

# THE 2008 MID-SOUTH CREATIVE NONFICTION WRITERS

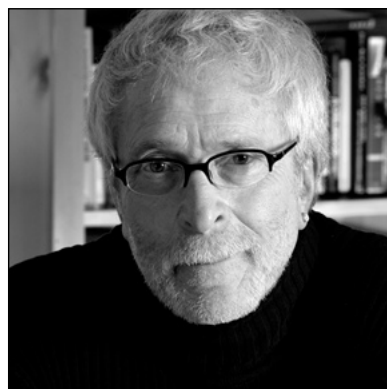
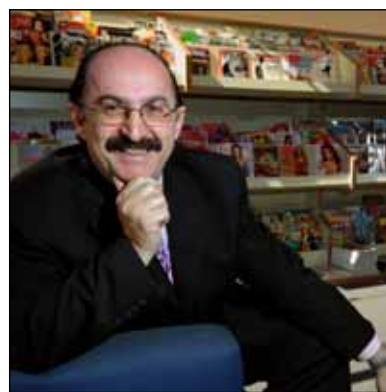
C O N F E R E N C E

WRITERS & EDITORS FROM  
TOP NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Condé Nast  
**Traveler**

**Slate**

**OXFORD**  
...AMERICAN...



EDITORS FROM MAJOR  
BOOK PUBLISHERS



Doubleday



BROADWAY



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN



ONE-ON-ONE MEETING WITH  
AGENTS, EDITORS & WRITERS

## JOURNEYS

Travel Writing & Memoir — Turning Experiences into Words

**FEBRUARY 29 - MARCH 2, 2008**

*The University of Mississippi Department of Journalism • Oxford, Mississippi*

*Presented by*

The Creative Nonfiction Foundation & The University of Mississippi Department of Journalism

PRE-CONFERENCE WRITING WORKSHOPS • FEBRUARY 28 & 29, 2008 • SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS

# The 2008 Mid-South Creative Nonfiction Writers' Conference:

## JOURNEYS: TRAVEL WRITING & MEMOIR – TURNING EXPERIENCES INTO WORDS

This intensive three-day conference offers a rare opportunity for writers interested in travel narrative and memoir to hear first-hand from the most influential editors in the field about what they're looking for and how they choose the work they publish.

Featured speakers will include internationally recognized magazine expert Samir "Mr. Magazine" Husni, Journalism Department chair at The University of Mississippi, and Lee Gutkind, the award-winning editor and founder of Creative Nonfiction. Other speakers are prominent writers, editors, and agents from across the publishing landscape.

Participants will also have the opportunity to meet with agents and editors one-on-one and to network at informal social events. Have a blast while taking your writing to the next level!

## TENTATIVE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

All conference facilities are ADA compliant

### Thursday, February 28 & Friday, February 29

Pre-conference workshops (all day)

See page 5 for details

### Friday, February 29

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

#### Registration

Farley Hall, Department of Journalism, The University of Mississippi

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

#### Welcome Reception: *Roomful of Writers*

Memory House, The University of Mississippi

Enjoy light refreshments while you mingle with writers, editors, agents and other conference participants. Featured speakers include:

Samir "Mr. Magazine" Husni (*The Future of Magazines*) and

Lee Gutkind, "*the godfather behind creative nonfiction*" (*Keep It Real: The Creative Nonfiction Way of Life*)



Lee Gutkind



Samir Husni

7:30 p.m.

Dinner (on your own)

### Saturday, March 1

9:00 -10:45 a.m.

#### Panel Discussion

"Travel Narrative/Creative Nonfiction"

Magazine editors Ted Moncreiff (*Condé Nast Traveler*), June Thomas (*Slate.com*), and Virginia Morell (*National Geographic*) discuss the magazine market for travel memoir and literary narrative. What are the approaches, subjects, and voices editors are seeking?



Ted Moncreiff



Virginia Morell

Q and A to follow

**2 Register online at [CreativeNonfiction.org](http://CreativeNonfiction.org) ■ Register by phone at 412-688-0304**

## Saturday, March 1 (continued)

11:00 -11:30 a.m.

### Mini Sessions

*Insight into Craft and Technique*

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

### Lunch

*Ride the double decker bus to Oxford's historic Square for lunch (on your own).*



1:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

### Panel Discussion

Books: Writing and Publishing Travel Narrative and Memoir  
*Editors Charlie Conrad (Doubleday/Broadway) and Webster Younce (Houghton Mifflin) and literary agent Gillian MacKenzie will discuss current trends and the market for narrative travel memoir. How can you tell if you have a good book idea? What information should you include in a proposal? Is the memoir craze dead? Q and A to follow.*



Charlie Conrad



Webster Younce

3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

### One-On-Ones

Individual meetings with agents and editors

*Conference participants will have the opportunity to meet with agents and editors individually to pitch their story ideas and get feedback.*

*Try out your story ideas! Pitch your book!*



Gillian MacKenzie

7:30 p.m.

### Party at Memory House

*Join other conference participants and guests for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and dancing at historic Memory House.*



## Sunday, March 2

9:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m.

### Panel Discussion

The Writer's Life

*Rebecca Skloot (The New York Times Magazine), Mike Rosenwald (The New Yorker, Esquire), Virginia Morell and other conference faculty offer concrete tips for scheduling your writing, supporting yourself as a writer, networking and making connections, and building relationships with editors.*



Rebecca Skloot



Mike Rosenwald

11:00 a.m.

### Farewell Remarks

Lee Gutkind

1:00 p.m.

### Tour (Optional)

Rowan Oak, Home of William Faulkner



# CONFERENCE PANELISTS & PRESENTERS



**Charlie Conrad** is Vice President, Executive Editor and Editorial Director of Paperbacks at Doubleday/Broadway, a division of Random House, Inc. Formerly the Editor-in-Chief of Anchor Books/Doubleday, he has also held editorial positions at Warner Books, Newmarket Press and New American Library. Among the authors he has worked with are such memoirists, travel writers and journalists as Frances Mayes (*Under the Tuscan Sun*, *Bella Tuscany*, *A Year in the World*), Jon Krakauer (*Into the Wild*, *Under the Banner of Heaven*), and Eric Clapton (*Clapton: The Autobiography*).

**Samir "Mr. Magazine" Husni** is the Chair of the Journalism Department at The University of Mississippi. He is the author of numerous books and guides on magazine publishing. *Forbes ASAP* magazine called him "the country's leading magazine expert," and *The Chicago Tribune* dubbed him "the planet's leading expert on new magazines."



At her independent agency, **Gillian MacKenzie** represents a wide variety of nonfiction writers, including journalists, academics, memoirist and scientists. Her clients include the prominent social psychologist, Philip Zimbardo; Nobel Peace Prize-winning geologist, Henry Pollack; former Moscow Bureau Chief for NPR, Lawrence Scott Sheets; and former ad-exec turned Starbucks barista, Michael Gates Gill, among many others. Prior to starting her agency, Gillian helped produce feature films based on books, and designed products at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**Ted Moncreiff** is Executive Editor of *Condé Nast Traveler*. He began at the magazine fifteen years ago as a fact-checker. Prior to that, he was at *CFO* magazine, *Economist*, and *USA Today*.



**Virginia Morell** is a correspondent for *Science*, and a regular contributor to *National Geographic Magazine*, and has written for *Smithsonian*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Discover*, *Outside* and other publications. Her articles are often about travels or expeditions with scientists exploring the natural world. She is also the author of two books, "Ancestral Passions: The Leakeys and the Quest for Humankind's Beginnings," (Simon and Schuster, 1995; this was a *NY Times* Notable Book of the Year); and "Blue Nile" (*National Geographic*, 2001), a *San Francisco Chronicle* Best Travel Book. She also co-authored "Wildlife Wars" with Richard Leakey (St. Martins, 2001); it was a Best Book of the Year in the *Washington Post*.

**June Thomas** is *Slate's* foreign editor, where she is in charge of the "Foreigners," "Dispatches," "War Stories," "Fighting Words," and "Well-Traveled" sections. Before joining the magazine in 1997, she was an editor and foreign rights manager at Seal Press and managing editor of *Women in Translation*, a publishing company specializing in women's writing from around the world. She was born and raised in Manchester, England.



**Webster Younce** is senior editor at Houghton Mifflin, having worked at Random House, Alfred A. Knopf, and Picador USA. His authors include Paul Theroux, Diane McWhorter, Joseph Epstein, Christopher Merrill, David Kertzer, Ward Just, and Jonathan Miles, among others. He also oversees Houghton's publishing program for JRR Tolkien. A graduate of Ole Miss and Oxford University, his journalism and criticism have appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, *Time Out New York*, *Beliefnet.com*, and in the anthology "A Galaxy Not So Far Away."

## WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS

**John T. Edge** is a contributing editor at *Gourmet*. He has written for the *New York Times*, and is columnist for the *Oxford American* and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. His work for *Saveur* and other magazines has been featured in every edition of the "Best Food Writing" anthology since 2001.



Edge has a number of books to his credit, including the James Beard Award-nominated cookbook, "A Gracious Plenty: Recipes and Recollections from the American South." He is editor of the foodways volume of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. Edge serves as culinary curator for the weekend edition of NPR's "All Things Considered."



**Blair Hobbs** received an M.A. in Creative Writing from Hollins College and an M.F.A. Creative Writing from the University of Michigan. Her work has appeared in *Prairie Schooner*, *The Georgia Review*, *Laurel Review*, *The Texas Review* and *The Oxford American*.

**Kristen Iversen** teaches Creative Nonfiction in the MFA program at The University of Memphis. She is Editor-in-Chief of the literary journal *The Pinch* and is the author of "Molly Brown: Unraveling the Myth," winner of the Colorado Book Award, and the textbook "Shadow Boxing: Art and Craft in Creative Nonfiction." Her memoir, "Full Body Burden: Living and Dying in the Shadow of Rocky Flats," is forthcoming.



**Dinty W. Moore** is a professor of English at Ohio University and the publisher of *Brevity*, an online journal of concise literary non-fiction. His fiction and essays have appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Arts & Letters*, *The Georgia Review*, *Utne Reader*, *The Southern Review*, and numerous other journals and magazines. He is also the author of three books of nonfiction, "Between Panic and Desire", "The Accidental Buddhist" and "The Emperor's Virtual Clothes"; a collection of stories, "Toothpick Men"; and a textbook, "The Truth of the Matter: Art and Craft in Creative Nonfiction."

**Michael Rosenwald** is a staff writer at the *Washington Post*. He is also an accomplished magazine writer whose work has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Smithsonian* and *Popular Science*. He was previously a finalist for the National Magazine Award in feature writing.



**Rebecca Skloot** is a freelance writer and contributing editor at *Popular Science* magazine and a television correspondent for PBS's *Nova Science NOW*. She writes feature stories, essays, and reviews for *The New York Times Magazine*, *National Public Radio*, *Discover*, *New York Magazine* and others. Skloot's award-winning essays have appeared in several anthologies, including "Best Food Writing 2005," and "Women's Best Friend: Women Writers on the Dogs in Their Lives." Her first book, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks," is forthcoming from Crown. Skloot teaches creative nonfiction in the MFA program at the University of Memphis, where she directs the River City Writers Series.

## CONFERENCE DIRECTOR



"A wild book—a crazy suspense story—fascinating stuff." That's how host Jon Stewart described **Lee Gutkind's** new book, "Almost Human: Making Robots Think", on *The Daily Show* (Comedy Central), when the two squared off in an amusing and enlightening conversation and debate. Gutkind's national TV appearance followed in-depth interviews on National Public Radio's "Talk of the Nation," the "BBC World," and *Wired.com*. and rave reviews from the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Lee Gutkind is founder and editor of *Creative Nonfiction*. He is also the editor of "The Best Creative Nonfiction", an annual anthology, and the forthcoming "Keep It Real: Everything You Need to Know About Researching and Writing Creative Nonfiction", both by W. W. Norton. *Vanity Fair* proclaimed Gutkind "the Godfather" behind the creative nonfiction movement— an indisputable force whose efforts have helped make the genre the fastest growing in the publishing industry.

**4 Register online at [CreativeNonfiction.org](http://CreativeNonfiction.org) ■ Register by phone at 412-688-0304**

# PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Thursday, February 28, 2008 • Friday, February 29, 2008

*These day-long courses will focus on the art, craft and business of writing. Whether you're an established writer looking to expand your range or just beginning to think about a career in writing, these workshops will give you concrete tips for making your writing stronger and finding the right market for it. Workshops can be attended separately or in conjunction with the rest of the conference.*

**Thursday, February 28, 2008** *(Limit one workshop per day, per student)*

■ **Structuring Creative Nonfiction Instructor: Rebecca Skloot**

Structuring: Structure is one of the most important (and most challenging) aspects of writing creative nonfiction. No matter how good your story is, no matter how vivid your scenes, it won't work without a solid structure. This workshop will cover various ways of structuring essay-length nonfiction, from conventional to experimental. We will look at published work as examples and, time permitting, discuss some current projects of workshop participants.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

■ ***The Most Interesting Person (or Place) That I Have Ever Met (Or Been To)* Instructor: Michael Rosenwald**

Come learn about the lovely lady who eats roadkill. When we get done with her, we will talk about the man who gave an annual ball for the benefit of himself. We all have stories we want to tell everyone we know. In this workshop you will learn what it takes to produce fascinating profiles of people and places — from coming up with an idea to reporting it and selling it to an editor.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

■ **Manuscript workshop Workshop Leader: Dinty W. Moore**

Memoirs-in-progress will be discussed and possibilities for revision identified and analyzed in an intimate workshop setting. Writers may submit up to 10 double-spaced pages in advance to share with other members of the workshop. Please email your work (up to 10 double-spaced pages) to [institutes@creativenonfiction.org](mailto:institutes@creativenonfiction.org), attached as a Word or text document, by February 15.

**Workshop registration fee is \$250.**

■ ***How to Begin Your Memoir* Instructor: Kristen Iversen**

Your life is a web of stories that contain vital truths that readers will recognize from their own lives. But where to begin? This class will discuss strategies to explore, shape, and develop vivid moments from your life and ways to begin to construct a cohesive narrative.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

**Friday, February 29, 2008** *(Limit one workshop per day, per student)*

■ ***The Art and Craft of Characterization in Memoir* Instructor: Dinty W. Moore**

The people we write about in memoir are real, and our descriptions of them are true, but these people we write about, including the author/narrator/self, still function as characters on the page. The challenge is to bring them to life through their actions, reactions, dialogue and intimate detail. This seminar will explore strategies used by memoirists and include exercises designed to increase the writer's skill at transforming complex flesh-and-blood individuals into words, sentences and scenes.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

■ ***Scenes From a Notebook: How to make words cinematic* Instructor: Michael Rosenwald**

Learn the nuts and bolts of turning life experiences, reportage, and even the most mundane facts into pulsing, scenic narratives that are impossible to put down. You will learn to write long scenes, short scenes, and what order to put them in so they become stories. You will learn to tuck facts into scenes. And you will study some of the greatest scenes in creative nonfiction history.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

■ ***Book Proposals and Query Letters* Instructor: Rebecca Skloot**

Learn the secrets behind getting published (and paid for it) from award-winning freelance writer Rebecca Skloot. Her workshop will teach you to write irresistible query letters and book proposals, and how to sell them. Skloot will cover finding and contacting editors and agents, developing marketable ideas, and more, including many useful handouts and candid tips you won't hear elsewhere.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

■ **Manuscript workshop Workshop Leader: Kristen Iversen**

Memoirs-in-progress will be discussed and possibilities for revision identified and analyzed in an intimate workshop setting. Writers may submit up to 10 double-spaced pages in advance to share with other members of the workshop. Please email your work (up to 10 double-spaced pages) to [institutes@creativenonfiction.org](mailto:institutes@creativenonfiction.org), attached as a Word or text document, by February 15.

**Workshop registration fee is \$250**

■ ***Word of Mouth* Instructors: Blair Hobbs & John T. Edge**

Eating is the most intimate act we humans engage in with regularity. This personal narrative workshop leverages time at table (and stove) to explore matters of import. Family. Fidelity. Province. Prejudice.

**Workshop registration fee is \$175.**

**Register online at [CreativeNonfiction.org](http://CreativeNonfiction.org) ■ Register by phone at 412-688-0304 5**



# Oxford & Ole Miss



## SOCIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The following social events have been planned for The Mid-South Creative Nonfiction Writers' Conference\*

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Reception at The Depot, a renovated railroad depot adjacent to the Ole Miss campus.

Reception is open to all Pre-conference and Conference registrants.

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Welcome Reception at Memory House. A reception for conference registrants and instructors. Lee Gutkind and Samir Husni will make presentations during the gathering.

Open to Conference registrants.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 1

Saturday evening party at Memory House. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and dancing.

Open to Conference registrants.

## CONFERENCE HOSTS

Once you register, you will be assigned an Oxford host — a resident who can answer questions about the town or escort you to area attractions, including William Faulkner's Home (Rowan Oak), the University Museums (it holds the world's largest collection of 19th century scientific instruments), after hours dancing and music on the square or even a late-night excursion to Graceland Too (a quirky, private residence in Holly Springs, Mississippi, occupied by an Elvis fanatic who welcomes visitors any time of the day or night.)

Hosts will be available throughout the conference to assist you with transportation, dining or entertainment.



Oxford is nestled in the rolling hills of North Mississippi. Founded in 1837 (and named after the town of Oxford, England), Oxford was burned by troops in the Civil War. But since reconstruction, Oxford has thrived, especially in producing outstanding literature. Nobel Prize-winner William Faulkner created his fictional Yoknapatawpha County based on Oxford. Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak, is open for tours. In more recent years, the town has been called home by Willie Morris, Barry Hannah, Larry Brown and, of course, John Grisham.

But Oxford is more than just an arts and cultural center. The historic square offers exceptional shopping, dining and nightlife. It is also home of Square Books, one of the premier independent bookstores in the United States (Oxford's current mayor still owns the store).

The University of Mississippi, known by alumni and locals as "Ole Miss," is one of the great American public universities. The campus has been called the most beautiful in the country by the *The Los Angeles Times*. In addition to picturesque buildings and grounds, the university houses the world's largest blues archive, as well as the papers of many of the South's greatest literary figures.

Oxford has been voted one of the Top Ten Small Towns in America, and is consistently ranked as a top retirement community in the U.S.

For more information on Oxford and Ole Miss, visit [www.oxfordcvb.com](http://www.oxfordcvb.com). Call 662-513-0159 if you have additional questions.

## Lodging

Oxford may have only 19,000 residents, but the town boasts more than 4,000 hotel rooms. For a complete listing, visit the Oxford Convention and Visitors Bureau web site ([www.oxfordcvb.com](http://www.oxfordcvb.com)) or call the bureau at 662-232-2367. Special conference rates have been negotiated at two locations.

Space is limited, so please make reservations early.

### The Inn at Ole Miss

Tel: 1-888-486-7666

Web: [www.theinnatolemiss.com](http://www.theinnatolemiss.com)

### Hampton Inn Oxford

Tel: 1-662-232-2442

Web: [hamptoninn.com](http://hamptoninn.com)

Be sure to mention "Writers' Conference" when making reservations. For additional information, contact Carroll Chiles at 1-662-513-0159.

## Geography/Weather



Oxford is located 75 miles south of Memphis, Tennessee. The average temperature for the first of March is 54 degrees. At conference time, weather should be mild during the day, and cool in the evenings.

# REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to: Creative Nonfiction Foundation, 5501 Walnut Street, Suite 202, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 or Fax to: 412.688.0262

Name _____		
Organization _____		
Address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Telephone ( ) _____		
Fax ( ) _____		
E-mail _____		
<small>Please include an e-mail and phone number in the event there is a need to contact you. For privacy, your e-mail address, telephone and other information will never be shared with other companies.</small>		

Conference	Total
Friday, Saturday & Sunday Conference: Journeys: Travel Writing & Memoir — Turning Experiences into Words (\$350)	
Pre-Conference Workshops	Total
<b>Thursday, February 28, 2008</b> (please select only one Thursday workshop)	
Structuring Creative Non-Fiction, Instructor: Rebecca Skloot (\$175)	
The Most Interesting Person/Place I've Ever Known/Been To, Instructor: Michael Rosenwald (\$175)	
Manuscript Workshop, Workshop Leader: Dinty W. Moore (\$250)	
How to Begin Your Memoir, Instructor: Kristen Iversen (\$175)	
<b>Friday, February 29, 2008</b> (please select only one Friday workshop)	
The Art & Craft of Characterization in Memoir, Instructor: Dinty W. Moore (\$175)	
Scenes from a Notebook: How to make words cinematic, Instructor: Michael Rosenwald (\$175)	
Book Proposals and Query Letters, Instructor: Rebecca Skloot (\$175)	
Manuscript Workshop, Workshop Leader: Kristen Iversen (\$250)	
Word of Mouth, Instructors: Blair Hobbs & John T. Edge (\$175)	
<b>Total Cost</b>	

## Method of Payment

Check Enclosed  
 Credit Card  
 (Circle One): Visa MC AmEx Discover

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Card Security Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Comments, Notes or Special Requests

*To inquire about the conference schedule or registration, please write to: [institutes@creativenonfiction.org](mailto:institutes@creativenonfiction.org)*

# The 2008 Mid-South Creative Nonfiction Writers' Conference

Sponsored by

**The Creative Nonfiction Foundation  
The University of Mississippi School of Journalism  
The Oxford Tourism Council  
The University of Memphis Creative Writing Program  
The Nautilus Publishing Company  
SonEdna Foundation  
The Five Twelve  
Southside Gallery  
The Mississippi Hills  
Plein Air  
Marie's Lebanese Cuisine  
The Overby Center  
Uptown Coffee &  
Star Package**



Come study the art and craft of creative nonfiction in the hills of North Mississippi that inspired William Faulkner.



Creative Nonfiction Foundation  
5501 Walnut Street, Suite 202  
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

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