

2022



INDIANA AUTHORS AWARDS

WRITER BIOS

WRITING WORKSHOP PROGRAM





WORKSHOP LEADER: John F. Allen
EMAIL: johnfallenwriter@gmail.com
PHONE: 317-698-8687

GENRE: Speculative Fiction
LENGTH: 1 ½ hours
FORMAT: In-person or virtual

THE BASICS OF WRITING SPECULATIVE FICTION

The Basics of Writing Speculative Fiction is a basic guide on what speculative fiction consists of and how to create a Speculative Fiction Short Story from beginning to end. In this 1.5 hour course, you will learn the basic mechanics of writing a Speculative Fiction Short Story including: plot, setting, characters and world building.

The workshop will explore what is speculative fiction. You may get a different answer depending on who you ask. In this workshop, we are going to explore the basics of what is needed to compose a speculative fiction piece.

Like any story, you will need to create the basic elements:

- **Theme** – Central story idea.
- **Plot** – What happens within the story?
- **Setting** – Where and when the story takes place?
- **Character** – Who is in the story/who the story is about?
- **Conflict** – Why is there a story to tell? What stands between the characters and their desires/needs/goals?
- **World building** – This is a culmination of the above elements, woven together to create a relatable environment for the reader.

JOHN F. ALLEN is an American author/writer and visual artist born in Indianapolis, IN. He is a founding and active member of the [Speculative Fiction Guild](#). He is also an active member of the [Indiana Writers Center](#), where he serves as a [faculty member](#), and teaches classes on various writing subjects. John studied Liberal Arts at IUPUI with a focus in Creative Writing and Art, received an honorable discharge from the United States Air Force and is a current member of the American Legion. John's debut novel, [The God Killers](#) was published in 2013, followed by a spin-off novella series titled, [Codename: Knight Ranger](#). Many of his short stories have been featured in his collection, [The Best is Yet to Come](#) which is currently published by [Hydra Publications](#), along with [The God Killers](#), [Codename: Knight Ranger](#) and [Codename: Knight Ranger – The God Particle Conspiracy](#). He also penned the novelization of respected screenwriter, Demetrius Witherspoon's short film, [Submerge: Echo 51](#). John currently resides in Indianapolis, Indiana and is married to an amazing woman named Mia. He has one adult child and a teenager from a previous marriage.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Jennifer Ann Coffeen

EMAIL: jencoffeen@gmail.com

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GENRE: Romance

LENGTH: 2 hours

FORMAT: Virtual events only

HOW TO WRITE ROMANCE: CREATING A PAGE TURNER

Romance is one of the hottest-selling genres on the fiction market. But how do you turn your story into page turner? This two-hour class will focus on the fine details of writing a romance novel or short story. We'll focus on setting, plot, character, and dialogue to make your romance into a book readers can't put down. This class is appropriate for writers of all levels - beginners who want to learn more about the romance genre, to writers looking to put the final touches on their stories. Come prepared to write! We'll use class discussion and fun writing exercises to help take your story to the next level. We'll end the class with a guide on the publishing world to help you take your first steps into the romance market.

JENNIFER ANN COFFEEN is the author of several historical romance novels (*Priceless Deception*, *Lover's Gamble*, *A Deal with Lord Devlin*) as well as short stories. Her short story "Tooth" (Streetlight Magazine) was nominated for a 2017 Pushcart Prize. She is a founding member of the kates and performed with Live Lit shows including Write Club, Story Club, Serving the Sentence, and Guts & Glory. Jennifer is a writing instructor and the Festival Director for StoryStudio Chicago.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Bryan Furuness

EMAIL: furuness@gmail.com

PHONE: 317-850-2799

GENRE: Fiction

LENGTH: 75 minutes – 2 ½ hours

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

REMIX: WRITING EDITION

Writers and other artists often feel pressure to be "original." However, most of our favorite stories and other works of art aren't actually all that original. They tend to have a "core of familiarity and a fringe of novelty." One way to achieve that balance is to take something old and make it new in some way. To remix it, in other words. During this workshop, participants will cycle through several stations to try different ways of remixing the "source material." Participants will cut and paste, add and erase to make new stories from old material.

BRYAN FURUNESS is the author of a couple of novels, *The Lost Episodes of Revie Bryson* and *Do Not Go On*. He is the editor of the anthology *My Name was Never Frankenstein: And Other Classic Adventure Tales Remixed*, and the co-editor (with Michael Martone) of *Winesburg, Indiana*. His stories have appeared in *New Stories from the Midwest* and *Best American Nonrequired Reading*, and elsewhere. He lives in Indianapolis, where he teaches at Butler University.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Dave Griffith

EMAIL: dgriff8@gmail.com

PHONE: (434) 316-3683

GENRE: Nonfiction; all

LENGTH: Adaptable

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

BEARING WITNESS: RAISING AWARENESS AND PROMOTING JUSTICE THROUGH NONFICTION

Join essayist Dave Griffith, author of *A Good War is Hard to Find: The Art of Violence in America*, for a two-hour masterclass on how writing about the issues and injustices right outside our front door can promote justice and disrupt cycles of violence and neglect. Participants will reflect on how writers can transform anger, fear, and grief into work that raises awareness and promotes change.

WRITE DIFFERENTLY: A WORKSHOP FOR YOUNG WRITERS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

“Write Differently” is a workshop for writers on the autism spectrum aimed at celebrating the unique abilities and passions of those who are neurologically diverse. This two-hour workshop will focus on helping each writer to embrace their neurological differences and use them to their advantage in the creation of works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

DAVE GRIFFITH is the author of *A Good War is Hard to Find: The Art of Violence in America*, a collection of essays reflecting on how images of violence in film, literature, and news media shape our collective understanding of violence as a means of solving problems. For the past two decades, Dave has been leading creative writing workshops for writers of all ages and levels of experience. Formerly director of creative writing at Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, he now serves as a professor in the Center for University Advising at the University of Notre Dame. He lives in South Bend, where he directs Write Differently, a program offering workshops for young writers on the autism spectrum.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Lydia Johnson

EMAIL: lmjohnso89@gmail.com

PHONE: 219.614.9724

GENRE: Poetry

LENGTH: 1 hour

FORMAT: Virtual events only

YOUR LIFE AS A POEM

In this online workshop, I will teach participants how to mine their life experiences for poetic expression. Poets will read relevant contemporary poetry that will help them to imagine new ways to express, commemorate, and process significant events in their lives. A guided writing exercise will help new and experienced poets gain inspiration and create new work.

ORDERING A CHAPBOOK

In this online class, poets who have written a variety of individual poems will learn actionable steps to build a small collection, or chapbook. This short demonstrative class will give poets a framework for building from themes in individual poems to a larger theme across the chapbook, creating interest, as well as an emotional and stylistic journey to engage readers.

LYDIA JOHNSON is a poet and writer from Gary, Indiana. Her writing has been published in *BLACKBERRY: a magazine*, *Glamour Magazine*, *Kiwanis Magazine* and the books *Women in Clothes*, *Writers Resist: Hoosier Writers Unite*, and *Belt Magazine's The Gary Anthology*. She received her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Butler University and lives in Indianapolis, Indiana. She is an Editorial Assistant for *The Indianapolis Review* and a poetry instructor and book discussion leader for the Indiana Writers Center.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Samuel Love

EMAIL: samuelalove219@gmail.com

GENRE: Creative Nonfiction

LENGTH: Adaptable

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

ORAL HISTORY FOR BEGINNERS

In this workshop, Sam will share best practices (and occasional failed approaches) from more than three decades of experience as an oral historian. Producing a good oral history involves more than just pressing record and asking a few questions. Sam will cover the entire process of conducting an oral history project, from selecting the right topic to preserving your work for posterity. At the end of the workshop participants will learn how to build enthusiasm for the project, how to make their potential respondents comfortable, how to develop open-ended questions that yield detailed, thoughtful answers, and tips for preserving and promoting the finished project. Far more than just an academic practice, oral histories are useful in producing family histories, community history projects, and for preserving institutional memory and wisdom of community organizations and businesses.

SAMUEL LOVE is a social practice artist from Gary, Indiana who organizes public projects that connect communities to their cultural histories through publishing, multi-media installations, and performance. He is a 2019-2020 fellow with the Center for Community Progress Community Revitalization Fellowship and the Indiana Arts Commission On Ramp Fellowship and is the editor of the forthcoming Gary Anthology for Belt Publishing.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Ashley Mack-Jackson

EMAIL: amack14@ivytech.edu

PHONE: 317.921.4342

GENRE: Creative Nonfiction; Memoir

LENGTH: 1-2 hours

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL: THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL

Identity, inclusion, disenfranchisement, and marginalization are words we often hear in today's public discourse. But, the conversation around how we fit into or are excluded from certain spaces is often so politicized that it loses personal relevance.

In this workshop, which is adaptable for writers ages 12 and up, we will explore our own identities, experiences, and unique perspectives while interrogating various forms of exclusion or injustice in our lives and communities.

ASHLEY MACK-JACKSON is the co-founder of Word As Bond, Inc., an organization that provides free creative writing education to young writers. She is an assistant professor and assistant department chair of English for the Central Indiana region of Ivy Tech Community College and editorial assistant for *The Indianapolis Review*. Her work has appeared in *The Indianapolis Anthology*, *Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora*, *Callaloo*, and elsewhere.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Sandra Mitchell

EMAIL: hi.saundra@gmail.com

PHONE: 317-883-7137

GENRE: Fiction

LENGTH: 1-2 hours

FORMAT: Virtual events only

LETTERS FROM IMAGINARY PLACES

In this workshop, we're going to create a world together! Using the Dewey Decimal system, I will teach writers how to create, investigate and populate a new world for original fiction and non-fiction. As we work step by step through the elements of world building (what's the weather like? The terrain? The language? The food?), participants will make notes for the final exercise: writing a letter home from their imaginary place! This program is a great foundational workshop for writers, popular during NaNoWriMo, and an excellent way to introduce library literacy.

This program can be as short as 1 hour and as long as 2 hours, depending on time constraints. It does require the use of a laptop or USB projector for the PowerPoint guide, and pen/pencil and paper for the workshop writers. Writers are also welcome to use laptops, Chromebooks or text programs on their phone. I can also provide a PDF of the presentation to use as handouts or for future reference. I am willing to teach this course to teachers, and provide the PDF and PowerPoint presentation so they can teach it to their own students.

SAUNDRA MITCHELL has been a phone psychic, a car salesperson, a denture-deliverer and a layout waxer. She's dodged trains, endured basic training, and hitchhiked from Montana to California. The author of nearly twenty books for tweens and teens, Mitchell's work includes *SHADOWED SUMMER*, *THE VESPERTINE* series, *ALL THE THINGS WE DO IN THE DARK*, a novel forthcoming from HarperTEEN and the forthcoming *CAMP MURDERFACE* series with Josh Berk. She is the editor of three anthologies for teens, *DEFY THE DARK*, *ALL OUT* and *OUT NOW*. She always picks truth; dares are too easy.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Alicia Rasley

EMAIL: rasley@gmail.com

PHONE: 317-694-6732

GENRE: Fiction

LENGTH: Adaptable; 2-4 hours

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

STORY-BUILDERS! LET'S GET STARTED PLOTTING!

Do you have a story in you? Is there an idea or character you want to explore? Here's your chance to get started with the guidance of a veteran writer and affirmative editor, Alicia Rasley. We'll start with your idea, and build out from there—explore the characters, organize the plot, outline dramatic events. Here's what we'll be doing in this fun and practical workshop:

1. Developing your story through the Three Plotlines (External, Internal, Interactional)
2. Channeling your characters and discovering their journey, goal, and strengths/weaknesses
3. Changing the characters through events of the plot
4. Intensifying the conflict and character change
5. Ending the story with drama and resolution

It sounds like a lot, but we can do it all in one workshop! By the time we're done, you'll have an outline of the three acts of the story plot, AND a summary of the character's internal journey. You'll be excited and ready to get started writing or revising your story! There's a bigger market for stories than ever before, so here's your chance to plunge right into that story you've wanted to write.

ALICIA RASLEY is an award-winning novelist whose mystery, science fiction, family saga, and romance novels have released by major publishers. She has edited dozens of stories, and teaches fiction writing in workshops and online. She also teaches college students how to write essays at a state university. An Indiana native, she currently lives on the White River, and is developing a podcast about the challenges that come up when you're plotting a story. She loves to help brainstorm other people's stories and research solutions to writing and grammar problems! Her writing articles can be found at www.aliciarasley.com.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Larry D. Sweazy

EMAIL: larrysweazy@prodigy.net

PHONE: 317-797-6369

GENRE: Fiction

LENGTH: 3 hours

FORMAT: In-person or virtual

THE BIG SECRET: STARTING AND FINISHING YOUR NOVEL

Here's the big secret about writing novels: The hardest part of writing a novel is finishing it. The day by day grind it takes to write a novel can be overwhelming. Great ideas tire out. Real life gets in the way. Doubt over takes the dream. In this interactive workshop, Larry D. Sweazy will share proven tips and help beginning and seasoned writers alike to build the skills that they need to finish that special novel. Topics discussed will be time management, building a toolbox, finding support, writing tips, and most importantly living life as writer—even if they're not published. Students should come prepared to write in class. Exercises include determining how many words can be written in a sitting, character creation, designing titles, writing query letters, and submission techniques. This workshop is designed to jump start a writers dream and turn it into a happy reality.

LARRY D. SWEAZY is a multiple-award winning author of 18 novels, 34 short stories, and over 80 non-fiction articles and book reviews. An early reader, he was raised in a home filled with paperback books brought home from the factory and watched a lot of 1960s westerns and 1970s detective shows on television. Stories have always been a safe place to turn to in difficult times, and early on Larry thought he might want to be a writer. A notebook, a journal, and something to read were always close by. After a stint in the United States Air Force, he worked a lot of jobs, including time spent as an insurance salesman, a restaurant manager, a janitor, and for the last 23 years, he has worked as a freelance back-of-the-book indexer as well as writing fiction. As an indexer, Larry has written indexes for over 1000 books on a wide variety of topics ranging from computer science, cookbooks, and anthropology books. His career as an indexer inspired the Marjorie Trumaine Mystery series, and Larry continues to work in the field today (indexing only books that interest him).

Larry was 49 when his first novel, *The Rattlesnake Season* (2009), was published. Since then, he has been awarded eight national writing awards, including the Western Writers of America Spur Award (2), Best Books of Indiana Award (1), the Will Rogers Medallion Award (2), the Elmer Kelton Book Award (1), the Willa Award (1), and most recently the Western Fictioneers Peacemaker Award for Best Novel (1). He has also been short-listed and been a finalist for four awards and has served as an award judge for several well-known genre writing organizations. His books have been translated in Italy and Turkey. He currently serves on the faculty and board of directors for the Midwest Writers Workshop, is a member the faculty for the Indiana Writers Center, teaches writing workshops, and speaks about creativity and writing as often as possible. Larry lives in Noblesville, Indiana with his wife, Rose, and is hard at work on his next novel. More information can be found at www.larrydsweazy.com.



WORKSHOP LEADER: Shari Wagner

EMAIL: sharimwagner@gmail.com

PHONE: 317-612-4368

GENRE: Poetry

LENGTH: 2 or 2 ½ hours; max. length 4 hours

FORMAT: Virtual events only

POETRY AS MEMOIR: EXPLORING THE TERRAIN

Members of this writing workshop will be surprised by the details and insights they discover as they explore memory's terrain with the tools of the poet. This workshop is adaptable to almost any age and experience level and includes an introduction to the memoir focus and writing prompt; discussion of accessible and engaging poetry models; creation of a collaborative list poem related to the prompt; tips on the writing process; writing exercises designed to draw forth memories, sensory details, and associative leaps; time to work on a rough draft; and the opportunity for volunteers to share what they've written. A few examples of Shari Wagner's previous Poetry as Memoir workshops include *Exploring an Inheritance*; *Return to a Childhood Place*; *A Coming of Age Experience*; *What I Learned from a Family Member*; *Looking at a Family Photograph*; *School Recollections*; *My First Job*; *Memories of a Library*; and *Memories Related to Music*. These are just examples. Shari looks forward to designing a poetry workshop with a memoir theme tailored to the background or interests of your specific group.

SHARI WAGNER, former Indiana Poet Laureate, is the author of three poetry books: *The Farm Wife's Almanac*, *The Harmonist at Nightfall*, and *Evening Chore*. She co-authored *A Hundred Camels: A Doctor's Sojourn and Murder Trial in Somalia* and *Making the Rounds: Memoirs of a Small Town Doctor* and edited the anthologies *Finding the Words: Stories and Poems of Women Veterans* and *Returning: Stories from the Indianapolis Senior Center*. Shari has taught in grade schools, high schools, universities, libraries, and senior centers. Currently she teaches for the Indiana Writers Center and IUPUI's Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative.