

Critic vs. Critique: The Difference Is More Than Just A Few Letters

with Bonnie Smith

In this seminar we will explore ways to read a manuscript critically and give constructive criticism to the author. We'll look at several approaches that will not only give the author feedback, but will help sharpen the writing skills of the reader as well. Included in the discussion will be workshop etiquette, how to avoid a 'group hug' workshop and what not to say (and how to say it).

Bonnie Smith graduated from The University of Southern Maine with a BS in Nursing and currently is the Director of Care Coordination at Maine Medical Center. A member of the inaugural class of USM's Stonecoast MFA program, she received her degree in Creative Writing in 2004. Her work has been published in *The Journal of Emergency Nursing*, *Men In Nursing* and *RN Magazine*. She is a regular feature writer for *Memories of Maine Magazine* and has had articles appear in *Neighbors* and *Port City Life*.

Private Obsessions

with Michael Macklin

Many times our private language has become imbued with meaning for us as writers, but doesn't always carry over to our readers. A mentor of mine once graphed the words that consistently appeared in a group of my poems and I was deeply surprised to find that I had used words referring to light and dark in the majority of the pieces. This seminar will be structured as a conversation with writers about private language — i.e. specific words that crop up regularly your work.

Michael Macklin is a carpenter and poet. He has worked as a furniture maker, barn and home builder, theater set maker, factory worker, health worker in geriatrics and psychiatric hospitals, bleach bottler, cab and truck driver, and farmer. At age fifty he returned to college and earned his BFA and MFA in Creative Writing at Vermont College. He has served as Reviews Editor and Associate Editor for *The Café Review* for nearly ten years; published in print and online journals; and his chapbook, *Driftland*, was published by Moon Pie Press in 2003. He is working on a new poetry manuscript, *Rough Openings*.

The Art of Reading Aloud

with Elizabeth Peavey

Reading before an audience is a wonderful way for authors to get immediate and direct reaction to their work. Sadly, most writers are not trained how. It is assumed because one can read, one can read aloud: *au contraire, mon frère!* In this one-hour workshop, Elizabeth Peavey, who has been teaching, performing and competing in various forms of public speaking for over 30 years, will offer the basics of giving a good reading: preparation, poise, projection – and no apologies. There'll be instruction on how to handle nerves, select what to read and how to work with a microphone (the undoing of many a reading). Let your writing sparkle. Read it proud!

*See faculty bios for more about Elizabeth Peavey.

A Ramble at Linekin Bay Resort with Penelope Schwartz Robinson

This seminar will explore the basics of nature writing, emphasizing attention to observation and the senses. We'll look at a brief overview of the genre and then take ourselves outside and explore the landscape. Writers will be encouraged to look differently at the natural world around them and to consider how fragments of that world can uplift and enhance their prose. Participants should bring a portable notebook for field writing. A small sketch book and colored pencils are suggested for capturing impressions.

Penelope Schwartz Robinson's essay collection *Slippery Men* was selected by Katha Pollitt for the Stonecoast Book Prize and published by New Rivers Press in 2008. She is the recipient of the 2009 Individual Artist Fellowship in the Literary Arts as well as a Good Idea Grant, both awarded by the Maine Arts Commission. Other honors include an AWP Intro Journal Award in Nonfiction and notable mentions in *Best American Essays 2005* and *2009*. She was a finalist for the 2008 Brenda Usland Prose Prize and for the 2009 *Hunger Mountain* Creative Nonfiction Prize. Her work is featured in *Alimentum*, *Ascent*, *Fourth Genre*, *Hotel Amerika*, *River Teeth*, *Willow Springs*, and elsewhere. Penelope holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Southern Maine Stonecoast Program and a BA in English Language and Literature from the University of Michigan. She lives in Cape Elizabeth and teaches nonfiction writing and literature at Southern Maine Community College.

In the Beginning: Approaches to Opening a Short Story with Joshua Bodwell

If finishing a short story is the most challenging part of that particular literary form, then beginning is the most exhilarating. However, with seemingly unlimited possibilities comes the opportunity for missteps. In this workshop, we will look at the work of recognized short story masters as we discuss strategies for openings. We will read as writers as we discuss point-of-view and tense, as well as: the "soft lede" versus the "on the cusp" opener; the ambiguous versus the declarative; the tell versus the show. Authors to be discussed include: Raymond Carver, Andre Dubus, Richard Ford, Jhumpa Lahiri, Maile Meloy, and Annie Proulx.

Joshua Bodwell is the executive director of the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance. He served as the associate editor of *Maine Home+Design* magazine and, prior to that, his newspaper journalism with the *York County Coast Star* garnered awards from the Maine and New England press associations. He is a regular contributor to *Art New England*, *Down East*, *Fiction Writers Review* (online), and *Poets & Writers Magazine*. In 2006, Joshua was a recipient of the Maine Community Foundation's Martin Dibner Fellowship for fiction. His poetry and short stories have appeared in *The Threepenny Review*, *Ambit* (London, England), *Northern New England Review*, *Frank* (Paris, France), and *Tears in the Fence* (Dorset, England).

Writing from the Copy Editor's Perspective: What We See that You Should Know

with Stephen Abbott (from *Maine Home+Design* and *Maine* magazines)

It has been said that the best writers are good editors. That is, the best writers are not only knowledgeable about the technical arcana of grammar and style, but they are self-aware enough to know what they don't know and dogged enough to do whatever it takes to produce polished, professional, readable prose—even when it entails a bit of humility and the reluctant embrace of constructive criticism. In the ever-quixotic quest for muscular, expressive writing, the copy editor can be an indispensable Sancho Panza—a sober-eyed companion able to save writers from titling at those unseen windmills on the page (and inadvertently slaying the reader's patience in the process). Evocative examples of gaffes, malapropisms, clunkers, and illogic will be deconstructed, several no-nonsense techniques for writing publishable prose will be shared, and curmudgeonly, tedious, holier-than-thou harangues on prescriptive grammar will be avoided.

Stephen Abbott is the copy editor of *Maine* and *Maine Home + Design* magazines. For more than a decade, he has worked as an editor, writer, and communications professional, and his writing has appeared in magazines, newspapers, and journals. He is also a former copywriter and publicist for Columbia University Press, a former contributor to *Publisher's Weekly*, and a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, where he studied that most financially remunerative of subjects: literary theory. His IQ is (reportedly) 174.