

GOTHAM



WRITERS

Go anywhere

Stories. Everywhere.

Summer Classes 2014



Photo: Derek Midgley

Everyone has a Story

OUR STORY HAS BEEN TWENTY YEARS IN THE MAKING.

Gotham Writers Workshop is a creative home in New York City and online where writers develop their craft and come together in the spirit of discovery and fellowship. We've been teaching creative writing to tens of thousands of students since 1993.

We believe that everyone has a story to tell. Whether you're a new writer looking for a safe space to spread your wings or an experienced one looking to deepen your skills and receive feedback on your work, our classes help you reach your goals in a structured and fun environment.

We strive to give each student the best possible learning experience. Class size is strictly limited so students never get lost in a crowd. And our instructors are consistently excellent—working writers who are as skilled at teaching as they are at writing.

We are also invested in helping students find the writing class that is most appropriate for their particular needs. Explore our website, and feel free to discuss options via email or phone.

Thousands of people have been enriched by the Gotham experience. It's why we've been around twenty years.

Courses



Fiction

With only words and the reader's imagination, a work of fiction can sail across the world in pursuit of a whale or zero in on a few minutes in line at the local bank, luring the reader into a story that feels real.

FICTION/NOVEL
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY
MYSTERY
ROMANCE
READING FICTION



Nonfiction

Whether it's an experience found in your kitchen or halfway around the world, whether it's an idea you can't forget or a conversation with a fascinating person, sometimes the most intriguing stories are true.

NONFICTION 101
MEMOIR
ESSAY & OPINION
PERSONAL ESSAY
ARTICLE
TRAVEL WRITING
FOOD WRITING



Scriptwriting

We all like to be entertained, whether it's watching a performance live on stage or flickering on a screen. Here's where you learn to write the material that holds those audiences in thrall.

SCREENWRITING
TV WRITING
PLAYWRITING
DOCUMENTARY FILMS
SCRIPT ANALYSIS



Comedy, Poetry & Song

Send words soaring in the lyricism of poetry or song. Or get people high on laughter through stand-up comedy or humorous prose.

POETRY
SONGWRITING
HUMOR WRITING
STAND-UP COMEDY



Essentials

Creative Writing 101 is an ideal starting point for writers, to test the waters or wash off the rust. The other courses here focus on crucial aspects of the writing craft, useful for all types of writing.

CREATIVE WRITING 101
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
DIALOGUE WRITING
WRITE IT RIGHT! (*Grammar*)
THE WRITER'S MIND
THE EDITOR'S EYE
IN (VERSE): POETIC TECHNIQUES FOR NON-POETS
PROMPT-A-THON



Professional Development

If you want to be taken seriously, these courses sharpen your skills in the workplace, or help you build a platform as a writer, or guide you through the tricky task of publishing your work.

BUSINESS WRITING
HOW TO BLOG
HOW TO GET PUBLISHED
NONFICTION BOOK PROPOSAL
HIT SEND: PUBLISHING SHORT NONFICTION



Classes for Teens

Pressure-free, creativity-stretching, not-like-school courses for writers ages 13-17. Useful for expanding your talent or gaining skills bound to help with essays and schoolwork.

UNBOUND: CREATIVE WRITING
TRUE STORY: CREATIVE NONFICTION



One-on-One

It's wonderful to learn in a group setting, but sometimes one-on-one is the right match. You may want a private class, or "doctoring" on a specific project, or a professional mentor to guide you, or one of our specialty arrangements.

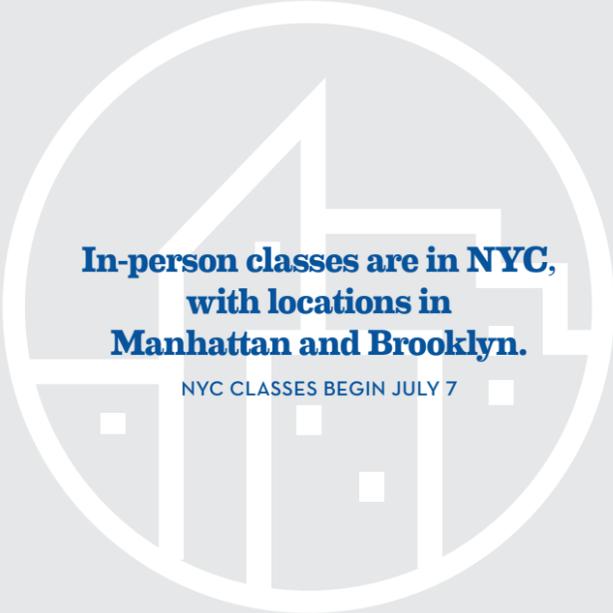
BOOK/STORY DOCTORING
SCRIPT DOCTORING
MENTORSHIPS
PRIVATE SESSIONS AND CLASSES
COLLEGE ESSAY COACHING
MFA APPLICATION ASSISTANCE
BLOG LAUNCH

Events and Free Classes

Gotham offers various events that bring writers together, such as our weekly Write-Ins. And we present free classes around Manhattan and Brooklyn to showcase our teaching.

Check our website for listings.

Ways to Learn



**In-person classes are in NYC,
with locations in
Manhattan and Brooklyn.**

NYC CLASSES BEGIN JULY 7



**Online classes draw together
writers from across the globe.**

ONLINE CLASSES BEGIN THROUGH JUN-SEPT

10-Week Workshops

These classes use a combination of lectures, exercises, and workshopping (critiquing of student projects). In New York City, they meet for three hours per week; online, each session begins at the same time each week, and unfolds gradually all week long. Available in Level I, Level II, and, periodically, Level III.

\$420 — NYC
\$399 — Online

6-Week Classes

These classes let students explore a variety of forms and concepts in a low-pressure manner, through a combination of lectures and exercises. In NYC they meet for three hours per week (two hours for Business Writing); online, each session begins at the same time each week, and unfolds gradually all week long. (Timing and price is different for Business Writing.)

\$299

Selling Seminars

These courses emphasize the business side of writing. The New York City versions take place over two three-hour sessions. The online versions take place over four weeks.

\$159

Intensives

In NYC, these are seven-hour crash courses, taking place all in one day. The online versions take place over three weeks.

\$125

**Registration fee for these classes:
\$25 paid once per term.**

we write ^{to} taste life twice,
in the moment, and in
retrospect

-Chais
Nin



st.



Gotham Faculty

NEVER TOO LATE

Faculty Insight

BY RICHARD GOODMAN

I didn't write my first book until I was forty-six years old. It wasn't that I didn't want to. It was just that, for whatever reasons, I didn't. This is how it happened.

For many years I worked in advertising. When people asked me what I did for a living, I'd say, "I'm in advertising—but I really want to write." I never could muster the moxie to say, "I'm a writer." How could I? I'd never published a book. I'd never published much of anything, actually. Even my unpublished output was relatively slight.

I may have walked around thinking and believing I was a writer, but where was the proof? I'm sure enough people already thought I was a fraud. If they didn't, I began to. I'd been talking about being a writer to a select circle of friends and relatives for years and years.

After a decade or two, I imagined them like in one of those scenes in a Grade B movie where people gather in a circle, eyes darting toward the person in question, whispering about him, their lips moving in barely-disguised disdain.

"Oh, is he still saying he's a writer?"

"After all these years. It's a shame."

"It's a disgrace!"

"He's really just an advertising copywriter. Why doesn't he admit it?"

"He's never written a book. He never will."

"He's never gotten married, either."

"I know. Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

"I have been for years."

As I say, I don't know why I didn't, or couldn't, write a book. I still don't. I took writing courses. I was in a writing group. I read inspirational books on how to unleash the inner scribe in you. I drank booze. I went to a shrink. Still, nothing came.

But for some reason I still harbored the idea, the belief, the faith, that I was a writer. I think it was because it was the only thing I could ever picture myself doing. It was the only thing that made sense to me. It was the only thing I could see devoting an entire life to. Books and art in general seemed to me something worth living for. Something to choose for the one chance you have at life. Inside me, I knew this, and I trusted that knowledge about myself, despite everything to the contrary on the outside.

Yet, on and on I went with my advertising career. Advertising! What an ideal profession for self-loathing, if you think you're an artist. The Hucksters! The Hidden Persuaders! (Well, that attitude may have changed a bit with the TV show *Mad Men*, which romanticizes the hell out of advertising.) It's really

a Darth Vader kind of thing—using the force for evil instead of for good.

"Luke, come to the Dark Side. Write for Jell-O."

"Never!"

"Yes, Luke, you will write an ad for Jell-O. Because you are like me, Luke. You want to sell!"

The years went on. Maybe I really wasn't a writer, I began to doubt. Something inside me just wouldn't accept that, though. I just couldn't capitulate. Which is, I suppose, the point of this little essay. Never capitulate. Only you know what is true about yourself. People can say whatever they want about you and your aspirations, but it is you who know your own heart. Listen to it.

Then I fell in love with a good, strong, caring, courageous woman. It was she who helped me to write. She didn't actually put my pen to paper, but she might as well have. We went, at her urging, to live in France for a year. There, I found inspiration, and the subject, for my book. It was in the unlikely form of a vegetable garden in Provence.

Then I came home, I sat down at my desk and began to write. At the start, though, I hesitated: will my first, and perhaps my only, book be about a garden? How could that be? Shouldn't I be writing about the equivalent of the hunt for a great white whale? Shouldn't my theme be mighty, as

Melville required? Here I am, about to write about a garden. But my heart told me this is what I wanted, needed, to write about. And my pen was dying to be let go. So, I let it go, wisely.

I wrote, without ceasing, for a year. All my love of language, of character, all those pent-up, aching rivers burst forth and flowed through my little, sturdy Bic pen onto my page, day after day. It all gushed forth, and I worked like a dog to tame the current and make it graceful and pretty. It's what I had been living for, and this was the daily proof. It was true. I hadn't been fooling myself all these years.

Something else rather remarkable happened. I found that I could call on all the passionate reading I had done through the years. Sentences, phrases, words, metaphors, what have you, I had stored, like literary nuts, somewhere for safekeeping in the cache of my heart, all were there for me to employ in my own book. Here came Hemingway when I needed him, perhaps in a turn of phrase but more likely in the effort to make the writing as clear and strong as a diamond. Here came Thomas Hardy, with his humanistic sensuality, when I was trying to convey the rapturous experience of watering my garden at night by the moonlight. And so on.

I was lucky after that year. I finished the book, and I found an agent, and the book was

published. I count my stubbornness, my blind faith, as part of the reason I was lucky.

But what is luck? Isn't it a certain persistent open-mindedness? It was pure hard-headedness, in the face of so many arid years, that kept me going. I highly recommend it.

Seventeen years later, the book is still in print, still selling. I thank the gods for that. The fact is, some people write their first book when they're twenty-three. Some people when they're thirty-five. Some, like me, when they're forty-six. And some, like Harriet Doerr (the remarkable *Stones for Ibarra*) when they're seventy-three.

I say, if you haven't written your book yet, there are no rules when it comes to this. Your inspiration may come in the form a lowly vegetable garden or a cookie dipped into a cup of your aunt's tea, or heaven knows what else. Just don't ever give up. I'm here as a witness to tell you that it's never, never too late.

This article first appeared in *The Writer* magazine. Richard Goodman is the author of *French Dirt*, *The Soul of Creative Writing*, *A New York Memoir*, and *The Bicycle Diaries*.



FRANK FLAHERTY

Faculty Profile

BY BRITT GAMBINO

Gotham teacher and journalist Frank Flaherty conducted his first interview with famed crossword puzzle editor Eugene Maleska. Frank was only in his early twenties then, yet to begin his career at the *New York Times*. "I didn't really know what I was doing, but it was a lot of fun," he says. "He looked just like you would imagine a crossword puzzle editor to look like: mismatched socks, tie thrown over one shoulder." While the finished piece was never

accepted for publication, Frank maintains it was a worthwhile experience: "I just had fun doing it."

When Frank first began working at the *Times*, he was assigned to write an investment column for the Business section. "It's quite difficult to write a compelling column about bond funds," he says. "You have to learn a way into it." But the good news? "If you can write compellingly about stuff like that, then it's all the easier to write well about something you do care about."

Eventually, he worked his way up to Deputy Editor of the Metropolitan section, which covers news around New York City. Frank saw a lot of stories cross his desk over the years, but one piece he's especially proud of is a feature about the psychiatric emergency room at Bellevue Hospital, written by Erik Kinetz. "An ER without blood," as Frank puts it. "All of the wounds are on the inside." It was difficult to get the story done, as there were lawyers involved due to patient confidentiality issues. But all the work paid off because, as Frank points out, "It was a good journalistic thing to do. It made people more sensitive to the pain of mental illness."

"Journalists don't make much money," Frank says, "but you have a lot of great stories for cocktail parties. You get to have all these different lives."

During his tenure at the *Times*, the novelist and memoirist Susan Shapiro invited Frank to her class to guest lecture on the process of editing. As he prepared for his presentation, Frank started thinking about all the editing issues he had encountered, but had never written down. It was out of this material

(and his subsequent teaching at NYU) that Frank's book *The Elements of Story: Field Notes on Nonfiction Writing* was born. "It's sort of a diary of how I edited," Frank says. "It's a 'field guide,' really, into the newsroom."

Of the more common problems that writers face, Frank includes: 1) "The Conscientious Writer"—the writer who always wants to keep *everything* in the story. But, as he explains, "You have to choose something to focus on, otherwise you'll focus on nothing"; 2) "The Irresistible Anecdote"—the problem with the anecdote is when it doesn't have a place in the story; 3) "The Fruit Salad Lede,"—when a writer tries to jam all the important information in the first graph of an article; and 4) "Show versus tell"—too many writers want to be direct and tell flat out what is and what isn't. "Showing gives the reader something to do," he says.

These are just a few pearls of wisdom you can learn from Frank in Gotham's new course *The Editor's Eye*, which covers self-editing for both nonfiction and fiction students.

Frank has since left the *Times* to concentrate more fully on writing. He's in the midst of his second book, tentatively titled *English: A Fan's Notes*. (It's inspired by a chapter in *Elements of Story* on the beauty of language.) "Words," Frank says, "are like my music. Some people look at paintings, I look at words. They're my art."

Student Voices



“The most fun three hours of my week, every week. In just a couple of months, I learned an incredible amount about the craft of writing, and laughed heartily while doing it.”

—Dodd Ellsworth, Software developer

“Probably the smartest thing I have done with my spare time in many years.”

—Phil Fryberger, Financial consultant

“A community of intelligent, supportive writers with the best interest of the story at heart.”

—Erin Kidd, Indie publisher

“It’s no exaggeration to say that I owe my career in writing to Gotham.”

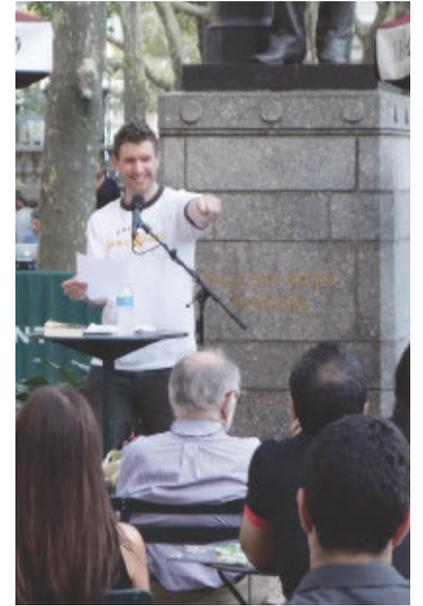
—Josh Farrar, Writer

“This is the best course I have ever taken, and since I have a master’s degree, I have taken hundreds of courses.”

—Heather Stone, VP of marketing and sales

“Try to imagine the Lord of the Rings trilogy without Gandalf. That’s what my life was like before I met my instructor. I would say three words to anyone considering a Gotham course: Do it now!”

—Rois Beal, Housewife



WRITE-INS

Do you wish there was a place you could go for writing inspiration and practice? Where you could hang out with other writers? Without needing to make a long-term commitment or spend a lot of money?

Gotham Write-Ins are that place.

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS: The teacher gives an interesting writing prompt. Everyone writes for a while. Then, those who want to read aloud their work. You take a break and socialize. Then you go through the process one more time. Then you partake of free drinks and snacks and socialize a little more. It's 90 minutes plus social time afterwards.

There is no pressure, no critiquing, no angst. Just freewheeling creativity. It will get your juices flowing no matter what type of writing you favor.

You can sign up in advance or you can just drop in. It's like an exercise class for writers. **And it's really fun!**

Registration

NYC ONLY

\$20 /per session
\$45 /3-session pass

IN MANHATTAN

Fridays 6:30-8:30pm

IN BROOKLYN

Saturdays 12-2pm

Further details on our website.



Contests

CONTESTS: INVENT A WORD

We invite you to invent a word. Not just any word. A word you think will greatly enhance the English language.

Interestingly, there are words that mean “invented words”; the fancy word is *neologism* (invented by Thomas Jefferson) and the informal word is *sniglet* (invented by Rich Hall).

THE WORD YOU INVENT MIGHT BE...

Adopted for the times. Such as *selfie* or *emoticon*.

Sprung from politics. Such as *muckraker* or *Obamacare*.

Formed by merging two previously existing words. Such as *bootylicious* or *blog*.

Related to the worlds of science fiction or fantasy. *Cyberspace* was invented by William Gibson for the novel *Neuromancer*. *Muggle* was invented by J.K. Rowling for the *Harry Potter* books.

Just a good sound. Such as *chortle* or *persnickety*.

Or just a word that we need. Such as *zonked* or *neologism*.

NOBODY INVENTED MORE WORDS THAN SHAKESPEARE. TO NAME A FEW:

articulate, bandit, bedazzled, besmirch, bump, clangor, corroborate, domineering, ensnare, eyeball, frugal, hobnob, incarnadine, intrenchant, lackluster, majestic, mimic, moonbeam, obscene, rant, suspicious, swagger, uncomfortable, vulnerable, zany

Though it's an honorable practice, we discourage simple morphing (itself a fairly new word). For example, turning a noun into a verb, as in *googling*, or a noun into an adjective, as in *flowery*. Those probably won't wow us enough to win.

SO, HERE'S THE DEAL: Give us the word, a one-sentence definition, and use the word in a sentence. For example...

Cyberspace – an alternate reality that exists solely inside the digital world of computers.

Maurice cruised through cyberspace in search of the perfect answer.

The inventor of the best word gets a free Gotham class of his or her choosing.



**For competition rules and online entry form,
— visit —
GOTHAMWRITERS.COM/INVENTWORD**



REVISING OUR STORY

Gotham Writers Workshop is celebrating 20 years of helping writers discover their stories. Now we're revising ours, with a new logo, a new look, and all kinds of new courses and initiatives. Stay tuned by visiting our website, getting on our mailing list, or following us on social media.

GOTHAMWRITERS.COM

212-974-8377