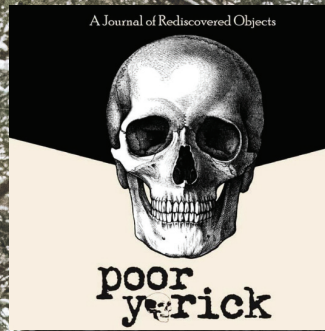


WCSU | **MFA**
CREATIVE
AND
PROFESSIONAL
WRITING



**Bram
Stoker
Festival**

WCSU MFA

2021 Virtual Winter Residency

Photo by Michaela Lawlor, New Sun Rising, LLC

2021 Winter Residency

Saturday, January 2nd

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

“Go Deep: Unlock and Inhabit Your YA Voice”

Kendra Fortmeyer – 2019 Housatonic Book Award Winner in YA/MG

What does it mean to authentically inhabit a voice? Whether you love or hate the genre, young adult fiction is a proving ground like no other. Crafted for an unflinchingly discerning audience (teens will call you out in a *heartbeat!*), young adult fiction requires adult writers to harken back — to summon enough of their remembered youth to the page to connect to young readers today.

So, it’s time to get in touch with your inner teen voice! No slang, no jargon. Instead, we’ll focus on writing out of the emotional and psychological landscapes that shaped students’ younger worlds. But, like, in a non-traumatic way. Not a YA writer? No problem. Treat this as an exercise in voice and character study — your teen voice may just blow you away.

Students are encouraged, but not required, to bring a sample of YA writing they admire.

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Mentor “Ask Me Anything” (AMA) Session

Onnesha Roychoudhuri (Creative Nonfiction & Political Journalism)

These AMA sessions are open to all current and prospective students. Each day, we’ll feature a new mentor/alum who will answer any questions you have about writing, publishing, teaching, and more! If we have time, mentors/alumni will read some of their recent work and/or lead the group in a writing prompt.

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Lunch Break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

“How to Survive as a Writer: Dealing with Demons”

Karen Romano Young

Some people call it imposter syndrome. Some people call it writer’s block. Some call it fear. I call it demons, and I know what to do with them. How about you? Should you:

- a. exorcise them?
- b. face them?
- c. make peace with them?

Bring your own writing demon to this workshop and we’ll hear what it has to say, then explore strategies that go beyond the simple options above. The result? A more optimistic, grounded, and capable writing life.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Housatonic Book Award - Live Reading and Q&A

Kendra Fortmeyer – *Hole in the Middle* (YA/MG Winner)

Sunday, January 3rd

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

“In Demand: Writing for the Tech Industry”

Bonnie Denmark & Steve Miller

Calling clear communicators! Tech and pharma companies need good writing now more than ever. Documentation, training, and the language in the product itself are a big part of the user experience, often a make-or-break factor for a product’s success. Sales and marketing are also needed in technical fields, and clear writing sharpens the impact of web content, presentations, and white papers. Video is a growing medium, and each one needs a script. And proposals to potential clients will never go out of style. All these types of writing have real value to tech companies, and good writers are in demand. In this session, technical communication experts will talk about their work and career paths and answer your questions about the industry.

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Agent Panel

Connor Goldsmith & Saba Sulaiman (Moderated by MFA Mentor Jane Cleland)

MFA mentor, Jane Cleland, will moderate a discussion with two literary agents, Connor Goldsmith and Saba Sulaiman. Both agents represent a wide range of genres and will share their expertise on writing queries, synopses, and book proposals; the ins and outs of the writer/agent relationship, and the many thrills and chills of shepherding a book into the world. Students will also have the option of meeting with either agent one-on-one during or after the residency. [Contact MFA Coordinator Anthony D’Aries for more details.](#)

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Lunch Break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

“Join the Club: The Logistics and Community of a Podcast”

Jenn Adams, Dan Caffrey, Randall Colburn, and Mel Kassel

Stephen King podcast *The Losers’ Club* started off as just that: a club. A place where a group of friends gather every week to geek out over (and criticize) an author they all love. As their popularity grew, so did the bond with their audience (also known as “Constant Listeners”). In this discussion with four of the pod’s co-hosts, they’ll talk about what goes into starting a podcast, how it ties into their practice as writers, and the importance of community.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – PRE-RECORDED

Graduate Student Reading

Monday, January 4th

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

“Crafting a Book Proposal”

Erik Ofgang & Josh Pahigian

This workshop will explore the nonfiction book proposal process. Students will learn the various components that make up a nonfiction proposal and learn how to navigate the process from idea conception to selling to a publisher. We will examine the most common reasons books are rejected by publishers and provide tips for overcoming those objections. Students who wish to get the most out of the workshop should come with an idea for a nonfiction book, though much of the discussion will be useful for writers of all genres.

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Mentor AMA

Stephanie Wytovich (Horror, Sci-Fi, Poetry)

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Lunch Break

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

“How to Choose Your Second (Professional) Genre”

Anthony D’Aries

Our MFA program is one of the few that provide students with the opportunity to study both creative and professional writing. Often, students enter the program with clear plans for the creative (primary) genre – their professional (second) genre? Not so much. But that’s ok! Stop by this session for an informal chat about why we structure our MFA program this way, how students choose their second genre, and the myriad careers students are prepared for by studying in this dual-concentration model.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM - LIVE

Michael Ian Black in Conversation with MFA Coordinator Anthony D’Aries

Tuesday, January 5th

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

“A Writing Career”

Jane K. Cleland & Brian Clements

In this session Brian Clements and Jane K. Cleland explain their paths as writers both in and out of academia and offer suggestions to help you achieve your career aspirations.

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Alumni AMA

Gina Atanasoff (Creative Nonfiction & Speech Writing)

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Lunch Break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

“Facing Deep Fakes and Fake News in Your Fact-Based Writing and Fiction”

John Roche & Sarah Darer Littman

Authors Sarah Darer Littman and John Roche will lead a two-part discussion centered on manipulated content and its myriad impacts on the media and society. The first part of the session will take the form of a Q & A focused on Littman’s recently published YA novel *Deep Fake* as well as examining how technology, misinformation and intentional media exploitation has affected most areas of life. (And we ain’t seen nothin’ yet.)

The second part of the session will explore what writers should know about deep fakes and other misinformation, how not to fall victim to it, and also how writers might tap into the emerging world of deep fakes in their fiction, nonfiction or other writing.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Graduate Student Reading – PRE-RECORDED

Wednesday, January 6th

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

“Writing About Landscape: Being Attentive to Place Without Falling into Cliché”

Francisco Cantú – 2019 Housatonic Book Award Winner in Nonfiction

As writers, the land is often one of our greatest sources of inspiration. But “nature writing” is sometimes seen as a tired or outdated genre, and writing about landscape can sometimes feel like a fraught endeavor. In this generative virtual master class, you’ll be encouraged to take your phone or laptop outdoors—taking note of whatever you might see, hear, and feel from your yard, patio, or in front of your window. We’ll discuss new ways of being attentive and responsive to the landscape, the histories it holds, and the narratives that flow from it.

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Internship Panel

Diana Arciniegas, Caroyln Baccaro, and Catherine D’Andrea

Landing an internship is a crucial step in launching any career, particularly in writing, education, and publishing. In this panel, Caroyln Baccaro and Catherine D’Andrea, two recent MFA graduates, will share their internship experiences and how those experiences enriched their coursework and prepared them for post-MFA opportunities. Diana Arciniegas, Academic Relations Program Manager at Boehringer Ingelheim, will offer insight into a variety of writing internships in business, health care, and other fields. We will also discuss the influx of remote positions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and how, for many students, this has expanded their opportunities and professional networks.

12:30 – 1:45 PM
Lunch Break

2:00 – 3:30 PM
Mentor Meetings

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM
“After and Outside the MFA”
R.O. Kwon – 2019 Housatonic Book Award Winner in Fiction

This is a crash course on how to find time, money, and space to write after and outside an MFA. How will you find fellowships, grants, and residencies, and what are best practices for applying? How helpful are writing conferences? Where can you participate in literary communities? What do you need to know about submitting fiction to magazines? What’s a key part of a magazine pitch? Please come to class with ideas about short pieces you’d like to pitch to publications. You’ll leave with a draft of a fellowship/ residency statement of purpose, as well as a pitch draft.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM - LIVE
Housatonic Book Awards Reading and Q&A
Francisco Cantú (Nonfiction)
R.O. Kwon (Fiction)

Thursday, January 7th

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Primary Genre Chats (for current students)

In these casual chats, students will meet with mentors and fellow students who share an interest in the same genres/subgenres. Bring your thoughts, questions, pesky revision challenges, and reading suggestions! This is a great opportunity to meet new students, connect with mentors, and maybe even spark an idea for a new piece. Students can drop in to any of the rooms to chat about a genre they know well or to learn about a new genre they’re curious about.

Room 1: Memoir/Personal Essay – Anthony D’Aries & Sonja Mongar
Room 2: Fiction – Oscar De Los Santos & Ron Samul
Room 3: Poetry – Brian Clements & Sean Thomas Dougherty
Room 4: Writing for Stage and Screen – Louisa Burns-Bisogno & Matthew Quinn Martin

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM
Mentor Meetings

This block of time is for students to meet with their spring semester mentors and begin planning their syllabi.

12:30 – 1:45 PM
Lunch Break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
“From Thesis to Book”
Ron Farina, Brian Thiem, & Beth Turley

Many MFA students go on to publish their final thesis, some even before they graduate. In this panel, recent graduates will discuss their thesis semester, the revision process, how they found an agent/publisher, and what it was like seeing their typed manuscript become a published book.

7:30 PM – Until You Can’t Take Any More!
Bad Poetry Contest

Our Winter Residency wouldn’t be complete without our annual Bad Poetry Contest! Does your verse soothe like a mouthful of broken glass? Do you have a sappy love poem that was rejected by your middle school crush? Do you write haikus about Robert Downey Jr.? If you answered yes to any of these, then we’ve got a contest for you! Extra credit for gratuitous rhyming and exclamation points!!!!

Come read your work to a welcoming audience of faculty, students, and alumni. First, second, and third place prizes will be awarded to the baddest of the bad. As we say in workshop, there is no bad writing, only under-developed writing – but who wants to sign up for an Under-Developed Poetry Contest?

Email Anthony D’Aries by noon on the last day of residency to add your name to the list.

Presenter Bios



Jenn Adams is a writer and podcaster from Nashville, TN. She co-hosts both the Psychoanalysis podcast, examining the horror genre through the lens of mental health, as well as *The Loser's Club* podcast. She received a bachelor's degree in Music Education from Belmont University in 2004 and holds Orff and Kodaly level certifications. After teaching elementary music for 13 years in Nashville, she now works as an educational content writer and curriculum specialist. She is a contributing writer for *Consequence of Sound* focusing on horror and will gladly talk your ear off about Stephen King.

Gina Atanasoff graduated from the MFA program in May 2019 with a concentration in public relations and communications writing. Her thesis, Public Relations, Communications, Journalism and Politics: A Comprehensive Professional Writing Portfolio, was awarded High Distinction.

Gina is currently the Press Secretary and Social Media Manager for Secretary of the State Denise Merrill. She has worked for companies such as ViacomCBS and Subway World Headquarters, and worked on Rep. Jahana Hayes' and Sen. Elizabeth Warren's congressional and presidential campaigns.



Michael Ian Black is a multi-media talent who's starred in numerous films and TV series, written and/or directed two films, is a prolific author and commentator, and regularly tours the country performing his ribald brand of jokes and observations. He most recently starred in TVLand's *The Jim Gaffigan Show* and Comedy Central's *Another Period*. He also reprised one of his iconic film roles in Netflix's *Wet Hot American Summer: Ten Years Later*, and previously in *Wet Hot American Summer: First Day of Camp*. His third standup comedy special, *Noted Expert* was released on Epix.

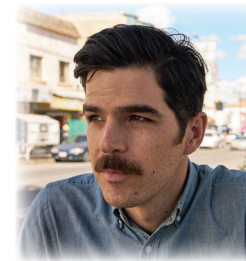
Black's authored 11 books, including the best seller, *A Child's First Book of Trump*. He's written two well-received memoirs: *Navel Gazing: True Tales of Bodies, Mostly Mine (but also my mom's, which I know sounds weird)*, and *You're Not Doing It Right: Tales of Marriage, Sex, Death and Other Humiliations*. In 2012, he collaborated with Meghan McCain on *America, You Sexy Bitch: A Love Letter to Freedom*. He's the author of *My Custom Van (and 50 Other Mind-Blowing Essays That Will Blow Your Mind All Over Your Face)*, and seven children's books, including *Cock-a-Doodle-Doo-Bop!*, *Naked*, *Chicken Cheeks*, *The Purple Kangaroo*, *A Pig Parade is a Terrible Idea* and *I'm Bored*. He also writes book reviews for *The New York Times*. His most recent book, *A Better Man: A (Mostly-Serious) Letter to My Son* was released in 2020 by Algonquin Books.

Carolyn Baccaro is a freelance advertising copywriter and half-owner of the retail shop, Hyperbole. She earned her BFA in Poetry at Eugene Lang College and her MFA in Copywriting and Poetry at WCSU. Carolyn began her professional career as an Assistant in Wenner Media's Publicity Department (*Rolling Stone*, *Us Weekly*, *Men's Journal*)--held multiple positions in between--and then switched to copywriting, working at Ketchum PR, Big Spaceship, and more. She now lives with her husband Mickey, daughter, Vita, and two dogs Brutus and Trixie in Beacon, New York.



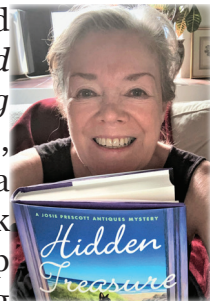
Louisa Burns-Bisogno is an award-winning screenwriter, director, author, and international media consultant with over 100 on-screen credits. Her movies have been produced on cable TV and on all the major U.S. networks, as well as distributed internationally. Among these are: *My Body, My Child* with Vanessa Redgrave, Sarah Jessica Parker and Cynthia Nixon and *Bridge to Silence*, with Marlee Matlin. In Fall 2019, she co-created and produced *Sisters by Choice*, an Italian situation comedy series. Currently, she is developing *Lady Interpol*, a 'dramedy' about spies. Louisa is a professor of playwriting, screenwriting and multimedia.

Dan Caffrey recently completed his M.F.A. in Playwriting at The University of Texas at Austin. He has been both a Finalist and Semi-Finalist at the O'Neill, an artist in The Orchard Project's Liveness Lab, and his work has been published by Smith & Kraus. His scripts have also been developed by Kitchen Dog Theater, Pegasus PlayLab, and the Sewanee Writers' Conference. His first book, *Radiohead FAQ*, will be published by Rowman & Littlefield this December. He also records music of his own with Mae Shults under the name Methodist Hospital. Dean of American Rock Critics Robert Christgau hailed their debut album, *Giants*, as one of the best of 2018.



Francisco Cantú (2019 HBA Winner in Nonfiction) is a writer, translator, and the author of *The Line Becomes a River*, winner of the 2018 Los Angeles Times Book Prize and a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in nonfiction. A former Fulbright fellow, he has been the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, a Whiting Award, and an Art for Justice fellowship. His writing and translations have been featured in *The New Yorker*, *Best American Essays*, *Harper's*, and *VQR*, as well as on *This American Life*. A lifelong resident of the Southwest, he now lives in Tucson, where he coordinates the Field Studies in Writing Program at the University of Arizona.

Jane K. Cleland writes both fiction and nonfiction, including the long-running and multiple award-winning Josie Prescott Antiques Mysteries [St. Martin's & *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*] and the Agatha Award-winning bestsellers *Mastering Suspense*, *Structure & Plot* and *Mastering Plot Twists* [Writer's Digest Books], recommended by Dan Brown, Louise Penny, David Baldacci, and Neil Gaiman. Jane is a contributing editor for *Writer's Digest Magazine*, and the chair of the Wolfe Pack's Black Orchid Novella Award (BONA), in partnership with AHMM. She is a frequent workshop leader and guest author at writing conferences and MFA Residencies. Jane is offering free monthly workshops on the craft of writing in the "We're All in It Together," series. Details can be found at www.janecleland.com



Brian Clements is the founding Coordinator of the MFA program and Professor of Writing, Linguistics, and Creative Writing. He is author or editor of over a dozen books of poetry, including *A Book of Common Rituals* (Quale Press), *Disappointed Psalms* (Meritage Press), and the anthologies *An Introduction to the Prose Poem* (Firewheel Editions) and *Bullets into Bells: Poets and Citizens Respond to Gun Violence*. Prof. Clements also has worked professionally in technical communications, corporate communications, grant-writing, and non-profit administration.



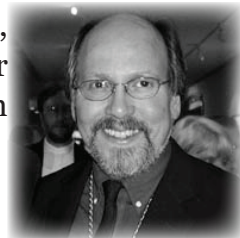
Randall Colburn is an internationally produced playwright, podcaster, and culture writer with bylines at *The Guardian*, *The Outline*, and *Consequence of Sound*. He’s featured in *Best Worst Movie*, the documentary about *Troll 2*, and is currently the Internet Culture Editor at *The A.V. Club*.

Catherine D’Andrea taught French for ten years, raised two children, and confronted cancer before facing her fear—and dream—of becoming a writer. She studied poetry and nonfiction in the Creative and Professional Writing MFA program at Western Connecticut State University and graduated in 2019. An active member of the Connecticut Poetry Society, the Sherman Writers, and other writing groups, Catherine also enjoys yoga, hiking, and searching for thrift shop treasures. She lives with her husband and two cats in the Northwest Hills of Connecticut.



Anthony D’Aries is the author of *The Language of Men: A Memoir* (Hudson Whitman Press, 2012), which received the PEN Discovery Prize and IndieFab’s Book of the Year Award. His work has appeared in *Boston Magazine*, *Solstice*, *The Good Men Project*, *Shelf Awareness*, *Memoir Magazine*, *The Literary Review*, *Sport Literate*, *Flash Fiction Magazine*, and elsewhere. In 2016, he was selected as the Lighthouse Writers Workshop’s Fort Lyon Writer-in-Residence and taught writing workshops for homeless veterans. He is currently the coordinator of the MFA in Creative and Professional Writing at WCSU.

Oscar De Los Santos is Professor and former Chair of the Department of Writing, Linguistics, and Creative Process at WCSU. Professor de los Santos is the author of *Hard Boiled Egg* (Fine Tooth Press, 2004) and *Infinite Wonderlands* (Fine Tooth Press, 2006.) He co-hosts the podcast *Talking the Weird* with Kelly L. Goodridge.



Bonnie Denmark is Senior Writer/Editor at an award-winning patient-education media company. She started in the tech field as a computational linguist in a software R&D firm specializing in speech and language engineering. Here she oversaw linguistic and human aspects of software design and routinely wrote reports, proposals, and user manuals. Since then she has worked as an educator, writer, editor, literacy specialist, and multimedia curriculum developer with special attention to accessibility issues. She particularly enjoys using her technical and business writing skills in the health and science fields, producing video, print, and web-based educational and marketing content.



Sean Thomas Dougherty was born in New York City and grew up in Brooklyn, Ohio, and New Hampshire. Dorianne Laux has called him “the gypsy punk heart of American poetry.” Dougherty is the author of 13 books, including *The Second O of Sorrow* (BOA Editions, 2018), *All You Ask for is Longing: Poems 1994-2014* (BOA Editions, 2014), *Scything Grace* (Etruscan Press, 2013), and *Sasha Sings the Laundry on the Line* (BOA Editions, 2010), which was a finalist for Binghamton University’s Milton Kessler Poetry Book Award. He has received fellowships from the Fulbright Foundation and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and his work appeared in *Best American Poetry 2014*. Known for his dynamic readings, Dougherty has performed at hundreds of venues, including in Albania and Macedonia where he appeared on national television, sponsored by the US State Department. He lives in Erie, Pennsylvania, where he works as a medical technician.

Kendra Fortmeyer is the author of the magical realist YA novel *Hole in the Middle* as well as short stories appearing in the Pushcart Prize anthology, the *LeVar Burton Reads* podcast (yes, she got to meet — *and hug!* — LeVar Burton, and yes, it was amazing), *The Best American Nonrequired Reading*, *One Story*, *Lightspeed*, and elsewhere. She got thoroughly schooled by Kelly Link in SFF at the 2016 Clarion Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers’ workshop, and has her MFA in fiction from the New Writers Project at the University of Texas at Austin. She loves a good genre-bend.



Connor Goldsmith is an agent at Fuse Literary, specializing in a variety of nonfiction titles and Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror Fiction for adults. His clients run the gamut from influential celebrities to award-winning novelists. Born and raised in New York, Connor lived briefly in the Midwest studying English and the Classics at Oberlin College in Ohio. He is passionate about media as a vehicle for social progress, and received a Master’s Degree in Media Studies from The New School. Connor began his career in publishing in 2012 at Lowenstein Associates, and joined Fuse Literary in 2014. Prior to entering the world of books, he spent a year as an intern in the commercial film and television department at A3 Artists Agency (then known as Abrams Artists Agency). Follow Connor on Twitter at [@dreamoforgonon](#). You can find more information at his [personal website](#).

Mel Kassel teaches creative writing and peer tutoring at the University of Iowa. She is a graduate of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, a World Fantasy Award winner, and a co-host on *The Losers’ Club: A Stephen King Podcast*. Her work has appeared in *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Lightspeed*, *The Toast*, and elsewhere. She’s currently writing and revising her first collection of short stories. Find her on Twitter [@MelKassel](#).



R.O. Kwon’s nationally bestselling first novel, *The Incendiaries*, is published by Riverhead. *The Incendiaries* was named a best book of the year by over forty publications, and it is being translated into seven languages. Kwon’s writing is published in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Paris Review*, *New York Magazine*, NPR, and elsewhere. Named by *The New York Times* as one of four “writers to watch,” she has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Yaddo, MacDowell, and the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference.



Sarah Darer Littman is the critically acclaimed author of Young Adult novels, *Deepfake*, *Anything But Okay*, *In Case You Missed It*, *Backlash*, (Winner of the Iowa Teen Book Award and the Grand Canyon Reader Award) *Want to Go Private?*; *Life, After*, and *Purge*; and middle grade novels, *Taming of the Shoe*, *Fairest of Them All*, *Charmed*, *I'm Sure* and *Confessions of a Closet Catholic*, winner of the Sydney Taylor Book Award. In addition to writing novels, Sarah is an instructor in the Writing Department at Western Connecticut State University and teaches creative writing at the Yale Summer Writers' Conference. She is also an award-winning opinion columnist.

Matthew Quinn Martin is the author of the *Nightlife* series (Pocket Star/Simon & Schuster) as well as numerous works of short fiction. He is the co-writer of the feature films *Being* and *Slingshot*. He currently lives in the woods of upstate NY.



Steve Miller has been a writer in the San Diego tech industry for 35 years. With education in Linguistics and Computer Science, Steve started his career writing grant proposals and user documentation for a small software firm. For the next ten years he worked as a technical writer for several companies, creating user and internal documentation for business software, telecommunications and medical products. Making a switch to marketing writing, Steve created client proposals and printed and online marketing materials for information-management and transportation-security products. For the past four years, he has been a video-script writer for enterprise software firm ServiceNow.

Sonja Mongar is a 10-year MFA mentor and recently retired University of Puerto Rico Associate Professor. She is a journalist and managing editor of the bilingual – *Esta Vida Boricua: A Digital Life Narrative Installation*, *Spoken Story Archive & Public Art Space*. Her interests include digital and performance story work, film production, ancestral narratives, indie publishing, and social justice and advocacy. Her novel, *Two Spoons of Bitter* was released in 2018. A car auction driver, closet street poet, and songwriter-blues harmonica player, Sonja lives in Florida.



Erik Ofgang is the senior writer at *Connecticut Magazine*, author of *Buzzed: Where to Enjoy the Best Craft Beverages in New England*, and *Gillette Castle: A History*. “His most recent book is *The Good Vices: From Beer to Sex, the Surprising Truth About What’s Actually Good for You* (Penguin Random House). In addition, he has written for the Associated Press, *Thrillist* and *Tablet Magazine*. A graduate of this MFA program, he was *Poor Yorick*’s first editor. Erik Ofgang specializes in journalism, literary nonfiction, literary journalism, and PR writing.



Josh Pahigian is the author of several baseball travel guides, including *The Ultimate Road Trip*, *101 Baseball Places to See Before You Strike Out*, and *The Amazing Baseball Adventure*. He has also written about baseball travel for ESPN.com and other print and online periodicals. Josh writes fiction, as well, having penned the Maine mystery novel *Strangers on the Beach*. A mentor is the WCSU program since 2012, Josh also teaches undergraduate writing and global humanities at the University of New England and writes for that university’s Office of Communications. He lives in Southern Maine.

John Roche has been an award-winning newspaper journalist for twenty years. In addition to stints as an actor and stand-up comedian, he has taught journalism, media studies, English composition and writing at several colleges in the tri-state region and was recognized as Adjunct Faculty Member of the Year in 2008 by Marist College. He writes fiction in addition to teaching and his work as a journalist. His novel, *Bronx Bound*, was published in 2015 by Black Opal Books.



Onnesha Roychoudhuri is an editor, journalist, and fiction writer. Her writing has appeared in a number of outlets, including *The Nation*, *Boston Review*, *The American Prospect*, *Salon*, *Mother Jones*, *n+1*, *McSweeney’s*, *Opium*, and *Wag’s Review*. Most recently, she worked as an editor for the Investigative Fund at the Nation Institute, helping to fund, edit, and place investigative journalism in a range of outlets, from *Harper’s* and *GQ* to *Orion* and the *Oxford American*. She has also contributed to a number of books, including *Women’s Lives* (McGraw-Hill, May 2006), *Send Yourself Roses* (Springboard Press, February 2008), *109 Forgotten American Heroes* (DK Press, October 2009), *How to Rule the World* (Klutz, January 2011), *Hope Deferred: Narratives of Zimbabwean Lives* (McSweeney’s, March 2011), and *Junk-box Jewelry* (Zest Books, June 2012).

Saba Sulaiman holds a BA from Wellesley College and an MA from the University of Chicago, where she studied modern Persian literature. She is looking primarily to build her children’s list, and is particularly interested in contemporary realistic stories. She’s also open to romance (all sub-genres except paranormal), literary, upmarket, and commercial fiction, tightly plotted, character-driven psychological thrillers, cozy mysteries à la Agatha Christie, and memoir. Being an immigrant who is constantly negotiating her own identity and sense of belonging in a place she now calls “home,” she is committed to highlighting more diverse voices with compelling stories to tell; stories that demonstrate the true range of perspectives that exist in this world, and address urgent and often underexplored issues in both fiction and non-fiction with veracity and heart. Twitter: [@agentsaba](https://twitter.com/agentsaba). Website: sabasulaiman.com





Brian Thiem is a 2013 graduate of the WCSU MFA Program and the author of the *Detective Matt Sinclair Mystery* series (*Red Line* 2015, *Thrill Kill* 2016, and *Shallow Grave* 2017), published by Crooked Lane Books. He retired as a Lieutenant from the Oakland Police Department, with years of experience as a homicide detective and commander of the homicide unit. He is also an Iraqi War veteran and retired from the U.S. Army as a Lieutenant Colonel. He's a member of the Mystery Writers of America and International Thriller Writers. He lives and writes in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

Beth Turley is a graduate of the MFA in Creative and Professional Writing program at Western Connecticut State University. She lives and writes in southeastern Connecticut, where the leaves changing color feels like magic and the water is never too far away. She is the author of *If This Were a Story* and *The Last Tree Town*.

Follow Beth on Twitter [@beth_turley](#) and Instagram [@bethturleybooks](#)

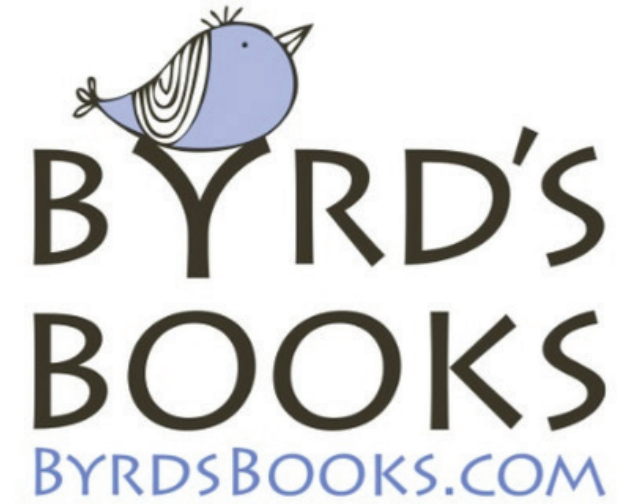


Stephanie M. Wytovich is an American poet, novelist, and essayist. Her work has been showcased in numerous venues such as *Weird Tales*, *Gutted: Beautiful Horror Stories*, *Fantastic Tales of Terror*, *Year's Best Hardcore Horror: Volume 2*, *The Best Horror of the Year: Volume 8*, as well as many others.

Wytovich is the Poetry Editor for Raw Dog Screaming Press, an adjunct at Western Connecticut State University, Southern New Hampshire University, and Point Park University, and a mentor with Crystal Lake Publishing. She is a member of the Science Fiction Poetry Association, an active member of the Horror Writers Association, and a graduate of Seton Hill University's MFA program for Writing Popular Fiction. Her Bram Stoker Award-winning poetry collection, *Brothel*, earned a home with Raw Dog Screaming Press alongside *Hysteria: A Collection of Madness*, *Mourning Jewelry*, *An Exorcism of Angels*, *Sheet Music to My Acoustic Nightmare*, and most recently, *The Apocalyptic Mannequin*. Her debut novel, *The Eighth*, is published with Dark Regions Press.

Follow Wytovich on her blog at [stephaniewytovich.blogspot.com](#) and on Twitter [@SWytovich](#)

Karen Romano Young is a writer, artist, deep-sea diver, polar explorer, and comics creator. The author of more than twenty books, including novels, nonfiction, and graphic novels, Karen has taken her work to the top of the world — the Arctic Ocean — and the bottom of the ocean — in a submarine. Recent work includes writing and drawing aboard an icebreaker, creating *Humanimal Doodles* — a science comic, the children's book *Doodlebug: A Novel in Doodles*, and the young reader detective novel, *A Girl, A Racoon, and the Midnight Moon*.



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	9:00-10:30	11:00-12:15	12:30-1:45	2:00-3:30	5:00-7:15	7:30-9:00
Sat., Jan. 2	Kendra Fortmeyer Unlock Your YA Voice	Mentor AMA: Onnesha Roychoudhuri	Lunch	Karen Romano Young How to Survive as a Writer	Dinner	Kendra Fortmeyer
Sun., Jan. 3	Bonnie Denmark & Steve Miller Writing for the Tech Industry	Agent Panel	Lunch	The Losers' Club Podcast panel	Dinner	Graduate Student Reading
Mon., Jan. 4	Erik Ofgang & Josh Pahigian Crafting a Book Proposal	Mentor AMA: Stephanie Wytovich	Lunch	Anthony D'Aries Choosing Your Professional Genre	Dinner	Michael Ian Black
Tues., Jan. 5	Jane K. Cleland & Brian Clements A Writing Career	Alumni AMA: Gina Atanasoff	Lunch	John Roche & Sarah Darer Littman Deep Fakes	Dinner	Graduate Student Reading
Wed., Jan. 6	Francisco Cantú Writing About Landscape	Internship Panel	Lunch	Mentor Meetings	R.O Kwon After and Outside the MFA 4:00-5:30	Francisco Cantú & R.O. Kwon
Th., Jan. 7	Primary Genre Chats (current students only)	Mentor Meetings	Lunch	Ron Farina, Brian Thiem, and Beth Turley From Thesis to Book	Dinner	Bad Poetry Contest

All **green** sessions are live and required.
All **blue** sessions are pre-recorded and required.
All **yellow** sessions are live, but optional.

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