

Norman Galaxy of Writers

Formed in March, 1969

Affiliated with

Oklahoma Writers Federation, Inc.



WriteLine

APRIL 10TH MEETING

J. Madison Davis, “Getting Your Nonfiction Book Published”

Saturday, April 10th, 2010; 10 a.m

McFarlin Church, University & Apache, Room 209

J. Madison Davis's first novel, *The Murder of Frau Schütz*, was voted one of the five Best First Mysteries of 1988 by the Mystery Writers of America. Since then he has published seven more novels, i.e., *The Vertigo Murders*, *Law and Order: Dead Line*, and *The Van Gogh Conspiracy*. He has also published several non-fiction books, including *Dick Francis*, *Conversations with Robertson Davies*, *Stanislaw Lem: A Reader's Guide*, *The Shakespeare Name Dictionary* (with A. Daniel Frankforter), and *The Novelist's Essential Guide to Creating Plot*. He writes a column on crime writing for *World Literature Today*. Davis has served as the senior professor in the Professional Writing Program of the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communications since 1991, teaching fiction, non-fiction, and screen writing. He has been a finalist for the Gaylord College's teaching award several times and won the Rufus G. Hall teaching award from the College of Liberal Studies in spring 2002. He was named a Gaylord Family Endowed Chair of Journalism and Mass Communication in 2008.

—Kathleen Norris Park, VP-Program

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
Charolte 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
Madeline Ross:	Galaxy, 2010; OWFI, 2010

SPEAKER NOTES BY HELEN DUCHON



Mel Odom: Find Character in Your Own Vulnerabilities

Mel Odom, prolific author and instructor in the OU Professional Writing Program, spoke to Galaxy March 6th using humor, questions and his own life.

“Writing is hard work, not magic, but I love what I do. I work seven days a week, ‘cuz God didn’t make

eight. Now I find I love teaching,” Mel said. “I love to shock the college kids. I tell them I have a better sex life than they do. I have five kids to prove it.”

Who are characters; what do they do in a story?

“Characters make us care. They reveal our own vulnerabilities. Give a fear people can understand, like when I give my car keys to my 16-year old. Have you been disappointed in yourself, like the student who didn’t pickup his friend at the airport in order to go out with a girl (who stood him up.) What does love feel like? Not the first six weeks of endorphins and then you wake up and wonder why is he still here, but the deep dependency and trust that allows me and my wife to argue for four hours.

“You can borrow education and income level, but an emotional layer one can hang onto comes from experiences, yours or others: stories after a funeral; movies; books; gossip magazines (Brad & Angelina); court TV; being in earthquakes and fires like Jack London.”

How are characters’ lives different from our own?

“No fictional character is ever as complicated as me/I have real children! Even Jack Bauer in *24* only kills one guy at a time. Plus, we meet the characters on the worst day of their lives.”

Heros and heroines

“These days the emphasis is on heroines because about 70% of the readers are female. That number is even greater for young readers. Female readers want a strong male

MARKETS BY ANN CHAMPEAU

Guidelines Decoded

- 1) **On spec** is when you submit an article in its entirety to a publication without any prior promise of acceptance or pay.
- 2) **A Query** is a letter in which you pitch the article you'd like to write.
- 3) **Clips** are examples of your own published articles.
- 4) **Tearsheets** are published samples of your articles or good photocopies.
- 5) **Sidebars** are boxed pieces that appear within or at the end of full-length articles -- Information the reader needs like hotel names and numbers or a bit of commentary such as local etiquette and manners for foreign travel. When submitting a sidebar with your story, include it at the bottom of your main article under the subhead "Sidebar."
- 6) **Fillers**—short items that help an editor fill a page.
- 7) **Byline Given:** Your article will appear with your name before or after it.
- 8) **Kill Fee** is the fee you'll receive if a publication first accepts your article and then decides not to publish it after all. The kill fee is most often a percentage of what you would have received had your article appeared.
- 9) **Simultaneous Submissions:** When you offer an article to more than one publication at a time. Identify this at the upper right below your word count. As soon as your piece is accepted in one place, you need to tell the other publications.
- 10) **Editorial Lead Time:** The time between when you submit your completed article to an editor and when that article actually appears in print.
- 11) **Pays on Publication:** Once your article is published, you'll be paid.

—Ann Champeau, Markets
To continue next month with 12 - 22

TREASURER'S REPORT - VICKEY KENNEDY

PREVIOUS BALANCE: 2/26/2010 \$ 1039.04

DEPOSITS:

Ruth Castillo, NGW&OWFI	35.00
Paul Crafton, NGW&OWFI	35.00
Mike Krawczyk, NGW&OWFI	35.00
Carol McCarty, NGW only (cash)	15.00
Carol McLoud, NGW&OWFI	35.00
Judy Nystrum, NGW only	35.00
Madeline Ross, NGW&OWFI	35.00
Smokey Stover, NGW&OWFI	35.00

TOTAL DEPOSITS: \$ 220.00

EXPENSES:

Helen Duchon, Badges	\$12.25
Helen Duchon, March WriteLine	15.59
Mel Odom, Speaker	25.00
OWFI, Dues, 8 members	160.00
OWFI, Category Sponsorship	<u>105.00</u>

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$ 212.84

CURRENT BALANCE: 3/17/2010 \$ 1046.20

MINUTES BY DARLINE HOBBS

March 6th Minutes

Galaxy of Writers met at University Lutheran Church, Saturday, March 6 at 10:00 a.m.

Kathleen Park, Vice President, presided for Sherry Bynum who was working on the NAC Grants Panel. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Reports

The minutes of the February 6th meeting were approved as written in *WriteLine*.

Kathleen Park reported on the progress concerning a writing work shop. Ann Champeau volunteered to help.

Mary Spaulding, recruitment, gave brochures to guests and asked members to take them to be picked up.

Helen Duchon reported on NAC Roundtable meeting with guest speaker Tiffany Monhollon, PR director for Express Employment Professionals, who explained how to use Social Media for promotion of our arts groups.

Helen said she was collecting Pennies for Peace, a program to aid in building schools for girls in Afghanistan. They will be presented to Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea* when he speaks at OU, April 22, at 10 a.m. After discussion, it was agreed that Galaxy would join the Pennies for Peace program and thus get reserved seats at the Mortenson public lecture.

Kids for Kindness project is Sunday, April 18th at Reaves Park. Galaxy's booth for making cheer cards for patients at NRH will be managed by Darline Hobbs and Tom Barczak.

Vickey Kennedy, treasurer, reported a current balance of \$1,039.04; 53 Galaxy members, of which 43 also belong to OWFI.

Our representatives to OWFI, Vickey Kennedy, Dion Mayes-Burnett and Patti Harvey, will attend the OWFI planning meeting, March 7. Officers and volunteers are still needed for the conference, April 29-May 2.

Marilyn Flear called attention to the fact that Galaxy is forty-one years old this month. She brought dessert to celebrate the occasion. Helen Duchon brought sandwiches.

New Business

The April Galaxy meeting will be moved to the second Saturday, April 10th because of Easter activities at churches. J. Madison Davis, professor, OU Professional Writing, on non-fiction publishing will be the speaker.

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

Cindy Stevens, librarian and Galaxy member, gave copies of The Big Read book, *The Maltese Falcon*. She urged people to go to the opening during the Art Walk in downtown Norman, March 12.

Ann Champeau reported on Ann Trumbly's surgery.

Kathleen Park introduced the speaker, Mel Odom, a writing instructor at OU and author of 100 books.

Kathleen Park adjourned the meeting, encouraging the group to eat and enjoy the refreshments provided.

—Darline Hobbs, Secretary

BRAG SHEET

Sales and Acceptances

KATHLEEN NORRIS PARK: GRAMMAR COLUMN: Norman Galaxy of Writers (3/24/2010); PRESS RELEASE, “Professor J. Madison Davis Speaks to Writers,” Norman Transcript, (3/25/2010) for publication (4/4/2010); MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, “Norman Cluster Newsletter,” (3/6/2010).

HELEN DUCHON: NEWSLETTERS: Edit and layout of Galaxy’s *WriteLine* for January, February, March and April; Speaker Notes, “Mel Odom on Character” (4/2010).

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: Columns for March: Check them online at www.sillimanonsports.com

3/2/10 Curling Songs Genuine authentic curling songs

3/9/10 Teamwork Lesson: Steal Papers An embarrassing story leads a football to steal all the school newspapers

3/16/10 Little Known Iditarod Facts My punster brother-in-law gives me the one-two on the dog-sled race

3/23/10 Woods’ Masters Return Drama You must see the cartoon

Professional Activities

JUDY HOWARD: April 9-11 Present a Centennial Stitches quilt trunk show program, curate the “Thanking Our Troops—God Bless America Touring Quilts and sign books for the Keller Quilt Guild’s Show at the Armon Carter Art Center in Ft. Worth, TX. Judy is owner of www.BuckboardQuilts.com and author of four award-winning books available on www.HeavenlyPatchwork.com.

STAN SOLLOWAY: I spoke to Chickasha Kiwanis Mar 23rd on new “Sports Fans are Crazy” book. Orin filmed the event. Book signing at Hastings in Norman Mar 27 for “Sports Fans...” Book signing at Hastings in Stillwater Apr 10 for “Sports Fans...” Book signing at Full Circle in OKC Apr. 17 for “Sports Fans...”

Club News

- Interested Galaxy members met March 27 to discuss Bylaws which are the first step to establish 401 (c) 3 non-profit status and apply for grants.
- Galaxy is collecting “Pennies for Peace-Oklahoma” project. The project has been initiated in anticipation of Greg Mortenson’s participation in the OU Centennial Symposium, April 21-23, 2010. Greg Mortenson is the author of *Three Cups of Tea* and *Stones into Schools*. He will give a public lecture **Wednesday, April 21, 4:00 p.m. at Lloyd Noble Center**. This is a change in day and time so that more students can come after school. For more information about “Pennies for Peace” go to <https://www.ikat.org/pennies-for-peace/>

SPEAKER NOTES - HELEN DUCHON

Mel Odom on Characters, cont.

character who is interesting, they can understand and who they can ‘fix’. The male character may be a womanizer but that’s just because he hasn’t meet the right girl!

YA is same as Teen Market

“Boys want the graphic novel or a video game like *Modern Warfare* or the new *Heavy Rain* which is interactive story-telling with four characters.

“The Young Adult market is up 15% over last year. Most is in the SciFi genre. Susan Collins’ 510-page *Pen Dragon*, defies the general rule that YA is shorter.

“Teens have sex but not three pages of it. Sexuality and orientation are discussed, like in *Luna* which is about a trans gender young man.

“Books like the Harry Potter series are written for 9-12 year olds, but when adults discover them they take off. They are simple stories. YA don’t read any thing that happened more than ten years ago—unless you throw in Greek mythology and fantasy.”

Archetypes for Characters

“Character traits can be modeled after comic book characters:

- Batman is the broken and battered psyche. His butler, Alfred is really a father figure. “What must it be like for Alfred to see ‘Wayne’ go off into the night?”
- Superman is the boy scout. “How must it have felt to not be there the day his father died?”
- Wonder Woman “was not a women’s libber in the beginning, but now is featured as a strong woman and an ambassador of her own country.”
- Villains “have to be strong enough to beat the hero. They are often cut from the same cloth as the hero.
- Private eyes like Sam Spade. “PI’s have codes of honor: they always defend their partner even if they were cheating on him and didn’t like him.

Codes of Honor

“Conflict: things you will sacrifice and things you will not. A lot of times it is innocence that gets sacrificed. Life isn’t simple. Fiction is less simple. In life, we can decide not to do this and not to do that; but in fiction the choice is close. The conflict can be within one person or between two people.”

Motivation sources

Find a unique motivation other than just the job. It could be experience, age, gender, geographical setting, or situational ethics.

Borrow motivation and character traits from *The Birth Order* book by Kevin Leman; *Zodiac Signs* by Linda Goodman; or history and biographies.

Show how interesting you are on the page. “Everybody is interesting under the right circumstance. Most of you are married. What made you attractive to your mate?”

WATCHING YOUR LANGUAGE BY KATHLEEN NORRIS PARK

Quick Fixes

Here are some all-too-common errors we can catch from others (the ones Bernstein calls the “literary unwashed”) or make through simple inattention. Call it a little refresher.

1. **whose**—possessive pronoun meaning *belonging to whom*. (Whose sweater is this? We whose homes are far away sometimes feel lonely.)

2. **who’s**—contraction of who and is or who and has (The girl who’s first wins. Anyone who’s come late, raise your hand.)

3. **its and it’s**—Its is the possessive form: *belonging to it*. (The dog wags its tail.) It’s is a contraction of it is or it has. (It’s time to go. It’s been a long day.)

4. **there, their, they’re**—There can be what’s called a function word. (There have been many robberies in this neighborhood). Or an adverb (The boys are there). Their means belonging to them; the possessive of they (This is their house). They’re is a contraction of they and are (They’re going to be late).

Potpourri

• Here are some of my pet “didja-know’s.” Did you know that the commonly heard “safety deposit box” is really “safe deposit box”? And “new innovation,” “free gift” and “close proximity” are all double talk?

• Another quote from Theodore Bernstein (*The Careful Writer*, p. 347), “Prior to: A faddish affectation for before. Would you say posterior to in place of after?” [I know—a few of the latest dictionaries have capitulated. Stay strong!]

• In six years in Oklahoma, I’ve heard only one news reporter pronounce the unit modifier “short-lived” (also “long-lived,” etc.) correctly. The i is long! Here’s why: to form the unit modifier, which works as an adjective, you must add ed to the noun. When you do, the f in life changes to v. But the vowel sound does not change. That noun, life, doesn’t become the verb live. Think of these combinations to prove it to yourself: sure (adj.) footed (noun plus ed); light-hearted, floppy-eared, purple-coated. An even bigger rub is remembering that in the predicate adjective position, the hyphen disappears: “A well-known man” becomes “The man was well known.”

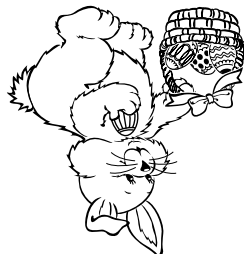
—Kathleen Norris Park, *Grammarians*

CHANGES IN ADDRESS REQUESTED

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2010 Dues for Galaxy are \$15
2010 Dues for OWFI are \$20
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April 10, 2010
10:00 AM
McFarlin Church, Rm 209
J. Madison Davis
Publishing
Non-Fiction



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