

Biblio File

Arnie Bernstein writes to say, “*Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund* has been optioned for possible television production. Now begins the long marathon of hurry up and wait for Hollywood decision makers, but it is an



Donna Seaman

exciting development. I can neither confirm nor deny the rumor that, in a brilliant turn of typecasting, I will be played by George Clooney.” ... **Donna Seaman** has been named Booklist’s adult books editor. She also

has a book coming out in summer from Bloomsbury USA, *Identity Unknown: Portraits of American Women Artists*. ...

James Finn Garner was awarded Book of the Year, Nontraditional Fiction 2015 from the Chicago Writers Association for *The Wet Nose of Danger*, the third in his series of clown noir mysteries starring Rex Koko, *Private Clown*. It made him the CWA repeat winner with the CWA. His 2011 Rex Koko book – *Honk Honk, My Darling* – also

won Book of the Year. The awards will be presented at 7 p.m., Jan. 23 at The Book Cellar, 4736-38 Lincoln Ave., Chicago. ... The Nation profiled **Chris Abani** on Dec. 12. ... In a Nov. 25 Los Angeles Review of

Books interview with **Amina Gautier**, Amina said that in her short stories, “I use epiphanies – short illuminating bursts of insight striking the protagonist and/or the reader – to represent moments which are only temporarily definitive, lasting as long as the story lasts, momentarily slicing into a character’s life to reveal what



Amina Gautier

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LEFT: Robert Marovich discusses the history of gospel music Jan. 12 at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago. RIGHT: Gods Posse, a gospel chorus, opened and closed the program.



Author gives chapter, verse on history of gospel music

BY THOMAS FRISBIE

Like a musical reprise, the Society of Midland Authors’ January program echoed the previous one in November.

In November, **Mary Morris** talked about her novel set in “The Stroll” in Chicago during the Jazz Age, an area of clubs, dance palaces, cabarets, theaters and musicians.

On Jan. 12, author **Robert Marovich** described how elements of that music migrated to Chicago’s African-American churches and became part of a new sound: gospel music.

After the gospel band Gods Posse opened by playing for the audience at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago, Marovich discussed the musical art form at the heart of his book, *A City Called Heaven: Chicago and the Birth of Gospel Music* (University of Illinois Press, March, 2015).

“When we talk about gospel music, we are talking about more than songs. We are actually talking about a style of singing,” said Marovich, who hosts “Gospel Memories” on a Chicago radio station and is the founder and editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Gospel Music*.

Gospel music grew out of earlier gospel hymns and spirituals, but added elements of jazz, he said.

“Music is a social history of people,” said Marovich, who played historic recordings during his talk. “And that is particularly important when we are talking about gospel music. Because what the songs and singing meant to the people who came to Chicago from the South during the Great Migration – those pioneers who began the gospel music that we know today – they were seeking freedom from discrimination in the South. Freedom for a better life in the North, in

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came before and to suggest what might come after." In Jan. 11 review of Amina's 2014 book *Now We Will Be Happy*, Necessary Fiction said, "What the stories ... really do so impressively is compel the reader to pay attention to lives of breathtaking complexity." Her third book, winner of the Elixir Press Award, will be published Feb. 1, and she will read at Women & Children First Feb 12 in Chicago for the book launch. ... **Robert Pruter** was quoted a number of times in the Aug. 14 New York Times in a story on an NFL football scandal from 1924 involving Chicago high school players. Robert says, "The reporter contacted me because of my 2013 book, *The Rise of American High School Sports and the Search for Control, 1880-1930*." Also, Robert contributed the essay "Golf and Tennis" to *A Companion to American*



Robert Pruter

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Literary License

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Society of Midland Authors members can now pay their membership dues, buy tickets to the annual dinner and make donations on our website with PayPal (there is a \$1 fee to help cover PayPal's fee). To make a donation, visit our home page at www.midlandauthors.com and click on the "Donate" button in the upper right corner.

■ Gospel

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Chicago. But what they found was more cunning forms of racism. As their expression of their experience as migrants, as strangers in a strange land – [that is] what we have as gospel music today."

Back then, for solace, people turned to their churches, he said.

"There was one problem. The mainline Protestant churches did not worship with the fervency that they did in the South. These were very austere churches."

It was a clash of cultures. The migrants wanted the enthusiastic music they were used to. But the pastors, who preferred classical music styles, were hesitant.

"Classical music was popular in 1925. This is what the churches wanted, but it was not what the migrants were used to. ... Part of it was, [gospel music] reminded [pastors] of the music of the clubs,"

Marovich said. "The jazz. The vaudeville blues that Ma Rainey might sing. A little bit of classical, but mostly this music that they associated with vice. The clubs had prostitution, they had policy. For a church, this is not what you wanted to be part of."

A breakthrough came when "Arizona" Juanita Dranes recorded "My Soul Is a Witness for the Lord" in 1926 in the same studio where Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five recorded.

"After that record, everything changed," Marovich said. "[The churches] wanted the pentecostal sound because the migrants wanted it."

Gospel music got its biggest boost in 1931 when Dr. J.H.L. Smith was brought to Chicago to pastor Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church at 45th and Vincennes. Smith turned to Theodore Roosevelt Frye to bring in a new sound.

Frye brought in Thomas Dorsey, now known as the Father of Black Gospel

Music. The two men formed a gospel chorus.

"It went over like crazy," Marovich said. "They took the songs like 'I'm On the Battlefield for My Lord,' but they gave it a little bit of that blues, jazz, because they didn't want to sound like they were right out of the South. They wanted to take the songs of the South and bridge them with this modern contemporary music that you would hear on The Stroll in the 1920s in Chicago."

From there, gospel music started spreading.

"In the Chicago Defender in 1932 you could see every week a different church was starting a gospel chorus," Marovich said.

After World War II, gospel music from Chicago became a hot commercial property. Gospel artists started going on national tours. Mahalia

Jackson became an international star.

"Suddenly, gospel music was a professional, commercial music, but Chicago remained the hometown, the headquarters, the birthplace of gospel music."

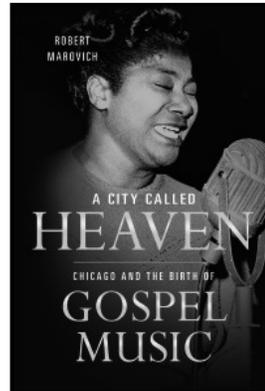
And a vibrant gospel music community remains in Chicago to this day, he said.

"What distinguishes Chicago from other places in gospel is that churchy sound," he said.

To research his book, Marovich spent many hours at the library.

"I am loving being in the library because this book was really birthed out of many, many afternoons in the Chicago Public Library microfilm room reading old copies of the Chicago Defender from 1931 to 1965 or 1966," he said. "Because of the library, this book was possible. I couldn't have done it without all their resources."

The program closed with a performance by Gods Posse of "When Jesus Walked."



Save the date

This year's annual Society of Midland Authors book awards dinner, honoring the

best books of 2015, will be on Tuesday, May 10, at the Cliff Dwellers Club in Chicago. The emcee will be Chicago Tribune columnist Rex Huppke.

Boosting civic engagement

Dick Simpson, co-author of *Winning Elections in the 21st Century* (University Press of Kansas, April 4, 2016), will present the Society of Midland Authors' February program with **Don Rose** and **Betty O'Shaughnessy**. Here is what Simpson tells Literary License:

Literary License: *You write about social media, vote analytics, small donor online fund-raising and micro-targeting. Can these techniques overcome the infusion of big money and dark money?*

Dick Simpson: Betty O'Shaughnessy and I in this book show how to merge the new techniques for campaigning with the older methods, especially those we have used in Chicago for decades. We translate some of the whizbang stuff from presidential campaigns like Obama's for use at the local level, and we use the Will Guzzardi campaign of 2014 to demonstrate how it is used in real life. Certainly at the local level, it is possible to run a campaign to beat the political machine, big money, and dark money, but it does take dedication, outstanding candidates and knowhow. We put the tools into the hands of local campaigns to do it.

Literary License: *Was encouraging electoral participation by average citizens part of your reason for writing this book?*

Dick Simpson: The original *Winning Elections* book I first published in 1972, and which has been in print in new editions ever since, was subtitled: *A Handbook in Participatory Politics*. Our new book is still meant to empower citizen participation.

Literary License: *How are today's campaigns different from when you ran for the Chicago City Council?*

Dick Simpson: The campaign tools are different: computers, cell phones, voter analytics (or big data), and social media are all different. But the fundamentals of successful campaigns as we demonstrate having changed since Cicero won his campaign in Rome, Lincoln won his campaign in Illinois, or I won my aldermanic campaigns in Chicago. It is knowing how to use these tools the right way that is

February 9, 2016, program

Cliff Dwellers, 200 S. Michigan, Chicago, 22nd floor

6 p.m. - Social Hour, 7 p.m. - Program
Free - donations accepted

critical. Making the tools promote democracy, not destroy it, is important, and we end our book with a discussion of the promise and the challenge of these new campaigns for democracy.

Literary License: *Was it hard to write this book when technology and campaign strategies are constantly changing?*

Dick Simpson: It was a challenge to learn and to keep up with the changing technology. It meant that we had to read the magazines that campaign consultants read and write, to observe and participate in current campaigns to figure out firsthand how things were changed and techniques were adapted. There is a lot of research updating all my previous writing on campaigns. I regularly write book chapters in other edited campaign books so that helps me stay abreast of the latest trends as well.

Literary License: *What's your next book?*

Dick Simpson: A year and a half ago the American Political Science Association published my co-edited book *Teaching Civic Engagement*. Labor Day this year they made it available to all 13,000 members as a free book to promote better civic engagement. Now they have commissioned *Teaching Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines* as part of a national push to increase civic engagement in high schools, community colleges, and universities. We are training the teachers and administrators to get it right with case studies from across the nation. Teaching civic engagement in political science is easy. Teaching it in biology or English is more challenging and getting student organizations to promote it outside of classes is also key. In many ways, this is the answer to the problems raised in my co-authored book, *Corrupt Illinois*.

Literary Landscape Dick Simpson



JENNY FONTAINE

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Sport History, which Biblio File reported in the December/January Literary License won the 2015 North American Society for Sport History Prize for best sport history anthology. ... **Steven**



Steven Burgauer

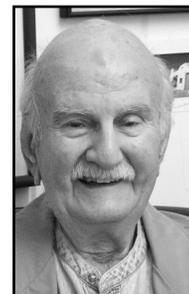
Burgauer's wife, Debra Burgauer, tells Biblio File that Steven is working on a book about Higgins boats, which were vital to the success of the troop landings in North Africa, the Normandy beaches, and the Pacific Island theaters. The working title is *Operation Greek Tau U-Boats*. ...



Kathleen Rooney

Kathleen Rooney reviewed *Days of Shame & Failure* by Jennifer L. Knox in the Dec. 24 New York Times Sunday Book Review. Kathleen also reviewed *A Field Guide to the F Word* by Ben Parker for the Jan. 3 Printers Row Journal. ... **Michael Ebner** was quoted Jan. 9 in the Daily North Shore on the history of Kenilworth, Ill. ... In case you are wondering whether it is easier to finish writing a prologue or check your email 150 times, **Kelly O'Connor McNeas** tweets to say she can tell you the answer. ... **Megan Stielstra** wrote a Dec. 31 op-ed in the New York Times headlined, "What should Chicago celebrate?" ...

Stuart Dybek, Rebecca Makkai, Scott Turow, Mary Morris, Jonathan Eig and **Christine Sneed** listed their holiday season favorite writings in the Dec. 20 Printers Row Journal. ... **Harry Mark Petrakis** wrote a full-page essay headlined "Reflecting on a childhood bully in later years" in the Dec.



Harry Mark Petrakis

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26 Chicago Sun-Times. ... **Dominic Pacyga** was interviewed Dec. 23 on Chicago's WBEZ-FM. ... **Glennette Tilley Turner** is featured in the "A



Glennette Tilley Turner

Journey into 366 Days of Black History 2016 Calendar," which includes 12 stories of black men and women who worked for positive change in the arts, education, sciences, athletics, literature, and politics. Also, she will be the keynote speaker in February for the African American

Festival in Elgin, Ill, and in April for the Carter Carroll Excellence in History Awards Night at the College of DuPage.

... In December, **Patrick T. Reardon** wrote two essays published in the Chicago Tribune – "Republicans should dump Trump now" (Dec. 11) and "After a brother's death, a last day and a first day" (Dec. 31) – and one on the front page of the National Catholic Reporter: "The Conversion of St. Scrooge" (Dec. 21).

Ann Durkin Keating is among the advisers for a new Agricultural Interpretive Center in Naperville, Ill. Also, WBEZ-FM on Dec. 3 quoted from her book *Rising Up from Indian Country: The Battle of Fort Dearborn and the Birth of Chicago*. ... **James Hugunin's** next work of fiction, *Finding*

Mememo, is in progress. ... The Dec. 11 St. Thomas Times-Journal quoted

Barbara Gregorich.

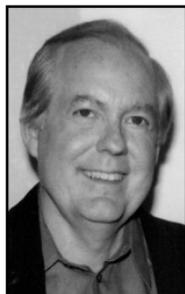
... **Margaret McMullan** is one of three authors selected to be a presenter at the Feb. 19-20 Writers and Readers Symposium in St. Francisville, La. She also will be at the

March 2-6 Oxford Conference for the Book at the University of Mississippi. ... On Dec. 22, Dr. Karen M. Wyatt wrote on Huffington Post, "A *Call from Spooner Street* by **Carol Ascher** is a good read for an adult child dealing with the death of an



Rick Kogan

elderly parent." ... **Richard Lindberg** discussed his latest book Dec. 29 on **Rick Kogan's** WGN-AM program. ... The Dec. 20 Printers Row Journal called CityFiles' two new volumes *Gotta Go Gotta Flow: Life, Love, and Lust on Chicago's South Side From the Seventies* and *Richard Nickel: Dangerous Years* "a pair of fine books." ... **Gunter Nitsch** wrote the lead letter to the editor in the Dec. 16 Chicago Sun-Times. It was headlined, "Past refugees weren't readily accepted in Germany." ... On the Dec. 4 "Good Day Chicago," **Lori Andrews** discussed the privacy implications of the new wi-fi enabled Barbie doll. And on Dec. 24 she co-authored a Chicago Tribune article on protecting your privacy in Windows 10. ...



Eldon Ham

In an interview published Dec. 28, movie-maker Michael Moore quoted from an April Salon essay by **Edward "Ted" McClelland**. ... **Eldon Ham** was quoted in a Dec. 18 story on youth sports violence on SFGate.com, the sister website of the San Francisco Chronicle. He also recently published an article at Law360 about a disabled athlete federal case. ... **Bonnie Jo Campbell, Gloria Whelan** and four other writers read at the Dec. 12 Good-Tyme Writer's Buffet. Bonnie emails to say, "This is a fun event at the art space/gallery called 'The Public Pool' in Hamtramck, where the writers have to bring a dish to pass, so there was some good food. The organizer puts the event together at least four times a year." ... Nuvo.net, based in Indianapolis, on Dec. 10 said "**Haki Madhubuti** ranks as one of the most important individuals in American literary history." ... **James Klise**, author of the Edgar-award winning novel *The Art of Secrets*, is among the Young Adult authors scheduled to appear at a 1 p.m. Jan. 23 litfest at the Evanston (Ill.) Public Library. The event welcomes middle school and junior high students for panels on writing and publishing. ... Milwaukee Magazine reports that in 2016 **Kathie Giorgio** will celebrate 20 years of

Society has new archivist

BY CRAIG SAUTTER

On Dec. 31, **Craig Sautter** officially transferred the duties of SMA archivist to **Walter Podrazik**.

Sautter and Podrazik met at the Billy Goat after Podrazik appeared that morning on WGN radio. Sautter gave him the box that Jim Schwab recently assembled from his years as president, plus some extra Literary Licenses that he had collected.

"Because Wally teaches courses at the University of Illinois at Chicago and has done research work in the UIC library, this is perfect," Sautter said. "He can develop a long-term relationship with the UIC librarians and hopefully spur them on to actually catalog all of the material we have been dropping off in recent years. We also spoke about the importance of past SMA presidents who have not yet done so to collect material from their tenure and turn it over to him. Also, he will need a little help to collect copies of winning books at the annual banquet. It is great that he has stepped up to do this."

Sautter pointed out that every volunteer organization, including the Society of Midland Authors, needs members to take over established roles from time to time to promote the continuity of the organization, which has thankfully happened in recent years for SMA.

Any members who have old dinner programs, yearbooks, or other SMA memorabilia can send them to our P.O. box (See Page 2 for the address), marked to Podrazik's attention. As Literary License readers know from Robert Loerzel's "Literary Lore" series, we have a rich history that needs to be preserved.



Craig Sautter



Walter Podrazik

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teaching. Also, Prairie Schooner has accepted her short story "Clean" for publication. Kathie emails to say, "My story 'Out of Hibernation' has been accepted by Headland: Literary Frontiers and Emerging Voices. My publisher is releasing a collection of my published stories in June called *Oddities & Endings: The Collected Stories of Kathie Giorgio*. My poetry chapbook, *True Light Falls In Many Forms*, will be released that month too. Oh, and my creative writing studio, AllWriters' Workplace & Workshop, just had its 11th anniversary." ... **Nelson Algren** is the topic of an upcoming two-movie Chicago Authored Members' Film Series at the Chicago History Museum. The first movie will be "Algren: The Movie" (2014) on Tuesday, Jan. 19. Director Michael Caplan will introduce the film and discuss Algren's legacy with museum historian Peter T. Alter. The second will be "The Man with the Golden Arm" on Tuesday, Feb. 23. Alter will introduce the film by discussing the themes of the novel and the state of post-World War II Chicago. The schedule for both movies is: 5:30 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. presentation, 6:30 p.m. screening; \$10 per member, \$15 for nonmembers per film; \$15 and \$20 for both. ... **Michele Weldon**, one of this year's SMA book judges, was one of "15 women I loved getting to know in 2015," Heidi Stevens wrote in the Dec. 28 Chicago Tribune. Stevens also wrote that Michele's *Escape Points* (Chicago Review Press, Sept 1, 2015) "was one of my favorite books all year." And the Jan 1. Booklist named *Escape Points* to its Editors Choice list of best



Michele Weldon

books of 2015. ... The Jan 7. Bloomington (Ill.) Pantograph profiled **Vicki Quade** in a story headlined, "Force of habits: She's still having fun with nuns." ... **Steven Lubet** was quoted as "a widely known expert on judicial ethics" in a Dec. 19 Belleville (Ill.) News-Democrat story on attempts to knock judges off ballots. ... The Dec. 23 Indianapolis Star listed **Ray Boomhower's John Bartlow Martin: A Voice for the Underdog** as one of "Six books that really know Indiana." Also, the crowdsourced book *Undeniably Indiana* will include a story by Ray. ... On Nov. 10, Gapers Block listed "Burnham Centennial Prairie, Lake Shore Drive" by **Martha Modena Vertreace-Doody** as a "must read" in *City Creatures: Animal Encounters in the Chicago Wilderness* (University of Chicago Press, Nov 3, 2015), a book of essays, poetry and art. ... The Highland Park (Ill.) Historical Society was scheduled to host **Dave Hoekstra** Jan. 14 to discuss *The People's Place: Soul Food Restaurants and Reminiscences from the Civil Rights Era to Today* (See Literary Latest, Page 6). ... Writing in the Jan. 5 Calusa County Sun-Herald, DeEtta Mayberry called **Patricia Polacco** one "of my favorite authors of children's read-aloud stories." ... **Stewart Massad** was named a "clinical teacher of the year" Nov. 2 at Washington University School of Medicine. It's the third time in four years. ... **John David Anderson's The Dungeoneers** and **Ann Bausum's Stonewall: Breaking Out in the Fight for Gay Rights** were among the titles in Publishers Weekly's Dec. 2 list of children's and young adult books that received 2015 starred reviews. Also, Ann is scheduled to appear in a Wisconsin Department of Instruction video series called "Wisconsin Writes." ... **Robert Loerzel** wrote a Dec. 24 article on homelessness in Illinois for WCBU Peoria (Ill.) Public Radio. ... Reader's Digest UK

included **Christine Sneed's Paris, He Said** on its list of 2015 literary highlights. ... **Julie Hyzy** says *Foreign Eclairs* will be the final White House chef book she writes. ... **Scott Turow** will be the featured speaker at a Jan. 29 Palm Beach (Fla.) Library System panel. ... Lyric Opera of the North will stage a June 23-24, 26 production in Duluth of "Les Uncomfortables," co-written by **Margi Preus**. ... **Shari Wagner**, Indiana's new poet laureate, was profiled Jan 5 on currentinwestfield.com, which quoted **Barbara Shoup** as saying, "I'm a long-time admirer of her work, always amazed by how she creates beauty and mystery from what we think of as the most ordinary things. She's such a gifted teacher, too, insightful and generous, with a knack for conveying her expertise in poetry in a way that both challenges and nurtures aspiring poets of all ages." ... **Stan "Tex" Banash** had a letter to the editor published in the Dec. 3 Chicago Tribune, headlined, "The whole world is watching Chicago." ... **Sue Harrison** wrote an article in January about families and music for the online women's magazine Her View From Home. ... **Jonathan Eig** wrote a Dec. 19 article for the New York Times headlined, "In his corner, Larry Holmes is the greatest." ... In the Dec. 28 suburban Chicago Daily Herald, **Joseph Schwieterman** called the drop in fuel prices one of the top stories of 2015. ... **Bill Yarrow** published a new poem "Two Weeks in a Dristan Land" on erationpost-modernpoetry.com and four poems in the January Pirene's Fountain. In November, he released "Pointed Music," a poetry CD of readings of 38 of his poems set to music by the Boston composer Dr. Raymond Fahrner. ... ABC Studios is picking up a drama script based on the five-book "Black Stiletto" novels by **Raymond Benson**.

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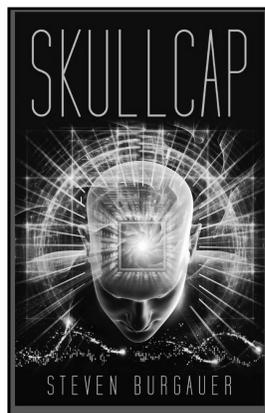
Dues cover mailings and other organizational expenses, but the Society always needs additional money for programs such as the awards at the annual May

book awards banquet.

Thanks to **Beverly Offen, Lisa Greyhill, Carol DeChant, Meg Tebo** and **Thomas Frisbie**, who made recent contributions.

Note: Society of Midland Authors members can get a free copy of our history, *A Century of Winged Words*, by sending \$1 for postage via PayPal or to our post office box.

Literary Latest / New Books



10th SCI-FI NOVEL

Steven Burgauer's upcoming book is *Skullcap* (iUniverse, April 20). It is his 10th science-fiction novel.

"When I see young people on a date or even shopping at the grocery store, and I see them constantly tapping away on their phones, texting this, checking that online, watching bits of movies while waiting at the checkout counter, I begin to wonder what the logical end to this process will be.

"Writing science fiction allows a man to fantasize," Burgauer tells Literary License. "So I began to contemplate where complete and constant connectivity would ultimately take us. Thus was born the idea behind *Skullcap*."

"The story truly takes a young man where no young man has ever gone before, deep inside his own head, the ultimate virtual reality where a person can experience an entire life without ever once leaving their chair. I loved writing it and I loved allowing my mind to venture down untraveled lanes."

FOREMAN RETURNS

Chicago video producer Ellie Foreman has been absent from thriller author Libby Fischer Hellmann's repertoire for almost a decade. Now, in *Jump Cut*, she's back...and is soon entangled in a web of espionage, murder, and suspicion that threatens to destroy what she holds most dear.

Hellmann tells Literary License: "*Jump Cut* is an exploration of espionage in the post-Snowden era: drones, a giant

Chicago aviation company, Chinese spies, hackers, file encryption, and the Uyghurs. It was a story that I knew Ellie Foreman was perfect for – not only because she's been on an extended vacation for the past 10 years, but also because I knew she wouldn't let it go until she got to the bottom of it.

"So the premise was pretty easy: Ellie is producing a video for Delcroft Aviation, but the VP of Engineering, Charlotte Hollander, cancels the video in the middle of production. Ellie believes Hollander was spooked by shots of a specific man in the video footage. But when Ellie arranges to meet the man to find out why, he is killed by an El train before they can talk. In the confusion, she finds a seemingly abandoned pack of cigarettes



with a flash drive inside that belonged to the now-dead man.

"Ellie gets the drive's contents decrypted, but before long discovers she's under surveillance. Ellie and her boyfriend, Luke, try to find answers, but they don't realize how far they have ventured into the dangerous echelons of hidden power – where more lives are on the line, including their own and those dear to her.

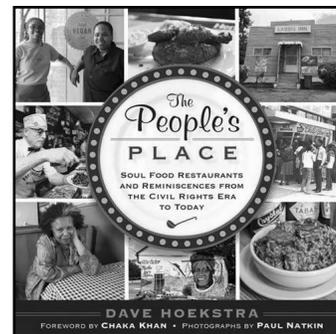
"What I found interesting was that the 'mystery' is solved, but the ending isn't terribly happy – in fact, it's kind of noir.

"It will be out March 1."

TASTY STORIES

In his new book, *The People's Place: Soul Food Restaurants and Reminiscences from the Civil Rights Era*

to Today (Chicago Review Press, Oct. 1, 2015), Dave Hoekstra (See New Members, Page 8) sniffs out tasty stories as he travels, munches and talks his way through 20 of America's best, liveliest and most historically significant soul food



restaurants.

Here's what Hoekstra tells Literary License about the book:

"These are times of division in Chicago. But there is a unifying code that can be heard in the voices of *The People's Place*."

"Many soul food entrepreneurs provided sustenance and spirit for the civil rights movement. A place is not a place if it is not open to all people.

"In 2013 I wrote *The Supper Club Book* for Chicago Review Press where I also learned "a place is not a place until it is remembered." *The Supper Club Book* and *The People's Place* are not really food books or cookbooks (although *The People's Place* has recipes), but they are a tribute to unique spirits that keep these places alive.

"For more than a year, Chicago photographer Paul Natkin and I traveled from New Orleans to Detroit, Chicago to Washington, D.C., and Birmingham to Charleston to collect oral histories and photographs of many soul food restaurants that were part of the civil rights movement.

"We ate pig ear sandwiches with James Meredith in Jackson, Miss., and heard 34-year-old Harlem activist Tamika Mallory declare, 'Our rights are being rolled back, like stand-your-ground and stop-and-frisk in New York City. Discrimination in general, you realize we're going back to a very dangerous time in the history of black people in

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Literary Latest

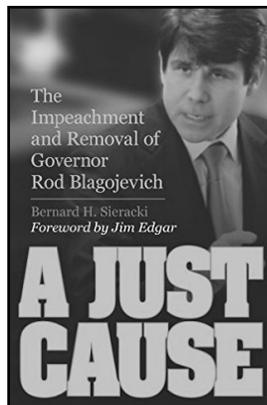
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America.’

“She said that in March, 2014 at the iconic Sylvia’s soul food restaurant in Harlem. Before Ferguson. Before Laquan McDonald.

“Our book is a celebration of empowerment that opens the eyes while they feed the soul. Most of our subjects agreed that soul food is best defined through love. Soul is everywhere, in the air and under your heels.

“Soul is the ability to be free.”



FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT

In *A Just Cause: The Impeachment and Removal of Governor Rod Blagojevich* (Southern Illinois University Press, Dec. 14, 2015), **Bernard H. Sieracki** delivers a firsthand account of the eight-week political crisis that started when former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich was arrested. The book covers Blagojevich’s impeachment and trial, and culminates in his conviction and removal from office.

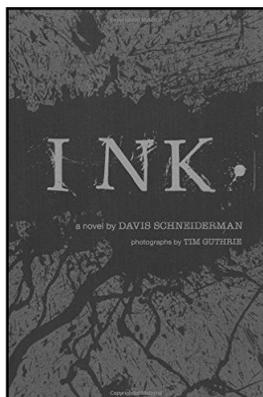
In telling the story, Sieracki draws on his eyewitness observations of the hearings and trial, interviews, trial transcripts, and knowledge gained from decades of work with the Illinois Legislature.

Sieracki tells Literary License, “When the arrest of Rod Blagojevich occurred, I realized what was happening before me were the most consequential series of events ever played out in the almost 200 year history of the Illinois Legislature. No Illinois state office holder had ever

been removed from office. I felt at the time that the events were of historical significance and perhaps I may wish to do something, academically, in the future. Consequently, I attended every house investigative hearing and every moment of the Senate trial.

“My four decades as a lobbyist resulted in my being acquainted with everyone involved. (I even knew, quite well, Blagojevich’s impeachment attorney, Ed Genson). About four years ago I realized, while there had been a few books about Blagojevich, nothing had been accomplished concerning his impeachment and removal. Doing ‘something’ turned out to be the book. The book covers the actions and decisions of the General Assembly during the seven plus weeks from the arrest to Rod Blagojevich’s final day as governor.

“The book is intended to be an accurate work, produced in a scholarly manner, that also presents an interesting and effortless read for the general public. It tells an engaging story of the decisions, attitudes and interactions of the key participants, who struggled with and negotiated through the moral imperatives, political tensions and legal processes of impeachment and removal as provided, vaguely, in the Illinois Constitution. It is a case study of the checks and balances element of the American political system at work. Former Ill. Gov. Jim Edgar wrote the forward.”



TH(INK) OF IT

INK. (Jaded Ibis Press, Dec. 31, 2015) is the third book of **Davis Schneiderman's** DEAD/BOOKS trilogy,

after *BLANK* (2011) and *[SIC]* (2013).

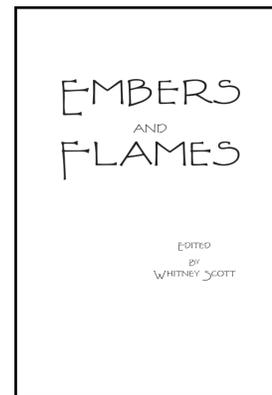
The publisher says: “Th(ink) of it: A book that you read by looking at. A book that you hold and never read. A book that looks back at you looking. A book that is the electronic publishing future. A book for the dark days ahead. *INK*. is all dark, a smear of solid ink over every surface of the book.

“A book that you read by looking at.

“A book that you hold and never read.

“A book that looks back at you looking.

“A book for the dark days ahead.”



20th ANNIVERSARY

Embers and Flames (Outrider, October) marks the 20th anniversary of the Black and White series edited by **Whitney Scott**. The theme is fire. The fiction, essays and poetry spotlight an established and new authors who encompass the scope of this primal element.

Included are writings on literal embers and flames, in forests and prairies and



Whitney Scott

within the intimacy of domestic settings; symbolically, fire also stirs long-simmered yearnings, awakening dormant memories and forces within.

Among previous titles in the series are: *A Bird in the Hand*,

Deep Waters, *Family Gatherings*, *Fearsome Fascination*, *Music in the Air*, *Seasons of Change*, *A Walk in My Garden*, and *Earth Beneath, Sky Beyond*, which was selected as a “Small Press Pick” by Dustbooks’ Small Press Review.

New Members

James R. Hugunin, who teaches the history of photography and contemporary theory at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, is the author of five books.



James R. Hugunin

He has written *Case X* (JEF Books, 2015); *Wreck & Ruin: Photography, Temporality and World (Dis)order* (JEF Books, 2013); *Writing Pictures: Case Studies in Photographic Criticism 1983-2012* (JEF Books, 2013);

Elder Physics, the Wrong of Time: Stories from an Elder Home (JEF Books, 2013), and *Something is Crook in Middlebrook* (JEF Books, 2012).

He was nominated by **Eckhard Gerdes**.

Michael S. Maurer is the author of five books: *50 Crossword Puzzles with Playful Narrations* (2015); *10 Essential Principles of Entrepreneurship You Never Learned in School* (IBJ Book Publishing, 2012); *19 Stars of Indiana: Exceptional Hoosier Men* (IBJ Media/Indiana Historical Society, 2010); *19 Stars of Indiana: Exceptional Hoosier Women* (Indiana University Press, 2009), and *Water Colors: The Photographs of Michael S. Maurer* (IBJ Contract Publishing, 2003).

He is a former Indiana commerce secretary, an attorney, chairman of IBJ Corp. and chairman of the National Bank of Indianapolis.

He was nominated by **Joseph Gustaitis**.

Margaret Garb, associate professor of history at Washington University in St. Louis and co-director of the Washington University Prison Education Program, is author of *Freedom's Ballot: African American Political Struggles in Chicago from Abolition to the Great Migration* and *City of American Dreams: A History of Home Ownership and Housing Reform, Chicago 1871-1919* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

She was nominated by **Joseph Gustaitis**.

Patricia Skalka is author of *Death at Gills Rock* (Terrace Books/University of Wisconsin, 2015) and *Death Stalks Door County* (Terrace Books/University of Wisconsin, 2014),



Patricia Skalka

A former staff writer for Reader's Digest, she presents writing workshops throughout the United States.

She was nominated by **Patrick McBriarty**.

Dave Hoekstra is author of *The People's Place: Soul Food Restaurants and Reminiscences from the Civil Rights Era to Today* (Chicago Review Press, Oct. 1, 2015), *The Supper Club Book: A Celebration of a Midwest Tradition* (Chicago Review Press, 2013); and *Ticket to Everywhere: The Best of "Detours" Travel Column* (Lake Claremont Press, 2000).

He is a co-author of *Country Music Stars: The Legends and the New Breed* (Publications Intl., 1993).

Hoekstra was a columnist-critic at the Chicago Sun-Times from 1985 through 2014, where he won a 2013 Studs Terkel Community Media Award. He is a weekend radio host at WGN-720 AM Chicago, and he has contributed articles to Chicago Magazine, the Chicago Reader and Playboy magazine.

His next book, with Steve Dahl, is *Disco Demolition: The Night Disco Died* (Curbside Splendor Publishing, Apr 12, 2016).

He was nominated by **Craig Sautter** and **Thomas Frisbie**.

Bernard H. Sieracki, author of *A Just Cause: The Impeachment and Removal of Governor Rod Blagojevich* (Southern Illinois University Press, Dec. 14, 2015),

teaches public administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago and at the Stuart School of Business, Illinois



Bernard H. Sieracki

Institute of Technology, Chicago.

Sieracki received his Ph.D. in public administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago. His dissertation dealt with the formation of the first railroad regulatory agency, the Illinois Railroad and Warehouse

Commission of 1870. The commission eventually led to the Munn v Illinois decision (1877), which then led to the formation of the federal ICC.

He also has a masters in political science and a bachelor's degree in history.

Sieracki is working on a book that deals with populism to progressivism in Illinois at the end of the 19th century.

Prior to teaching he was an Illinois lobbyist for nearly four decades.

He was nominated by **Dick Simpson**.

Megan Stielstra is the author of the essay collection *Once I Was Cool*, a 2014 Favorite at Chicago Magazine, Chicago Tribune, and Salon.

Her work appears in The Best American Essays, New York Times, Poets & Writers, Guernica, The Rumpus, and elsewhere, and her next collection, *Come Here Fear*, is forthcoming from Harper Perennial.

A longtime company member with 2nd Story, she's told stories for all sorts of theaters, festivals, and bars (many, many bars, she says) including the Goodman, Steppenwolf, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as Chicago Public Radio, National Public Radio, and Radio National Australia.

She teaches creative nonfiction at Northwestern University.

She was nominated by **Joseph Gustaitis**.



Megan Stielstra

A history of the Society

This is Part Seven of the SMA history.

The previous issue of Literary License listed some of the region's noteworthy authors who joined the Society of Midland Authors in the years following its launch. Here are more names:

John T. McCutcheon Sr. (1870-1949) was called the "Dean of American Cartoonists." At the Chicago Record, he illustrated the columns of his future fellow SMA member **George Ade**. Then he worked at the Tribune from 1903 until 1946, where his 1907 "Injun Summer" cartoon became a popular fixture, appearing once every fall, and where he also served as a war correspondent.

McCutcheon traveled so much that Ade called him a Mexican jumping bean. He was the younger brother of SMA member **George Barr McCutcheon** and the father of SMA

member **John T. McCutcheon Jr.** McCutcheon was won the 1932 Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning for "A Wise Economist Asks a Question," which shows a penniless man sitting on a park bench, labeled "victim of bank failure." A squirrel asks him why he did not save his money, to which he replies, "I did."

In addition to books of his cartoons, McCutcheon wrote the 1950 memoir *Drawn from Memory*.

"He was first of all an artist," author Finis Farr commented, "and one of the most gifted who ever worked as a cartoonist and illustrator; his drawing retains its strength and charm, because of what seems to be an absolutely spontaneous line, unforced but satisfying composition, and delightful humor."

Mary Dickerson Donahey (1876-1962) wrote many children's books, including *The Castle of Grumpy Grouch*. She'd met her husband, cartoonist William Donahey (1883-1970), when they worked together at the Cleveland Plain Dealer. He created The Teenie Weenies, a comic strip about two-inch-tall people living under a rose bush, which appeared in the Chicago Tribune for more than 50 years, and in books such as *Teenie Weenies Under the Rose Bush*. The Donaheys both joined the

““ *John M. Stahl wrote: 'The S.M.A. is indeed fortunate that it can attract to its membership such interesting persons as Miss Parsons.' ”*”

SMA in its earliest years and stayed members into the 1960s. Their summer home, the Pickle Barrel House in Grand Marais, Mich., became a tourist attraction.

Paul Carus (1852-1919), a German immigrant who lived in Chicago and La

Salle, wrote 75 books on history, politics, philosophy, religion, logic, mathematics, anthropology, science, and social issues, while corresponding with many of the era's greatest minds. Carus spoke at the World's

Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. His classic 1894 book *The Gospel of Buddha* introduced many Westerners to Buddhism. He joined the SMA shortly after it was founded.

Louella O. Parsons (1881-1972), whose syndicated column made her famous as one of the first journalists covering the movies as a regular beat, joined the Society of Midland Authors in 1918. "I ... shall hope to profit greatly from the meetings of the Society," she wrote.

In reply, John M. Stahl, wrote: "The S.M.A. is indeed fortunate that it can attract to its membership such interesting persons as Miss Parsons. ... The Movie has become such a truly wonderful thing that I regard the Editor of the Movie Department of a daily paper with more than 200,000 circulation with real awe, but then I once thought that all literary people were very different from other mortals – and learned better."

C'est La Guerre

In January 1917, Harriet Monroe wrote an editorial in Poetry, expressing her suspicion of the propaganda that seemed to

be pulling the United States into the war. "The air is full of prophecies these days," she wrote. "Through the war the spirit of man is to be reborn, we are told; the costly red fertilizer, so lavishly poured out, is to enrich the soil of the new era, so that souls will grow to nobler stature than is possible from the dry and weedy sod of peace."

In April, the United States entered the war, and some of the SMA's members were called away to serve in it. Monroe's assistant editor, Eunice Tietjens, went to France as a war correspondent for the Chicago Daily News.

"We could none of us much care for our writing or our reading, except as that had to do with the winning of the war," **Emerson Hough** recalled. "We had members across seas, others were in war work at home, all of us were in war work of one or other sort. We held our meetings and good ones, live ones; but all the time our gaiety was forced..."

When the SMA invited its members to another outing to Hobart Chatfield-Taylor's estate that summer, it noted the wartime situation. "Because of the war and Lake Forest's proximity to Fort Sheridan and the Naval Station, we are urged to expect simple nourishment," Alice Gerstenberg wrote in the invitation. "I have assured

our kind hosts that our patriotism is in accord with theirs and they will find us none the less very appreciative guests." Vachel Lindsay, who lived in Springfield, Illinois, sent Gerstenberg a note, expressing his regret that he wouldn't be able to join the authors on this outing.

"I do not come to Chicago so very often and those delerious [sic] occasions are well pictured on my memory's canvas, so to speak," he wrote. Fifteen authors and three guests did make the trip, taking a stroll across Fairlawn's "lawn that is indeed, so fair," and enjoying a supper that was delicious – in spite of the advance warning about wartime austerity.

"In fact, Mr. and Mrs. Chatfield-Taylor had guests at supper who forgot they were authors and settled down for a 'chummy' time; and they went away to remember the charm of that evening," Gerstenberg wrote.

Literary

Lore

Robert

Loerzel



Louella O. Parsons

Final chapters

Ellen Kort, 1936-2015

Ellen Kort, a former member of the Society of Midland Authors and Wisconsin's first poet laureate, died last April at age 79.

Ms. Kort published eight collections of poetry, in which she wrote about the Midwestern landscape, grief, loss, birth, death, and even laundry and spring planting. She also wrote nonfiction books, including *The Fox Heritage: A History of Wisconsin Fox Cities*. Her book *Wisconsin Quilts: Stories in the Stitches*, was named an Outstanding Book of Wisconsin by the Wisconsin Library Association.

As the September 2004 Literary License reported, she was known for stocking glow-in-the-dark chalk in her car so she could write poems on sidewalks.

Ms. Kort helped start the Fox Cities Book Festival, which she envisioned as an event that would "celebrate the power of books and the value and richness of

reading ... in a joyous community book festival."

Ms. Kort taught workshops in schools, community centers, grief groups, hospitals and prisons, and her writing won numerous awards, including the Pablo Neruda Literary Prize for Poetry, the Mel Ellis/Dion Henderson Outdoor Writing Award, the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Poetry Award, the Thomas G. Scullen Leadership Award, and the 2001 Dr. Hanns Kretschmar "Excellence In The Arts" Award.

C. Ramon Greenwood, 1927-2015

C. Ramon Greenwood, a former member of the Society of Midland Authors and author of several books, including *Another Time, Another Place*, his memoir of growing up in a small town in Arkansas during the Great Depression and World War II, died at his home July 7.

Mr. Greenwood served in the U.S. Army and graduated from the University of Arkansas. He began a public relations career at the Crossett Lumber Co. In 1964, he went to work at Morton Salt, and then became vice president of public affairs at Consolidated Foods (now Sara Lee).

He was appointed senior public affairs officer for the U.S. Department of Transportation under President Gerald Ford, before being named senior vice president for worldwide communications at American Express in New York. He also was co-founder of two consumer goods companies and founder and president of Wave 9 Enterprises and Career Counselors, firms engaged in consulting on personal and business strategies.

As a career coach, Mr. Greenwood wrote a syndicated newspaper column and blog. Among his career coach books were *How To Get the Pay Raise You've Earned* (2011) and *How to Make the World of Work Work for You: A Common Sense Operating Manual for a Successful Career* (2000).

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