left FSG, I did so reluctantly, due to some unpleasant circumstances surrounding a lawsuit that had been brought against *The Mambo Kings*.

You've published three books with HarperCollins, which also reprinted your earlier novels from FSG, so they must be doing something right. Have you ever felt restricted by the connection?

I was brought to HarperCollins by Bill Shinker, who had taken on the *Mambo Kings* paperback. Later, when I left FSG, moving to HarperCollins seemed a natural transition. The first book I did with them was *Mr. Ives' Christmas*, and I was fortunate to have a wonderful editor in Robert Jones, who was of much help to me with *Ives and Empress of the Splendid Season*. Throughout this process, Robert, one of their best literary editors, became a close friend and a literary ally. At no time was I pressured to render a more commercial-seeming type of book. Though the feeling there is quite corporate—the opposite of what I experienced at FSG—the house seems to take enormous pride in their more literary authors.

How have the changes in publishing over the last 20 years—in particular, the move toward consolidation—affected your life as a writer?

Well, truthfully, HarperCollins, like so many other publishers, has changed somewhat from the days when I first settled there. The emphasis seems to have shifted gradually to a less literary and more commercial, market-oriented way of publishing, which is to say that while they have their fair share of literary au-

Isabel Howe is a member of the Authors Guild staff.
thors, the house seems to be in more of a hurry to get books out. In general, I get the feeling that editors are much more hassled and hurried these days and that the kind of care that once attended the process has been replaced by a more pressured and chaotic atmosphere.

As for my own experience, the corporate trend toward consolidation has left me with the disconcerting feeling that authors, once revered, have been put into the category of expendable employees. Though I have been treated very well in general, these days I feel less an author and more a contracted artisan.

Is there any element of the author-publisher relationship that you would like to see change?

By my lights, once a manuscript is turned in, there is too much of a rush to get it out. The kind of tender loving care that used to exist, when one would spend hours, if not days, going over manuscripts with editors, seems to have been replaced by a rather cold and impersonal way of processing books. It seems that the houses are now driven to put out more product, and, because of that, both editors and writers seem to have much less time to refine their books than they used to. Think about it—in the old pre-computer days, when it would take six months or even a year to get a book from manuscript to the proof stage, both authors and editor had ample time to reflect on the contents; things were always changeable. Now the window is perhaps three or four months, and within that frame hardly any time is allotted for an author to put through substantial changes.

Have you had an ongoing relationship with any other editors?

As I mentioned, Jonathan Gallassi was my editor at FSG. He was great with Mambo Kings, but, after its success, he had been promoted to editor in chief, and I somehow saw less of him than before. My next book, Fourteen Sisters, was more or less edited by my agent and myself. But once I moved to HarperCollins, the hands-on style of editing, which I had missed with my previous novel, was restored, via my felicitous dealings with Robert Jones, who was a fine novelist in his own right. I could not have been happier—at a certain point we would see each other at least once a week, when he would come over to my place on the West Side to look at manuscripts in progress (always with a gin and tonic and cigarettes and ashtray by his side, red and blue pencils in hand), after which we would head out to dinner. Since then, that kind of one-on-one relationship has fallen by the wayside, unfortunately. For my last book, A Simple Habana Melody, what editorial contact I had mainly consisted of e-mails, a few phone conversations, and an intense, somewhat rushed few days working with a copy editor, whom I have not seen since.

What do you advise students who come to you for advice about being a professional writer?

To the young writers I come into contact with, even on the amateur level, I say: Write daily, even if only for a short time, so as to keep an inward continuity of subject and emotion going, and when you cannot write, read good books. As for the agent and publisher end of that advice, I am generally at a loss as to what I can offer, the climate in the publishing world these days being so much less kindly to serious, aspiring writers than it used to be.
Do you think enough young Latino writers are being published? Who are some strong publishers in this area?

Having been around when few Hispanics were being published in the mainstream press, and having seen this change to the point where being a Hispanic author is not a detriment—a little homegrown Latin “boom” having occurred in American letters—I would say that the mainstream houses have been receptive to young Latino authors in a way unheard of 20 years before. Having said this, I don’t think there have been many inroads into the way such authors are being presented to their greatest potential audience, Hispanics themselves. What marketing exists—say an ad in a prominent place like The New York Times—while well intentioned, does not even begin to reach the newspapers and magazines that Hispanics read. Whether such ads would make a difference in finding a book-oriented audience remains to be seen, but it has yet to be tried. In other words, I don’t believe that the houses “get it.”

As for which houses seem to be doing their best by way of Hispanic publishing, two names come to mind: Arte Público Press and, as it happens, Rayo, a Harper-Collins Spanish-language imprint, which seems to have had some impact and success.

Has your approach to promotion changed since your first book was published? What lessons have you learned?

My first novel, Our House, had zero promotion. I can remember spending an afternoon at Persea mailing out the cover letters and advance galleys myself. Mambo Kings was entirely different. I spent three or more years promoting it; some 26 or so different editions came out within a relatively short time. Then, after a film was made of the novel, a whole other period of promotion set in. In general, in those years, from 1990 to 1993, I spent more time promoting than writing, though I managed to write a follow-up novel anyway. What lessons did I learn? Mainly to be careful about what one tells journalists, because things can be easily taken out of context. So now I am—fortunately or unfortunately—rather wary of the whole process.

How do you prepare for an interview or public appearance?

Readings I consider performances, and as I believe that audiences attend such events out of curiosity and to get a sense of the author, I try my best to be as accessible as possible. Which is to say, I will break off in the middle of a paragraph, to describe how the idea of it came to me, or to relate an amusing anecdote—or one I think amusing—about my circumstances while writing said paragraph. In general, I dislike the overly reverential carved-in-sacred-stone attitude that some authors apply to the printed text of a book. If anything, when I am giving readings, I enjoy the prospect of riffing off my own ideas, as would a jazz musician off a melody, and audiences seem to appreciate that.

Have you had any particularly difficult experiences concerning the adaptation of your work for film?

My experience is that once you decide to put your work into the hands of another, you must be prepared to watch it dismembered, creatively disemboweled, and otherwise transformed into something only vaguely recognizable. Movies, for example, are mainly about the actors; the film made of Mambo Kings was in many ways charming and entertaining, but folks who know the book found it to be more shallow than they had hoped for.

You’ve received many awards for your work, from the Pulitzer Prize to grants from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. What kind of impact has this level of recognition had on your writing?

The recognition is nice, but for a writer struggling along, the financial aid that grants bring can provide enormous hope and relief. I can well remember how a $3,000 grant from the Creative Artists Programs Service foundation in New York State, awarded to me in the mid-1970s, made a very big difference in my life. Just the luxury of buying books that one needs, instead of only worrying about paying the rent, can make a big difference.

But my favorite award was the Rome Prize in Literature, which allowed me, at the age of 34, to travel to Europe for the first time. The year I spent at the American Academy of Rome, where I worked on Mambo Kings, I have always counted as one of my happiest, and one that, drenched in literature and new experiences, could never be bought again for any amount of money.

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**Court Approves Freelance Settlement**

On September 27 in federal court in Manhattan, Judge George Daniels gave final approval to the freelance class-action settlement. The suit, filed in August 2000 by the Authors Guild, several of its members, the ASJA and the National Writers Union, claimed that 12 major electronic databases had infringed the copyrights of freelance journalists. We will keep members posted regarding the payment schedule. The deadline for filing claims was September 30.
Stop the Presses: Control of the Student Press at State Universities

United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Does the First Amendment right to freedom of expression protect university-funded student newspapers from censorship by administrators of the state universities that pay for publication? The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit was recently confronted with this question in Hosty v. Carter and held that, at least in some cases, student newspapers at public universities are subject to censorship.

The controversy arose from the October 31, 2000, publication of the Innovator, a student newspaper published and funded by Governors State University, one of many state universities in Illinois. The issue contained an article written by student editor/reporter Margaret Hosty, which attacked the integrity of Dean Roger Oden for failing to renew the teaching contract of Geoffrey de Laforcade, the Innovator’s faculty supervisor.

Following publication of this issue, Patricia Carter, Dean of Student Affairs, called the printer of the Innovator and instructed it not to publish future issues of the paper without her prior approval. However, the editorial staff refused to submit the paper for prior review. The printer, fearing it would not be paid for unapproved editions, ceased publication of the newspaper.

Hosty, student editor Jeni Porsche, and student reporter Steven Barba maintained that Carter’s threat not to pay the printer for unapproved editions of the newspaper violated their First Amendment rights and brought suit against the university, its board of trustees, and several university administrators, including Carter, seeking damages under Section 42 U.S.C. 1983.

In response, the university and its officials brought a summary judgment motion to dismiss the case. The district court granted the motion with respect to all claims except one against Dean Carter in her personal, rather than official, capacity. The district court noted that the evidence could support the conclusion that Carter’s threat to withdraw the Innovator’s financial support violated the First Amendment. Carter appealed the judgment against her to the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, which after initially upholding the district court’s decision, elected to re-hear the case en banc.

In evaluating the claim against Carter, the Seventh Circuit looked to the Supreme Court decision of Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier for guidance. In Hazelwood, the Supreme Court held that high school faculty may supervise and determine the content of a school-sponsored student newspaper, provided that the actions are related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. The Hazelwood ruling noted that these “concerns” included a school’s right to set its own standards in terms of determining what speech is permissible for publication in the sponsored paper, as well as the right to account for the emotional maturity of the audience when regulating what can be published about topics the faculty deems sensitive. In a footnote, the Court stipulated that many lower federal courts have recognized a school’s right to regulate the content of school-sponsored newspapers and other expressive activities, but stressed that the decision did not necessarily apply at the college or graduate level.

In this case, the Seventh Circuit disagreed with the district court’s interpretation of Hazelwood, noting that the district court’s assumption that the decision did not apply on the college or graduate school level was inaccurate. To the contrary, the Seventh Circuit claimed the Supreme Court intended to give deference to educators in determining what content was publishable. The Seventh Circuit found that the right to regulate speech in the newspaper was contingent upon whether the paper was considered a public forum. As a rule, the court held that speech in a public forum is not subject to regulation, while speech in a non-public forum, even if underwritten at public expense, may be open to reasonable regulation at all levels of education.

In this case, the Seventh Circuit noted that if the paper is part of the school curriculum, that may constitute a non-public forum, though that is not in and of itself a required condition, since extracurricular activities may be considered outside the public forum but still within the university’s right to govern the content.

“The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit . . . held that, at least in some cases, student newspapers at public universities are subject to censorship.”
The Seventh Circuit also pointed out that academic freedom grants Governors State the right to manage its academic community and evaluate its teaching and scholarship agenda without interference from other governmental units, including the courts. Thus, while the court found that the facts did not clearly reveal whether the Innovator constituted a public forum, it held that a reasonable trier of fact could conclude that the Innovator operated in a limited-purpose public forum, prohibiting university interference with the content of the paper.

Having determined that a valid claim could be made out, the Seventh Circuit next considered whether Dean Carter was entitled to qualified immunity, which protects a state official from personal liability unless it was clear to the official that her conduct was unlawful. In this case, the Seventh Circuit found that it was not clear that Dean Carter’s decision to require the printer to obtain approval before it published future issues of the Innovator was unlawful. The court noted that post-Hazelwood decisions had not clearly established that college administrators lacked the right to supervise the content of student newspapers funded by the university. As such, the court found that Carter could not reasonably be expected to predict, at her own financial peril, how these constitutional uncertainties could be resolved. As such, the Seventh Circuit found that Dean Carter was entitled to qualified immunity and granted her motion to dismiss the case.

Fortunately, the Seventh Circuit’s decision is binding only for the federal courts in Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana. Other courts, such as the First Circuit Court of Appeals, have ruled that the Hazelwood framework is inapplicable to university student newspapers and that the prior law in this area remains controlling.

—Michael Gross
Staff Attorney

—Elizabeth Kaufman
Legal Intern

Don’t Ask, Don’t Sell: Marketing the Illegal Use of File-Sharing Devices is Illegal Too

MGM Studios, Inc., et al. v. Grokster, Ltd., et al.
United States Supreme Court

A Ninth Circuit decision that absolved distributors of file-sharing software for its users’ copyright violations was reversed when the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that such a company is liable for copyright infringement that it actively enabled, intended and induced through its business plan and advertising. The decision carefully balances the need to support creative pursuits and the promotion of innovation in new technologies.

Grokster and StreamCast Networks distribute software products that allow computer users to search other users’ computers and to share electronic files through the Internet. These services are similar to those of Napster, in that most of the material shared is copyrighted material, but dissimilar in that there is no centralized collection and distribution of the files. Because of this difference, it is much more difficult to control the content of files available for retrieval and the behavior of users, both technologically and legally.

To combat this practice, a group of copyright holders who represent approximately 70 percent of the material traded, and include the named plaintiff, MGM, sued Grokster and StreamCast, alleging that the defendants knowingly and intentionally distributed software that enables users to intentionally distribute software that enables users to copy broadcast material that may be copyrighted. They argued that they should not be held liable for the infringing use of their customers, over which they have no control. That theory was based on the 1984 Su-

Kay Murray Joins Tribune Company

Authors Guild general counsel Kay Murray left the Guild’s staff this summer to join the New York office of the Tribune Company. Kay had worked for the Guild for 11 years.

Kay, a 1988 graduate of Northwestern University School of Law, served the Guild in challenging times, helping guide policy on knotty electronic rights, First Amendment, and Internet issues. She wrote countless articles for the Bulletin, thoroughly revised the Guild’s guide to book contracts and co-authored the indispensable “Writer’s Legal Guide.”

Kay’s intelligence, experience and unfailing good sense will be greatly missed by all Guild members who had the good fortune to work with her. Her warmth and humor will be particularly missed by the Guild staff. We wish her well.

—Paul Aiken
The Supreme Court reversed the Ninth Circuit, reasoning that the central issue was not whether Grokster and StreamCast offered sufficiently substantial non-infringing use, but whether they had actively encouraged infringement. The Court pointed out several facts to demonstrate what led them to this position. Both companies were aware that users employ their software primarily to download copyrighted files, and both provided technical support for users who had downloaded copyrighted movies. Each took active steps to encourage the downloading of copyrighted works, and sought out former Napster users known to be inclined to such activity through advertising and public statements. Both generate income by selling advertising space, so their opportunities grow as their infringing user bases do. Neither company made efforts to impede the sharing of copyrighted files. The Court was particularly troubled by the large number of infringing downloads (many millions, and potentially billions), and the practical difficulties of nailing infringers directly. Under the Grokster standard, distributors of file-sharing programs could be held liable if they are aware of the potential infringing uses and intentionally encourage such infringement to promote the product.

By basing its unanimous decision on an inducement theory, the Court avoided the question of whether the file-sharing product has “sufficient non-

**Kevin Trudeau’s Latest Battle with the FTC**

In September 2004, the FTC settled with infomercial mogul Kevin Trudeau after charging him with making false and misleading claims on the show he hosted regarding the efficacy of Coral Calcium Supreme as a cure for cancer. Trudeau’s free speech rights under the First Amendment did not protect him because his advertising of specific products was deemed “commercial speech,” which falls outside the bounds of First Amendment protection.

Under the settlement’s terms, Trudeau agreed to cease further promotion of any type of product, service or program to the public, except for truthful infomercials for informational publications. In addition, he agreed to cease making disease or health benefit claims for any type of product, service or program in any form of advertising, including print, radio, Internet, television, and direct mail solicitations. Trudeau also agreed to surrender cash and property worth over $2 million dollars to the FTC.

Trudeau has recently returned to the infomercial airwaves, this time hawking his latest work, *Natural Cures ‘They’ Don’t Want You to Know About*. While the book has topped The New York Times bestseller list for self-help works, some readers are crying foul, alleging that Trudeau’s infomercials constitute false advertising. While the advertisements for the book boast about its discussion of natural cures, some readers have claimed the book does not directly address these cures.

Trudeau is relying on his First Amendment rights and the fact that his prior settlement with the FTC did not apply to the advertisement of books, which he has claimed is protected by the First Amendment. While the FTC has not brought new charges against Trudeau, the New York Consumer Protection Board (NYCPB) has publicly informed him, through a news release, that it intends to dissuade cable broadcast stations from airing his advertisements for the book.

In response, Trudeau has brought suit in federal court against the NYCPB, seeking a declaratory judgment that the NYCPB is not lawfully permitted to hinder his speech under the First and Fourteenth Amendments. Trudeau also sought an injunctive order prohibiting the NYCPB from contacting cable and broadcast networks with intent to coerce them into pulling the *Natural Cures* infomercials. On August 30, a federal judge refused to block the NYCPB from asking television stations to withdraw misleading infomercials that promote his work.

—Michael Gross
Staff Attorney

—Elizabeth Kaufman
Legal Intern
AUTHORS GUILD FOUNDATION SYMPOSIUM

Nonfiction Page Turners

How to shape a compelling story from a surfeit of real-life characters and facts was the subject of an Authors Guild and Authors Guild Foundation-sponsored panel discussion held at the Society for Ethical Culture in New York in April. The panelists were Melissa Fay Greene, author of *Praying for Sheetrock, The Temple Bombing* and *Last Man Out*; Sebastian Junger, author of *The Perfect Storm* and *Fire*; Hampton Sides, author of *Ghost Soldiers*, and Dava Sobel, author of *Longitude* and *Galileo's Daughter*. The evening was moderated by Guild President Nick Taylor.

NICK TAYLOR: I’m going to start with Dava. In the acknowledgments for *Longitude*, you thank various people for introducing you to the lure of longitude. Not many of us would have thought that longitude had a lure. Can you describe how the lure coalesced into your story?

DAVA SOBEL: When I first heard that there was going to be a longitude symposium with all the world’s experts in attendance, I thought there’d be maybe five people. I didn’t understand what there could be about that subject that would occasion the gathering of about 500 individuals. But I went to cover the symposium and learned that the boring lines on maps and globes were actually a matter of life or death for centuries. And that for a long time it was impossible to determine one’s longitude, especially at sea. The entire Age of Exploration had been carried out without anyone ever knowing where he was, which is a sobering thought.

At the heart of this issue was a scientific problem that had engaged the world’s greatest scientists, including Galileo and Newton, over a period of several centuries, without success. Then a self-educated clockmaker from the north of England crawled out of the woodwork and did what no one else could do. So there was also a human-interest story at the heart of it. One doesn’t often find something quite that appealing in science, a real underdog who manages to upset the establishment without ever compromising his own integrity. It was a great story before I wrote the first word.

TAYLOR: At what point in your research did you figure out that it was going to be not just a magazine story, which you originally wrote, but a book.

SOBEL: I didn’t know that until the magazine article was published. It took me over a year and many rejections from editors who said they couldn’t think of anything more boring than a story about longitude. Every magazine I was writing for turned me down, including Harvard Magazine, where I was a contributing editor, and the symposium was taking place at Harvard. I gave up on it. Two days before the start of the meeting, the editor called to tell me that there were 500 people on the campus and that he’d convinced the rest of the magazine board that I could make it interesting somehow. So would I please drop everything and come up after all?

I broke the cardinal rule of science writing, and went up there without knowing anything about the subject. I couldn’t have asked an intelligent question if my life depended on it. Fortunately for me, the symposium was excellent and I learned a great deal. I had my chin on the floor for three days. That made it very easy to write. In fact, I was so excited I was actually writing notes on the steering wheel of my car as I drove home. I didn’t think of turning it into a book, but Harvard Magazine goes to a lot of interesting people, including my current editor at Walker, George Gibson, who read the article and told me the next day he thought this could be a book. That was the first extraordinary thing that happened.

TAYLOR: And now it’s in its 27th hardcover printing, correct?

SOBEL: Yes. And we’re about to have a 10th anniversary edition with a foreword by Neil Armstrong.

TAYLOR: For all of us who have walls papered with rejection slips, that’s another story to give us heart. Let
me turn now to Sebastian Junger. Sebastian, you write about going into the Crow's Nest bar in Gloucester, Massachusetts for the first time after the storm. And you wrote, "I was just a guy with pen and paper and an idea for a book." That idea had formed during the storm itself when you watched these 30-foot swells and you read the next day of a fishing boat being lost. That was all it took, you wrote. How did the idea move from that first day watching the swells and then reading about the Andrea Gail to the moment you walked into the bar ready to ask questions.

SEBASTIAN JUNGER: I went through my twenties unable to make anything close to a living as a writer, so I did a lot of different jobs. I waited a lot of tables, but I eventually moved on to a great profession, which was as a climber for tree companies. It was very, very lucrative, and I could work just a day or two a week. It was work I really loved. I'd work 80 feet in the air with a chainsaw on a rope taking trees down. Rigging them over houses and taking them down in pieces. It was tremendous work. But I hurt myself. I whacked my left leg with a chainsaw. It didn't do permanent damage but I was limping for a while and I was about to turn 30. I was living in Gloucester, and I just realized my life wasn't taking off the way we all imagine our lives will. While I was having these gloomy thoughts, limping around Gloucester thinking I better get out of the tree business, this huge storm hit. I watched these seas come in and destroy the fancy houses with the view that always get destroyed in ocean storms. I guess it was the next day that I found out that a Gloucester boat had gone down. I thought maybe I'll write a book about dangerous jobs. The idea was sort of a way to combine my injury with what I learned about the tragedy of this boat. So commercial fishing was going to be one chapter. I was going to do a chapter on logging, another on drilling for oil. I felt there were a lot of industries that the nation depended on that killed people or maimed them regularly and that none of these people were being honored in any way or even acknowledged.

So initially I was going to write a collection on dangerous work, but the chapter on commercial fishing turned into a book proposal. It was probably a year before I went into the Crow's Nest, something like that.

TAYLOR: You describe a little bit of difficulty in asking the questions, in feeling comfortable with the people, because of their insularity.

JUNGER: It's a feeling I think everyone probably knows, whether you're going in to ask difficult questions or not. You go into a neighborhood bar in a tough neighborhood, which is what the Crow's Nest looked like, and all the heads turn when you step in the door.
On top of it, I was going in there to ask the woman bartender, whose son had died on the Andrea Gail, about the death of her son. I’m not a fisherman, and I’m not from Gloucester, and I imagined a very, very cold reception at best.

TAYLOR: You didn’t know these people whose lives you then told about.

JUNGER: No, I didn’t know them personally. I knew I wanted to find out about this boat, and that the mother of one of these guys worked at the Crow’s Nest. I thought that was a good starting point and it was. But it was very hard to go in there and order a beer and say, Listen, I’m here to ask about your dead son. That was terribly, terribly hard. One thing that worked for me, other than that I think I’m basically a respectful and polite person, is that I was always in working clothes. I was living on Cape Cod, and going into Boston to do a day’s worth of tree work because I had an arrangement with several different tree companies in Boston. I’d go in, do a day’s worth of tree work, be covered in sawdust, and then go back to Gloucester and spend the night. It wasn’t intentional but I would go into that bar really looking like one of them. And my line to Ethel Shatford was, Look, I do a dangerous job. I know your son did. I know he died. I’ve been injured doing it. I want to write about dangerous work. Can you help me find out about commercial fishing because I don’t know anything about it?

I feel that if you go to someone saying, You have a very special knowledge about something and I want to know what you know, I want to learn from you, they are really flattered, and particularly if you are sincere. Someone like Ethel Shatford was not used to thinking that her experience was something of value, something a writer might want to set to paper. In a way it’s a very honoring idea. You have to be genuine about it, but it really does get people to open up.

TAYLOR: Melissa, your work focuses on issues, primarily racism and injustice, and how people respond to them. You say you witnessed the events that led to Praying for Sheetrock while you were working for Savannah Legal Services in Savannah, Georgia. Could you describe those events briefly and tell us what prompted you to believe there was a book.

MELISSA FAY GREENE: I’m from Macon, Georgia, originally; spent the accent-forming years of my childhood in Ohio; graduated from Oberlin College; and returned to Georgia in the summer of 1975. I started work with the Savannah Legal Aid office just as things were heating up in a coastal county south of us: McIntosh County. The majority-black population was stirring for the first time against the power-holding white minority. People suspected the all-white county school board of diverting public funds from the all-black public schools to the all-white private schools. I was 22 and wearing pantyhose every day for the first time in my life. I had studied the civil rights movement in college and assumed it was over. It was in the American history textbooks already; I’d taken exams on the subject and had done nicely. But I began to accompany our circuit-riding lawyers south to McIntosh and discovered people packed into hot little wooden churches, singing gospel songs, signing petitions, organizing boycotts, and bringing lawsuits.

In those years, Sheriff Tom Poppell controlled everything that breathed in McIntosh County; had done so since his daddy, the first Sheriff Poppell, had died in 1948; and even though he was the chief law officer in the county, had been labeled by the FBI and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, “armed and dangerous.”

The only way to travel through McIntosh County was on old State Route 17, because Sheriff Poppell was blocking the completion of Interstate 95. Yankees trying to cross Georgia for their Florida vacations were obliged to travel through McIntosh, where the truck stop was really a house of prostitution and the fruitstands were really gambling joints. Vacationing Yankees were the main source of income in McIntosh County.

The famous speed trap of Ludowici was in Long County, next door. For 30 years, it had the honor of being named the worst speed trap in the United States by the AAA. Yankees who detoured around McIntosh drove through Ludowici, where the speed limit dropped from 60 to about 15 in the blink of an eye. They soon made the acquaintance of the Long County sheriff’s department instead.

The first thing I heard about McIntosh County in the summer of ’75 was the wreck of the Snickers candy truck. The S&S truck stop in McIntosh lured truckers from across the United States. They used to say that truckers traveling from Detroit to New York would manage to detour through McIntosh County and stop at the S&S. While a trucker was being entertained in a trailer out back, locals could pry open his truck, help themselves, then seal it up again. A semi-trailer carrying a load of Snickers wrecked on its way through the county. Someone from the state Department of Agriculture condemned the truckload as inedible and that was the end of it—until Snickers started surfaced up and down the coast. There was a period of a few weeks during which the only snack you could get anywhere was a Snickers, illegally sold, with kickbacks to the sheriff’s office. The Legal Aid staff all circuit-ride to clients’ houses; formerly a client would offer you a
were marched and memorial as there were libraries named after the year Bataan state case. They went down...
about 300 years of background, which is a very awkward problem for a book. I finally decided to start with an opening chapter that would tell the whole story in brief so that people could decide whether it was of interest to them. Some of my early readers were very troubled by the fact that the main character didn’t really appear until chapter six. Structuring a book is really the hardest part, I think. Usually you get to do that in the proposal, but because Longitude started as a magazine article and I didn’t have to write a proposal to sell it as a book, I was suddenly writing a book without a proposal. So I wrote one for myself. I thought about it a long time, but I really didn’t see any way around that odd structure. I think the terms of your story actually govern the way the book is structured. You can’t fit every story into this or that formula.

TAYLOR: Sebastian, you also told two stories at least: Bobbie Shatford and the crew of the Andrea Gail, and the storm itself. There was also the equally dramatic story of the downed rescue helicopter that flew out of Montauk and the para-rescue jumper whose life was lost. That seems to be a lot of balls to keep in the air. How did you do it?

JUNGER: It took a while for me to figure out how to structure it. I had this idea for the Andrea Gail chapter of showing the narrowing of their options. Then I would have a chapter on their life in Gloucester, how they were getting ready to go out on this trip and who they were and their girlfriends, etc. The last month would be chapter two, and I’d talk about fishing. It’s a one-month trip, there’s plenty of opportunity for them to sort of avoid their fate. I saw their story as a sort of funnel heading toward an inevitable end. Then there was the last week. In that part I thought, I could talk about the weather, because the storm was gathering force over the course of the week they died. Then there’s the last day, when the storm hits them. Then the last hour, where I talk about the 100-foot seas they were in. Then the last minute, how they died: The boat sank and they drowned.

I thought it was kind of an interesting concept except the book should end at the last minute and it doesn’t. I had this whole rescue to go through. And later an Air National Guard helicopter dropped into the sea because it ran out of fuel and all but one of the crew were saved. Very, very dramatic. But I wasn’t quite sure how to weld those together. There was also a rescue on a sailboat, so actually there were about three stories. I thought all right, I’m just going to go completely chronologically. So halfway into the story of the Andrea Gail, somewhere in the chapter that would be the last week, I’m going to mention the sailboat that left Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and then I’m going to drop them. I had an idea of the time line that progressed day by day and hour by hour, and as the different threads of three different stories popped up, I would introduce them and then I would drop them again and they would pop up again more fully formed. By the end, I was juggling three stories at once because they were all happening simultaneously. That was the only solution I could think of.

TAYLOR: At what point did The Perfect Storm become the title of the book?

JUNGER: The storm was also sort of a character in the book. I’d read a great book by Alec Wilkinson called A Violent Act, about a serial killer who careened through the Midwest and killed a number of people. I thought,

“A meteorologist who I was sort of harassing for an explanation of the storm that I could actually understand, was very patient with me, explaining why this was such a bad storm. I didn’t get it and I didn’t get it, and finally, in frustration, he said, Look, it was a perfect storm.”

—Sebastian Junger

that’s the book I’m writing except my serial killer’s a storm. The storm was what unified everyone. It sucked these people in and spat some of them out alive and it killed others and then it moved on. So I felt that the title had to focus on the one element common to all of these people’s experiences, which was the storm. Luckily a meteorologist who I was sort of harassing for an explanation of the storm that I could actually understand, was very patient with me, explaining why this was such a bad storm. I didn’t get it and I didn’t get it, and finally, in frustration, he said, Look, it was a perfect storm, it had this, this, this, and this. It was a while yet before I fully understood the meteorology of it, if I ever did completely, but that phrase obviously lodged itself in my mind and I thought, That’s a great title for the book.
“You have these building blocks of facts, and you can pile them up in a way that says newspaper article or you can pile them up in a way that has a narrative structure . . .”

—Sebastian Junger

SOBEL: I have a question for Sebastian. When I read your book I was very impressed with the way you handled the things you didn’t know. No one knew what the crew’s final hours were like, what actually happened to the ship, and I felt that you managed to tell it anyway. How did you approach writing that?

JUNGER: The terrifying part of writing this book was that the boat left port and then very little information came in over the next month about what actually happened. There were a few radio contacts, but almost no real information, and zero information the last 24 hours. If I were a novelist, I would have novelized all that, but then it wouldn’t be journalism. Just because it’s narrative nonfiction doesn’t mean you can bend the rules any more than you would in a newspaper or magazine. It’s just a question of what you do with these facts that you come up with. You have these building blocks of facts, and you can pile them up in a way that says newspaper article or you can pile them up in a way that has a narrative structure and a rise of tension and a falling of tension. That’s what I wanted to do but how? How do you handle these holes in the story?

Right before I wrote the book I read a book called *The Hot Zone*, and the author had a similar problem. There were things he couldn’t have known. One of his characters had died of the marburg virus, I think. At the very beginning of the book, he writes something like, “One could imagine Mr. So-and-so walking down this path on his plantation looking up to the west at the sunset, lighting the mountains behind.” Because he wrote “One can imagine,” he’s not stating fact. He’s saying to the reader, Look, none of us here knows what he was doing that afternoon but we can entertain ourselves with imagining that he might have done this, and that’s true. There’s no violation of journalistic rules.

The other solution to the hole in the story is to find other people with a similar experience. I found a guy whose fishing boat sank in 70-foot seas and he survived and I interviewed him. In the book I basically say to the reader, Look, we’ll never know what happened on the *Andrea Gail*, but we can get a pretty good idea by talking to this guy, Ernie Hazard, who sank in almost identical circumstances, but lived. So we can ask him, What were you thinking when you were underwater in a capsized boat a hundred miles out at sea at night in 70-foot breaking seas, absolutely sure you were going to drown? What was going through your mind? His answer is probably very close to what was going through the minds of the men on the *Andrea Gail*. And as long as you say to the reader what you’re doing, as long as there’s full transparency, you’re fine.

TAYLOR: Because the imagination works so well, and the reader can substitute a little bit of his or her imagination as well.

JUNGER: Yes. If one person had survived, you would have their story and that’s it. I would never have had to interview Ernie Hazard. I probably wouldn’t have found out that much about the meteorology. Those other things probably ended up being more interesting than if I could have somehow interviewed someone on that boat. That’s my guess, anyway.

TAYLOR: Let me skip over to Hampton for a minute. Did you ever have to imagine anything that went on during the rescue?

SIDES: There was not much left to the imagination because everybody remembered that night so vividly that when I began to interview people the details poured out. And although there were conflicts and seeming contradictions, everyone basically remembered the same thing. The biggest problem I had with *Ghost Soldiers* was that, chronologically, the major part of the experience was a prison camp situation. But then I began to wonder, how is the reader going to stick with me through three years of dysentery, three
years of beriberi, three years of malaria? I was casting around for ways to ventilate that material, and I kept thinking, Well, we'll cut to Washington, we'll cut to the hometowns of these men and find out what their families knew and what they were thinking. Or maybe we'll cut to Tokyo and try to get inside the heads of the Imperial Army, why they were treating American prisoners of war so badly. When I started writing the book, I was most excited about the rescue, which chronologically belongs at the very end of the book. I knew that I had strong material. I knew that the rescue was the light at the end of the tunnel, and for that reason I began to write the ending first. The one or two chapters became three, became four, became five, because one of the things about narrative is that pages start piling up very quickly. The pages about those three years in prison camp were piling up very slowly, because their memories weren't that good about individual days. But everybody remembered every detail of the rescue night, hour by hour, minute by minute. Suddenly I realized I had six or seven chapters just about the rescue and that was what I would use to ventilate the prison camp experience, cutting back and forth between the two stories, with essentially two narratives and two time lines: one of three years, one of three days. Near the end of the book they finally intersect and the two narratives become one.

But the biggest issue I had was finding the story within the story. I think a big narrative often has to have a central core narrative that is simple to understand, that has a drive to it, a compelling arc, and that's what I discovered this rescue was. It allowed me to tell the horrible story of the dysentery, of the brutality, of the beheadings, without fear that the readers were going to give up on me. I think the two stories almost depend on each other.

**TAYLOR:** Back to you, Melissa. By contrast with *Praying for Sheetrock*, which takes place in the seventies and tells the story of the growing empowerment of the black community in McIntosh County, *The Temple Bombing* and *Last Men Out* go back into the fifties, to perhaps harsher times of racism. In a way those stories seem obvious, but the bombing of the temple in Atlanta seems to have awakened that city to a larger danger outside its gates almost in a way that 9/11 awakened the United States to the danger from Islamic terrorism. I wondered if that was the story you felt you had going in to the temple bombing.

**GREENE:** I love hearing these authors talk about wrestling with the structures of their books. The older I get, and with every book I write, I find that the most important thing is what the bones of the book are going to be, what the structure is.

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**TAYLOR:** Talk about that.

**GREENE:** I didn't know much about structure with *Praying for Sheetrock*. An amazing, classically structured story just fell into my lap. I didn't read Aristotle's *Poetics* until many years later and realized that in my late twenties, early thirties, I had lucked into a subject—Thurnell Alston, leader of the McIntosh County black community—who was a perfect Aristotelian hero, which is to say that he was a good man but not a perfect man. He did wrong things, but he wasn't an evil man; he was human. Unfortunately, I hadn't read Aristotle by the time I looked into the story of the bombing of the Temple on Peachtree Street in Atlanta in October 1948 (part of the massive white resistance to desegregation). In my second book, *The Temple Bombing*, my two main characters would not have been smiled upon by Aristotle. I had a righteous, justice-seeking rabbi, Jacob Rothschild. And I had this kind of

"**In my late twenties, early thirties, I had lucked into a subject—Thurnell Alston, leader of the McIntosh County black community—who was a perfect Aristotelian hero, which is to say that he was a good man but not a perfect man.**"

—*Melissa Fay Greene*

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smarmy, sneaky, small-eyed neo-Nazi named George Bright, who lived in a house with all the doors boarded up. The two of them started on these separate paths of goodness and evil and, by the end of the book, they were still on their separate parallel paths of good and evil. I think the book worked to whatever extent it did because of the ups and downs of the various communities within Atlanta—the German Jews, the Russian Jews, the labor union Jews, the black intelligentsia, the black clergy, the white clergy, the white country club class, and so on.

**TAYLOR:** Including the way it responded to the bombing?
GREENE: White Atlanta tried to behave decently. It was poised on the verge not of universal social equality, but of “maybe we’ll let the Jews in.” “Maybe Jews are white.” “Not as white as Episcopalians.” “But kind of white.” And it brought city leaders and city thinkers to the dangerous edge of the cliff: “If we let the Jews in, can the Negroes be far behind?”

It was a fascinating time. I accidentally wrote two books in a row about the same month. Both The Temple Bombing and Last Man Out (about a famous coal mine disaster in Springhill, Nova Scotia) are set in October, 1958. I spent almost a decade of my life on October 1958. My husband guarantees that eventually I’ll be a question on the SAT test. What late 20th century author . . . ?

TAYLOR: Any structural problems from those two books that you care to talk about?

GREENE: Yes! Last Man Out had the worst aesthetic problem I ever hope to see, although Dava’s 300 years of history sounds tough, as does Hampton’s three years in a prison camp. I had 18 men trapped in a sealed-up coal mine a vertical mile underground. The removal of so many tons of coal over so many years left a hallowed-out underground maze in Springhill; on this day, October 12, 1958, the thinned walls of the mine finally yielded to the explosive pressure from the core of the earth; the walls collapsed, allowing the stone floors to rise one by one and smash into the stone ceilings. It was like a skyscraper falling in reverse—the fifth floor rising to smash into the sixth floor—and men worked on all of those floors. Most of the miners were killed, but there were two groups of men who were trapped separately for a week.

Because we’re in New York City, I’ll mention that I started the book before 9/11, and afterwards my editor and I realized there were elements that seemed to be universal about disasters. For example, in both the mine disaster and the attack of 9/11, there was a moment when the hospitals were cleared to make way for survivors and everybody came running to help and people gave blood and ambulances waited, and everybody was ready to help the survivors . . . and then there weren’t survivors. People either escaped right away or they died there. So there was this terrible time lag when everything was in readiness, and nobody came out.

The aesthetic problem was that after three days underground, the miners’ head-lamps ran out of batteries. They sat in complete darkness, without food, without water. So I’ve got two groups of men deep underground, seven trapped in one hole, 12 in another. They’re all coal miners, they all grew up in this town, their accents are the same, and there’s no light. I realized I should have written this as a radio play. You’ve got nothing but voices. And the voices sound alike. “It’s really dark down here.” “Yeah, it’s dark.”

—Melissa Fay Greene

“They’re all coal miners, they all grew up in this town, their accents are the same, and there’s no light. I realized I should have written this as a radio play. You’ve got nothing but voices. And the voices sound alike. “It’s really dark down here.” “Yeah, it’s dark.”

It was a difficult problem. I had to find out what the men were talking about. I spent most of my time on that book reading the transcripts of the interviews over and over and over. I wanted to know the men so well that if someone was crying about his wife, saying that he missed his wife, then it had to be this guy. If it was another guy saying, I bet she’s got someone else in her bed already, well, you know it was this guy.

TAYLOR: Dava, with regard to Galileo’s Daughter, at what point in reading Sister Maria Celeste’s letters to her father did you realize there was a book?

SOBEL: I first found out about the letters while I was writing Longitude because Galileo was one the people who tried to solve the longitude problem. There was a scholarly treatise written on all his work on time-
keeping and longitude—the things that never got him into trouble with the church. The author of the book was Silvio Bedini, who as an Italian-American had translated one of the daughter’s letters for that book. The letter was about how the clock in the convent was broken and now they didn’t have a way to be awakened during the night to start the new round of prayers. I was dumbstruck by this. First of all, I never knew Galileo had children. And the daughters were nuns. I went to school in New York City, and we were always taught that Galileo was the great enemy of the Catholic Church, that he put all that religion and superstitious stuff behind him to become the first scientist. But he had two daughters in a convent. If he did all the things he did as a good Catholic, it’s even more interesting. I was raised Jewish in the Bronx, but the story absolutely fascinated me. Then I found out that the rest of the letters were still in Italian. At that moment I realized there had been a reason for my taking Italian in college 30 years before, besides the fact that my roommate wanted me to wake up at the same time as she did. So I thought it would be worth trying to revive my Italian, translate these letters and try to look at Galileo’s story again through the lens of his religious faith. So it was a book in that first moment. I thought, if there’s any way to get at this material this is the best thing I’ve ever heard. Then I went to some Galileo scholars because I knew this was going to be a lot of work, years maybe, and I needed some encouragement. I also didn’t want to bumble into their turf. So I asked a few people and got very positive responses, such as, Oh, I’ve always wanted to do that, I’ve always wanted to translate the daughter’s letters. And someone said to me, If all you do is translate them and make them available to students and history of science, that’s time well spent. Then he said, When you read those letters, they’ll break your heart. So I knew it was good.

TAYLOR: How hard was the translation given your college Italian?

SOBEL: Well, I had to go back to school and I took all the courses offered at the local adult education center, and then I got the teacher, who was a retired Italian professor who actually had a Catholic girlhood in Italy, to become a consultant.

TAYLOR: Did it surprise you that they’d never been translated before?

SOBEL: It surprised me very much. There had been an English book written in the 1800s about Galileo’s private life that was based on these letters and it quoted large chunks of them, but they had never been published in their entirety in any other language. I think that’s just a question of the times. She was just a girl, she was not a scientist, but she was a magnificent writer, and that alone made it interesting. Of course her relationship with that father made them extremely interesting. People often think it must have been some kind of weird, medieval Italian, but it wasn’t. It was just a different time, a time of very great writing. The sentences were so long. And to think, it’s all first draft, and she was constantly interrupted while she was writing, and yet every single sentence came down on its feet. I was mightily impressed by that. I think I absorbed some of her complications. I’ve never tested this, but I would bet that the sentences in Galileo’s Daughter are twice as long as the sentences in Longitude.

TAYLOR: I’m sure somebody has a computer program that can figure that out. Sebastian, Fire includes two stories of forest fires in the American West and reports from the war zones in the Balkans, Africa and Afghani-

“I went to school in New York City, and we were always taught that Galileo was the great enemy of the Catholic Church, that he put all that religion and superstitious stuff behind him to become the first scientist. But he had two daughters in a convent.”

—Dava Sobel

stan. Surely some of these were written under deadline. I wonder if you felt more pressure to find the story in these circumstances than when you were writing A Perfect Storm, and if you feel you were successful?

JUNGER: It depends on the story. I have a contract with Vanity Fair to go overseas and report on a political situation, usually in an unstable country. I started doing that in Bosnia in ’93. I was then determined to write the book on dangerous jobs, and one of the chapters was going to be on war correspondents. I bought a ticket to Zagreb and I had a backpack, a sleeping bag, a notebook and some pens. I thought I’m just going to hang out with war reporters and I’ll either write a
chapter about them or if I don't manage to sell this book maybe I can learn how to become one of them. That really hooked me on foreign reporting, so I started doing these assignments. Basically, if you go into a country at war, like Sierra Leone or Kosovo, the story is, Why is the country at war and how can it be stopped? Of course things happen while you're there, which might produce a different sort of narrative, but that's the basic premise.

When I went to Afghanistan, it was to profile Ahmed Shah Massoud of the Northern Alliance, a year before 9/11. That was the only real profile I ever did. He was this brilliant guy, a very compassionate human, a mystic, an educated person who devoted his whole life to fighting war. I asked him why. He said, because war is so bad that I'm fighting to end this war.

TAYLOR: I want to ask all of you about self-editing. Hampton, you're an editor. How hard is it to edit your own work? What can you tell us about self-editing?

SIDES: I think having been an editor is great for writing. People who know me say that I have no problem ripping up 20, 30, 40, 50 pages of my stuff at a time. I don't get wedded to my material the way I did when I was a kid or when I was in college. It's important because there's not a whole lot of editing going on in the publishing world these days. Editors are very, very busy and they're strapped for time, as we all know. I'm lucky that I have a very good editor now, but in previous projects there just wasn't time. So you either hire someone to do it or you do it yourself. I actually enjoy taking a chainsaw to a manuscript and cutting it down. It's not as bloody as that, actually. If you know what you're doing, you don't see the cuts at all, and you don't miss them. In fact, the piece is better because of it.

Questions from the audience

Q: Can you tell us something about marketing once you have a good manuscript?

JUNGER: I think serious marketing typically comes on the heels of an initial success. When Clinton writes his autobiography, of course they plan a big marketing campaign. But certainly my publisher had no expectations that my book would do well at all, and, frankly, neither did I. There started to be some rumbling, and then the sales force at Norton read the book and thought, Oh we think we can sell this pretty hard. It slowly built from there, but the marketing followed the success rather than the other way around.

TAYLOR: Dava, you also said you were surprised by the success of Longitude.

SOBEL: I was very surprised, but only because I thought it was such a weird story, the kind of thing my mother would read and maybe a few friends. While I was writing it, people would say, What are you working on? I'd say I'm writing a book about longitude, and they'd look down. Nobody knew what to say to me.

"I thought it was . . . the kind of thing my mother would read and maybe a few friends. While I was writing it, people would say, What are you working on? I'd say I'm writing a book about longitude, and they'd look down. Nobody knew what to say to me."

—Dava Sobel

SOBEL: I was very surprised, but only because I thought it was such a weird story, the kind of thing my mother would read and maybe a few friends. While I was writing it, people would say, What are you working on? I'd say I'm writing a book about longitude, and they'd look down. Nobody knew what to say to me. But although there was no budget for promotion, my publisher talked about the book to everybody, and that made a huge difference. He published it beautifully, and there was a lot of editing, I must say. I definitely agree with Hampton that there is precious little editing going on, and if you're lucky enough to have an editor who will rip your book apart and tell you why, that's a very good thing. I was told when I turned in the manuscript of Galileo's Daughter that it just didn't work and I had to rewrite it.
TAYLOR: Did you?

SOBEL: I did. And he was right.

Q: How do each of you sustain the passion of the story you are telling?

SIDES: In my case it was easy because there was kind of an internal deadline; the men I was interviewing were dying in the course of the research. I felt a sense of urgency that mirrored the sense of urgency that the rangers felt—that they had to rescue these men because they feared that the Japanese were going to massacre them. I also think it helps a lot to have an editor who’s really not kidding about the deadline. It gets harder when you’re writing about things that are really old. My next book is about the Indian Wars of the Southwest and the Navajos and Kit Carson. I’m getting in deep and I’m thinking what’s the rush? This happened 150 years ago, everyone is not only dead but good and dead. I think that’s a problem with history; when you get beyond the twilight of history into true history, sustaining the sense of urgency is harder, and urgency is key to completing the thing.

TAYLOR: But the passion for the material remains. Does anybody else want to respond to that question?

GREENE: I reached a point with Last Man Out during which I would line up my pens, coffee and notebook; open the notebook; glance over what I wrote the day before; then get up and go do the laundry. That lasted for a couple of years. It was awful. I wrote the first draft of Praying for Sheetrock in about nine months. The book I’m just finishing I will have written in a little over a year. With Temple Bombing I got in so deep that the manuscript grew gigantic. It kept taking on more scenes and characters. I had a recurring nightmare that I was in charge of an enormous ship like the Queen Elizabeth; I was the only person on the ship and I was also the only person in the harbor and I was trying to get this tremendous vessel into harbor by myself and I couldn’t bring it in.

The Temple Bombing manuscript was due the winter of ’95 because, just after I signed the contract with the publisher, the City of Atlanta snared the 1996 Olympics. The editors suddenly realized they were sitting on an Atlanta book.

Naturally, if millions of people are coming to Atlanta for international sporting events, they are going to want to read about a 40-year-old hate crime!

Atlanta was insane with boosterism. Everyone was promoting Atlanta; we were mowing our lawns, painting our fences, entering slogan competitions. (“Atlanta: Better than Birmingham” was a slogan that didn’t win. Another was: “Come to Atlanta. Maybe You Won’t Get Robbed.” And another: “Atlanta: We got the Olympics and You Didn’t.”)

Meanwhile there was a PR meeting in Boston about the marketing plan for The Temple Bombing and they unfolded this huge poster—so happily—which read: “Hate. Violence. Racism. Atlanta.”

“Oh no!” I cried. “They’re going to shoot me back in Atlanta! You can’t imagine how obsessed we are at home with positive images.” I tried to convince them to edit the PR campaign to read: “Hate. Racism. Synchronized Swimming. Atlanta.”

Q: I’d like advice on how you deal with too much material. I am just finishing a book and for parts of it I have too much archival material, which itself disagrees.

TAYLOR: Hampton might want to respond to that with an answer having to do with his chainsaw.

SIDES: Don’t be afraid to cut, and if you can’t do it yourself, hire somebody to do it for you.

Q: A number of the memoirs contradict one another. How would you handle it?

GREENE: I think it’s very hard for us to know, writing in 2005, what will make sense to readers in the future. It’s very risky to cut elements of the story when they don’t correspond to the way you perceive the big picture. I think you must embrace those contradictions and preserve them. Sometimes those unwieldy pieces are the ones that lead you to new insight.

But I know the feeling! You’ve got the whole thing laid out—you’ve got the beginning, the middle, and the end—and then here’s this piece sitting off the main line and it doesn’t work. Do you delete it?

In the Springhill mine disaster, there was one black miner in the group. After the rescue, reporters looking for stories of heroism gleaned that the “Afro-Canadian” miner, Maurice Ruddick, had led hymns in the darkness underground. It became their lead story—“the singing miner” who’d kept up the spirits of the rest. He became Canada’s Man of the Year and the subject of a TV documentary. Maurice Ruddick, the singing miner, is a household name in Canada. On his gravestone it reads, The Singing Miner. My editor wanted the book to be called The Singing Miner.

I am a year or two into the research and have begun writing the book when I get access for the first time to an old survivor. I spend hours and hours with him—he’s poor, he’s illiterate, he’s got no teeth, and he’s chain-smoking. I’ve asked him everything under the sun. I’m done. I’m closing up, I’ve turned off the tape recorder, I’ve zipped up the briefcase, I’m leaving, and suddenly he says: “I didn’t hear no singing.”
I'm halfway out the door already. I turn and say, "I beg your pardon?"
"I didn't hear no singing."
"You didn't hear any singing?"
He shrugs.
"You didn't hear Maurice Ruddick leading everyone in song?"
"Maybe I was somewhere else," he says.
"Where else would you have been?" I cry. They were walled into a cave about the size of this table.

The temptation is strong to pretend I didn't just hear this. My rental car is waiting in the driveway; the keys are in my hand; in an hour I can be at the airport. I pause, then I step back inside. I unzip the briefcase. I haul out the tape recorder.

And it led me down a completely different path of understanding of what had happened underground. Maurice Ruddick had been a leader underground, but it hadn't been by singing. He'd been calm, he'd been reasonable, he'd been an intellectual and spiritual leader. But the story got told, by his mates and by the reporters—this is 1958, you'll recall—as if he'd been Al Jolson. How could a black man lead a group of white men in 1958? Well, he must have been entertaining them, right? So don't be afraid of those contradictions; face them, even if it completely throws off your schedule.

SIDES: Just be honest. Say there are these contradictions and acknowledge them. I think if there were violent contradictions that might be a problem, but otherwise I think it's fair game as long as you're honest about it.

TAYLOR: With the phrase, on the one hand and on the other.

Q: You must have had an enormous amount of contradictions in your interviews, right? One guy saying it happened at twelve-thirty, the next guy says it was five-thirty. How did you handle those?

SIDES: If we were to have an accident out front here, a car accident or something, everyone of us would have a slightly different version of the event. In *Ghost Soldiers*, especially when they were describing that night, everybody had a different vantage point. It was dark outside. There was a lot of gunfire. There were mortars going off. There were grenades going off. There was a major firefight a mile away that was extremely loud and very confusing. So naturally, everybody concerned had a slightly different way of remembering it. I think there are two ways to handle it. One is, if someone remembered something radically different, which happened, it ended up on the cutting room floor because I couldn't reconcile it. If it seemed to fit with the preponderance of the information I was getting from other interviews, I kept it. If it was an interesting contradiction, and sometimes a contradiction is quite interesting, especially a memory that is 50 years old, then it was a part of the story. As long as you can quote people, and say, This is the way this source remembered it, then I think you're on firm ground and you can use memory to your advantage. I also think that if it's interesting, you should put it in the narrative and if it's really dull put it in footnotes.

Q: It seems to me that anecdotes are the motor of many books. I'll ask all of you, but in particular Dava Sobel, who probably had more difficulty with that, where do you get the anecdotes, how do you find them and how do you get started?

SOBEL: Anecdotes about the long dead, is that your question?

Q: In *Longitude*. How do you get anecdotes about a man who not only left no diary but—

SOBEL: Right. No diaries, no letters. Well, I had to say that there was very little known about him. And it was only what other people thought of him and said about his methods. And then there were the machines themselves, which said a lot about him.

Q: I'm interested in your thoughts on how to structure a narrative with many different voices. When are too many voices involved in narrative?

GREENE: I have two authors upon whom I have leaned when in desperate narrative shape. One is Aristotle; the other is a Hungarian writer, Lajos Egri, who wrote books about dramatic structure.

Egri helps me think of my story in its simplest outline. He makes me realize that, if you're watching a play, you really don't want to see 30 main characters on stage at once, unless it's a kindergarten musical and your son is one of the sharks. You want someone to care about. You want someone in opposition. You want a story-line which can be simply told.

If I find myself, unhappily, at a crowded cocktail party or reception, and scores of people are milling about with drinks, and waiters circulate with platters of hors d'oeuvres, and some group by the windows is laughing uproariously, and a band is tuning up, someone inevitably will sidle up to me and shout over the noise: "What are you working on now?"

So I think, OK, here we go again. But it's a fair challenge: How can I tell the story of my book project (which is absorbing years of my life) in a sound bite shouted between bites of a wild mushroom phyllo triangle?

A writer had better be able to do it. Because if you
don’t have a story line that can be told—even shouted—in under 30 seconds; if you don’t have a story line that will cause distracted listeners to stop chewing for a moment and lean forward to hear you, then you may not have a book. If cocktail party listeners aren’t transfixed by your tale for a minute or two, your 300-page opus is going nowhere.

JUNGER: I would put it even more strongly. I don’t think there should be debate about it. There’s journalism, there’s nonfiction, and there’s fiction. As soon as

The cocktail party test:
“How can I tell the story of my book project... in a sound bite shouted between bites of a mushroom phyllo triangle? . . . If you don’t have a story line that will cause distracted listeners to stop chewing for a minute and lean forward to hear you, then you may not have a book.”

—Melissa Fay Greene

you fictionalize something in a piece of journalism, it becomes fiction. That’s fine as long as you say, I’m writing fiction. My opinion is, one part per million makes it fiction. You can make mistakes, all kinds of things can happen as a journalist and obviously do, but as soon as you intentionally create something that you can’t get as a reporter, you’re writing fiction. And the only way around that that I can possibly think of is to say, We don’t know what these people said in the locker room, in the submarine as it sank, but it may have been something like this. Some substitution might work that way, but it only works journalistically because you’re telling the reader, I’m not passing a lie off as truth, I’m just trying to make this gripping for you, but every step of the way I’m advertising the fact that we don’t know.

Q: Sebastian, you mentioned that when you first walked into that bar you had a different idea for your book, and I’m wondering, once you recalibrated, whether you felt the need to revise your explanation to the people who became narrators? What kind of responsibility do you have if your story changes but your cast of characters doesn’t?

JUNGER: Originally my idea was a book on dangerous jobs. Then one chapter became “The Perfect Storm.” So it didn’t require much explanation with the people I knew in Gloucester, in that bar, to say, I’ve narrowed my focus. That was fine. As for the concept of The Perfect Storm once I started working on it, it never changed that much. I was a journalist. I had this idea that basically as a journalist you go out and you gather as much information as you possibly can on the topic and you go home and write about it.

SIDES: And if you had known about those things in advance, you probably wouldn’t have written the book. Ignorance of a subject matter is really what drives us to do this stuff, I think. Don’t be afraid to embrace your own ignorance. In my book there were some gigantic subjects. I didn’t know the first thing about the Bataan Death March or the Japanese Imperial Army when I started. I think ignorance is a good thing. A gigantic subject to throw yourself into—it’s OK as long as we fill the hole.

TAYLOR: Melissa has dissuaded me from asking what each of you is working on. But as readers, we all want to be watching for the names of Sebastian Junger, Melissa Fay Greene, Hampton Sides and Dava Sobel in the new nonfiction shelves of our local bookstores. Thank them, and thank you all for being here. Good night.
Along Publishers Row

Continued from page 2

QUESTION? The late, great wit Fred Allen once said, “I can’t understand why a person will take a year or two to write a novel when he can easily buy one for a few dollars.”

SLEIGHT OF HAND: José Donoso, a novelist who lives in Chile, is the author of many novels, including The Obscene Bird of Night. This quote (translated by Gregory Rabbasa) is from Donoso’s novel Taratuta: “In order to create an aesthetic world, an author usually begins with quite modest facts: the familiar trait of an unknown person, the half-open window of a bedroom in disarray, a world with childhood resonances, an expression that betrays the deceit of a father, a priest, a woman, and it is the artist who chooses, puts together, and takes apart in order to construct the other truth, the truth of deception.”

SLOW STARTER: “It’s not uncommon for a pop novelist—Patricia Cornwell is a good example—to have the No. 1 books on both the hardcover and paperback fiction bestseller lists at the same time,” wrote Dwight Garner in The New York Times. “For nonfiction writers, however, this kind of domination is practically unheard of. Malcolm Gladwell has pulled it off—his new book, Blink, is No. 1 on the hardcover list . . . and his previous book, The Tipping Point, sits atop the paperback side.”

Garner described Gladwell’s success as “slow, up-from-the-bottom,” one of those word-of-mouth “epidemics.”

HOT: On Bullshit by Harry G. Frankfurt has 170,000 copies in print and is the fastest-selling book in Princeton University Press’s 100-year history. The New York Times will not print the title in full but refers to it as On Bull——.

That book was singled out by William Grimes in a Times “Critic’s Notebook” column because it has only 80 pages. Grimes wrote, “All books should be exactly as long as they need to be. There is no ideal length. But like mainstream Hollywood films, nonfiction books have shown a tendency to expand in recent years, for no particular reason. Directors cannot bring a film in at 90 minutes anymore. Likewise, my shelves are overloaded with nonfiction titles that, 30 years ago, would have been 225 or 250 pages. I’m not sure why. Fatter spines do look more imposing, and readers may feel, subconsciously, that $30 should buy them a thick, substantial volume. But time and again, I find, the extra weight comes from empty calories.”

FOR HIRE: Matthew Stover wrote the novelization of George Lucas’s Revenge of the Sith, a Star Wars movie that opened last May. Stover told the Associated Press that he was just a gun for hire—the story was the director’s. Lucas read the manuscript carefully and ordered changes. Stover’s advance was under $100,000 and his cut of the royalties is “small.” The author hopes that this book will attract sci-fi fans to his other novels.

Publishers Weekly reported that there are 1,700 Star War titles in print, with 70 million Star Wars related books in print worldwide.

CHANGE: Publishers Weekly has rechristened itself “PW,” and that is the way I shall refer to it from now on—if I can remember.

Meanwhile, PW ran the following correction: “Jane Fonda wrote every word of her memoir herself, insists Random House. Like most of us, she may have ghosts in her life. Unlike most celebrity memoirists, however, she has no ghostwriters.”

BOOK FAN: In the 15th century, Thomas à Kempis wrote: “Take thou a book into thine hands as Simon the Just took the child Jesus into his arms to carry Him and kiss Him. And when thou hast finished reading, close the book and give thanks for every word out of the mouth of God; because in the Lord’s field thou has found a hidden treasure.”

TOO MUCH? Charles McGrath declared in The New York Times that “we are living in the age of maximalist novels—books less concerned with le mot juste than with being full-service entertainment centers.

“These are long books, for the most part, and not always easy reads; they aspire to a condition of larger-than-lifeness, and frequently come decked out with extra bells and whistles—clever textual devices, say, or over-the-top descriptions and set pieces. They are not, one would think, particularly well-suited to our current moment of collective attention deficit, of sound bites and instant messaging, and yet that’s exactly the point; at one level or another the maximalist books are all worried about the ways in which our lives and the printed page fail to match up.”

McGrath concludes, “With the maximalist writers . . . the gesture sometimes seem less jokey and knowing than defensive and apologetic, suffused with an awareness that in our multimedia culture books are an old and threatened technology. When it comes to writing, they seem to be saying, even too much may not be enough.”

FUNNY BUSINESS: Poet Robert Frost once said, “All the fun’s in how you say a thing.”

NO SPREADSHEETS: Lan Samantha Chang has been named director of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and, in an interview, told The New York
Times that she didn’t believe that the workshops should be therapy sessions. “I don’t think they should advocate one aesthetic over another. I don’t believe in singling out particular people or destroying them in public, though I make my opinions known.”

After graduating from Yale, Chang studied public administration at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. Then she began taking writing courses and attended the Iowa Writers’ Workshop. She is the author of a novel, Inheritance, and a collection of short stories, Hunger. She told the Times that she was disappointed to learn that the Atlantic Monthly had announced it would cease publishing fiction regularly. Chang said, “Our country is currently in sore need of fiction. Our country is hung up on what’s quantifiable, on spreadsheets and cost-benefit analysis, the things I learned at the Kennedy School. Even the most honest economist says there are things that can’t be explained by numbers.”

She said that today “the publishing industry is focusing on writers as entertainment personalities.” Iowa is “one of the few havens where a developing writer is given the opportunity to focus on work alone.”

ADVICE: The late E. B. White wrote to Linda H. Davis, young author of a biography about White’s wife Katherine White: “Advice from this elderly practitioner is to forget publishers and just roll a sheet of copy paper into your machine and get lost in the project. Write about it by day, and dream about it by night.”

ON TEACHING: Novelist James Salter wrote a tribute to the Iowa Writers’ Workshop’s late Frank Conroy in the New York Times Book Review. Salter commented: “Originally established in 1936, the workshop is the pre-eminent writing school in the country, although it is almost universally believed that writing cannot be taught, and in fact it is not really taught there; it is practiced. Kurt Vonnegut, one in the long list of famous writers who have been on the workshop’s faculty, liked to say he couldn’t teach people to write but, like an old golf pro, he could go around with them and perhaps take a few strokes off their game.”

PROMOTER: To get publicity for his new novel, Cannaan’s Tongue, John Wray, 35, built a raft and floated down the Mississippi. The Brooklyn writer told The New York Times, “I had a bunch of cockamamie schemes to get people to pay attention to the book, and this seemed like the best of them. . . . I want to write fiction the rest of my life, and to do that you have to sell books. I thought this might help.”

The cockamamie idea was good enough to get a major article in the Times with three photographs and a reproduction of the novel’s jacket. Cannaan’s Tongue is about a man named John Murel, a real-life horse thief who planned to escape after a few weeks had passed, but he could resell them. He said, “The most successful children’s picture books offer a child’s-eye view of the world. Whether that child is a human or a bear is of little consequence.”

VIEW: In a review of children’s books for The Washington Post Book World, Elizabeth Chang noted: “The most successful children’s picture books offer a child’s-eye view of the world. Whether that child is a human or a bear is of little consequence.”

PAST TENSE: Mordicai Gerstein was asked by PW how winning the 2004 Caldecott Medal for The Man Who Walked Between the Towers had changed things for him. Gerstein said, “Winning the Caldecott opened the gates for me and gave me a tremendous sense of freedom. I now feel liberated to explore new things, both in picture books and in fiction.” Gerstein’s new book is entitled The Old Country. He said that his father came to the U.S. from Poland and his maternal grandparents were from the Ukraine. Growing up, Gerstein heard many stories about the old country. He said, “As a child I loved fairy tales; I felt that those stories came from the Old Country . . . The book was an attempt to explore my childhood imaginings of what the Old Country was.”

WASTE NOT: Larry McMurtry, author of Lonesome Dove and many other novels, told The New York Times Magazine, “Why write a book and then talk about it? It doesn’t make any sense. I can get another book done in the time it takes to do a book tour. I don’t want to sit around reliving last year’s book in conversation.” The author’s most recent is about Buffalo Bill and Annie Oakley and “the beginnings of superstardom.”

THE SPORTING LIFE: The Boston Globe asked Katherine Powers to review 16 new books about the Red Sox. She began her essay with, “Over five months have passed since the Red Sox won their first World Series in 86 years, and it is impossible to get over the sheer perfection of the achievement.”

She concludes her reviews with, “Red Sox devotion, born in the bone, cannot be driven from the blood—or kept out of print.”

HOW TO: Mark Twain gave a lot of advice to young writers, including, “Don’t say, ‘The old lady screamed.’ Bring her on and let her scream.” He followed that advice too. Here is the way The Adventures of Tom Sawyer begins:

“Tom!”
No answer.
“Tom!”
No answer.
“What’s gone with that boy, I wonder? You TOM!”
No answer.
PLEASE: The headline on the item said, “Authors Implore Oprah.” A petition signed by more than 150 writers, including Jhumpa Lahiri and Amy Tan, asked Oprah Winfrey to go back to her former practice of choosing new novels for members of her book club. A loose alliance of female writers said fiction sales plummeted when Oprah’s Book Club stopped featuring contemporary authors and promoted John Steinbeck’s East of Eden and Leo Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina. Reuters reported that the letter said, “The readers need you. And we, the writers need you.”

A spokeswoman for Winfrey’s company said, “There are no plans to change the focus of the book club at this time.”

In late September, the reader with a golden touch did an about face, announcing that she would once again recommend contemporary books to her book club readers. Her first pick was A Million Little Pieces, by James Frey, “a harrowing 2003 memoir about the author’s stay in a treatment center to address his alcoholism and drugs,” according to The New York Times’s front page report. In London, The Independent’s account was headlined “Authors of the world rejoice as Oprah’s book club embraces modern literature.”

“I wanted to open the door and broaden the field,” Winfrey told the Times. “That allows me the opportunity to do what I like to do most, which is sit and talk to authors about their work. It’s kind of hard to do that when they’re dead.” Oh? I talk to E. B. White all the time.

NEW GAME: Buzz Bissinger, author of Friday Night Lights, about football in Odessa, Texas, switched to baseball for his latest book, 3 Nights in August. It’s about a three-game series between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Chicago Cubs, with the focus on Tony La Russa, manager of the Cardinals.

Bissinger told PW, “Tony came to me because he was an admirer of Friday Night Lights and my voice and style of writing. I said, ‘Tony, for it to work, for me to put my imprint on this book beyond the traditional collaboration, I need access.”’

The author got unprecedented access to the Cardinal clubhouse. “Tony was enormously forthcoming about himself, about his personal life, the effects of baseball on his marriage. In a sense the book is about all managers, it’s about the timeless beauty of baseball.”

SCENARIOS: The late novelist Robertson Davies (The Deptford Trilogy) wrote in a book of essays entitled A Voice from the Attic, “The best of novels are only scenarios, to be completed by the reader’s own experience. They do not give us feeling. They draw out such feelings as we have.”

SOLD: The University of Texas has paid Norman Mailer, 82 years old, $2.5 million for 500 boxes, weighing more than 20,000 pounds, and containing notebooks, family photographs, canceled checks, sales receipts, scrapbooks—his archives. When asked by The New York Times how it felt to crate up his life, Mailer replied, “I have nine children. It does remind one a bit of sending them off to college.”

The university’s Ransom Center has recently acquired the papers of James Jones, Don DeLillo, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams and Leon Uris. In 2003, it paid $5 million for the Woodward-Bernstein Watergate papers.

FOER’S FAN: Jonathan Safran Foer hit it big with his first novel, Everything Is Illuminated. It was written while he was a student at Princeton, where Joyce Carol Oates was his teacher. It was published in 2002. Foer told The Washington Post Book World that Oates said in class one day, “I’m a fan of your writing.” Then in a letter, she wrote, “You appear to have the most important of writerly qualities, energy.”

Foer wrote the novel little by little, and Oates returned it little by little, marked in red. Then the manuscript was rejected by five agents. Two years later, the same manuscript was pulled out of his drawer and submitted to another set of agents. It sold in a heated auction.

Foer’s new novel is Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close.

GLOOM, DOOM: In an article praising Steve Stern’s latest novel, The Angel of Forgetfulness, The New York Times quoted Paul Slovak, Stern’s editor at Viking: “Steve is a writer everybody here believes in, but it’s gotten tougher than ever to sell writers in hardcover. There are a handful of books that sell and sell, but the others suffer.”

Robert Weil, the executive editor of W. W. Norton, considers the situation to be even more dire. “If you speak to publishers about the sales of literary fiction—I mean we’re in real trouble in this country,” he said. “Sales are shocking these days, even compared to 10 years ago. And publishers are seriously cutting back.”

FANS FOR SPARKS: Nicholas Sparks’s tour for his latest, True Believer, pulled in big crowds. Waldenbooks in New Bern, N.C., sold 3,000 copies at the author’s first stop.

In Charlotte, N.C., Barnes & Noble told PW it had its largest crowd ever for an author—1,300.

HOW IT STARTED: Some time ago Kazuo Ishiguro was asked a question that he, and many other writers, hate: “So, what are you working on?” At the moment, the author of The Remains of the Day was planning a novel about a torch singer in 1950s America, but he told his questioner that he was working on a novel about clones.
Then, in an interview in the San Francisco Chronicle, Ishiguro said, “The next time I was sitting at my desk, I thought, ‘That is a quite interesting story; for a few days I’ll see if I can develop it.’ In two or three months, I had the whole thing.”

The author’s sixth novel is called *Never Let Me Go*. The narrator is a clone named Kathy.

THE WINNERS: When the British Book Awards were handed out in London by Publishing News, Americans made out like bandits. Dan Brown’s *Da Vinci Code* was voted book of the year. Brown recorded his acceptance and replied to critics, including the Vatican, who have objected because the story says the Catholic Church has suppressed the knowledge that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married. Brown said, “For the record, it is a novel.”

Bill Clinton’s book, *My Life*, was named biography of the year. David Mitchell’s *Cloud Atlas* won “best read.” Brit John Mortimer, 82, was presented with a lifetime achievement award.

Brown’s *Code* made news again when Westminster Abbey in London refused to allow any of the movie version to be shot there. Reuters reported that the abbey issued a statement: “*The Da Vinci Code* is theologically unsound, and we cannot commend or endorse the contentious and wayward religious and historic suggestions made in the book, nor its view of Christianity and the New Testament. It would therefore be inappropriate to film scenes from the book here.”

PW announced that *The Da Vinci Code*, with 25 million copies out there, is the best-selling mystery of all time. It has triggered several books, including Simon Cox’s *Cracking the Da Vinci Code*. Now Cox, a British writer, has promised *Unlocking the Solomon Key*, a guide to the next Dan Brown novel, due out in the spring of 2006.

SELL, SELL, SELL: To promote *The Traveler*, a novel by John Twelve Hawks (a mysterious mystery author—his editor and agent have never met him), the publisher borrowed from movies and television. John Pitts, the marketing director at Doubleday, told The New York Times, “If you’re going to look to an industry for innovative and aggressive marketing tactics, it’s definitely those industries—not the publishing industry.”

Groups of young people with posters were sent to talk up the book at concerts. A Web campaign was planned to start discussions. Five young women dressed like one of the characters from *The Traveler* wandered around the annual book convention floor.

In her review, Janet Maslin listed the book’s influences: “There are traces of *Star Wars*, *The Matrix*, *Kill Bill* and *Minority Report*. There are echoes of *Stephen King*, *Michael Crichton*, *Joseph Campbell*, *Jeremy Bentham*, various samurai stories and (could it not have been thus?) *The Da Vinci Code*."

USA Today said Twelve Hawks likes wine and lives in New York, London and Los Angeles. Doubleday’s website quotes him: “I studied martial arts for several years and have fought both in tournaments and on the street.”

The Washington Post floated a rumor that Twelve Hawks is actually “fat, 40 and named Bernie Broadbeam.”

SUBJECT MATTER: William H. Pritchard opened his Boston Globe review of Sue Miller’s *Lost in the Forest* with: “When an interviewer once asked her why she always wrote about the family, Sue Miller replied that—as with *Conrad* and his books about the sea—it was a way to write about life.”

TRIVIA: The New York Times has a gossip column entitled “Boldface.”

It reported that, at the last PEN gala, Jonathan Franzen said, “I write with earplugs and Bose noise suppression headphones on all day. I’m failing to give you anything possibly quote worthy. I’m really sorry. I’ve cut down my writing day from eight hours to five hours, but I don’t know how that could possibly interest you. I don’t take drugs to do it.”

On the same occasion, Salman Rushdie said, “Quite often I will just be in my, you know, dressing gown or bathrobe or whatever and I will just go straight there and sit at the desk for several hours. I think it’s important, pajamas. I think you should do a little survey of how many writers write in their pajamas.”

As asked how he writes, Bernard-Henri Levy said, “Naked.”

RETURN: Brock Brower’s *Blue Dog, Green River* is his first book since 1972, when *The Late Great Creature* was nominated for a National Book Award. He couldn’t find a publisher for his next novel and told PW, “I lost my courage. I let it all go for about thirty years, and that was a big mistake.”

During those decades, Brower wrote for TV and magazines. He teaches at Dartmouth.

The new novel is about a raftman and his dog after they get separated going down the Green River in Desolation Canyon. Brower said, “I couldn’t have written this book as a younger man.”

SLOW GOING: Movie actress Helen Hunt attended a book party for her boyfriend, writer Matthew Carnahan, author of *Serpent Girl*. Asked about the novel that she is writing, Hunt told The New York Times, “It’s coming together very slowly. We used to write across from each other, before he had an office. If we wrote together, we’d Never write. We’d just make out. So we don’t do a lot of writing together.”
WITH GROCERIES: Supermarkets have become the new frontier of bookselling. In addition to paperback romances, pulp thrillers and astrology guides, chains like Wegman, Kroger and Albertsons have added big displays of hardback bestsellers. A Wegmans in Sterling, Va., held a book signing for Mary Higgins Clark and her daughter Carol Higgins Clark and sold 500 books.

Josh Marwell, president of sales for HarperCollins, told The New York Times, “Hardcover bestsellers have become more of an everyday commodity. So it’s a question of having books available where consumers are.”

Lance Parsons, Kroger category manager, said, “When you look at our business versus a bookstore, we have the opportunity to capture the same customers three times a week. Now publishers are beating down our doors.”

According to Ipsos BookTrends, books sold at grocery stores account for 3 percent of the 1.7 billion general-interest books sold in 2004. (The percentage of hardcover and trade paperbacks sold in supermarkets has jumped by 50 percent since 2001.)

The hardbacks offered in grocery stores are bestsellers like the Harry Potter books and titles by John Grisham, Nora Roberts, Mitch Albom and Danielle Steel—the same books on display in every Costco, Target and Wal-Mart.

Think about it. If your book isn’t up there between the toothpaste and Stephen King’s latest in all these outlets, fewer people will be tempted to buy it.

SENSITIVE: Paul Ruditis’s novel for young adults is Rainbow Party. PW said that “the party theme is oral sex, in which the girls wear a different colored lipstick and the boys, by evening’s end, sport a chromatic spectrum.” The event never happens, however, and the publisher, who got the idea from an Oprah program, says the book is a cautionary tale.

The chains and many booksellers are refusing to carry the book. An article in The New York Times said, “As if the book’s premise is not enough to enrage conservatives, the sex-ed teacher is a heroine who angrily quits her job because she has been forced to teach an abstinence-only curriculum, and 39 students get oral gonorrhea.”

SYNERGY: Marcie Walsh is the name of a fictional character on a soap opera, One Life to Live. She is also the author of a best-selling novel, The Killing Club. There are 150,000 copies in print. The photo on the book cover is of Kathy Brier, the actress who plays Walsh on television.

It is no accident that the TV channel carrying One Life to Live, ABC, and Hyperion, the publisher of the mystery novel, are both owned by the Disney Company. One of the writers of the show is Michael Malone, the author of several mysteries. He is credited on the book’s jacket along with Marcie Walsh.

The New York Times Magazine entitled the article on this curious ruse: “Stranger Than Fiction: In which a soap-opera character writes a novel that ends up on real-life bestseller lists.”

FETE: A 70th birthday party for Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian writer, was held at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. as host.

In addition to Soyinka, three more Nobel Prize winners attended: Toni Morrison, Derek Walcott and Nadine Gordimer.

Gordimer said, “You can’t explain why you write.” She also dismissed the value of writing programs. One either is or is not a writer, she said.

Soyinka has written that religion is the problem of the 21st century. He told The New York Times, “It is not so much religion itself but what religion has turned into, the use to which religion is being put, which is a highly political, sectarian one. In other words, religion is being taken over by fundamentalist extremism—and that’s the problem.”

FAME: Jack Kerouac has become a bobblehead doll, one of those big-headed plastic figures, with pencil and notepad in hand. The doll is in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., and 1,000 copies of it were given away at a baseball game played by the Lowell (Mass.) Spinners, a Boston Red Sox affiliate. The Associated Press reported that Hall of Fame spokesman Jeff Idelson said, “Having the Jack Kerouac bobblehead in our collection is important, given he’s an American icon who had a deep passion for the game, which he shared in his writing.”

ROLE PLAYER: Mystery writer Carl Hiaasen’s first book for children, Hoot, won a 2004 Newbery Honor and has sold more than a million copies. He told PW, “As an arrested adolescent, I feel my kids’ books are closer to my true mentality and voice.” His next for children, Flush, is due out in September.

WRITER’S ROUTE: Stacy Schiff has written prize-winning biographies of Antoine de Saint-Exupery and Vera (wife of Vladimir) Nabokov. Schiff’s new book is A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France and the Birth of America.

Before she began writing in 1989, Schiff was an editor at Simon & Schuster and had tried to commission a biography of Saint-Exupery. She couldn’t find an author. “I knew what would make a good book, and I could write a great proposal . . .,” Schiff told PW. She quit S&S and
wrote the book herself. Schiff said, “All editors are failed writers—or is it the other way around?”

PLOT: “The Dying Mystery Trick,” where the victim manages to plant a clue, was often used by Ellery Queen. Janet Maslin, of The New York Times, pointed this out in an article about a celebration at Columbia University to mark the legacy of the fictional detective.

Ellery Queen, the creation of cousins Fredric Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, both born in 1905, would have been 100 years old this year. Maslin says the best Queen mystery is a classic house-party murder called *The Finishing Stroke* (1958).

Panel speakers included Lawrence Block, the mystery writer, and Otto Penzler, the chief of the Mysterious Bookshop.

HELPERS: Jamie M. Saul, a TV writer, is the author of a first novel, *Light of Day*, about a divorced father of a 15-year-old boy who has killed himself.

Asked by PW about the possibility of sinking into melodrama with such a plot, Saul said, “I have a little gauge in me that says, Don’t go over the top. I also have a really good agent who reads this. My wife is a book editor, and she read a draft of it, and Jennifer Brehl, my editor at Morrow, really tightened it up and put the final polish on it brilliantly. I don’t think I went over the top. But if I did, they would have brought it back and said, ‘This is too much!’ I think the book has a lot of ambivalence and irony in it, and I really wanted the book to have that. No one does anything for just one reason.”

BOXED: Three novelists, Laurie Stone, Ranbir Sidhu and Grant Bailie spent a month in three boxes as participants in “Novel: A Living Installation” at the Flux Factory, an artists’ collective in Long Island City, N.Y.

Stone’s box, about 140 square feet, had walls of translucent plastic panels. Every evening, the three writers sat side by side for a meal from a local restaurant. Their goal was to each complete a novel.

Visitors were allowed to peek into the writers’ boxes during certain hours, and the trio gave weekly readings of work in progress on Saturdays. Stone told The New York Times that she had agreed to take part because “The idea of escaping from TV, all media, was very appealing.”

The Times thought the exhibition deserved an editorial and said that “The installation trivializes the nature of writing. . . . one has to hope that in a week or two, these writers will burst from their cubicles, repudiate their deadlines, and return to the world in which literature is really made.”

Four weeks later the Times reported that, while in confinement, the three writers had produced two novels and parts of two more—a total of 137,000 words. “It’s been heaven,” Laurie Stone said.

Bailie finished a novel draft and started another.

He said, “I liked the boundaries here. I knew what was expected of me. I was supposed to stay in my room a month and write a book.” Sidhu said, “I’m ahead of schedule in that I’ve composed more than twenty pages and haven’t vomited.”

JUST CHECKING: Neil Olson is head of the Donadio & Olson Literary Agency and author of *The Icon*, a novel.

PW asked him if he checked his rating on Amazon.com every day, and he said, “I only check it about once a week. I know when your rank moves up into the thousands that it can jump impressively on relatively few copies sold. I expect my mother to buy at least five copies, and I’ll be sure to check then.”

BIG FAN: Tracy Kidder, author of *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, was asked by The Boston Globe to name a book that changed his life. He said, “The book I go back to a lot is *Moby Dick*, but it is not the book I would choose as the one that influenced me most as a writer. No one can write like Melville. I would say the short stories of Ernest Hemingway have meant a lot to me. I know Hemingway has kind of gone out of vogue, but his short stories are gorgeous.”

HOW TO: Elmore Leonard’s new novel, *The Hot Kid*, inspired yet another glowing feature-interview in The New York Times, where readers were told once again that the Detroit writer says he leaves out those parts that readers tend to skip.

Leonard described how he works: “The first part moves along O.K., and then I have to think about the second part, because the second part keeps it going. And then you’ve got to get some new things, say around page 250. There are always those surprises near the end.”

Although he gets plenty of praise-full reviews, Leonard said that he writes his books “to find out what happens. I don’t write for anybody else.”

IN THE COUNTRY: Caleb Carr, the author of the best-selling *The Alien-ist* and a military historian, lives on 1,400 acres in Cherry Plains, N.Y. The place is called Misery Mountain Farm, which sounds like a Stephen King hideout. Carr’s new book is *The Italian Secretary*, a Sherlock Holmes mystery commissioned by the estate of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Carr, 49, lives alone with a cat, Suki. He designed his house, a late-18th-century country manor in-
spired by houses he saw while on a book tour in England. He told The New York Times, “I’m a fairly ascetic person, and I do most of my writing at night. You don’t get distracted, your brain goes into what you are writing about, into the world you’re writing about, rather than into the world you’re in.”

NEW NAME: John Sanford’s 16th Prey title, Broken Prey, is another bestseller. The author’s real name is John Rosewell Camp. PW explained, “When The Fool’s Run and Rules of Prey, his first Prey book, were published three months apart in 1989, Putnam wanted a pseudonym so that Fool’s publisher Henry Holt couldn’t ride on its publicity.”

AMEN: Terence Riley is architecture and design curator at the Museum of Modern Art. In an article about his apartment in The New York Times Magazine, Riley said, “I have a wall of books at home and an archipelago of books piled on the floor. There’s a notion of modernism where houses look like the interiors of refrigerators. But...I don’t live by the dogma of modern design. I think if people are too uptight to handle the unruliness of books, they probably wouldn’t create a very pleasant place to live.”

GOODBYE, BOOKS: The University of Texas at Austin has stripped its undergraduate library of almost all of its 90,000 books to make room for a 24-hour electronic information center. Dictionaries and encyclopedias remain.

This is a national trend that is being driven, academicians and librarians say, by the dwindling need for undergraduate libraries. The New York Times reported that similar digital library centers have been built at the University of Southern California, Emory University in Atlanta, The University of Georgia, the University of Arizona and the University of Michigan.

Frances Maloy, president of the Association of College and Research Libraries, praised the University of Texas and said “that a great university with a fabulous library collection recognizes it’s in the digital age.”

In a letter to the Times, Mike Perkovich of Chicago wrote, “I worry that when the next Allen Ginsberg comes to write this generation’s version of ‘Howl,’ it might well begin, “I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by power failures.”

HOLMES ECHOS: In a Los Angeles Times Book Review article, Leslie S. Klinger, editor of The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes, cited some interesting numbers about the venerable detective. At last count the number of Holmes pastiches was more than 4,000. Klinger quotes Nicholas Meyer, author of three pseudo-Holmes tales: “We should all write Holmes pastiches. [By doing so] we each challenge ourselves to take the restrictions imposed upon us by [A. Conan] Doyle and see what aspects of ourselves can be brought to light by such a transfusion.”

Klinger said, “One of the sorrier tendencies has been to draw other well-known figures into Holmes’ universe, perhaps in an effort to add verisimilitude.” These include Freud, Karl Marx, Theodore Roosevelt, Oscar Wilde, Lily Langtry, Sarah Bernhardt and Jack the Ripper. Holmes has also met many famous fictional folks: Count Dracula, Dr. Jekyll and Lord Greystoke, a.k.a. Tarzan.

LONG LIFE, SHORT BOOK: Peter Pouncey, 67, is the author of Rules for Old Men Waiting. Pouncey, a former dean at Columbia University, said that he had written his novel by pulling together 1,000 pages or so of fragments of fiction and rumination that he had begun in 1981. During seven weeks in 2004, he distilled those scraps into the 200-page manuscript of Rules.

The book covers the life of Robert Maclver, the fictional narrator, encompassing three wars, a 40-year marriage, the meaning of history and narrative and the pleasures of art and sex. Pouncey’s editor, Ileen Smith, said, “In this case the really difficult work was done by the author.”

Pouncey told The New York Times that he and his fictional Maclver do have some things in common. “Maclver is in the position I want to be in at the end.” The character refuses to die until he finishes his story. “There is a clock running on you and not the clock of mortality but the thought that there is an unknown date when you may lose your marbles, when you can’t focus, you can’t write, you can’t pull together complex thoughts. That perception is strong for Maclver and me.”

LATE START: Fifty authors were interviewed for a book entitled Conversations with Texas Writers. In the introduction, it was noted that the first Texas book printed in English came out in 1833. The author was a woman, Mary Austin Holley.

BLOG TO BOOK: In 2000, Wendy McClure of Chicago started a blog to chart her weight loss. Then an agent suggested that she turn her material into a book, I’m Not the New Me. The Boston Globe described the book as “part comic memoir, part diary and part social commentary.”

McClure said, “I didn’t want a blog that was totally about losing weight, that was goal oriented. It was weird to have people say, ‘You’re my inspiration,’ and I had no inspiration for me. It worked for other people but doesn’t work for me.”
FOR LAUGHS: “Lit Life” is a weekly series of bad writing read aloud at a Manhattan restaurant called Elmo. Each session tackles a different subject, from sex to self-help. Ballet dancer Robert La Fosse made fun of his autobiography, Nothing to Hide. Performers read excerpts from Ethan Hawke’s novels The Hottest State and Ash Wednesday, actress Yvonne De Carlo’s Yvonne: An Autobiography, Eve Ensler’s Good Body, Oliver North’s Mission Compromised and Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin.

The New York Times reported that the crowd was in stitches listening to the chapter in which Stowe describes Little Eva’s death from consumption. Little Eva said, “I am going to give all of you a curl of my hair; and when you look at it, think that I am in heaven and that I want to see you all there.”

Grady Hendrix, one of the organizers who helps select the texts said, “To pick something that’s bad and bad enough to be entertaining is really a lot of work.”

SALESMAN: Adriana Trigiana lives in Manhattan’s Greenwich Village. She’s the author of Big Stone Gap, The Queen of the Big Time and Rococo.

PW said that four times a week she puts on headphones and chats by telephone with book groups around America. She said, “I consider it part of my job. Five years ago, an author went on tour for two months, if at all. But now I know that this is an ongoing process, year-round.”

CLOTHES: While Tom Wolfe was in Brazil promoting his latest novel, I Am Charlotte Simmons, he told the Associated Press that his next book would not be fiction. He plans to write about Wall Street men who disguise themselves by dressing down and acting like bad seeds.

“After all,” Wolfe said, “what is a rich man who dresses in a style known as post-homeless trying to say? That’s why there are so many bad marriages. A girl can no longer tell where a young man stands just by looking at him.”

As for Wolfe, he certainly never looks like a homeless bum. The author was traveling with five of his trademark white suits.

After he got back from Brazil, Wolfe turned up on the Today show to promote a new, illustrated edition of The Right Stuff, published 25 years ago. He was, of course, wearing a white suit. Host Matt Lauer asked Wolfe how many white suits he had, and the author said, “I used to have a lot, but I have only 24 now.” He explained that suits like his could be worn only for three or four hours before they needed cleaning.

STILL GOING: Stanley Kunitz, the poet, was 99 when The New York Times had an article about him and his garden in Provincetown, Mass. Back when the title was “consultant in poetry,” Kunitz served as poet laureate of the U.S twice and won a Pulitzer. The photograph showed a balding gnome surrounded by greenery.

He told the Times, “I conceived of the garden as a poem in stanzas. Each terrace contributes to the garden as a whole in the same way each stanza in a poem has a life of its own.” He continued, “The form provides some degree of repose, letting our mind rest in the comparatively manageable unit of the stanza, or terrace.”

FEUD: Alan M. Dershowitz, Harvard Law School faculty member and author, complained about Beyond Chutzpah by Norman G. Finkelstein of DePaul University, before publication, and the New Press delayed the book. The Finkelstein book is concerned with Dershowitz’s The Case for Israel, published in 2003. The New Press said it had delayed the book “because we’d had these very aggressive letters from Dershowitz . . . we wanted to make sure that we had all of our arguments marshaled.”

Finkelstein took the book to the University of California Press, which rushed it into print. “Because of the timeliness of the book, I didn’t want to lose an extra few months,” he told The New York Times.

SIGHTING: Rarely seen or heard from, Harper Lee, author of To Kill a Mockingbird, was honored with the Los Angeles Public Library Literary Award. The novel won the 1961 Pulitzer. According to The New York Times, Lee, 79, was invited to the ceremony by Veronique Peck, widow of actor Gregory Peck, who played the lawyer Atticus Finch in the film version of the book. The award was presented to Lee by the actor Brock Peters, who played the man falsely accused of rape in the movie.

BOOK LOVERS: The Welsh town of Hay has a population of only 1,300, but there are 39 bookshops to serve them. On hand to help celebrate the 18th annual Guardian Hay Festival in June were Jonathan Safran Foer (Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close), Goldie Hawn (A Lotus Grows in the Mud), Jane Fonda (My Life So Far) and Kazuo Ishiguro (The Remains of the Day).

EXPLAINER: Mo Willems is a writer-illustrator of children’s books with Knuffle Bunny on the bestseller lists. The book is about a stuffed rabbit left in a Laundromat. The Brooklyn resident won six Emmy Awards as a writer for Sesame Street, and his books have been honored by Caldecott.

Willems has four more books coming out this year. He told The Orange County Register that children loved to hear readings of Knuffle Bunny, although outside ur-
banned areas he has had to explain: “Some kids are not aware of what a Laundromat is.”

GIFT: Dr. Seuss wrote Oh, the Places You’ll Go!, his last book, for children, but it turns up on bestseller lists every spring because it’s become a gift for college graduates. PW says there are now more than seven million copies in print.

AUDIO: According to the National Endowment for the Arts, “Fewer Americans are reading books than a decade ago, but almost a third more are listening to them on tapes, CDs and iPhones.” The New York Times commented that “audio books, once seen as a kind of oral CliffsNotes for reading lightweights, have seduced members of a literate but busy crowd by allowing them to read while doing something else.”

Author Ben Cheever told the Times: “I read a book a week, but I probably listen to three.”

Author Anita Diamant said, “We listened to stories before we read them . . . I’m so grateful that anybody wants to read anything I’ve written, if they want to listen to it, that’s fabulous.”

Sue Miller said, “I think listening to an audio is not as intense an experience. But it is one I’m delighted for people to have if that’s what they choose.”

Times readers reacted with letters. Preston Wilson of Genoa, N.Y., wrote, “Audio books have created a vibrant new art form. To be seduced by the printed word coming to life, how great is that!”

David Rapp of Beverly, Mass., wrote, “As a writer, I feel obliged to point out that listening to someone read a book aloud is not the same as reading one.

“The place where a paragraph breaks is every bit as important as the sentences that make up that paragraph. The point where a writer places a single comma can be crucial to the meaning of a scene, a chapter or an entire book.

“Books are a visual medium, after all. We’re not writing radio scripts here.”

BANNING: Sixteen-year-old Brittany Hunsicker of Muhlenberg, Pa., got up before the school board and read from Adam Rapp’s young-adult novel, The Buffalo Tree. “What she read,” according to The New York Times, “was a scene set in a communal shower, where another adolescent boy is sexually aroused.”

The book had been on the 11th grade reading list since 2000, but the board banned it. Judith Krug, director of the American Library Association’s office for intellectual freedom, attributed a current rise in book banning to the re-election of President George W. Bush. She said, “In 1980, we were dealing with an average of 300 or so challenges a year, and then Reagan was elected. Challenges went to 1,000 a year.”

At the next meeting the board voted to rescind the ban. “No one is more critical of literature than English teachers,” Stacia Richmond, a teacher, told the board. “Do you really think we as educators choose literature in terms of its titillation? Do you not realize we are battling the same immorality you are?”

MONEY TALK: Americans spend more money buying books than they do going to movies or buying recorded music, video games or DVDs, according to The New York Times. In the three years that ended in December, the amount that consumers spent on books rose 8 percent, to nearly $21 billion.

The growth has been fueled largely by the expanding popularity of religious-themed books. In 2004, sales of these books rose 17 percent, to $3.8 billion.

The editorial page of the Times followed up this rosy account with, “The driving force behind the increase in revenue is higher prices, not more books sold. In fact, the number of books sold has declined 3 percent in the last three years.”

BIG PRIZE: An Albanian novelist, Ismail Kadare, 69, was awarded the $115,000 Man Booker International literary prize. His novels include Broken April, The Concert and The General of the Dead Army. One of the judges said Kadare was “a universal writer in a tradition of storytelling that goes back to Homer.”

JOINS CHORUS: Beatles Paul McCartney will become yet another of those celebrities with his name on the cover of a book for children. The father of five’s book will be entitled High in the Clouds: An Urban Furry Tail. The New York Times said the picture book will be about a squirrel and a frog that rescue a number of other animals. Publication will be in October with a first printing of 500,000 copies.

CONVENTION: The book industry show, BookExpo America, was held in Manhattan in June, and The New York Times reported that “editors pushing their titles . . . outdid each other with hyperbole.” With 2,000 exhibiting companies, there was a lot of hype going on. An attendance of 30,000 was reported. C-SPAN2 telecast several of the panels and conducted interviews with authors and publishing figures.

To give some of the flavor, the Times said, “On Friday afternoon, four young publicists from Tor Books were spotted in a corner trying to get one of them, Melissa Broder, into an 8-foot-tall hotdog costume; it did have an air pump so the wearer could breathe. They were promoting Invasion of the Road Weenies by David Lubar.

“Finally, they zipped Ms. Broder up. Fiona Lee took her hand, or paw, or whatever, and led her across the convention floor.”
like your photo taken with a giant weenie?” Ms. Lee asked, over and over again.”

OUT: Jonathan Karp, 41, editor in chief of Random House Inc., resigned. He told The New York Times, “Sometimes in life you have to take risks. One of my favorite writers, Jane Jacobs, talks about the benefits of drift in life. After 16 years, I want to do a little creative drifting. I honestly don’t know what is out there, but I’m certain there are exciting opportunities.”

Not long after, Karp was named publisher and editor in chief of a new imprint at Warner Books. His plan is to publish only 12 books a year. He said that “by publishing no more than one book per month, I’ll be able to assure authors and literary agents that each of our books will have a clear shot at reaching its audience.”

FETE: Madonna’s fifth book for children is called Lotsa de Casha. It is about a greyhound that learns the value of sharing. Its publication was kicked off at Bergdorf Goodman in New York, where signed books cost $75 (proceeds went to Unicef). Hopping around among the Kenneth J. Lane jewelry and Isabella Fiore handbags were people dressed in 18th century costumes and made up to look like greyhounds, rabbits and other characters from the book.

The New York Times reported that Madonna arrived an hour and a half late, “leading a train of photographers, security guards, a publicist, an assistant and a makeup artist.”

Rui Paes, the illustrator, noted that the party celebrated a book about how money doesn’t buy happiness. He said, “One must see that one is able to do good while living in luxury.”

QUARTET: James J. Braddock was a heavyweight champion boxer almost seven decades ago. Now he is the subject of a film, Cinderella Man, and four books. They are Jim Hague’s Braddock: The Rise of the Cinderella Man, Jeremy Schaap’s Cinderella Man: James J. Braddock, Max Baer and the Greatest Upset in Boxing History, Mark Cerasini’s Cinderella Man (the official movie tie-in title) and Michael C. DeLisa’s Cinderella Man: The James J. Braddock Story.

Josah Behar acquired one of the books for Harper. He told The New York Times, “The market is small for this, and having four books out is difficult and it hurts every single one of them.”

This quartet was followed by a fifth, published in July, entitled Cinderella Man: The Shooting Script. The film was a box office disappointment.

HOT: PW reported that James Patterson has 100 million books in print. His books have grossed more than $1 billion in sales worldwide, and there have been 16 consecutive No. 1 bestsellers. PW called him, “A firecracker of a writer.”

SEX PLUS: The New York Times Book Review said that novelist Eric Jerome Dickey has “perfected an addictive formula” for his books. Included are “cheating, lying, back-stabbing.”

His 11th novel, Genevieve, hit the Times bestseller list in its first week. It opens with a sex scene (“she sings my name in three octaves”), and then the narrator says, “She’s my wife’s sister. This is our affair.”

JUST ASKING: Victor Navasky, publisher of The Nation magazine, was interviewed on the publication of his memoir, A Matter of Opinion. Navasky told PW’s John F. Baker that he was puzzled that, by tradition, book publishers do not fact-check. “Don’t they have an obligation to the truth of what they publish?” Navasky asked.

RERUN: Rona Jaffe’s 1958 novel, The Best of Everything, was described in The New York Times: “Notorious in its time for its candor about sex, it is today widely regarded as a cultural marker, providing the template for the gossipy genre of confessional fiction about women popularly known as chick lit.”

The novel has been brought out again, and Jaffe, 73, told the Times that her novel was “Sex and the City without the vibrators.”

OH: Christopher Hitchens, columnist for Vanity Fair and author of a new book, Thomas Jefferson: Author of America, wrote a signed review for PW of George Packer’s The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq. Hitchens wrote that he, Hitchens, makes “an appearance” in the book, “and, to my frustration, can find nothing to quarrel with.”

TOO BAD: Peggy Lipton was a member of television’s The Mod Squad back in the early 1970s. Now she has joined the celebrities who have written memoirs. Hers is called Breathing Out.

Her attitude about letting it all hang out was expressed in a speech she made at a book party in California where she said, “For those of you in my life who I didn’t write about, I’m sorry I left you out. And for those I did write about and you’re upset, too”—expletive deleted—“bad.” The New York Times doesn’t print that seven-letter word.

WHAT SELLS: Carrie Feron, a romance editor at Avon, told PW: “We buy more historicals than contemporaries, so for us the contemporaries are riskier. Contemporaries have a much higher upside if they break through, but in the main it’s easier to sell a great historical romance by an unknown writer than a great contemporary romance by an unknown writer.”
WHO'S COUNTING? Having trouble finding just the right title? Have you considered numbers? David McCullough’s new book, 1776, appeared at No. 1 on the bestseller lists. (The first printing was 1.2 million copies, and McCullough toured 22 cities.) In the spring Winston Groom’s 1942 was published. In August, Charles Mann’s 1491 came out. A couple of other recent titles: 1421 (the year China discovered America) and 1215 (the year of Magna Carta).

EMPIRE: Last year, Janet Evanovich, 62, sold an estimated one million books in hardcover and three million paperbacks, earning more than $3 million in royalties from the paperbacks and several million more in advances and royalties on the hardcovers. The New York Times refers to her “empire,” which employs her husband, son and daughter.

Evanovich’s latest is Eleven on Top. Her first week of book signings take place at stores that report their sales to the publications that publish bestseller lists. Thousands of fans show up at her publication “fests” in Trenton, N.J. She has an Internet site and a newsletter, television commercials and radio spots. There is an online shop that sells hats, mugs and other items.

Evanovich told The Times, “I’m a writer, but this is a business. You have to look at it in the way you would look at any business. . . . You have to meet consumer expectations. You give them value for their money and give them a product that they need. I don’t see anything wrong with all these things. And I don’t think it’s a bad thing to meet consumers’ expectations.”

RESEARCH: John Irving’s new novel is Until I Find You. One of the characters is a famous tattoo artist, and the author, by way of research, got a couple of tattoos. On his right arm is the starting circle of a wrestling mat, and on his left shoulder is a maple leaf for his wife, Janet Turnbull, a Canadian.

Irving, 62, told The New York Times that after his manuscript had been accepted, he called it back. “It was too confessional when it was in the first person.” Irving rewrote it in the third person and said, “My spirits lifted. Jack Burns [the fictional hero] wasn’t me anymore.”

SELF-PUBLISHED: Nick Katsoris, an Eastchester, N.Y., lawyer, wrote a story for his small son about a lamb named Loukoumi. Katsoris told The New York Times, “In Greece it’s a kind of candy. I thought it would be a good name for a character.” Katsoris hired an illustrator and printer and published the book without an agent or editor. He arranged a book tour with Barnes & Noble and had a display at BookExpo America. He talked about the book on local television and sold out the first printing of 2,000 at $15.95 a copy. He’s ordered a second printing and has commissioned a plush toy based on the character.

JOB CHANGES, NEW TITLES* After 17 years at Putnam’s, Kathy Dawson has been named associate editor at Harcourt Children’s Books.

Maja Thomas is editor-at-large for the Time Warner Book Group, with focus on acquiring books with a West Coast flavor.

Ellen Stamper is editorial director of the HarperFestival group.

Ivan Held is the new head of Putnam. Dan Collins, former executive editor at HarperCollins, now has the same title at Putnam. Rachel Kahan, formerly at Crown, is a senior editor at Putnam.

Michelle Howry has been promoted to senior editor at Perigee Books.

Dorian Karchmar, previously at Lowenstein-Yost Associates, has joined William Morris Agency, representing both literary and mainstream fiction.

Leah Hultenschmidt and Kate Seaver have been named senior editors at Berkley, where both will acquire romances, chick lit, mysteries and nonfiction.

Lawrence Kirshbaum has resigned as chief of Warner Books, and he told an interviewer on C-SPAN that he planned to become an agent.

Allison McCabe has been named senior editor at Crown, where she is acquiring fiction and nonfiction. She’s also in charge of expanding Crown’s historical fiction program.

Robert Kirkpatrick is at the Lyons Press, acquiring titles in sports, history and current events.

Gary Hoening, editor-in-chief of ESPN The Magazine, will also be in charge of acquisitions and editing at ESPN Books.

Anne Schwartz and Lee Wade are vice presidents and co-directors of Schwartz & Wade Books, a new imprint at Random House Children’s Books.

*Compiled from PW

DEATHS

Paul Abrecht, 87, died May 21 in Geneva, Switzerland. The American ethicist was the author of The Churches and Rapid Social Change (1961) and editor of Fifty Years of Ecumenical Social Thought (1988).

Shana Alexander, 79, died June 23 in Hermosa Beach, Calif. The journalist was the author of Anyone’s Daughter (1979), Very Much a Lady: The Untold Story of Jean Harris and Dr. Herman Tarnower (1983), When She was Bad (1990), Nutcracker: Money, Madness, Murder (1985) and a memoir: Happy Days: My Mother, My Father, My Sister and Me (1995).

David T. Blazelon, 82, died April 25 in Madison, Wis.


**Thomas D. Clark**, 101, died June 28 in Lexington, Ky. The historian was the author, coauthor or editor of more than 40 books, starting with a history of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, in 1933. His *The History of Kentucky* (1937) is still in print in a revised version.


**Tristan Egolf**, 33, died May 7 in Lancaster, Pa. He was the author of *Lord of the Barnyard: Killing the Fatted Calf and Arming the Aware in the Corn Belt* (1999) and *Skirt and the Fiddle* (2002). A third novel, *Kornwolf*, is scheduled to be published next year.


**David Hackworth**, 74, died May 4 in Tijuana, Mexico. The military officer and journalist was author of *About Face: The Odyssey of an American Warrior* (1989) and a novel, *The Price of Honor* (1999), and coauthor of *Hazardous Duty: America’s Most Decorated Living Soldier Reports from the Front and Tells It the Way It Is* (1996).


When She Died (1972) and Fuzz (1986). The 55th and last 87th Precincnt novel, Learning to Kill, was published in September.

Oliver Jensen, 91, died June 30 in Chester, Conn. A former editor of American Heritage magazine, Jensen was the author of Carrier War (1945), The Revolt of American Women (1952) and The American Heritage History of Railroads in America (1975).

Elizabeth Orton Jones, 94, died May 10 in Peterborough, N.H. She wrote or illustrated more than 20 books, including a novel, Twig. Her illustrations for Prayer for a Child won the 1945 Caldecott Medal.


Ernest Lehman, 89, died July 2 in Los Angeles. The screenwriter was the author of a novella, The Sweet Smell of Success (1950), two novels: The French Atlantic Affair (1977) and Farewell Performance (1982), and a collection of essays, Screening Sickness and Other Tales of Tinsel Town (1982).

Faith McNulty, 86, died April 10 in Wakefield, R.I. She was the author of The Whooping Crane: The Bird That Defies Extinction (1966), How to Dig a Hole to the Other Side of the World (1979) and The Burning Bed: The True Story of an Abused Wife (1977).

Robert Plate, 86, died May 14 in East Hampton, N.Y. He was the author of historical biographies for young people, including The Dinosaur Hunters: Cope and Marsh (1964), Palette and Tomahawk: The Story of George Catlin (1962), Charles Wilson Peale: Son of Liberty, Father of Art and Science (1967) and John Singleton Copley: America's First Great Artist (1969).

Richard Popkin, 81, died April 14 in Santa Monica, Calif. The historian wrote or edited 36 books, including The History of Scepticism from Savonarola to Bayle (2003) and Spinoza (2004). He edited the Columbia History of Western Philosophy (1999).

Judith Rossner, 70, died August 9 in Manhattan. She was the author of Looking for Mr. Goodbar (1975), August (1983), Emmeline (1980), Attachments (1977), Olivia (1944) and Perfidia (1997).


Claude Simon, 91, died July 6 in Paris. The 1985 Nobel laureate was author of more than a dozen novels, including The Wind (1959), The Flanders Road (1960), and The Jardin des Plantes (1997).

Gustaf Sobin, 69, died July 7 in Cavaillon in the south of France. The American poet and writer was the author of The Fly-Truffer (2000), three other novels and a dozen books of poetry, including Wind Chrysalid's Rattle (1980).

Kenneth Taylor, 88, died June 10 in Wheaton, Ill. He created a bestselling Living Bible (1972) and wrote children's books, including The Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes.

H. Richard Uviller, 75, died April 19 in Manhattan. He was the author of Tempered Zeal: A Columbia University Professor's Year on the Streets with the New York City Police (1988) and Virtual Justice: The Flawed Prosecution of Crime in America (1996).

Steven C. Vincent, 49, was killed in Iraq on August 2. The freelance writer was author of In the Red Zone: A Journey into the Soul of Iraq (2004).


Nathaniel Weyl, 94, died April 13 in Ojai, Calif. The economist was the author of Treason (1950) and Red Star over Cuba (1960).

Catherine Woolley, 100, died July 27 in Truro, Mass. She was the author of 87 children's books (some signed by a pen name, Jane Thayer). Her first book was I Like Trains (1944) and her last was Writing for Children (1989). She also wrote a series, Ginnie and Geneva, for older children. ✪
BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Clint Adams: Don’t Be Afraid of Heaven; Fear Ain’t All That; David A. Adler: President George Washington; Lloyd Alexander: Dream of Jade: The Emperor’s Cat; Elaine Marie Alphin: The Perfect Shot; Gigi Amateau: Claiming Georgia Tate; Nancy A. Anderson: Elementary Children’s Literature; The Basics for Teachers and Parents; Sheryl J. Anderson: Killer Cocktail; Jeff Angus: Management by Baseball; Piers Anthony: Pet Peeve: Xanth #29; Peggy Archer: Turkey Surprise; Katya Arnold: Elephant’s Can Paint Too; Linda Ashman: Starry Safari; To the Beach!; Jeannette Atkins: How High Can We Climb? The Story of Women Explorers; Deborah Turrell Atkinson: The Green Room; Avi: Poppy’s Return: The Book Without Words: A Fable of Medieval Magic;


Meg Cabot: Ready or Not: An All-American Girl Novel; Mark Caldwell: New York Night: The Mystique and Its History; Stephanie Calmenson: Kindergarten Kids: Tafty Cannon: Paradise Lost; Laurie Winn Carlson: William J. Spillman and the Birth of Agricultural Economics; Nancy Castaldo: Pizza for the Queen; Miriam Chaiken: Angel Secrets: Stories Based on Jewish Legend; Jane Chance: Tolkien and the Invention; Women Medievalists and the Academy; Jerome Charyn: Savage Shoreland: The Life and Death of Isaac Babel; (Ed.): Inside the Hornet’s Head: An Anthology of Jewish American Writing; Evelyn B. Christensen: More Multiplication Mosaics; Douglas Clegg: The Priest of Blood; Andrew Clements: Because Your Daddy Loves You!: Lunch Money; Slippers at School; Bruce Clements: What Erika Wants; Shirley Climo: Monkey Business: Stories from Around the World; Catherine Clinton: Hold the Flag High; Kate Clinton: What the L?; Margaret Coel: Eye of the Wolf; Joanna Cole: Ms. Frizzle’s Adventures: Imperial China; Sneed B. Collard, III: A Platypus, Probably: Dog Sense; The Prairie Builders: Reconstructing America’s Lost Grasslands; Paul Collins: The Trouble with Tom: The Strange Aftermath and Times of Thomas Paine; Suzanne Collins: Gregor and the Curse of the Warmbloods; Michael Connelly: The Lincoln Lawyer; Elisha Cooper: A Good Night Walk; Audrey Couloumbis: The Misadventures of Maude March: or, Trouble Rides a Fast Horse; Bruce Co-ville: Thor’s Wedding Day; Judy Cox: Don’t Be Silly, Mrs. Millie!: That Crazy Eddie and the Science Project of Doom; Patrick H. Crowe: Oprah for President: Run, Oprah, Runt!; Jane Cutler: Rose and Riley Come and Go;


Parnell Hall: Stalking the Puzzle Lady; John T. Halliday: Flying Through Midnight; Joan Hiatt Harlow: Midnight Rider; Elizabeth Hatch: Halloween Night; Carol Hebdal: Spinster by the Sea; Daniel Hecht: Puppets; Jeff Hecht: Beam: The Race to Make the Laser; Understanding Fiber Optics; Thomas A. Heinz: Green & Greene: Creating a Style; Karen Hesse: The Young Hans Christian Andersen; Carl Hiassen: Flush; Laban Carrick Hill: Casa Azul: An Encounter with Frida Kahlo; Mary Ann Hoberman: You Read to Me, I’ll Read to You; Alice Hoffman: The Foretelling; William Hoffman: Lies; Stacy Horn: The Restless Sleep; Inside New York City’s Cold Case Squad; Patricia Hubbell: Trains; Mark Peter Hughes: I Am the Wallpaper; Jeanette Ingold: Hitch;


Marsha Qualey: Just Like That;


Jane Yager: Career Opportunities in the Publishing Industry; Jane Yolen: Baby Bear’s Chairs; How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?; Moos: Cat Stories from Around the World; Pay the Piper; Soft House; Jane Yolen (and Patrick Nielsen Hayden): The Year’s Best Science Fiction and Fantasy for Teens; Gabrielle Zevin: Elsewhere; Harriet Ziefert: Buzzy Had a Little Lamb; Circus Parade; Mark Richard Zubro: Nerds Who Kill
**MEMBERS MAKE NEWS**

Dr. P.M.H. Atwater was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Association of Transpersonal Hypnotherapists at their 2005 conference in Virginia Beach, Va.


Richard Cortez Day’s collection, *Something for the Journey*, won the 2004 Spokane Prize for Short Fiction. The prize includes an award of $1,500 and publication by Eastern Washington University Press.

Ken Derby’s *The Top 10 Ways to Ruin the First Day of 5th Grade* has been selected by the Children’s Book Council and the International Reading Association as a Children’s Choice 2005 honor book.

The School Library Media section of the New York State Library Association presented its 2005 Knickerbocker Award for Juvenile Literature to Margery Facklam.

Parke Godwin’s novel about Robin Hood, *Sherwood*, has been optioned for a film by DeWarrenne Ltd. in England.

Literary critic and former U.S. Poet Laureate Daniel Hoffman was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by Swarthmore College at commencement in May.

The North American Branch of the International Association of Crime Writers announced that *Prince of Thieves*, by Chuck Hogan, has been named the winner of the annual Hammett Prize.

Rochelle Krich’s *Grave Endings* has won two awards: The 2005 Mary Higgins Clark Award, given by the Mystery Writers of America, and the Left Coast Crime Calavera Award.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science and Subaru presented the 2005 Science Book and Films Prize for Excellence in Science Books to Patricia Lauber for her contribution to children’s science literature.

Kate McLeod has been awarded a one-month fellowship by the Jentel Artist Residency Program, in Sheridan, Wyo.

Amy Nathan’s *Count on Us: American Women in the Military* won the 2005 Clarion Award for best nonfiction book. The award is given by the Association for Women in Communications.

Reya Patton’s *Christmas Angels* won Honorable Mention as the Spiritual/Inspirational Merit Book for 2005 by the Colorado Independent Publishers Association.

*Tibetan Tales for Little Buddhas* by Naomi C. Rose won the 2005 Nautilus Book Award in the Children’s Illustrated Book category.

Marjorie Ryerson has been named the 2005 recipient of the International Harry E. Schlenz Medal for her 2003 book, *Water Music*, and a related water-projection project. The award is given for public education about the importance of water quality.

ForeWord Magazine chose the memoir *Still Pitching* by Mike Steinberg as the Small and Independent Press Memoir/Autobiography of the Year. ForeWord’s annual Book of the Year Award was established to bring increased attention from librarians and booksellers to independent publishers and their authors.

Margaret Wiley’s picture book, *Clever Beatrice and the Best Little Pony*, received the 7th Annual Anne Izard Storyteller’s Choice Award.

The American Academy of Arts and Letters gave its annual awards. Edwidge Danticat won the Benjamin H. Danks Award and $20,000 as a promising young writer; Daniel Hoffman won the Arthur Rense Poetry Prize and $20,000; and Jeff Talarigo won the $5,000 Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation Award, as a young novelist.
Roanoke Review is holding its annual short story Fiction Contest. The winner gets $1,500 and publication in the Roanoke Review. All entries will be considered for publication. Submit an unpublished story of up to 8,000 words with a $15 entry fee, which includes a copy of the prize issue, by November 11, 2005. Send a SASE or visit the website for more details. Roanoke Review, Fiction Contest, 221 College Lane, Salem, VA 24153. Paul Hanstedt, Editor. www.roanoke.edu/roanokereview

Perugia Press’s Intro Award carries a prize of $1,000 and publication by Perugia Press for a first or second book of poetry by a woman. Submit a manuscript of 48 to 72 pages with a $20 entry fee by November 15, 2005. Send a SASE, e-mail, or visit the website for more information. Perugia Press, Intro Award, P.O. Box 60364, Florence, MA 01062. Susan Kan, Director. info@perugiapress.com, www.perugiapress.com

The American Library Association is holding its annual W. Y. Boyd Literary Award to honor the best fiction set in a period when the United States was at war. It recognizes the service of American veterans and military personnel and encourages the writing and publishing of outstanding war-related fiction. A cash prize of $5,000 is given to the winner. Publishers or authors must submit seven copies of the work and the application by December 1, 2005. ALA, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. feedback@ala.org, www.ala.org

The Boston Authors Club is accepting publisher submissions for its two annual Julia Ward Howe Awards, for trade books copyrighted in 2005. One is for an adult book, one for a book for young readers (beginning with chapter books through young adult books). Authors must live or have lived within a 100-mile radius of Boston (school or college counts). Honorable mention is given to finalists; special awards and recommendations may be given. Children’s picture books and self-published works are not accepted. Two copies of each book must be submitted, and will not be returned or acknowledged. Deadline for submissions is January 15, 2006, but early submission is desirable. Awards to be presented at the Boston Public Library on May 11, 2006. Please send books to The Boston Authors Club, c/o Andrew McAleer, 121 Follen Road, Lexington, MA 02421. ✪

Letters

Continued from page 2

A

s an English major at SUNY Buffalo in the mid-1970s, I had the privilege of taking several courses with Bob Creeley. At that time he was Buffalo’s unofficial poet laureate, having already published at least four (that I remember) well-received collections of poems, and, along with Gary Snyder, Gregory Corso and a few other friends, was a survivor and loving memoirist of the beat generation. As a “famous” professor teaching undergraduates, Bob Creeley went against stereotype: he was completely accessible to his students, encouraging of our development as writers and people, generous and effusive when our work was strong, and wonderfully interested in our day-to-day lives.

Bob’s funny and touching commentary as we watched Ginsberg and Kerouac’s antics in Pull My Daisy, which he showed in class, may not have translated directly into the creative writing curriculum, but it was one of the high points in my undergraduate career. Three years ago, when my husband Stan Johnson’s (and to a lesser extent my) first novel was published, and we were brainstorming how we could create the buzz that Penguin apparently wasn’t pursuing, I thought about Bob, Googled him, and seeing that he was alive, seemingly well and still writing, entertained the idea of reconnecting by sending him a copy of Once a Ranger. The note that I never wrote would have explained that while it took me 25 years to get (almost) published, here it is. Late last night as I thumbed through the Summer 2005 Bulletin, I somehow stumbled across the paragraph about the death of Robert Creeley, and, feeling my pulse quicken, tried to convince myself that this was a coincidence, not a typo, and that I could e-mail Bob today and reconnect. Once again, I Googled Robert Creeley, and got numerous hits. The first two sites discussed his body of work in the present and were actually encouraging, but the final italicized line of the third was less kind: Robert Creeley died on March 30, 2005. Only 78. And through my sadness at the passing of this wonderful man and brilliant poet, teacher, mentor and, I’d like to think friend, I smiled at the irony. A typo in his obituary! He would have smiled too.

Nora Hirschberger Johnson
Port Washington, NY

Continued on page 44
Beth Dickey proves that we are going to hell in a handbasket. First, she says she would do a “pre-interview.” There is no such thing. There either is or is not an interview. Did she mean she would conduct an interview prior to sending the chicken out for another interview? Gawd!

Next, she says she is “going to be perfectly honest.” Hmm. In light of this declaration of candor, as if an exception, if I were to talk with Ms. Dickey I would conclude that I would have to weigh carefully what she said.

Richard P. McDonough
Irvine, CA

I had to send you a tardy response to the long Symposium in the Summer Bulletin about publicity. It was hilarious, reminding me of nothing so much as an extended skit on Comedy Central. I found myself chuckling most of the time, much the way I do when watching CC. I feel that maybe the editorial person who prepared this for the Bulletin felt this way too, as he or she picked out some of the funniest quotes to highlight in the boxes. I’m sure much of what the panelists said—or perhaps it would be better to say delivered—is true, too.

Barbara Ford
Mendham, NJ

Every publication needs a little constructive criticism now and then. So I’m reflecting upon my latest issue (Summer 2005) of the Authors Guild Bulletin. Your “From the President” is always required reading. This person has access to almost everything in the writing world and can present a concise overview of it all.

Articles such as “The Bellow You Didn’t Know” are always interesting. What aspiring writer doesn’t savor anecdotes about their heroes?

An example of what I can do without is the coverage of the Authors Guild Foundation Symposium on writers seeking publicity. The 15 pages (15! pages, mind you) of the four panelists and their moderator’s back-and-forth, every word, chit chat was for the birds that pick the barnyard.

The 12 pages of Along Publishers Row was justifiable.

Books by Members: Is that for new books, old books by members, or both?

In Bulletin Board, I observed info on how to submit entries for a short story contest with a deadline of July 31, 2005. I did not receive my copy of the Authors Guild Bulletin until August 9, 2005.

How does all the foregoing affect my allegiance to the Authors Guild? Well, I still have faith in fellowship and loyalty to everything I love. Thus, I’ve sent my dues for the forthcoming year.

Mathew J. Bowyer
Roanoke, VA

Thanks for the constructive criticism and the praise. Re your specific questions: Books by Members is for recently published books by members. We apologize for having failed to yank the July 31 Bulletin Board item in time. Ed.

I will be 83 in eight months, and am still a member of the Authors Guild and the Screenwriter’s Guild West.

Early on I had representation in New York and Hollywood. Now I cannot beg, borrow or steal representation. Without it, no matter my accomplishments—which include 12 published novels, many of which won awards, and three nonfiction books on farming that are still in print after eight years—I cannot beg, borrow or steal entrée to a main-line publisher. (One exception: Nancy Hammerslough, the courageous editor at Brown Barn Books, Connecticut, who in 2004 published my young adult novel, Home to the Sea.)

Three years ago, at the age of 79, I sent letters to 30 agents detailing my publications and accomplishments. I received one reply, written in longhand across my letter: “Thanks but no thanks.”

I called that agent in her New York office, introduced myself, and politely requested an explanation. Her response: “Let’s face it, Mr. Aaron, you are 79 years old. Why should I waste my time and money on you?”

My letter containing her comment, sent to the AARP, received no response.

I want that agent and the editors of the AARP Bulletin and the editors and readers of the Authors Guild Bulletin and all writers young and old to know that age, like taste, is in the eyes of the beholder.*

Chester Aaron
Occidental, CA

* Pun intended

In our Summer issue, we incorrectly reported that the panel discussion, Standing Above the Crowd, was an Authors Guild and Authors Guild Foundation-sponsored event. In fact, the Guild’s cosponsor was the Association of Authors’ Representatives. ♦
my fellow man according to the dictates of my conscience." As spake the oil baron, so speak the information barons of today. Advertising is to Google what oil was to Rockefeller, a source of apparently limitless income. Ads will accompany every search a user makes at Google Library, all of the income will accrue to Google, and none to the authors whose works Google is scanning without permission.

A lofty purpose does not negate the crime. Al Capone ran a soup kitchen in Chicago during the Great Depression of the 1930s, but he was still a crook. He was, in effect, advertising his big heart and concern for mankind, just like Rockefeller; just like Google.

I hope, in the long run, that Google and the libraries will choose to do it right. It is a worthy venture. But they should not be allowed to exploit the resources that contribute to their wealth and reach without compensating the owners of those resources.

One other quick note: Kay Murray, the Guild’s general counsel, left during the summer to take a job with the East Coast legal office of the Tribune Company. Nobody is irreplaceable, but Kay’s absence leaves a hole in our hearts. She served the Guild for eleven years with a combination of extreme legal competence, warmth, steadiness, and a grasp of and sympathy for the issues that are most important to us as authors. She was never too busy to pay attention to a problem she could help solve, and she contributed to the work not only of the Guild but to the Guild Foundation that helps educate the public about the writing life and the issues that accompany it. She proved her versatility by conducting seminars on a range of author issues, and she was a writer herself, co-authoring with Tad Crawford the valuable The Writer’s Legal Guide. As a baseball fan, her heart remains in her hometown of Cincinnati, but you can’t have everything. We will miss her, and we wish her well.

namic of working for South Mountain Company—and it’s evolved in some great ways, thanks to the intelligence of the people at the company, ever since.”

The book shaped up quickly as Abrams realized that he had a lot to say about the merits of cultivating “workplace democracy,” of challenging American companies’ knee-jerk “Gospel of Growth,” and of providing benefits not only to employees but to communities. While he was typing, his wife, Chris, made the most of their Vermont sabbatical, finally learning to ski. And once again, Abrams’s unwriterly job—after clarifying for him when and what to write—was helpful in providing tips on how to write the book.

“What I discovered,” he says, “is that writing a book and building a house are, in a lot of respects, the exact same process. You have to design the thing, figure out how to build it, pay attention to all the pieces, and then put it together. Then you have to move the walls that don’t work. And, worst of all, you have to let some pieces go.”

By the time the couple returned to Martha’s Vineyard in the spring, Abrams had written a proposal and several chapters. He delved back into house building, worked to refine and bolster the company’s new structure according to the principles he was writing about, and returned to seclusion in Vermont to finish the book. Six months later, he sent the completed manuscript to three recommended agents—and directly to one small publishing company, Chelsea Green, based in Vermont. Chelsea Green’s publisher, Margo Baldwin, called him immediately with the news not only that she wanted to publish his book, but that employee ownership was a revolution that was underway at Chelsea Green as they spoke.

The Company We Keep: Reinventing Small Business for People, Community, and Place was published in the spring of 2005, and Abrams—in addition to overseeing the continued evolution of his company—is already plotting his next literary venture. Meanwhile, the parallels to the house-building business have only increased.

“I feel addicted to writing,” he says. “I feel like so many clients I’ve had over the years: Once they build something, they just don’t feel okay unless they’re building something else. An addition over here. A guesthouse over there. You just fall in love with the process. And before you know it, you’re looking toward the future and building something all the time.”
Legal Watch
Continued from page 12

infringing uses,” as it had for VCR equipment in *Sony.* Two concurring opinions took opposite positions on the issue. Justice Ruth Ginsburg wrote that Grokster and StreamCast products are used overwhelmingly to illegally copy protected works and thus failed the *Sony* standard; she commented that their supposed non-infringing use was either speculative or “little beyond anecdotal.” Justice Stephen Breyer disagreed, and wrote that the product clearly satisfied the *Sony* standard of 10 percent non-infringing use, which included authorized sharing of music, free electronic books, public domain and authorized software and authorized music videos, as well as possible future non-infringing uses. Justice Breyer also pointed out that other means exist to reduce piracy, such as Grokster-style inducement theory suits, traditional direct infringement suits, new technology, and making lawful copying cheaper and easier.

Grokster suggests a path that distributors of file-sharing technology can follow to avoid liability under the new standard. Where there is no action taken to encourage infringement through such means as advertising, the distributor will not be subject to liability. This distinction has been called “don’t ask, don’t sell” in The New York Times. If a future company distributes its file-sharing product without openly depending on or encouraging infringing use, it will not be held liable for infringing users under Grokster. Its potential liability under the *Sony* “sufficient non-infringing uses” standard remains unclear, however. Companies like Grokster will change their outward behavior with regard to infringing use, and copyright holders will continue to try to impose third-party liability through litigation until this issue is resolved.

*Britton Payne*
*Legal Intern*

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Dear Blog: Today I Worked on My Book
Continued from page 6

...people find funny and respond to,” said Marion Maneker, editorial director at HarperCollins’s HarperBusiness unit, who said it was too early to determine whether blogs would affect sales.

Michael Cader, who is the editor of two industry publications, Publishers Marketplace and Publishers Lunch, said he believed that, based on the limited examples, authors could build a much bigger audience for their work through blogging. While there is no evidence yet that blogs affect books sales, Mr. Cader said, anything an author could do to create a readership was beneficial.

Since the publication of their book *Freakonomics*, an economic lens onto human behavior, Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner have fielded questions about the book with their blog (www.freakonomics.com/blog.php), debated topics with readers (anything baseball-related strikes a nerve), and contemplated readers’ suggestions (one reader suggested that fluoride in the water may be the root of all evil).

While saying that he was impressed by the depth and complexity of readers’ responses, Mr. Levitt added that it was unlikely he would float his book ideas for mass consideration on the blog.

“The concern we have is about having our stuff sound fresh,” he said. In addition to the conversation it engenders, the blog is mostly a receptacle for the ideas not spun into magazine articles.

Steven Johnson has used his blog (www.stevenber-

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**Legal Services Scorecard**

From May 21 through September 20, 2005, the Authors Guild Legal Service Department handled 291 legal inquiries. Included were:

- 47 book contract reviews
- 9 agency contract reviews
- 12 reversion of rights inquiries
- 28 inquiries on copyright law, including infringement, registration, duration and fair use
- 5 inquiries regarding securing permissions and privacy releases
- 3 electronic rights queries
- 17 First Amendment inquiries
- 176 other inquiries (including literary estates, contract disputes, periodical and multimedia contracts, movie and television options, Internet piracy, liability insurance, finding an agent, and attorney referrals)
linjohnson.com) to keep readers informed of his appearances and readings of “Everything Bad Is Good for You,” his thesis on how pop culture strengthens, not erodes, intellect nonfiction. He has also rebutted his critics, chronicled his book tour, and responded to reader feedback. Mr. Johnson decided not to blog about the book while writing it, however, Mr. Johnson said that many people who seek out the blog have read his earlier books and are interested in reading about, or commenting on, how his work has evolved. The readers get a behind-the-scenes look at the author’s thoughts on the book’s reception and other topics.

“There is only so much you can get out of a book signing,” he said. “I feel like people don’t really go to promotional book sites. They want the live feeling of the author who’s out there fending off the critics and confessing his sins.”
# Membership Application

Mr. / Ms. _______________________________  Pseudonym(s) _______________________________

Address ________________________________  City __________________ State __ Zip __________

Phone ( ) ___________________________ Fax ( ) _____________________ E-mail __________________

Agent Name ___________________________  Agency ___________________________  Agent phone ( ) __________

How did you become interested in joining the Guild? (check one)  □ Invitation  □ Writing journal

□ Referred by ___________________________  □ Other ______________________________

What is your primary reason for joining?  □ Support and advocacy efforts  □ Legal services  □ Health insurance

□ Site-builder and other Web services  □ Other ______________________________

Writers may qualify on the basis of being book authors or freelance journalists. **Book authors** must have been published by an established American publisher. A writer who has a contract with an established publisher for a work not yet published may join as an associate member. A contract with a vanity press does not qualify a writer for membership in the Guild. **Freelance journalists** must have published three works, fiction or nonfiction, in a periodical of general circulation within the last eighteen months.

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Please enclose a check for your first year’s dues in the amount of $90 payable to “The Authors Guild” or charge your Visa or Mastercard.

Account # ___________________________  Expiration Date ____ / _____  Amount: $90

Mail to:
The Authors Guild
31 East 28th Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

Bulletin, Fall 2005