Atlanta Writers Club - founded in 1914
We are a social and educational club where local writers meet to discuss the craft and business of writing. We also sponsor contests for our members and host expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

Officers
President: Ron Aiken
Officers Emeritus: Michael Brown Valerie Connors George Weinstein Clay Ramsey Marty Aftewicz
Conference Director: George Weinstein
Membership VP: Yvonne Green
Programs VP: Valerie Connors
Operations VP: Jill Cox-Cordova
Marketing and Public Relations VP: Phil Fasone
Contests, Awards, Scholarships VP: Clay Ramsey
Secretary: Bill Black
Treasurer: Ron Aiken
Historian/By-Laws: George Weinstein
eQuill Publisher: Gene Bowen

May

Events

4 Atlanta Writers Conference
18 Fulmer Fiction Writing Workshop pt4
18 AWC Monthly Meeting

(more) abridged classics

War veteran takes forever to get home than kills everyone.
A sort-of brother and sister fall in love. It’s foggy.
Man sits outside for two years. Nothing happens.

BETWEEN NEWSLETTERS THERE’S FACEBOOK

http://www.facebook.com/people/Atlanta-WritersClub/100000367043383
http://twitter.com/atlwritersclub

The Atlanta Writers Club
Meeting Agenda

11:00 Fiction Shop w/David Fulmer (4 of 5)
12:30 Mixer—Flash Fiction Contest
   1:30 Inauguration of new AWC president
   1:45 Judy Goldman—First Speaker
   2:45 Dr. Paul Newton—Second Speaker

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18  This is the End
19  Brockway Essay
20  Best in Region
21  11 Authors
25  Benefit Book Release
26  Reinhardt Reading & Writing
27  Promote Your Latest
29  Critique Groups
31  How Membership Renewal Works
32  Membership Benefits
33  Membership Form
I believe most people who take on a leadership role want to leave an organization in a better place than when they assumed the position. That was undoubtedly my desire when I became president of the Atlanta Writers Club two years ago, and I think, in small part, I achieved that. But not without the help and support of my fellow club and board members. What a safety net and I want to take the time here to thank them.

* **Barbara**—for your efforts marketing the AWC brand to organizations like the Carter Center, Atlanta History Center and many others. Have an incredible adventure living in Italy for the next few years.

* **Bill**—for recording my sometimes rambling dialogue in board meeting minutes; and for making the mixer such an enjoyable gathering with your assistance and good cheer.

* **Clay**—for jumping into the world of grant writing to finance the book festival; and administering the annual writing contest. It’s been amazing to see how it’s grown.

* **George**—for your advice and counsel, and encouragement to try out new ideas. I don’t think there’s anything about the local writing community you’re not familiar with. And the ever-growing semi-annual Atlanta Writers Conference in the Southeast, maybe the best in the country.

* **Jill**—for managing the exciting lineup of authors at our inaugural book festival; and for carrying on Jennifer’s great work with our volunteers.

* **Jennifer**—the club wouldn’t be successful without the help and assistance of volunteers for monthly meetings, workshops, Atlanta Writers Conference, the Decatur Book Festival, and the AWC’s inaugural BookFest Gwinnett.

* **Marty**—thanks for your encouragement at a time when I most needed it.

* **Mike**—for timely suggestions (BookFest Gwinnett’s theme) and running all over Gwinnett County with me building relationships with the Gwinnett County Public Library System, the City of Norcross, and local businesses.

(Continued on page 5)
* **Val**—for finding great speakers and presenters to teach AWC members the craft and business of writing.

* **Yvonne**—for reaching out to members to determine the programs they wanted, and for offering timely tips and ideas and managing an ever-expanding membership roster.

I’ve had the pleasure of meeting and knowing a lot of our members. Especially Susan who contributed helpful articles on writing to the eQuill, and Valerie for taking on the job of building the club’s social media profile.

My time as president sped by, in part due to the enthusiasm and support of the AWC community, and for that, I thank you all as well.

And lastly, a big thank you to my wife, Herma, for understanding how important the Atlanta Writers Club is to me and bending her schedule and time to accommodate me.

Goodbye for now and I’ll see you all at our next meeting.
June 15
(Norcross Cultural Arts & Community Center, 10 College St NW, Norcross, GA 30071)
- Inaugural Atlanta Writers Club/Gwinnett County Book Festival

July 20
- Workshop (AWC members only)
  - Jill Anderson: Creating/improving Your Author Website

The May 18th meeting will be held at the Georgia State University Dunwoody Campus. There will be a pre-meeting mixer with light refreshments.

The mixer will feature a flash fiction contest and the winner will receive a gift card. The submittal must be less than 50 words and include a key word given out at the mixer.

Elizabeth Buttimer was the April contest winner.

“Grease sure can be a deterrent from the philandering of an errant husband when hurled from a hot skillet at the nether regions of his trousers and sure helps a wedding band swollen stuck on arthritic fingers to slide off quick as lightning.”

Members have an opportunity to engage their fellow writers in an informal setting before the regular meeting, 12:45 p.m to 1:15 p.m. Please contact me at ron@atlantawritersclub.org to schedule a presentation.
April Meeting Photos

by Phil Fasone

Top Left
April attendees

Top Right
Rosanne Barnett

Bottom Left
Steven Cooper

Bottom Right
Susan Crawford

April’s Meeting Video
Susan Crawford

Susan grew up in Miami, Florida, where she spent her childhood reading mysteries in a hammock strung between two Banyan trees. She graduated from the University of Miami with a B.A. in English. She later moved to New York City and then to Boston before settling in Atlanta to raise three amazing daughters and to teach in various adult education settings. A member of The Atlanta Writers Club and The Village Writers, Susan lives in Atlanta with her husband and a trio of rescue cats, where she enjoys reading books, writing books, rainy days, and spending time with the people she loves.

April 2019 Center Aisle Conversation with Susan Crawford

Steven Cooper

Steven Cooper is a former investigative reporter. His work has earned him multiple Emmy Awards and nominations, as well as a national Edward R. Murrow award, and numerous honors from the Associated Press. He taught for five years in the English department at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. Born and raised in Massachusetts, Steven has lived a bit like a nomad, working TV gigs in New England, Arizona and Florida, and following stories around the globe.

April 2019 Center Aisle Conversation with Steven Cooper
Next Fiction Shop at the AWC

David Fulmer will present the fourth of five workshops from his “Fiction Shop” program. This class will focus on “Dialogue.” The session will be from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a break and time for Q&A. All classes are free to members. Future programs will cover:

Program Outline

4. Speaking Up
   The essential importance of dialogue
   What they say and how they say it
   Real and unreal
   You don’t say

5. The Big Picture
   All the pieces into one
   The pen as a sword
   Free for all

As the author of eleven novels and a novella, Fulmer has won the Shamus Award for Best First Novel and a Benjamin Franklin Award, and has been nominated for an LA Times Book Prize, the Barry Award, the Falcon Award, and the Shamus Award for Best Novel. His books have received excellent reviews from, among others, The New York Times, USA Today, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, and Publishers Weekly, and in addition to audiobook versions, have been translated into French, Italian, Japanese, and Turkish.

The Day Ends at Dawn, his twelfth novel and the seventh and final installment in his acclaimed Storyville series was released in January by Crescent City Books.

He has been a journalist, an Army photographer, a welder, and a bartender. A native of central Pennsylvania, he lives in Ormewood Park with his wife, Sansanee Sermprungsuk.
The Atlanta Writers Club

MAY SPEAKERS BIOS

**Judy Goldman** is the author of two memoirs, two novels, and two books of poetry. Her new memoir, *Together: Memoir of a Marriage and a Medical Mishap*, was published by Nan A. Talese/Doubleday earlier this year. Her first memoir, *Losing My Sister*, was a finalist for both SIBA's Memoir of the Year and ForeWord Review's Memoir of the Year. Her first novel, *The Slow Way Back*, was a finalist for SIBA's Novel of the Year, winner of the Sir Walter Raleigh Fiction Award and the Mary Ruffin Poole Award for First Fiction. Her second book of poetry, *Wanting To Know the End*, won the Gerald Cable Poetry Prize, as well as the top three prizes for a book of poetry by a North Carolinian. Her work has appeared in The Southern Review, Kenyon Review, Gettysburg Review, Ohio Review, Prairie Schooner, Shenandoah, Crazyhorse, and Real Simple magazine. She received the Hobson Award for Distinguished Achievement in Arts and Letters, the Fortner Writer and Community Award for "outstanding generosity to other writers and the larger community," and the Beverly D. Clark Author Award from Queens University. She lives with her husband in Charlotte, NC. They have two married children and four grandchildren.

**Dr. Paul Newton**, a #1 Amazon Bestselling author of *The Expert Author Effect--How to Write a Book that Automates Your Sales and Marketing.*, is a 20+ year entrepreneur, having built 4 chiropractic practices, 2 of which he grew to multiple-6-figures. His company has helped hundreds of business owners achieve this status. He regularly addresses entrepreneurs about why a book is the best tool for growing your business and raising your prices.

After 16 years in chiropractic practice, he left the healthcare industry and put his skills to the test as a speaker and coach. In 2014 he published his first expert book and within three months, he replaced his doctor income, working from home, part time.

He now works with clients internationally from his home and schedules them around his favorite activities of snowboarding, stand-up paddle boarding and high intensity training.
BookFest Gwinnett
A Celebration of Diversity

Sponsored by:

GWINNETT COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

npac
northeast public arts commission

Georgia Humanities
Sharing stories that move us and make us

JUNE 15 · 10AM TO 6PM · FREE

NORCROSS CULTURAL ARTS
& COMMUNITY CENTER

27 Speakers & Moderators

- Kenny Leon, Keynote Speaker
- Tayari Jones & Other
  Best-Selling Authors
- Workshops for
  Aspiring Writers
- Children’s Activities
  with Free Books
- Young Adult Program

Seating is limited.
RSVP at our website
for the events
you wish
to attend:
BookFestGwinnett.org

The Atlanta Writers Club
Volunteer for BFG

Calling on All AWC Members – Volunteers Needed for BookFest Gwinnett

The Atlanta Writers Club will host a book festival for the public—BookFest Gwinnett (BFG)—at the Norcross Cultural Arts and Community Center on June 15, 2019. The festival will be a one-day event with programs scheduled across four stages from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. and we are seeking volunteers in the following areas:

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BookFest Gwinnett Volunteer Job Descriptions

Welcome/information Desk Volunteer
These volunteers provide the day’s schedules to attendees and offer AWC brochures to interested parties, AWC mailing list sign-ups, Gwinnett Library brochures and mailing list sign-ups, and any brochures the City of Norcross wants to provide.

Seating Coordinators - Main Stage
Assist attendees with finding and filling all open seats and help those with disabilities with seats or wheelchair spaces at the end of designated rows.

Room Monitor – Children’s Stage
Coordinate activities with Gwinnett Public Library staff, and manage children’s book giveaway.

Room Monitor – Young Adult Stage
Starting with 12:00 p.m. time slot, read brief introduction for each speaker (provided by festival director) and monitor time to ensure each speaker starts and ends on time.

Room Monitor – Writing Workshops
Read brief introduction for each speaker (provided by festival director) and monitor time to ensure each speaker starts and ends on time.

Book Signing / Green Room Coordinator
Monitor author signings with bookstore staff and author-attendee interactions to ensure no one needs assistance.

Parking Lot Coordinator
Direct festival attendees from off-site parking lots to the Cultural Arts Center.

This is an important event for the Atlanta Writers Club, and its success will rely heavily upon the full participation of its members. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Jill-Cox-Cordova jill.coxcordova@gmail.com.
Agent Advice:

Jody Kahn of Brandt & Hochman
by Staff – P&W
The Practical Writer
May/June 2019
4.10.19

Areas of interest: Literary and commercial fiction, narrative nonfiction, journalism, memoir, cultural criticism

Representative clients: Laura Pritchett, Michael Kardos, Jennifer Kabat, Devorah Blachor, Dave Madden, and Natalie Eve Garrett

Looking for: Query letter with the first ten pages in the body of an e-mail

Preferred contact: E-mail jkahn@bromasite.com
Agency contact:
Brandt & Hochman Literary Agents, Inc.
1501 Broadway, Suite 2310
New York, NY 10036
www.brandthochman.com

What is the best way to find novels from agents that relate to my story and genre? All the advice I read states that it works best to find an agent who has represented books similar to mine. But there is no way to tell that from a title. To start, visit a bookstore or library and consult someone there. Figure out what shelf your book would sit on, and then read other titles on that shelf. The acknowledgments section in the back of a book is likely to thank the author’s agent by name—target that agent, saying that you’re reaching out because you loved so-and-so title and because your book is of the same general category. Not only will this help you target the right agents, but it will also illustrate your literacy within your genre. Most agency websites list agent bios describing what each agent is specifically looking for, so that’s another way to make sure you’re targeting the right agents.

How many writers can an agent handle before he or she is overloaded? This very much depends on the agent. But you’re looking for an agent who you believe can communicate with you and who will give your work the attention it deserves regardless of how many writers that agent represents. If you find yourself in the fortunate position of having more than one offer of representation, take the time to research each agent thoroughly. It’s okay to ask agents to put you in touch with a few clients to discuss those clients’ experiences (though it’s highly likely the agents will refer you to clients with whom
they have good relationships). Do your research and trust your gut. If you think an agent gets your book and is experienced, passionate, communicative, and whatever other qualities are on your dream-agent checklist, that’s what matters.

**I have no sense of the potential costs for retaining an agent. Thanks for providing some ballpark estimates.**

An agent should not cost you a cent. Agents make money only when they are able to sell your work. The standard agent commission is 15 percent of all domestic income and 20 percent of all foreign income handled by that agency. I would strongly advise against working with any agent who charges clients for reading, editing, publicity, or any other services. A good resource for finding agents who do not charge any fees, and who adhere to a strict canon of ethics, is the Association of Authors Representatives; the website is [www.aaronline.org](http://www.aaronline.org). There’s also the **Literary Agents database** at pw.org.

**I am in my sixties. What chance does an older writer who doesn’t have decades left to “build a career” have of getting an agent? What chance of getting past a twenty-two-year-old intern slush-pile reader who likes current trends rather than world-building, character depth, and backstory?**

It’s unusual for writers to disclose their age in a query letter unless it’s relevant to the book being submitted (say, if it’s a memoir). An agent evaluating a manuscript should be more focused on the quality of the content and how it relates to the current cultural and literary conversation than on the writer’s age.

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**Independent Bookstore Day** is a one-day national party that takes place at indie bookstores across the country on the last Saturday in April.

In addition to authors, live music, kids events, art tables, readings, and other fun stuff, there are exclusive books and literary items that you can only get on that day. And guess who I ran into at Story on the Square in McDonough? Why none other than AWC member T.M. Mike Brown and his wife, Connie.
CONTEST WINNERS

Natasha Trethewey Prize for Poetry, 2019 AWC Writing Contest

WINNER: Elizabeth Bracken, Sestina for My mother

For me, the most striking feature of this poem is how it stirs such deep joy and sadness at once. The braid is a tangible image, and also a symbolic placeholder for something physical that made us feel safe as children but that takes on, perhaps, a meaning of helplessness in our adulthood, once we understand the impermanence of the physical world. By the last stanza, I felt like I had lived a whole life of love and the eventual, gentle acceptance of loss.

FINALIST: Jonathan Michael Knott, Sonnet to Soap and Wax

What a fun and clever poem--the author really takes charge with sensory imagery. I don't think I've ever had such fun going grocery shopping!

FINALIST: Elizabeth P. Buttimer, Ars Poetica, Where the Bones Are Buried

I love the presentation of this poem--it's compactness, broken up by but not broken by em dashes. The em dashes create a cadence that highlights the language and makes the poem a lot of fun to read out loud.

Rick Bragg Prize for Nonfiction

Winner: Harry Duke, A View from the Sidewalk

I’m not overstating the case that Rick Bragg himself would have applauded this story. The author took me on a melancholy journey to a neighborhood most folks are unfamiliar with, painting heartwarming images that will last an eternity. Blessed is he or she who favorably sees God’s creations with a compassionate and unjaundiced eye. The author touched my heart so profoundly that there was no escaping the tears. Thank you for a brilliant, eye-opening, poignant story.
Contest Winners, cont.

Finalist: LuLu (Heather Leigh) Johnson, *In the Low Country*

A beautiful, mesmerizing journey

Finalist: John Munna, *Panel 42 West, Line 71*

ECM is smiling down on you, Doc

Terry Kay Prize for Fiction

Winner: Albery Norton Jr, *Stink*

For a reason never explained everyone simply begins to stink, whether this is some apocalyptic transformation or simply a new awareness of what has always been true. A sardonic parable about the way modern civilization accommodates itself to universal and mutual loathing. In the best tradition of magical realism, the weirdness is delivered with deadpan calm and the epiphany at the end comes with a sense of understated resignation. This reminds me very much of Ionesco's "The Rhinoceros," in which an unexpected transformation leads the protagonist to embrace a fate he is incapable of changing.

Finalist: Raymond Cech, *A Perfect Imperfection*

Both of the runners-up offer a similar revelation, that the things that should distress us often bring us pleasure, and the things that we believe will please us are often distressing.

Finalist: Julie Laughter Dorsey, *The Lucky One*

Both of the runners-up offer a similar revelation, that the things that should distress us often bring us pleasure, and the things that we believe will please us are often distressing.
Janda Books, Inc., Canton, Georgia, announces the publication of

**COFFEE HOUR IN FLENSBURG**

*Stories of War and Peace, of Adventure and Love*

By ERIKA DETHLEFS PASSANTINO

Late spring 2019

“...when the present is unbearable and the future unthinkable, the mind turns to the past and finds a resting place” (author unknown, ca. 1940).

This statement, more than anything, defines the aging German-American couple, CARSTEN and MARGARETHE DETHLEFS, and the tales they spread like a feast before their daughter, ERIKA.

In a richly illustrated book of more than 200 pages, the author asks many questions: “How did they survive World War I, the trenches, the revolution in Berlin? What did they do during the Roaring Twenties in New York? Was it fun? Why return to Germany before World War II? How did they protect their young daughter during that war’s bombings and flight?”

Few of us remain who can tell about a child sitting on the lap of Nazi officers who played the violin so beautifully before being sent to their death on the eastern front; about innocent walks past the gates of STALAG-VIIB prisoner camp, singing Marlene Dietrich’s song, *Lilli Marleen*, and confronting the horrendous facts behind those walls many years later. Few can speak of Russian occupation, of wanderings in search of a home, the daughter finally returning to Germany from Africa with a father, by then a paraplegic.

Such memories demanded reflection by the adult writer, a historian, checking tales against recorded history, including the painful question of what it means to be German. These stories present the price paid for a life of adventure, its joys and rewards. Most of all, they celebrate the power of love in the hardest of times. Soon you will be able to read them in a book.

THE BOOK WILL BE AVAILABLE THROUGH AMAZON AND KINDLE

Contact: Erika Dethlefs Passantino
622 Laurel Crossing
Canton, Ga. 30114

mamapass@aol.com

Http://erikapassantino.com/the-book.html
This is the end

By Susan Crawford

The end. That slide into home plate, that zoom around the corner, the reach for the stars, the swing from the chandelier, that last typed word, there’s nothing quite like it.

Endings sometimes write themselves. If the author tilts her head just so and listens to the characters, the story might twist and turn and end up exactly where it should, although not where she had initially intended. To a large extent, strong characters can determine outcomes. If they have well-defined personalities, clear and consistent opinions, then their interactions will have inevitable undeniable consequences, and sometimes they take themselves (or each other) across the finish line.

Generally, though, the end of your book is at once the most fulfilling and most frustrating part. The beginning is a wide-open field—so many choices, so much leeway. We’re running at breakneck speed, the wind in our hair. Sex or murder, adventure or winged creatures—anything is possible. We’re taking detours that could quickly turn out to be so much more than detours. The book is young and fresh and pink-cheeked, filled with possibilities.

By mid-book, the field has narrowed, the detours are limited, the side roads necessarily circling back to what we’ve now determined to be the main path. Murder OR the winged creatures, sex OR a year-long voyage. The plot is set, the subplots are materializing. Red herrings might be swimming here and there, but the plan is in place.

If the middle of the book has elbow room, the end may not. At this point, all the red herrings and subplots must be rounded up, which can feel a bit like herding cats. And that’s okay. Hey. Life is messy, and, unless you’re writing a fairy tale or a romantic comedy, you probably don’t want things tied up too neatly. The protagonist’s career needn’t take off beyond her wildest dreams at the same moment that she finds her soulmate and reunites with her estranged mother. Not every book has to end happily. Not every loose end has to be neatly tied. You do, however, need to be aware of the loose ends. You don’t want readers frantically thumbing back through the book because you left a character clinging to the underbelly of a bridge in chapter six and never got back to him.

Leave readers satisfied. Make that three hundred pages of reading lead somewhere, even if it’s to a backyard barbeque with old friends, reunited family or a returned lost dog. Give them an ending that will make them close the book with a feeling of completion, a sense of ahhhh. That said, don’t overdo. Satisfaction is one thing, gluttony another. Too much crammed into the ending or frenetic wrap-ups will seem . . . like exactly that. Take your time. If something doesn’t work, you can always cut it, but be very sure you’re consistent. If you change your ending, go through the entire book and get rid of any threads leading up to the now-defunct outcome. Actually, this is often simpler than it sounds since it’s turned out to be a shakier, less developed plotline than you’d thought or you wouldn’t be cutting it.

I’ve never written a series, but if that’s what you’re doing, you’ll handle the end differently, leave a few unturned stones, half-open doors, or the character in chapter six will still be clinging to the bridge on purpose, not because you forgot him. Of course, the end is only the beginning, really. There is the tedious task of going back and editing, “killing darlings” and adopting others, rearranging, polishing, polishing, polishing. Still, you’ve done it! You’ve finished your book! Whether it took you twenty years or sixty days, it is a huge accomplishment. Go out for dinner. Take a trip. Contact the friends you’ve put on the back burner for the past few months while you were writing. Take a break, even if it’s a short one. Revisit your story with a clearer head. You’ll be more objective. You’ll see things you couldn’t see while you were up to your eyebrows in it.

Step away from the computer. . .
AWC member Barbara Brockway's essay, "Money Well Spent," was published in *Chicken Soup For The Soul: Mom Knows Best.*

She says, "This essay is about getting my 84-year-old mom an iPhone--and how it has changed her life, the way she handles everyday tasks and how she communicates with her family."
The Atlanta Writers Conference was voted the Best Writing Conference in Georgia—with more votes than any other conference in the U.S.A.: The Writer magazine declared ours the "runaway favorite" among voters!

A humble "thank you" to everybody who cast their vote for the Atlanta Writers Conference! We took The Writer magazine Best Writing Conferences Across America poll by storm, amassing more votes than any other conference in the country. In their February 2019 report (see image), the magazine also acknowledges Becky Albertalli, one of our many conference success stories.

George Weinstein
To distill a story...into a single word is no small feat.

**11 Authors on Their One-Word Book Titles**
The art of telling an entire story with a single word

Merriam-Webster partnered with eleven authors who shared the story and significance behind their one-word-title books.

**A.S. Byatt, Possession**
The book began with a word - the title - *Possession*. Earlier novels have begun with characters, or themes, but *Possession* began when I was watching the great Canadian Coleridge scholar, Kathleen Coburn, working in the British Museum and thought - "she cannot have had a thought that was not his thought for the last 30 or 40 years." And then I thought - "and what I know about him is mediated through her - she edited all his notebooks, checked the sources of the quotations, etc."

And then I thought, "I could write a novel called *Possession* about the relationship between a dead poet and a living scholar." And the word *possession* would have all sorts of senses - daemonism, ownership, obsession......

I was working on Henry James and *The Bostonians* and Hawthorne — *The Blithedale Romance* – at the time, so spiritualism and those senses of possession came to mind too.

Several years later, working on the Brownings, I had the crucial idea of two poets and two scholars, which brought in both the sexual meaning of the word *possession* and the ideas of feminism, and the different attitudes to *love* and *romance* in the nineteenth century and now.

**Candice Carty-Williams, Queenie**

When I was writing *Queenie*, the character herself had no name, and the working title was *Trauma* until my agent told me that I was doing a total disservice to a novel that, while it explored the various traumas of my character, was actually very funny. And so, it was back to the drawing board with character name and title. I was sitting with my mum one day, who is both the funniest and most irritating person I know, and I turned to her and asked ‘...what name would you give a girl that is ultimately nice, but she might be annoyed by?’ and she paused for a second, then said ‘Queenie?’ and so I had a sort of Eureka and/or lightbulb moment through my mother because suddenly I realized that this character, this young black girl who is trying to reign the crumbling land that is her own life, should have a name that says as much. It mainly felt exactly right given that black women have been using the term Queen to define, express and empower ourselves in a way that we haven’t been able to. So even though my character’s path is a bit of a reckless one, through the novel she begins to understand her true value and lives up to the name that she’s been given.

**Lauren Elkin, Flâneuse**

*Flâneuse* [flanne-euhze], noun, from the French. Feminine form of *flâneur* [flanne-euhr], an idler, a dawdling observer, usually found in cities.

That is an imaginary definition. Most French dictionaries don’t even include the word. The 1905 *Littré* does make an allowance for *flâneur*, -euse. Qui flâne. But the *Dictionnaire Vivant de la Langue Française* defines it, believe it or not, as a kind of lounge chair.

I called my book about the liberating power of walking in cities *Flâneuse* because I wanted to queer the flâneur, so to speak, with a change of gender reclaiming the concept of urban idling from a normative mythologized figure into one of rebellion and difference. The flâneuse is not merely a female flâneur, but a figure to be reckoned with,
and inspired by. She voyages out, and goes where she’s not supposed to; she forces us to confront the ways in which words like home and belonging are used against women. She is a determined, resourceful individual keenly attuned to the creative potential of the city, and the liberating possibilities of a good walk.

Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*

When I’m writing a book, I like to know the title beforehand. It’s reassuring in the way a life ring is to a person who’s fallen overboard.

A good title tells you what the book’s about. It reminds you, when you lose heart, why you started writing it in the first place. I saw an interview with Francis Ford Coppola once where he said that he likes to boil down his films into one word. For *The Godfather*, the word was “succession.” Whenever Coppola decided something, even a small thing like a costume detail, he reminded himself of his theme in order to make everything cohere, from the storyline right down to the gangsters’ hats.

With two of my novels, *The Virgin Suicides* and *The Marriage Plot*, I knew the titles before I even started writing. I wasn’t so lucky with *Middlesex.* For years I had a terrible working title for that book, so bad I won’t even mention it here.

It took me something like eight years to write *Middlesex*, and by year five, I still didn’t have a good title. The novel begins in 1960 with the birth of the narrator; then it goes back to 1922 and slowly works its way back to 1960 before telling the story of the narrator’s life. The narrator of the book, Cal Stephanides (formerly Calliope) is intersex. As a result of an inherited genetic mutation, he has a condition called 5-alpha-reductase deficiency syndrome. Cal is raised as a girl; later on, after puberty, he assumes a male gender identity.

One day as I was writing about Cal’s early years and recalling my own childhood, it occurred to me that the street I’d grown up on, in Grosse Pointe, was called Middlesex Blvd.

Americans name a lot of things “Middlesex.” When I lived in New Jersey, the next county over was Middlesex County. I stayed at a hotel once that had a conference room called “The Middlesex Ballroom.” “Middlesex” sounds classy to us.

And so for both these reasons, my intersex narrator and his suburban upbringing, I realized that I had found the perfect title at last. It had been there ever since I started third grade: on the street sign at the end of my block.

Stephen King, *Misery*

With *Misery*, it was the name of writer Paul Sheldon’s main character (he wrote bodice-rippers about a hot chick named Misery Chastain), and the situation he found himself in as Annie Wilkes’s prisoner. So the title was pretty much a no-brainer.

Malinda Lo, *Ash*

My novel *Ash* is a retelling of “Cinderella.” In many versions of the story, the main character sits in the hearth to keep warm, and thus is covered in ashes. This is why she’s named Cinderella (Cendrillon in French and Aschenputtel in German), implying a girl covered in cinders or ashes. In *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers*, Marina Warner called attention to the significance of ashes in the story, explaining that it was a sign of bereavement. Warner wrote: “Cinderella, in her rags, in her sackcloth and ashes, is a daughter who continues to grieve.”

Many people know “Cinderella” as the story of a poor servant girl who grows up to marry a prince, but the story begins when a young girl loses both of her parents. Grief and loss are the underpinnings of this tale, given symbolic expression by the way she sleeps in the ashes of the kitchen fire. Without this darker beginning, the true love that sets her free at the end wouldn’t have nearly as much impact.

I’m not sure when I chose to name my Cinderella character Ash, but it seemed crystal clear to me that it was the only name she could have. Her story
might begin in darkness, but she rises out of the ashes of her grief like a phoenix.

A word is many things: its meaning, and its execution, the feeling it evokes, and the way it cuts across your tongue. Telling a story with no heroes, but many kinds of villain, I needed to find a word that linked them all. 

**Vicious**: two syllables, sibilant, but sharp, and undeniably evocative. A step beyond cunning, right of cutthroat, and left of cruel.

**Curtis Sittenfeld, Prep**

My first novel, Prep, was published in 2005. It told the story of an awkward girl named Lee who left her home in Indiana to attend a fancy Massachusetts boarding school. Its cover was a pink and green ribbon belt, and its pages contained passages about crushes, English class, and embarrassing parents.

Seven years later, in 2012, the FDA approved a drug called Truvada to prevent HIV and AIDS in high-risk populations. The method is known as pre-exposure prophylaxis...or PrEP. The big, wonderful thing this means is that now there's an extremely effective way to prevent HIV infection. The tiny and personal thing it means is that sometimes I stumble upon headlines such as—this one ran in the New York Times last July—Why Don’t More Americans Use PrEP? In such instances, for about a second, my brain is befuddled. Then I realize, Oh, right, that PrEP.

As it happens, I didn’t come up with the title of my own novel; a friend of my editor did. Perhaps that’s why I don’t feel a particular sense of ownership of the word, and, if anything, am honored to share it with a medicine that literally saves lives. In general, I’m fascinated by the way language changes and evolves, sometimes rapidly, and how linguistic shifts can reflect shifts in society. For example: thirst trap. Enby. On fleek. Whenever someone says, by way of criticism, that a word is made-up, I always think, They all are! And that’s so cool.

Language doesn’t belong to any of us; Prep was never mine alone.

**Sarah Smarsh, Heartland**

Finding the right title for the book was a long process with no immediate consensus. At the final hour, my publisher suggested In the Heartland. I mused, "How about just Heartland?"

The word doesn't appear once in the text of the book. It's not a term I use to refer to my rural Midwestern home. It's a loaded word, culturally--often used sentimentally by proud residents of "Middle America," sometimes resented by coastal or urban Americans as an implication that their home is peripheral to the country's metaphorical center. It's the name of many businesses where I live, from medical offices to beverage distributors to moving companies. "Heartland" can be a benign cliche or a weaponized political idea.

I wrote a book about where I come from in order to validate a place and experience long overlooked in news media and caricatured in popular culture. The truth in it, I hope, might dispel stereotypes, condescending narratives, and romanticized tales alike. So calling my book "Heartland" felt like an appropriate and satisfying reclaiming of a term. It's a beautiful word that, like the book, joins two parts: the deeply intimate and the broader environment. There is an edge of irony about it, too, when followed by the subtitle, "A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth."

Only poetry can do so much with one word, so I think we made a poetic choice.
us the difference between self and not-self is more tenuous than we thought and the idea of the body being permeable means there’s less distinction between outside and inside, so to speak. An annihilation, then, could be a removal of an artificial barrier. And, of course, the title pertains to a specific moment in the novel but also to the annihilation of self imposed on the expedition before it enters Area X.

**Borne**

*Borne* features a giant psychotic bear, so borne being the past-tense of “bear” is a pun worthy of one of the other characters, named Borne, because as one character explains “I had to born him, but had to bear him.” What can be borne by what is born in a post-apocalyptic setting? What is burden? Why does a word that is about trials and tribulations in some ways contain the word for new life within it?

**Chuck Wendig, *Wanderers***

*Wanderers* was not always the book’s name. Originally it was *Exeunt* — which is a lovely-sounding title that nobody would ever be able to pronounce or spell, which, ha ha, is not the best way to sell a book, probably. And so came the search to find another title, and given that the book begins with an epidemic of sleepwalkers walking across the country to some unknown purpose, the line 'Not all who wander are lost' from Tolkien had a certain critical resonance, and given the epic nature of the story, it felt apt to use *Wanderers* as the title. Especially given how we are all wandering a bit, right now, trying to find our way in — and through— a time of upheaval.
Benefit Book Launch

Mary Kay Andrews Book Launch to Benefit DeKalb Library Foundation

Author Mary Kay Andrews is launching her 25th book and has planned a party benefiting the DeKalb Library Foundation!

Join us on Sunday, May 5 at the Atlanta History Center to celebrate the launch of *Sunset Beach*.

- Reception at noon
- Author presentation at 1:00 pm

Atlanta History Center
130 West Paces Ferry Road, NW
Atlanta, GA 30305

This special event requires a ticket purchased through the Atlanta History Center.

Tickets are $40 and include a book, author presentation, refreshments, and a swag bag!
The 2019 Reinhardt University MFA Program Summer Reading Series, June 20-29, is free and open to the public. The Visiting Writers who will be speaking about literature and the craft and business of writing include:

- Craig Amason
- Ray Atkins
- Valerie Boyd
- Earl Braggs
- Mary Anna Bryan
- John Burrison
- Tanya Caldwell
- Anne Corbitt
- Denise Duhamel
- Steve McCondichie
- Rob Merritt
- Bob Olmsted
- Eustace Palmer
- Megan Sexton
- George Singleton
- Jeffrey Stepakoff
- George Weinstein
- John Williams

You do not have to be an MFA student to attend.

In addition, there is the Summer Writer’s Conference component where you can participate in all the workshops, craft lectures, literary lectures, and evening readings. The cost for this conference, which includes food and lodging, is $1,000 for the entire event (June 20-29). Or, $750 if you do not want to stay overnight.

Here is a link to the program. https://www.reinhardt.edu/academics/graduate-programs/mfa-cw/

In addition to the fantastic writing workshops with Reinhardt’s core MFA faculty, each summer they host a symposium within the residency to discuss literary topics. The past symposiums have included the *Life and Work of James Dickey* and *Southern Women Fiction Writers*. In the Summer 2019, the symposium will be on *Literature from a Global Place*, with lectures on Appalachian literature and influences, Irish, Pakistani, New Zealand, and African literature, as well as a presentation on the life and works of international traveler and author, Lillian Smith.

For more details about the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing degree program, please see: https://www.reinhardt.edu/academics/graduate-programs/mfa-cw/. This is a wonderful place to become a great writer!

If you have any questions about the Summer Reading Series, conference, and/or writing program, please contact MFA Director Bill Walsh via email: bjjw@reinhardt.edu. He’ll be glad to answer your questions.
The Atlanta Writers Club has revamped its website! We're now featuring a page where AWC members can promote their latest publication:
https://atlantawritersclub.org/our-members-success/

Current Atlanta Writers Club members are invited to add/update their listing: please email your headshot, book (or other publication) cover, and website URL to AWC Officer Emeritus George Weinstein at george@atlantawritersclub.org
We depend on our members for support, and ask for volunteers to help out with some of the many exciting programs heading our way in the coming months.

We'll need check-in volunteers for each of our future monthly meetings. If you would like to volunteer for a specific meeting, please let VP of Operations Jill Cox-Cordova know which month you prefer.

If you would like to volunteer but are unsure about your availability until the time gets nearer, she will gladly include you in her list of volunteers to contact at a later date.

Please respond to: jill.coxcordova@gmail.com.
# AWC Critique Groups

(changes in red)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critique Group</th>
<th>Genre(s)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Time/Location</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online #1</strong></td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michealkbrown22@yahoo.com">michealkbrown22@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Online #2</strong></td>
<td>Fiction &amp; non-Fiction</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td>D.Nicole Steele</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dnicolesteele@gmail.com">dnicolesteele@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alpharetta</strong></td>
<td>All-genres</td>
<td>3rd-Thursday 7:00 pm at Barnes &amp; Noble North Point Parkway</td>
<td></td>
<td>Susan McBreairty</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sjmcb816@gmail.com">sjmcb816@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candler Park</strong></td>
<td>Non-Fiction: Creative, Narrative, &amp; Memoir</td>
<td>Tues 4-6PM @San Francisco Coffee 1660 Dekalb Avenue</td>
<td>Tara Coyt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:contact@taracoyt.com">contact@taracoyt.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conyers</strong></td>
<td>All Genres</td>
<td>Every other Tuesday, 6:00PM at Mandarin Garden restaurant</td>
<td>Nancy Fletcher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ncfletcher50@gmail.com">ncfletcher50@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decatur</strong></td>
<td>Adult/YA Novels and Novellas</td>
<td>Every other Thursday at Choco Late, 2094 North Decatur Rd.</td>
<td>Jonathan Grant</td>
<td>404-909-0189</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dunwoody</strong></td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st and 3rd Fri, 1-3 p.m. @ Georgia Perimeter College Library Building, Rm3100</td>
<td>Gelia Dolcinmascolo</td>
<td>770-274-5246</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>East Cobb</strong></td>
<td>Fiction &amp; Non-fiction</td>
<td>Every other Thursday, 6:30 to 8:30, Mexican Restaurant near YMCA</td>
<td>Rick Prescott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rpwritwer@hotmail.com">rpwritwer@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lawrenceville/ Snellville</strong></td>
<td>Novel, Short Story &amp; Memoir</td>
<td>1st Saturday 9:30AM - noon @ Member's Home</td>
<td>Kerry Denney</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kerrysii@bellsouth.net">kerrysii@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Wait List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logansville</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>1st Saturday of each month at 9:30AM</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com">michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Full</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marietta</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Tues. 6:30-8:00PM</td>
<td>Linda Sullivan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lindasullivan3@gmail.com">lindasullivan3@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Wait List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Thursdays @ The Heron House</td>
<td>Jane Shirley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:basketcasecafe@gmail.com">basketcasecafe@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every Tues 6:30 - 9:00PM @ Scooter’s Coffee</td>
<td>George Weinstein</td>
<td><a href="mailto:giweinstein@yahoo.com">giweinstein@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Twice monthly, Mon, 10:30AM - 12:30PM @ Roswell Library</td>
<td>Jeremy Logan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeremylogan.author@gmail.com">jeremylogan.author@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy Springs</td>
<td>Speculative fiction (novel length or short stories), regular fiction short stories, and any kind of nonfiction</td>
<td>First and third Saturday of each month at 5:00 p.m on the porch of Slope’s BBQ</td>
<td>Sarah Minnear</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sarah.dwyer.minnear@gmail.com">sarah.dwyer.minnear@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open (contact Sarah to submit work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrna/Marietta</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>2nd &amp; 4th Tuesdays from 6-8PM @coffee shop</td>
<td>Liz Helenek</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lizbizz7@bellsouth.net">lizbizz7@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snellville</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Meet at the Snellville Branch of the Gwinnett County Public Library on 1st Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.</td>
<td>Joyce Sewell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jbs.atpeace@gmail.com">jbs.atpeace@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snellville</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Meet at member’s house 1st Saturday of month 9:30 - noon</td>
<td>Lynda Fitzgerald</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lyndafitz@yahoo.com">lyndafitz@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Highlands</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Every other Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. @ member’s house</td>
<td>Cindy Tolbert</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cynthiatolbert@comcast.net">cynthiatolbert@comcast.net</a></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Want to Start Your Own Critique Group?**

Current Atlanta Writers Club (AWC) members can start their own critique groups, to focus on particular genres and/or serve a specific geographic area. The AWC will advertise your group on our website and in the monthly eQuill newsletter. To get started, please contact AWC Officer Emeritus George Weinstein at george@atlantawritersclub.org

The Atlanta Writers Club
The AWC has an automated system for tracking memberships and alerting members when it's time to renew.

You will receive an e-mail from the system (showing Officer Emeritus George Weinstein’s e-mail address george@atlantawritersclub.org) one month before your membership expiration date. If you haven't renewed within a week, you will receive another e-mail every seven days, with a final e-mail one week from expiration. If the expiration date for your membership passes without renewal, the system will mark your membership as expired. It is a good e-mail practice to check your spam/junk folder to see if any legitimate e-mail has been misfiled there, possibly including the email you'll receive from george@atlantawritersclub.org prior to the expiration of your membership.

We appreciate your continued support of the Atlanta Writers Club. Your membership dues make it possible to bring fabulous speakers to our meetings, provide generous cash awards for our annual writing contest, and sponsor scholarships, literary prizes, and local writing festivals.
Regular membership dues are $50 per year per person. Students can join for $40 per year. Family members of active AWC members can join for $25 per year. Our Membership Form is on the last page of this newsletter.

We are one of the best literary bargains in town. The Atlanta Writers Club is simply a group of writers that work together to help each other improve their skills and attain their writing goals. Anyone can join, with no prior publication requirements. Here are a just a few membership benefits:

**Monthly meetings.** On the third Saturday of each month, our members gather to listen and learn from two guest speakers who cover a broad range of topics and genres, and come to us from many facets of the literary world. Our speakers include published authors, literary agents, editors, playwrights and poets, just to name a few. Please refer to our list of upcoming guest speakers in this newsletter.

**Workshops.** Your membership provides access to outstanding writing workshops. Some are free with membership and others are provided at a discounted price. Watch for announcements about upcoming workshops.

**Twice-Yearly Writers Conferences.** This is your opportunity to spend time face to face with a literary agent or editor and have the chance to pitch your work. Conferences include agent Q & A panels, writing workshops, and a social gathering where you’ll get to meet and talk with the agents and editors in a more informal setting.

**Critique Groups.** We now have approximately twenty (20) different critique groups available to members. Scattered about the Atlanta metro area, these critique groups meet regularly to read each other’s writings and recommend modifications.

**Writing Contests With Cash Prizes.** At least one contest is held each year with a variety of formats and topics.

**Monthly Newsletter.** Our monthly newsletter, the eQuill, provides the opportunity for our members to advertise their book launches and book signings to a wide reaching mailing list. And, it will keep you up to date with news about writing opportunities and literary events across the Southeast and beyond.

**Decatur Book Festival Participation.** The Atlanta Writers Club has a tent at the Decatur Book Festival each year, that’s staffed by member volunteers. It’s a great way to get involved in the largest book festival in the area.

Potential members are invited to attend a first meeting as our guest. After that, we’re sure you will want to become a member and take advantage of all the benefits that come with it. You may join The Atlanta Writers Club at any of our events or meetings, or pay on line at our website using PayPal at [http://www.atlantawritersclub.org/membership.html](http://www.atlantawritersclub.org/membership.html).

If you have additional questions, contact AWC President Ron Aiken: ron@atlantawritersclub.org
The Atlanta Writers Club

First Name: ___________________________ Last Name: ______________________________
Cell Phone: __________________________ Other Phone: ____________________________
Email: _______________________________ Alternate Email: _________________________

For additional family members, please use additional forms

I/we would like to become involved with the AWC as a:  □ Meeting Volunteer
□ Conference Volunteer  □ Decatur Book Festival Volunteer
□ Other (please specify):

AWC MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership is for ONE YEAR

Individual [ $50.00 ] $___________

Family [add family members for $25.00 each] $___________

Student [ $40.00 ] $___________

Make checks payable to: Atlanta Writers Club

Tax Deductible Donation $___________

Total $___________

Mail check and form to: Atlanta Writers Club
C/O Ron Aiken, Treasurer
155 Glen Eagle Way
McDonough, GA 30253

The Atlanta Writers Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Name: __________________________________ donated $ __________ to the Atlanta Writers Club.
Date: _____ / _____ / _________

No goods or services were provided in exchange for or in association with this donation. Please keep this portion of the form as your receipt.