

Drop by Writers Night Out on October 17.



## eNews October, 2016

Autumn Issue

**From the Editor, a giggle for you...**



Thanks to everyone who sent Kudos and member announcements. Please feel free to send them any time of the month. We all love hearing about the work we are all doing, especially in these troubled times.

Below, check out upcoming events, news about our Chapter website, the semiannual Grievance and Contract Division report, a writer's dilemma, and so much more.

Until next time....

**Stay in touch,**  
**Sue Katz, editor eNews**  
**sue.katz @ hotmail.com**

### **SAVE THE DATE: READING ON NOVEMBER 4**

**WHAT:** Readings from [What Does It Mean to Be White In America?](#)

**WHEN:** Friday, November 4, 2016

**WHERE:** Porter Square Books, Cambridge

**SPONSORED BY:** NWU Boston and Porter Square Books

**WHO:** An editor and a number of contributors will be reading from this new, important anthology. Three NWU members are among the contributors: Martha Collins, Jim Kates, and Barbara Beckwith. The book's subtitle highlights the type of intimate writing that they will share: "Breaking the White Code of Silence, A Collection of Personal Narratives."

## WRITERS NIGHT OUT: Monday, October 17

**WHAT:** Come hang out with other writers. Exchange news. Pick each other's brains. Test-run new ideas on colleagues. We'd love to have you join us this October.

**WHEN:** Monday, October 17 (drop in any time between 6:00 - 8:00 pm)

**WHERE:** Christopher's Restaurant & Bar, 1920 Mass Ave., Porter Square (Red Line), Cambridge



Oscar Wilde: born October 16, 1854  
(in Dublin, Ireland)

*Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes.*

## OUR WEBSITE IS MOVING! by Barbara Mende, Webmaster



Beginning November 1, our Web pages will join the national NWU site at <https://nwu.org/chapters/boston/>. In fact, you can find dates of coming events and other current information there now, and we'll continue to keep it up to date.

The national site uses the latest WordPress technology, and you'll be able to find everything you need to know in one place. Over the next month we'll be transferring features such as feedback from recent events and our popular "Writers at Work" series. Please let me know at [webmaster@nwuboston.org](mailto:webmaster@nwuboston.org) what items you'd specifically like to see retained on the new site, and what additional features you'd like us to add.

We'll be getting new "contact-us" email addresses before the changeover. Those will be posted on the new site. [info@nwuboston.org](mailto:info@nwuboston.org) and [webmaster@nwuboston.org](mailto:webmaster@nwuboston.org) will continue to work through October 31.

We won't be transferring the member links that you've posted with us, because the national site has something better: Find a Union Writer. If you haven't signed on to that resource yet, you can do so by logging in as a member and going to <https://nwu.org/edit-member-profile/>. You can list your website as well as practically everything you might want people to know about your professional life. You have to opt in by checking the "yes" box under "Add Me to Find a Union Writer Directory." The more people use the directory, the more useful it will be.

In case you haven't used the national site, you have to use the username and password you were given when you joined. If you don't remember them, contact [nwu@nwu.org](mailto:nwu@nwu.org). The Boston part of the site will also have a members-only section, where you can use the same password you use now. Contact [webmaster@nwu.org](mailto:webmaster@nwu.org) if you don't know it.

Stay tuned for updates. We believe that when we switch over, you'll be able to type in [www.nwuboston.org](http://www.nwuboston.org) and be redirected to <https://nwu.org/chapters/boston/> but we can't arrange that until the change happens, so bookmark the national address now and keep checking it. And let us hear what we can do to make the new site more useful and fun for you!

## **YOUR CHANCE TO JOIN THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

Our nine-member Boston Chapter Steering Committee has an opening for our ninth seat, at least until Spring 2017 SC elections, that we can fill by appointment. Do you have ideas for what our chapter can do for writers like yourself? Are you willing to help realize those ideas?

We meet once a month for 2 hours flat (5:30-7:30) at Emerson College in Boston. We often follow the meeting by going for a bite to eat/drink at a nearby affordable spot. If you're interested in being considered, please email one of our co-chairs: Barbara Beckwith ([BeckwithB@aol.com](mailto:BeckwithB@aol.com)) or Charles Coe ([charles52@comcast.net](mailto:charles52@comcast.net)).

Sylvia Plath: born October 27, 1932  
(in Jamaica Plain, no less)

*Poetry, I feel, is a tyrannical discipline. You've got to go so far*

*so fast in such a small space; you've got to burn away all the peripherals.*



## **NEW GRIEVANCE AND CONTRACT DIVISION REPORT by Barbara Mende, GCD Coordinator**

The semiannual report of the NWU's Grievance and Contract Division is available at <https://nwu.org/grievance-and-contract-division/grievance-and-contract-division-reports/>. It covers our activities between January and June of 2016.



We hope you'll take some time to read about what we do. Our chief activity is reviewing members' contracts with publishers - both traditional publishers and firms that assist you in self-publishing - as well as agents, websites, collaborators in both ghostwriting and joint authorship projects, and work-for-hire clients.

We're not lawyers, but we know a lot about literary contracts and keep educating ourselves and each other. Read about contract advice at <https://nwu.org/grievance-and-contract-division/contract-advice/>.

We also help members with grievances. If you haven't gotten paid for your work, contact us. We can't represent you in court, but sometimes it's easier for a third party to demand money from the bad guys than it is for you. Read about grievance assistance at <https://nwu.org/grievance-and-contract-division/grievance-assistance/>. In addition, we field questions on business practices, rights, permissions, online piracy and anything else from both members and non-members. The report discusses our latest transactions.

We discuss issues that have surfaced through the inquiries we receive. This report looks at e-book contracts, royalty statements, subsidy presses, control freaks, and scam artists. Our webinar on e-books and e-rights (watch for the next showing if you haven't caught it already) came out of members' reports of abusive terms.

The GCD is there for you. Contact us any time about anything at [advice@nwu.org](mailto:advice@nwu.org). We'll answer within two days. If you don't hear from us, we didn't get your email, so write again. Looking forward to hearing from you!



Dylan Thomas: born October 27, 1914  
(Uplands, Swansea)

*Don't be too harsh to these poems until they're typed. I always think typescript lends some sort of certainty: at least, if the things are bad then, they appear to be bad with conviction.*

## AN ESSAYIST'S ETHICAL DILEMMA by Barbara Beckwith



Personal essayists preach "writing what you know." But that's tough when you write about close family, friends, or neighbors, as I just did. My "[Toys Will Be Toys? The Trouble With Toy Guns](#)" appeared on WBUR's Cognoscenti opinion page, September 20. By writing about the fun-loving boys who live on either side and across from my house, I risked upsetting the "live and let live" geniality on our dead-end street.

I've done so before. In a previous essay, I shared not only my own racial missteps, but my sister's without telling her in advance. She was so hurt that I changed her quote to something said by "my cousin" (of which I have 17). I've quoted my husband so much that he no longer cringes. But neighbors?

My solution: I wrote just what I felt compelled to write. But I also let the neighborhood kids speak for themselves, quoting them, not by name and without an identifying description. I cut a line that my editor found too disturbing, even though it was the impetus for my starting the piece. "I'd overheard one kid yell with glee: 'We're not going to assassinate the president - we're going to kidnap him!'"

That cut meant I had to cut my original ending ("The white boy who once yelled that he wanted to kidnap - but not assassinate - our President has now written in indelible magic marker on his scooter: Black Lives Matter. It's a start."), which made it easier to do what I did next. I showed my commentary to the kids' parents before it was posted, and heard them out when they shared their perspectives. And I told them that it's fine with me for each of them to post their view on Cognoscenti's comment section. The best thing about my ethical

dilemma is that I now have an excuse to invite them over for drinks and a lively conversation about boys and toys.



*Welcome!*

## WELCOME NEW and RETURNING MEMBERS

Amy Stevens, Northampton, MA  
Kimberly Jackson, Cranston, RI  
Michael Clarke, Plymouth, MA  
Roger Leisner, Augusta, ME  
Allan Dennen, Taunton, MA  
Casey Gilman, Greenfield, MA  
Lydia Edwards, Boston, MA

## MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT

**A Feedback/Support Group** for fiction and memoir writers is looking for new members. Get and give feedback; discuss plot or character development; explore publishing issues. We meet once a month.

If you're interested, write to Susan at [grain26@gmail.com](mailto:grain26@gmail.com) saying what you write and how you think such a group would be of help to you.



**Susan Pollack's** essay, "[Fishing for Progress: Saying No to 'No Women on Board,'](#)" about her struggle as a woman reporter to secure passage aboard a

Japanese factory trawler was posted on WBUR's *Cognoscenti* on June 9.

The same day *Cognoscenti* ran her essay, "[Looking for Poetry in Everyday Life](http://cognoscenti.wbur.org/2016/06/09/looking-for-poetry-in-everyday-life-susan-pollack)" (<http://cognoscenti.wbur.org/2016/06/09/looking-for-poetry-in-everyday-life-susan-pollack>)

**Miriam Stein's** article, "[Thoughts about addressing our unconscious biases](#)" appeared online in the Arlington Advocate and on [yourarlington.com](http://yourarlington.com). "Your article is a wonderful tutorial on the subject of unconscious bias," one person replied, noting readers will be enlightened on how their biased thoughts and behaviors can have unintended negative impacts.

Two of **Barbara Mende's** political views were published - one ([Memo To Hillary Clinton](#)) on the presidential campaign on WBUR's *Cognoscenti* on August 5 and one ([What has Cambridge achieved by banning plastic bags?](#)) about an issue closer to home in the Cambridge Chronicle and Tab on August 4

**Sheila Parks's** [letter to the editor](#) of the Boston Globe was published, August 9, 2016, as the lead letter on the page. She discussed a solution to the hacking of elections by all electronic voting machines. "The gold standard for counting votes is to hand-count paper ballots and to do so twice."

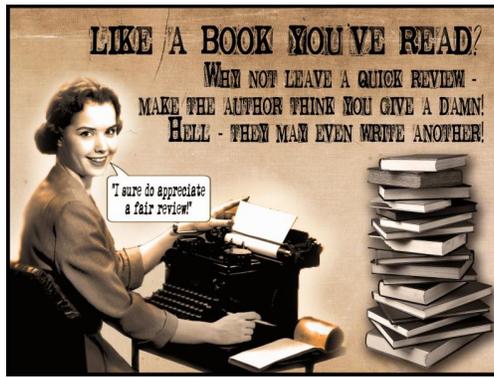
**Ned Daly's** short film "Why We Went to the Moon" (2015) won Third Prize at the BedStuy Pop-Up Cinema Festival in New York in August. In addition to writing the screenplay, Ned directed and provided voiceover narration.

**Jim Kaplan** wrote a much-praised Op-Ed piece in the Vineyard Gazette called "Trump Will Not Work for the Workers." Kaplan's 20th book, "Clearing The Bases: A Veteran Sportswriter on the National Pastime," has just been published by Levellers Press.

**Ken Lizotte** is on a speaking and radio tour promoting his new book, "The Speaker's Edge: the Ultimate Go-To Guide for Locating and Landing Lots of Speaking Gigs," published by Maven House Press. Recent appearances include the National Speakers Association, the CEO Club of Boston, The Small Business Advocate syndicated radio program and Growth Igniters' Radio.

**Barbara Beckwith's** essay, "[Overheard In A Cafe: 'Now That She's 70, She'll Have To Be Nice'](#)" rebuts age stereotypes.

**Sue Katz's** travel piece from London, "[The British Library and the Tate Modern: Shakespeare, Vagina Flowers, and a Gay Man](#)," appeared in the online publication [lgbtsr.org](http://lgbtsr.org).



## Discounts for NWU members

NWU has an agreement with Grub Street & Women's National Book Association that allows members of each organization to attend each other's programs at the member rate

### Stay in Touch with NWU-Boston

P.O. Box 380687

Cambridge, MA 02238

Phone: 617-301-8357

[info@nwuboston.org](mailto:info@nwuboston.org)

[www.nwuboston.org](http://www.nwuboston.org)

Co-chairs: Barbara Beckwith and Charles Coe

eNews editor: Sue Katz

Webmaster and eNews Copyeditor/Fact Checker: Barbara Mende

National Writers Union, Boston Chapter, PO Box 380687, Cambridge, MA 02238

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