

Revise This!

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WILKES UNIVERSITY CREATIVE WRITING NEWSLETTER

June 2017

- [Pennsylvania Writers Conference Returns, July 30-August 5](#)
- [Five and a Half Questions for M. Kilburg Reedy](#)
- [Here's to the Graduates!](#)
- [News From Faculty, Students, And Alums](#)

Pennsylvania Writers Conference: Bigger and Better Than Ever

Archives

[Archives](#)

[2017](#)

[2018](#)

[Revise This! -
November 2019](#)

Registration
is open for
the 2017



Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Natasha Trethewey.

Pennsylvania Writers Conference!

For the first time, four-day intensive workshops will be held before the weekend conference, offering participants small-group instruction and critiques. Spend a summer week in Wilkes-Barre honing your craft with expert teachers and motivated peers. [Sign up now](#) – space for the preconference workshops is limited!

Register Now

The
weekend
PWC event
on the
Wilkes
University
campus,
August 4-5,
will offer



craft classes
in creative
nonfiction,
fiction,
poetry, and

National Slam Champ Jason Carney.

screenwriting, pitch sessions with agents, a keynote reading by Pulitzer Prize-winning poet **Natasha Trethewey**, the annual open mic and poetry slam hosted by Def Poetry star and National Slam Champ **Jason Carney**, and literary panels with editors, film producers, literary agents, publishers, and writers, including a plenary session with Fresh Air reviewer **Maureen Corrigan**.

Sign up at wilkes.edu/pwc by June 30 for the \$116 early-bird registration rate for the two-day pass, which covers all conference events including the open mic/poetry slam and keynote reading. Regular price (after June 30) is \$145, \$75 for students 18 or older with a valid college I.D.

The \$395 PWC all-access pass includes the kickoff reception July 30, one four-day workshop July 31-Aug. 3, plus all conference events Aug. 4-5. Learn more about the four-day workshops and [register here](#).

Preconference Workshops Offer Four-Day Intensives

Four-day pre-conference workshops will make the PWC experience richer and more personal for participants. Each workshop runs from July 31 to Aug. 3 and is open to adults of any age.

Putting
Together
a Poetry



NPR Fresh Air reviewer Maureen Corrigan.

Chapbook with Rashidah Ismaili Abubakr

Participants will discuss and organize poems for a chapbook, begin a narrative poem to be completed and read on the final day of class, and read poets who may not be known to them. Each day will consist of homework, readings, personal work and guided instruction to increase each participant's ability to conceive a chapbook.

Rashidah Ismaili Abubakr is a poet, playwright and writer of fiction and nonfiction. Her latest work is *Autobiography of the Lower East Side*, a novel in linked stories (Northampton House Press).

Keeping Them Up All Night: Crafting the Thriller, Adventure, and Military Action Genres with David Poyer

This four-day master class focuses on exciting stories told in an accessible way. Participants will learn the requirements and vocabulary of the genre, and craft an elevator pitch, scene outline, short chapter outline and the opening pages of a novel or novella, the basic tools to work on a full-length project of their own.

David Poyer is the *USA Today* bestselling author of more than 40 books, including the Tiller Galloway diving adventures, the Dan Lenson novels of the modern Navy and Marine Corps, and sailing adventures such as

Ghosting and *The Whiteness of the Whale*. His military career included service in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Pacific, Pentagon, Arctic, and Middle East.

Screenwriting: 5 Films/4 Days with Ross Klavan

A deep reading and lasting look at five films that concentrate on structure to help you put together a film of your own. Screenwriting is about three things: "Structure, structure, and structure." Find out what that means, learn to use it, and get to see some terrific films.

Ross Klavan wrote the film *Tigerland* (starring Colin Farrell) and the novel *Schmuck* (Greenpoint Press). He has been a voice actor, journalist, and screenplay writer for New Regency, Paramount and Miramax, among others.

Creative Nonfiction: Types and Techniques with J. Michael Lennon

Understand varieties of creative nonfiction while learning about the key elements of craft: imagery, voice/point of view, character, setting, and story. Each participant should bring six copies of a nonfiction piece for discussion and a private critique with the instructor.

J. Michael Lennon is the late Norman Mailer's archivist and editor, and author of the biography *Norman Mailer: A Double Life*. His work has appeared in *Paris Review*, *The New Yorker*, *Times Literary Supplement* and *Creative Nonfiction*, among others. He co-founded the Wilkes University Graduate Creative Writing Program and has taught in it since 2005.

Creating the World of Your Memoir with Judy Mandel

You have a story to tell, a unique journey that can illuminate a path for others. In this workshop, we will discuss and write about issues for memoir writers, including choosing structure, events and scenes, narrative and commentary, theme, details, and perspective. When to tell and when to show, and what's the difference? What will your family say, and should you care?

Judy Mandel is the author of the New York Times bestseller, *Replacement Child* (Seal Press, 2013). She is a writing coach, teacher and editor whose essays, articles and short stories have appeared in *Kveller.com*, *Tishman Review*, *ASJA Monthly*, *The Southampton Review* and elsewhere.

Wonder, Disbelief and Fantastic Fiction: Writing the

New Supernatural, Dark Fantasy, and Fabulist Genres with Lenore Hart

Forget the old tropes of shambling zombies and evil demons with bad manicures. More and more writers are creating deep, powerful stories with supernatural or magical elements, suspending disbelief and evoking wonder and unease, in realistic settings inhabited by well-crafted characters. Participants will create a project pitch, step sheet, complete synopsis, and the opening pages of a short story or first chapter while participating in brief readings and critiques.

Lenore Hart is the author of seven novels, including *Becky* and *The Raven's Bride*, plus YA and children's books, short stories, poetry and nonfiction. She's the editor of the 2017 fiction anthology *The Night Bazaar*.

People and Place with Nicole Dennis-Benn

Setting provides a world for the story to take place. But more than that, setting reveals character—who they are, their culture and the social circumstances that shape them and affective the decisions they make. Through reading, writing, and discussion, we will explore how to use the physical environment as a characterization tool. Each student will write at least 10 short poems and two longer narratives, be critiqued twice in class, and have an individual conference with the instructor.

Nicole Dennis-Benn is the author of *Here Comes the Sun*, a *New York Times* Notable Book and NPR Best Book of 2016. Her work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Elle Magazine*, *Electric Literature*, and others, and she teaches as visiting faculty in the M.F.A. Fiction program at Sarah Lawrence College.

Certificate Workshops

For an additional fee, two workshops offer university-granted certificates in either noncredit or graduate credit (3 credit hours) options. Each program runs four days (July 31-Aug. 3) and includes PWC registration.

Certificate in Literary Publishing with Philip Brady (\$675 noncredit, \$1,500 graduate credit)

The certificate offers an in-depth, intensive immersion into the world of literary publishing, from large to small presses and various business models. Participants will have the unique opportunity to see two literary presses in operation, Etruscan Press and Akashic Books, and hear from professionals working in all areas of the publishing world.

Philip Brady's latest book is *To Banquet With the Ethiopians: A Memoir of Life Before the Alphabet* (Broadstone, 2015). He is a distinguished professor at Youngstown State University and executive director of Etruscan Press.

Certificate in Arts Education with Barbara Taylor (\$475 noncredit, \$1,500 graduate credit)

Invigorate your classroom and engage your students through creative writing. Learn to establish a writers' workshop or take your workshop model to the next level. Generate ways to manage grading, and leave with practical lesson plans to incorporate into your district's curriculum. Writers and nonwriters welcome.

Barbara Taylor has taught English for 30 years in the Pocono Mountain School District. Her most recent novel, *All Waiting Is Long* (Akashic/Kaylie Jones Books, 2014), is the sequel to *Sing in the Morning, Cry at Night*, named a "Best Book of Summer 2014" by *Publishers Weekly*.

Five and a Half Questions for M. Kilburg Reedy

By Lisa Greim

One of the
special
advantages
of studying

for an M.A.
or M.F.A. in
the Wilkes
University
Creative
Writing
Graduate
Program is
the access
the program
gives to
creative



Attorney M. Kilburg Reedy teaches a legal issues seminar at each residency and makes herself available to answer questions one-on-one for students in the program.

professionals. These people, involved in the marketplace for creative work, can give students realistic feedback on their projects. Each M.A. candidate's thesis draft is read by an outside reader—an agent, editor, theatrical or film producer—who also participates in pitch panels, question-and-answer sessions, and seminars.

Attorney **M. Kilburg Reedy** teaches a legal issues seminar at each residency and makes herself available to answer questions one-on-one for students in the program. Along with expertise in entertainment law as a partner in the New York law firm of Feldman, Golinski, Reedy + Ben-Zvi PLLC, Reedy is a published playwright, songwriter, and theatrical producer with three shows in production in New York: the Broadway premiere of the new musical *Come From Away*; *Nevermore—The Imaginary Life and Mysterious Death of Edgar Allan Poe*; and *Shear Madness*.

Somehow, she found the time to answer five and a half questions.

1) Attorney, producer, playwright, songwriter. What's the common thread? What makes you good at all these things?

I started off wanting to be a playwright, and moved to New York after college to pursue that goal. I was able to get a play produced when I was 25, for which I got a great *New York Times* review calling me a "promising playwright," and that play was successfully produced all around the U.S. and internationally, but I wasn't able to get the next few plays produced, so because I had to earn a living I went to law school and became an entertainment lawyer. I later became a producer because I love the business of theater and wanted to expand my role to including choosing and managing shows (elements that just being the lawyer doesn't offer). And I've continued to write, as and when I've found the time. I have a new play I'm trying to launch now called *The Daughter of Time*, based on a well-known British mystery novel that I got the rights to adapt.

2) Tell us about your three 2017 productions. What appealed to you about *Come From Away*, *Shear Madness* and *Nevermore*?

They're all such different projects, but if there's a common thread in shows I choose to produce or co-produce, it's that they have to be unique in some way. My motto is, "Show me something I haven't seen before."

Come From Away is a beautiful and uplifting story about the small town in Canada that welcomed 7,500 stranded travelers on 9/11, where the locals and the "Come From Aways" cared for and comforted each other during a dark time. *Nevermore* is a gorgeously designed, beautifully composed and written gothic opera about the tormented and transcendent life of Edgar Allan Poe. And *Shear Madness* is a one-of-a-kind theater experience in which the audience solves the show's murder mystery.

3) How does the role of a theatrical producer differ from a film or television producer?

The two businesses are very different. My legal practice includes film production counsel work, but I've yet to produce a film. There is a filmed version of *Nevermore* in the pipeline that, if all goes according to plan, will be screened in cinemas in October 2018.

3.5) *Come from Away* has 40 producer credits, *Nevermore* 12. Do these producer roles mostly represent a financial investment, or are you involved in the creative or business development of a show?

On *Come From Away*, my producing partner and I are co-producers of the show, not lead producers. Even though we were involved with the show starting in 2013, through its pre-Broadway development, up until it opened in March 2017, our creative and business input was not extensive. On the other hand, for *Nevermore*, we were the lead

producers, so we made virtually all the creative and business decisions on the project, and were responsible for raising all the money. You can tell our relationship to each project by the positioning of our credit—on *Nevermore*, our production company name (Radio Mouse Entertainment) is first, whereas on *Come From Away* we're somewhere in the middle of the pack.

4) As a playwright, what comes first to you in the creative process: characters or story?

I think as a playwright I tend to be very story- and message-driven. I write when I have something I want to say, which I think sometimes means my characters suffer, because I don't do what some writers do and start by listening to the characters and letting them do what they want to do naturally. In fact, the last two projects I wrote are based on pre-existing stories. One is a musical based on a Greek myth, and *The Daughter of Time* is based on a novel published in the 1950s about a 20th century Scotland Yard inspector who investigates whether Richard III really killed the Princes in the Tower or if he was framed by the Tudors, who succeeded him as rulers of England. It's a timely tale because it's about how a falsehood, if repeated often enough and loudly enough, without contradiction, can become accepted as fact. They say history is written by the victors.

5) What legal issues should rookie writers be paying the closest attention to?

It depends on what the rookie writer is writing. If it's something entirely original, there are very few issues that a writer has to worry about—the main advice I could offer there is, don't plagiarize. If a writer wants to do what I did and adapt an existing literary property that's still in copyright, the writer needs to hire a lawyer to negotiate and draft a license or purchase agreement with the owner of the property, to obtain the necessary rights. And of course, if a writer is writing a memoir or something else based on true events and living people, there are a host of legal issues that the writer should be aware of. All of these are issues that I cover in my presentation for Wilkes during the residency two times a year.

After this interview was conducted, Ms. Reedy's Broadway musical *Come From Away* was nominated for 9 Academy Awards, including Best Original Musical. It was awarded one for "Best Director for an Original Musical."

Lisa Greim is an M.A. student in Creative Nonfiction at Wilkes University. She lives in Colorado.

Here's to the Graduates

We congratulate the graduates of the Wilkes University Graduate Creative Writing Program, who were awarded their diplomas at the spring graduation ceremony on Saturday morning, May 20, in Wilkes-Barre!

M.A.

- Darcy Breault
- Joseph Bryan
- Melody Breyer-Grell
- Deborah Canon
- Jeffrey Ford
- Allison Foulke
- Donald Granza
- Carol MacAllister
- Maura Maros
- Luke Morris
- Robert Peck
- Donald Roe
- Joseph San George
- Ora Smith
- Michael Soloway
- Ronnie Stephens
- Brian Thomas

M.F.A.

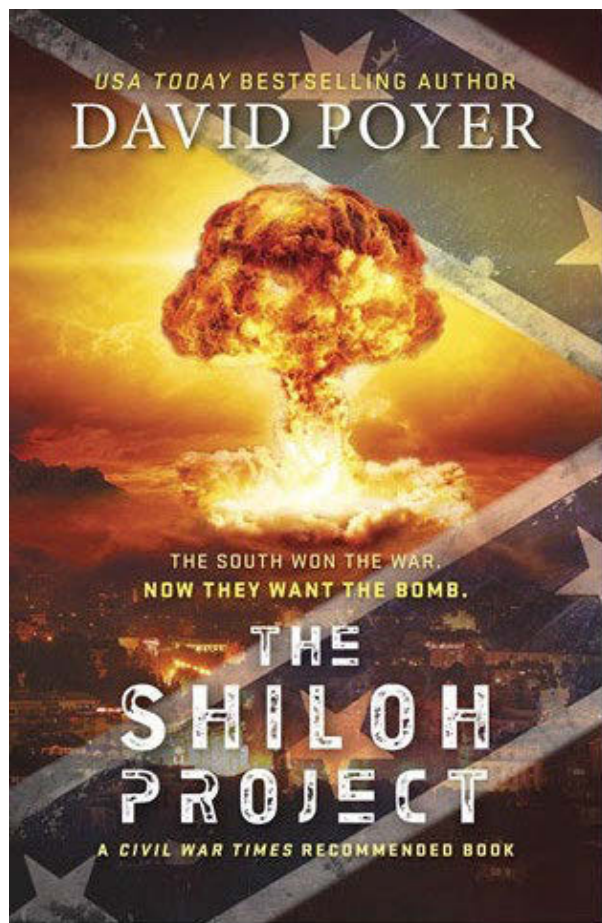
- Anna Arnett
- Molly Barari
- Renee Butts
- Patrick Charsky
- Gabrielle D'Amico
- Robert Holly
- Suzanne Ohlmann
- Christopher Purita
- Martha Rallison
- Caleb Sizemore
- Hillary Transue

Faculty News

Kaylie Jones had three personal essays from "a series of essays on my bad mothering" published this spring. The Rumpus published "[The Day the FBI Tapped Our Phones](#)," Hippocampus ran "[Bad Mother](#)" in its June issue, and The Southampton Review's 10-year anniversary issue features "[One True Friend](#)."

Dr. J. Michael Lennon is editing [Norman Mailer's works](#) for the Library of America, an anticipated 8- to 10-volume collection. The first two volumes, covering the 1960s, will be released in early 2018.

Before
Harry
Turtledove
and Cherie
Priest, there
was *The
Shiloh*



David Poyer's latest book, *The Shiloh Project*.

Project. **David Poyer's** alternate history begins with the victory of the South at Gettysburg in 1863. Today the Mason-Dixon Wall divides Union and Confederacy ... and many other things are different from the world we know. Available again in a new trade paperback edition from Northampton House Press, \$12.95.

Student and Alumni News

Molly Barari (M.F.A. '17) has published her first book, *Dakota Heirlooms: Stories from the Past*. The book was published in April by **Jean Klein's** Script Works Press, a division of Blue Moon Plays. The book started as Molly's M.F.A. publishing project, mentored by **Dr. Phil Brady**.

Writing as Ann McCauley, **Cheryl Bazzoui (M.A. '14)** produces a monthly blog at www.annmccauley.com. She had two reviews published this month: *Shame, Shame, I Know Your Name* by Heather Harlan was posted on [Story Circle](#), and *The Nightingale* by Kristen Hannah was posted on [Writer Advice](#) (click Hooked on Books and scroll to the review). Cheryl also recorded four book reviews for BookMark at WPSU, her regional NPR station: *Time to Heal, American Epochs, Vol. 3*, by Todd McClimans; *Shame, Shame, I Know Your Name*, by Heather Harlan; *To the Stars Through Difficulty* by Romalyn Tilghman; and *Mom, Mania and Me*, by Diane Dweller.

Randee Bretherick (M.F.A. '13) signed a three-book deal with Camel Press. The first Carrie Shatner Mystery novel, *Criminal Misdeeds*, will be released in Fall 2018 under the name Randee Green. You can follow Randee at www.randeegreen.com and www.facebook.com/RandeeGreenAuthor. Last fall, Randee also worked as the script supervisor/PA/clapboard extraordinaire on the set of the Blue Iron TV pilot.

Wendy Decker (M.A. '15) and her young-adult novel *Sweet Tea* were the subject of a feature story in [The Link News](#), covering Monmouth County, N.J.

Richard Fellingner's (M.F.A. '10) debut novel, [Made to Break Your Heart](#), has been published by Open Books.

Brian Fanelli

(M.F.A. '10) participated in two panel discussions at "Celebrating the Poetic Legacy of Whitman, Williams, and Ginsberg: A Literary Festival and



Patricia Florio's (M.F.A. '11) picture book, *Puppy in My Pocket*, will be published in June.

Conference," which was held at the beginning of June in Paterson, N.J. The panels were "Building Literary Citizenship and Expanding Poetry's Audience in Unlikely Places," which he moderated, and "Democratic Vistas: Whitman, Ginsberg, and Williams Among the Poets." In addition, he recently had poems published in *Freshwater Literary Journal*, *Gravel*, and *Connecticut River Review*. There was also a review of his latest book

of poems, *Waiting for the Dead to Speak* (NYQ Books), in the spring/summer issue of *The Paterson Literary Review*.

Patricia

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(M.F.A. '11)

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Pat Florio

and **D**

Ferrara

(M.F.A. '13)

edited

Jewels of
San Fedele,
an

anthology of
work

created at a
memoir
retreat in

Chianti,

Italy, led by

Kaylie

Jones and

Judy

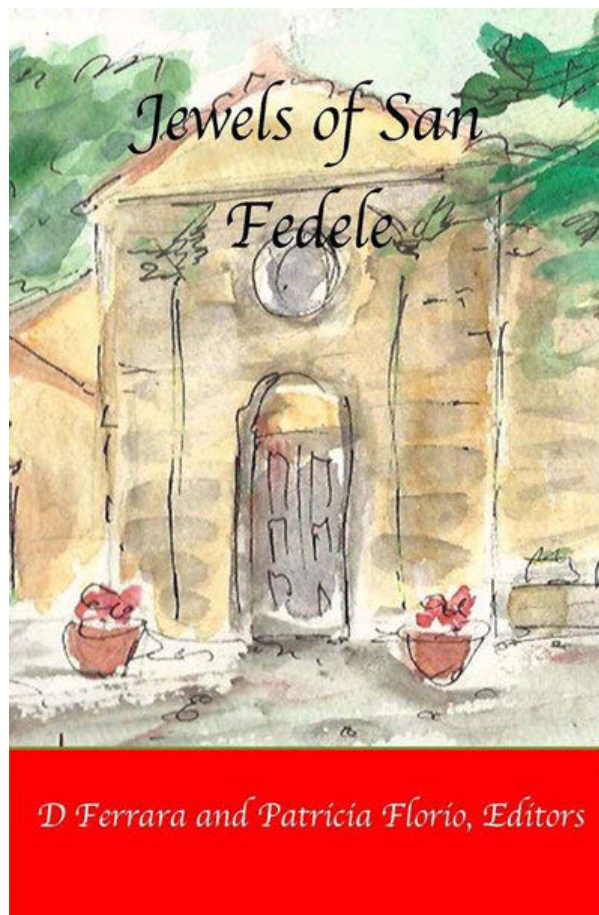
Mandel.

Wendy

Decker's Serenity Books was the publisher. Alums whose work appears in *Jewels of San Fedele* include **Margaret McCaffrey (M.A. '15)**, **Vicki Mayk (M.F.A. '13)**, **Joanne Biles (M.A. '14)**, **Carol McAllister (M.A. '17)** and **Beverly Major Schwartz (M.A. '09)**, who also designed the cover.

In July, M.A. student **Lisa Greim** has been invited to attend the Community of Writers at Squaw Valley's 2017 Writers' Workshop in memoir/nonfiction.

Gerald Gurka (M.A. '07) wrote and directed the play *Portraits of the Passion*, which was presented on April 7. *Redemption*, a collection of his Easter plays, was recently reissued by [WordsOnStage](#), and he's working on a Young Readers story for Northampton Press. Jerry adds: "My



Pat Florio and D Ferrara (M.F.A. '13) edited *Jewels of San Fedele*, an anthology of work created at a memoir retreat in Chianti, Italy, led by Kaylie Jones and Judy Mandel.

greetings to all in the program which is an awesome part of my life!"

Maureen O'Neill Hooker (M.F.A. '09) reports: "I am happy to announce the birth of my new book, *Shelly's Heart*, which weighs 8 ounces, and contains at least 50,000+ multi-syllable *bon mots*. It is a memoir of my heart transplant adventure that includes humor, horror, and useful information. It is a page-turner, perfect for a plane trip or afternoon on a porch. The profit will help the Shelly Whitman Endowed Scholarship for the child of an organ donor. To read it may inspire someone to become an organ donor (i.e. Hero!) and it will definitely help a deserving student at East Carolina University. My M.F.A. from Wilkes in 2009 and my post degree mentoring from Dr. J. Michael Lennon are the reason I persisted until now." *Shelly's Heart* is available on Amazon.

Since graduating, **Kamron Klitgaard (M.A. '11)** has published 23 plays. The latest, *Complaint Department and Lemonade*, was the most produced play for the publisher, Pioneer Drama Services, with 178 productions in its first year (Sept. 2016 to April 2017).

Mark Levy (M.A. '08), a registered patent attorney and member of the New York and Florida bars, has moved to Evergreen, Colo., and been admitted to the Colorado bar.

Dan MacArthur (M.F.A. '12) has started The Cookie Dude business, specializing in handmade, gourmet cookies. With funky names and descriptions for his creations, the business fuses his love of cooking and ridiculous word play. Check out www.thecookiedude.com.

M.A. student

Tara Lynn

Marta

published a short story in *The Humor Times*, "A Day in the Life of a Would-Be Writer."

Tara is also a

contributing blogger for the American Writer's



M.A. student Tara Lynn Marta published a short story in *The Humor Times*, "A Day in the Life of a Would-Be Writer."

Museum, and will do a reading for the Writer's Showcase at the Olde Brick Theatre in Scranton.

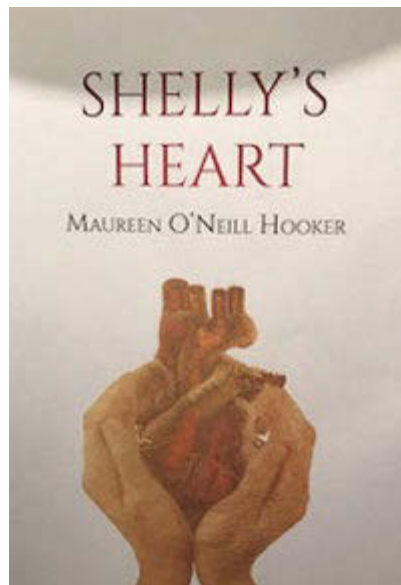
Lori A. May (M.F.A.'13) spoke on a panel, "Don't Forget the Day Job: Preparing Creative Writing Graduates for Lifelong Careers," at the annual AWP Conference in D.C. That discussion is now online as part of AWP's Podcast Series. She has additional podcasts on the writing life available at SoundCloud, as part of her project grant with King County 4Culture. Lori recently led a workshop at Book Publishers Northwest and, as a board member of CCWWP, will be attending their national writing conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Vicki Mayk (M.F.A. '13) is teaching a memoir retreat, "Healing Through Our Stories," June 23-25 at the Farmhouse at Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, Pa. More info: vickimayk.com/healing-through-our-stories/

Linda Nguyen (M.F.A.'14) taught a workshop earlier this year about Cinematic Writing in Video Games for Montreal's Pixelles Game Writing Incubator. She recently sold reprint and anthology rights to her short story "Pre-Elementary, My Dear Monkey," which first appeared in *RicepaperMagazine*. She also became a Scriptwriter this year at Ubisoft Montreal. It's been a long-kept secret, but not anymore: she's working on *Far Cry 5*. Here's the official announcement trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kdaoe4hbMso

Christoph Paul (M.F.A '16) edited and published the anthology *This Book Ain't Nuttin to Fuck With: A Wu-Tang Tribute Anthology* for CLASH Books. His nonfiction story "The Boy From Military School" was published in Civil Coping Mechanism's anthology, *A Shadow Map: An Anthology by Survivors of Sexual Assault* and he is now a columnist for the writing and teaching site [LitReactor](http://LitReactor.com).

Josh



Maureen O'Neill Hooker (M.F.A. '09) reports: "I am happy to announce the birth of my new book, *Shelly's Heart*, which weighs 8 ounces, and contains at least 50,000+ multi-syllable bon mots."

Penzone's (M.A. '13) short story "The Storyteller" will appear in an upcoming issue of *Junto Magazine*.

Lynne Reeder (M.A. '08) will have her poems appearing in three anthologies: *The Soapbox Official Vol. 2*, *The Howl of the Wild* by Winterwolf Press, and *[Insert Yourself Here]* by *The Paragon Journal*. Her book, *Found Between the Lines*, is available now on Amazon, featuring erasure poetry paired with short stories and personal essays.

Bill Schneider's (M.F.A. '14) short story "The Funicular" was accepted for publication by Hamline University's [HamLitJournal](#).

Ahrend Torrey (M.F.A. '16) is currently working on a collection of poems titled *City Monk*, which he plans to complete by the end of this year, and hopes to have published sometime in 2018. In April, his poems "Walking the Dog," "City Monk," and "Feeding Ducks at Lafreniere Park" were published in *Anti-Heroine Chic*. His poem "Tiny Dancer" was also published in April by *The Ravens Perch*. Forthcoming in June. His poems will appear in *One Person's Trash*, *The Seethingographer*, *Edify Fiction*, *Clear Poetry*, and *Young Ravens Literary Review*.

Quick Links

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Veterans Services	



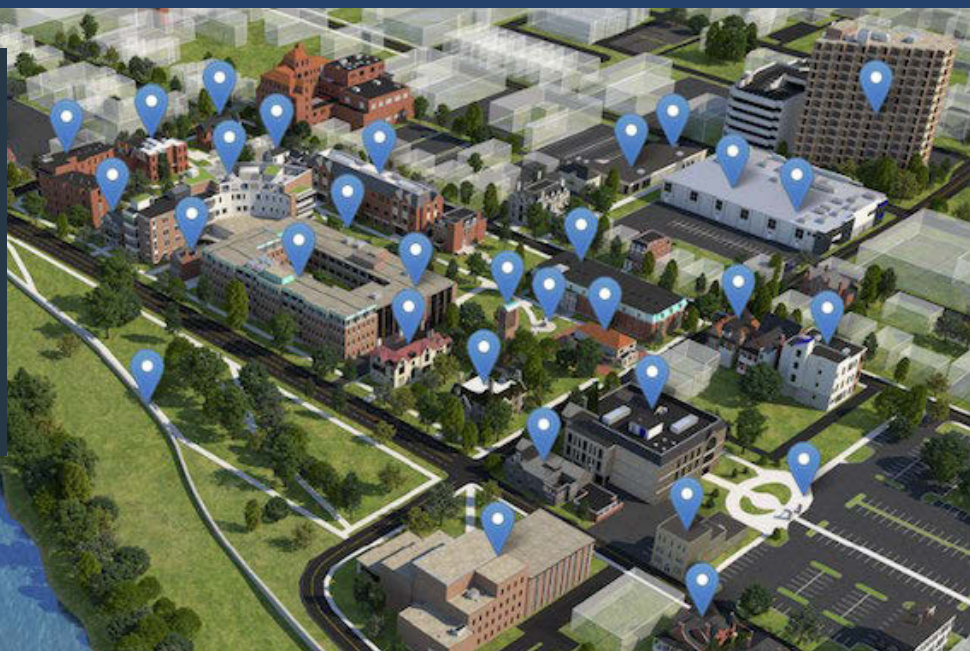
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