

Norman Galaxy of Writers

Formed in March, 1969

Affiliated with

Oklahoma Writers Federation, Inc.



WriteLine

MARCH 6TH MEETING

Mel Odom, Sink into it

Saturday, March 6th, 2010; 10 a.m.

University Lutheran Chapel, 914 Elm

Do you know how to “sink” into your character? What about that sometimes slippery business of point of view? Mel Odom, prolific author and instructor in the OU Professional Writing Program, will teach us all about both. His credits include the Hellgate Series, and the Apocalypse Series. *Apocalypse Unleashed*, the third of that series came out last summer. The Rover Series, published by Tor Books, are fantasy novels and won the Alex Award. Odom also placed as runner-up for the Christy Award and was inducted into the Oklahoma Professional Writers’ Hall of Fame.

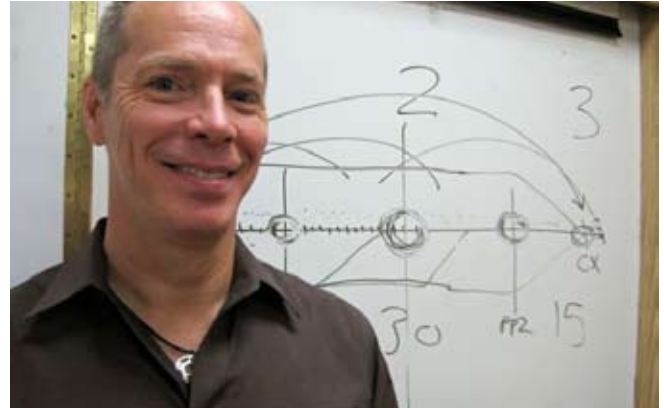
Here are some of the books and resources Odom uses and recommends: *Plot and Structure* by James Scott Bell; *Creating Short Fiction* by Damon Knight; Stephen King’s *On Writing*; and *On Writing Romance*, by Leigh Michaels. These join the staples of *Writer’s Market*, *Novel and Short Story Writers’ Market*, and *Writer’s Digest’s Handbook of Magazine Article Writing*.

Odom was born in California, but raised in Oklahoma. His best early memories are of his mother reading to him. “When I was in fifth grade, I knew I wanted to be a writer. Unfortunately, I lived in Oklahoma and figured you had to live in New York or California to pull that off. But I kept writing. Nobody read it, but I liked doing it. Just putting the words together, watching the people inside my head, borrowing those emotions and those worlds,” he said. “In sixth grade, I got my first library card. I could only check out five books at a time. My mom would only take me every two weeks. I got the books on Monday, had them read by Wednesday, and started writing sequels to them on Thursday. I read everything Andre Norton and Robert Heinlein wrote during the 1960s. In eighth grade, I discovered Doc Savage and *The Shadow* and the pulp magazines, and was pretty much ruined for life. I had to be a writer, but I just didn’t know how.”

Like the young Odom, we’re finding out how—especially how to “sink” into our characters and handle point of view.

—Kathleen Norris Park, VP-Program

SPEAKER NOTES BY SHANNON TAN



Bill Bernhardt with his diagram of the structure of a novel. He suggests three acts, with 60 scenes.

William Bernhardt Structure: Organizing Your Story for Maximum Impact

Author William Bernhardt spoke to a large crowd at the February 6 Galaxy meeting. He states that story applies equally to fiction and non-fiction, and it is important to structure it properly for maximum impact. Concerning methodology, he said that real artists do outlines, but hesitate to admit it. Laughingly, he added, “Why would you believe anything a fiction writer would tell you anyway?”

Bernhardt said that it is easy to become overwhelmed but there are easy ways to break a story down. He drew a graph on the board detailing the three-act structure (start/middle/end) while discussing the following terms:

Structure: Selection of events from characters’ lives strategically arranged to stir ideas or emotions in readers.

Story: Represents the complete change in the character’s situation from start to final change, which is complete and irreversible.

Act: Series of **scenes and sequences** that culminate in a major turning point in the character’s life. Each act ends with a major turning point.

In Act 1, there has to be an “**inciting incident**” that radically upsets the protagonist’s life and instigates his journey to his final goal or desire. The rest of the book is to restore order after the big hook or dramatic event.

Bernhardt, cont. on page 3

MARKETS BY ANN CHAMPEAU

FAMILY TREE MAGAZINE

Family Tree Magazine is a special-interest consumer magazine that helps readers discover, preserve and celebrate their family's history. They cover genealogy, ethnic heritage, personal history, genealogy web sites and software, photography and photo preservation and other ways that families connect with their past.

Editors accept queries by e-mail at ftmedit@fwpubs.com or mail Family Tree Magazine, 4700 E. Galbraith Road, Cincinnati OH 45236.

They want a specific story idea, clear, friendly, easy-to-read articles and sidebars.

Include in your query why you're right for this topic and why you're able to write it.

Be aware that issues are planned at least six months in advance and the December issue is planned the previous January. Their style is bright, breezy, helpful and encouraging. They are not an academic journal or a genealogy-research journal. Their focus is family history.

For writers new to the magazine, they are most open to short submissions for Branching Out (lively, newsy up-front section) and brief write-ups of new resources for family history buffs for their Toolkit section. They invite short, amusing stories of "the lighter side of family history" for Everything's Relative.

They pay on acceptance and buy all rights. Paid circulation is 70,000.

—Ann Champeau, Markets



TREASURER'S REPORT - VICKEY KENNEDY

PREVIOUS BALANCE: 2/6/2010 \$ 1149.14

DEPOSITS:

- Leslie Bohon-Bothwell, NGW&OWFI 35.00
- Dorothy A. Brinker, NGW&OWFI 35.00
- Nancy A. Cook, NGW&OWFI 35.00
- Rufina Jordan, NGW only (cash) 15.00
- Jeannie Rhodes, NGW only (cash) 15.00
- Cindy Stevens, NGW&OWFI 35.00
- Barbara Wilson, NGW only (cash) 15.00

TOTAL DEPOSITS: \$ 185.00

EXPENSES:

- Helen Duchon, Badges \$75.10
- William Bernhardt, Speaker 35.00
- OWFI, Dues, 4 members 80.00
- OWFI, Category Sponsorship 105.00

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$ 295.10

CURRENT BALANCE: 2/26/2010 \$ 1039.04

MINUTES BY DARLINE HOBBS

February 6th Minutes

Galaxy of Writers met February 6, 2010 at the Norman Library, Room AB, from 10-12. Sherry Bynum, president, called the meeting to order. She encouraged everyone to get their name tags.

Visitors were introduced. There were about twenty visitors. Each reported on their special writing interests. Others came during the program. Attendees filled the room.

Reports:

Minutes were approved as printed in the *WriteLine*.

Announcements were presented by Frances Searcey (an information document), Dorothy Brinker (honor Darlene Bailey Beard), Helen Duchon (League of Women Voters' Candidate forum, Feb. 8 at City Hall) and Little River Zoo's Kids for Kindness, April 18 at Reaves Park. Galaxy has kids make cheer cards to be delivered to Norman Regional Hospital patients. Tom Barczak and Darline Hobbs volunteered to staff our Galaxy booth.

Vickey Malone Kennedy, treasurer, gave the treasurer's report. Balance is \$1149.14. Copies are with Sherry Bynum, president and Helen Duchon, *WriteLine*.

Report by Frances Searcey, Friday Writers.

Report by Helen Duchon, Roundtable and *WriteLine*.

Report by Marilyn Flear, publicity.

Cheer Report, Ann Champeau. Kathleen Park reported that Madelaine Culp was much better and hoped to go home soon.

OWFI still needs volunteers, Vickey Kennedy said.

Old Business:

Proposed writer's workshop and committee volunteers report.

New Business:

How to inform about closings due to bad weather was discussed. Helen Duchon will e-mail and Marilyn Flear will phone members without e-mail.

A report about the library's Big Read events and the library's magazine, *The Word*, was given by Cindy Stevens, outreach librarian.

Kathleen Park introduced our speaker, William Bernhardt, a noted author, lecturer and publisher.

After his presentation (see Speaker Notes by Shannon Tan), the meeting was adjourned.

Refreshments:

Cindy Noble, Marilyn Flear and Patricia Harvey brought refreshments; Kathleen Park and Patricia Harvey provided coffee. Thank you.

—Darline Hobbs, Secretary



When patterns are broken, new worlds emerge.

—Tuli Kupferberg

BRAG SHEET

Sales and Acceptances

ROBERT FERRIER: PHOTOGRAPH, “Reflections on Lake Thunderbird,” February, 2010 issue, *Norman Living*.

KEITH EATON: ARTICLES: “OKC Kids, Going Up While Growing Up” and “Bagels and Buddies” Published in March Issue of *Distinctly Oklahoma Magazine*.

CURTIS “SMOKEY” STOVER: NOVEL: *Blind Justice*, is available on line @ Barnes & Nobel.com, Amazon.com and iUniverse.com. Book signings are Norman @ Hastings Bookstore, April 17th, 3-5 p.m. and at Hastings, Stillwater, Mar. 20th, 2-5 p.m.

KATHLEEN NORRIS PARK: COLUMNS: “Watching Your Language” and “Mel Odom: Sink into It,” published in *WriteLine*, (3/2010); MONTHLY MAGAZINE: copy edited 52 pages for February and 19 articles for March issues of *Moore Monthly Magazine*. Produced a FLYER for a speech by Dr. Tom Burns, “Lessons from the World’s Religions.” Produced an AD for the Bahá’ís of Norman published in the *Norman Transcript*, (Feb. 2010).

FRANCES SEARCEY: POEM: An untitled poem to be published in *Mature Living*.

JUDY HOWARD: PUBLISHED STORY: “The Perfect Gift” in *True Love, Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

STAN SOLLOWAY & MIKE KRAWCZYK: Comedy Empire Press has PUBLISHED two new books: *Golfreaks* and *Sports Fans are Crazy*.

Also, we’ve published 4 *Silliman on Sports* columns: **2/2** http://sillimanonsports.com/Mardi_Gras_Super_Bowl_2010.html; **2/9** http://sillimanonsports.com/WVU_Fans_Rude.html; **2/16** http://sillimanonsports.com/Vonn_Chooses_Cheese.html; **2/23** http://sillimanonsports.com/Rock_Paper_Scissors_Ultimate_Sport.

Professional Activities

JUDY HOWARD has presentations booked for her quilts and books: Feb. 10, Lexington Hi School; March 2, 6:30 p.m., Edmond Central Middle School, 500 East 9th, Edmond, OK, for the PTA; March 4, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Immanuel Baptist Church, 1451 East 45th St., Shawnee, OK; March 10, noon, Checotah Public Library, 626 W. Gentry, Checotah, OK.

Judy is owner of www.BuckboardQuilts.com and author of four award-winning books available on www.HeavenlyPatchwork.com.

STAN SOLLOWAY: Two new books, “*Golfreaks*”, illustrated by Jerry King and “*Sports Fans are Crazy*”, illustrated by Mike Krawczyk. We have a Hastings book signing March 27. I emceed Toy & Action Figure Museum fundraiser in January and at the Loony Bin, Feb. 14-17, with Julie Scoggins as headliner.

Member News

MARILYN FLEER has been doing publicity, meeting place and refreshments for Galaxy for the past 30 years. Thank you!

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Jocelyn Pedersen:	Galaxy, 2010
Barbara Shepherd, OWFI Treas:	Galaxy, 2010
Patricia Harvey:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Linda Joslin:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Robbie Lamberson:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Charoltte Mast	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Nancy A. Cook:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Cindy Stevens:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010
Jeannie Rhodes:	Galaxy, 2010
Rufina Jordan:	Galaxy, 2010
Barbara Wilson:	Galaxy, 2010

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Bernhardt on Structure, cont.

The inciting incident leads directly and inevitably to the **climax**.

Subplots: Inject tension into the novel and are about many issues, like love life, etc. They do not necessarily need to span the length of the book.

Climax: Scene or sequence that results in a dramatic or permanent change in the protagonist’s quest. There should be complications along the way to resolution. Don’t have the climax in the middle of the book, but toward the end of Act 3.

Scene: Event that changes the character’s situation in a meaningful way. Scenes are the atomic particles of structure. **Sequences** fill in between scenes – don’t use unless something changes. Beware of using flashbacks; use dialogue or dramatic surprise instead. There is no set number of scenes, but Bernhardt likes 60. Each scene must have a change. Change only comes in one way – conflict. Tension moves the story forward.

The “**midpoint**” is the hardest part to write and occurs in the middle of Act 2. Think of it as an important turning point of the character’s journey where things liven up and there is a renewed energy of the character.

Outlining: It is important to establish a routine for writing: same time, same place, everyday with the same amount of hours. “The first hour is always the hardest,” Bernhardt states, “because there are always distractions.” He recommends using 60 index cards and dividing them into three stacks:

- 15 cards for Act 1;**
- 30 cards for Act 2; and**
- 15 cards for Act 3.**

Write one sentence or phrase that represents a scene on each card. You now have ideas for 60 scenes, and this will help you to map out where you are going with your outline.

Another term Bernhardt mentioned was “**denouement**,” which is the final revelation or outcome of the plot in your story. It happens after the climax and you should keep it as brief as possible.

In his emotional wrap up, Bernhardt said, “Every time you pick up a pen you have the power to change the world.”

—Shannon Tan, Speaker Notes

WATCHING YOUR LANGUAGE BY KATHLEEN NORRIS PARK

Trends, Changes & Good Sense

Languages, living languages, that is, change. They always have, at various speeds and in various directions, but change they do. So then do the rules and accepted practices. Lexicographers and other language experts watch what educated writers coin, add or drop over a fairly long time before accepting those changes and incorporating them into the books we call authoritative.

We've seen the huge addition of words and phrases brought into our American English with the computer. It's hard to know which are "fad words," which will remain, and which new meanings for old terms will stay or be gone like new mushrooms under half a day's sunshine.

Even so, here are a few changes in usage and punctuation that have become accepted by most authorities.

The apostrophe in dates: no longer 1970's, but 1970s. The apostrophe still serves to indicate the missing part of the '70s.

The blinding speed that yesterday's (and I mean yesterday's) two-word or hyphenated compounds become

one word thwarts my poor efforts to describe, but there are some holdouts. In referring to the Internet or World Wide Web, retain both the capitals and the spacing.

The distinction between British and American usage seems worth waving around. American usage is a real and proper entity—not inferior to British. And in American usage, the end punctuation goes within the quotation marks.

Here are some exceptions and the reasons why. Question marks (and exclamation marks) belong outside the end quotation marks if the quoted material doesn't end with that mark, but the whole sentence does: Where did JoJo get that "hootenanny"? The semicolon goes outside quotation marks, parentheses or brackets: She assumed everyone had read "The Raven"; she mentioned it often. Roy wanted to go to the movies ("Zorro" started soon); but Mom said no. When the quoted matter ends with a semicolon, just drop it.

Strange how some perfectly good words can be yanked up by the hair, shaken like a turnip into bizarre usage and then done to death, making us gag to hear them again. Take awesome. Or totally. Or gaggier still, "totally awesome."

Take your time deciding whether to forgive me for gaggier.

—Kathleen Norris Park, *Grammarian*

CHANGES IN ADDRESS REQUESTED

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2010 Dues for Galaxy are \$15
2010 Dues for OWFI are \$20
Mail to Vickie Kennedy, Treasurer
721 E. Boyd St.
Norman, OK 73071

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|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| President | Sherry Bynum | 405-364-7818 |
| VP-Programs | Kathleen Park | 405-310-6512 |
| Secretary | Darline Hobbs | 405-321-8304 |
| Treasurer | Vickie Kennedy | 405-447-3623 |
| Editor | Helen Duchon | 405-329-2485 |
| Cheer | Ann Champeau | 405-364-0232 |
| Friday Writers | Frances Searcy | 405-321-6404 |
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| OWFI Delegate | Patricia Harvey | 719-287-1670 |
| OWFI Delegate | Vickie Kennedy | 405-447-3623 |

Mel Odum
Norman Public Library
10:00 AM
March 6, 2010

