



## **Presenting the Third Annual Atlanta Writers Conference – Where AWC Brings Top Literary Agents to You**

**Do you want a literary agent to tell you what you're doing wrong and doing right in your manuscript? Would you like to discuss your writing project with an agent to see if there's any interest in the marketplace? Do you want the chance to earn a contract for representation leading to publication? If you answer, "Yes," to any or all of these questions, then the Atlanta Writers Club has a conference designed for you:**

On Saturday, May 15, 2010 the Atlanta Writers Club will present its third annual Atlanta Writers Conference. The goal of this conference is to give you access to top literary agents—from six renowned agencies—who will respond to your pitches, critique the work you submit in advance, and educate you about the current environment of the publishing industry and the likely trends for the near future. You could be offered a contract based on the materials you've submitted (several AWC members are still in the running after the 2009 conference). You might be asked to send additional pages or an entire manuscript for their review. You certainly will know more about how your work is perceived by industry professionals than you have ever known before.

You also will have fun, learn more about the publishing business, and get a chance to chat informally with these agents and your peers. In addition to the conference, we will host a social event on the evening of Friday, May 14. This is another chance for you to network with your peers and hear war stories and advice from the publishing trenches.

But wait--there's more! We've invited Shamus-award winning historical mystery author David Fulmer to provide four separate talks during the conference--from writing queries to his infamous sex and violence lecture--to enlighten you and keep you entertained as you await your turn with an agent.

### **THE CONFERENCE**

**The conference will consist of three parts and you may participate in one, two, or all three of these events:**

1. One-on-one critique sessions where the agents share their evaluations with those who have submitted 20 pages of work in advance
2. Pitch sessions so you can present your project to an agent
3. Mini-workshop on the publishing industry with Q&A

#### **1. THE CRITIQUE:**

If you want a critique of your project on May 15, you will submit the following at least one (1) month in advance: (a) the first 20 manuscript pages of either your novel or nonfiction work, (b) a 1-paragraph summary of your book, and (c) a 1-paragraph biography that focuses on your writing experience and marketability (i.e., your "platform").

On May 15, you will have about 15 minutes for a one-on-one exchange with the agent about your work. The agent also will give you a written critique, which could consist of an overall review of the project (what worked and what didn't), the quality of the writing, character and story development, and marketability. The agent will not copy-edit your work (they shouldn't

have to--always make sure your work is free of grammatical errors before you submit it!). During the critique session, the agent may choose to request more pages or the entire manuscript from you, perhaps leading to a contract for representation and then an eventual publishing deal.

## **2. THE PITCH:**

During the afternoon of May 15, you will have the opportunity to discuss one of your projects for about 10 minutes with an agent of your choosing: give a basic synopsis, talk about your writing and what you want for your future, and be prepared to ask the agent questions. This will be a strictly verbal exchange, but if the agent is interested, you will be asked to send a number of pages or even the whole manuscript for consideration.

If you also want a critique (see above), pitching will give you the chance to introduce a second agent to your work. We strongly recommend, based on the agents' advice from previous years, that you do not choose the same individual for critiquing and pitching. It's much smarter to double your chances.

## **3. THE WORKSHOP:**

A candid, freewheeling, hour-long discussion with all six agents about the state of the publishing industry, what's hot, what's not, what trends they foresee, and their predictions about the future of books. Also get your questions answered about everything from queries and contracts to publicity and marketing.

## **BONUS:**

David Fulmer will present four of his most popular hour-and-a-quarter lectures, complete with handouts, to educate and entertain you while you're waiting for your turn to receive a critique or make your pitch. These lectures are free for anyone participating in the critique, pitch or workshop. Here are the topics he's selected: perfecting queries and synopses; developing characters; creating setting; and writing scenes of sex and violence without sounding like a virgin pacifist.

## **THE LOCATION**

Westin Atlanta Airport  
4736 Best Road  
Atlanta, GA 30337  
404-762-7676  
[www.westin.com](http://www.westin.com)

A free shuttle runs between the airport and the hotel every 20 minutes, so you can take MARTA to the airport and hop the free shuttle to the hotel, which saves you money and the hassle of driving, and provides an environmentally friendly option. If you do choose to drive, plenty of parking exists in the hotel lot. Note: the hotel charges a \$9 parking fee.

On the evening of Friday, May 14, we invite you to gather at the Westin lounge area, for informal conversations with the agents and networking with your peers. If you choose to stay at the Westin on Friday night so you'll be fresh and well rested the next day, we've negotiated a writers conference discount (\$95/night) for a block of rooms.

## HOURLY-BY-HOURLY CONFERENCE DETAILS

Friday, May 14

8:00-11:00 p.m. Social event in the Westin lounge area, for club members and the agents. Even if you cannot participate in the Atlanta Writers Conference on May 15, we invite you to join us on the evening of the 14th for casual chats about books and the people who write them, sell them, publish them, and buy them.

Saturday, May 15

8:00-9:00 a.m. Check in at the Riverdale/Fayetteville Ballroom on the second floor of the Westin Atlanta Airport conference area.

9:00-10:00 a.m. Workshop and Q&A with all six agents

10:00-10:15 a.m. Set up for Critique Sessions

10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m. One-on-one meetings for about 15 minutes each between agents and those who submitted their work for critique. Meanwhile, David Fulmer presents two lectures in the Riverdale/Fayetteville Ballroom

1:00-2:00 p.m. Break (go to lunch at Palio's restaurant at the Westin, retreat to the lounge, practice your pitch with friends)

2:05-4:15 p.m. Participants pitch agents one-on-one for about ten minutes each, while David Fulmer presents two more lectures in the Riverdale/Fayetteville Ballroom

## THE AGENTS

For the agents below, they've defined in their own words what genres they are looking for—and in some cases, what they do not represent. Besides reading this information, also review their websites (where available), do an Internet search for interviews with them and/or what other authors have written about them, and make sure you're a good fit for their tastes and attitudes.



**Sheree Bykofsky - Sheree Bykofsky Associates, Inc.**

([www.shereebec.com](http://www.shereebec.com))

Sheree Bykofsky represents over 100 authors in all areas of adult non-fiction as well as literary and commercial fiction. She loves mysteries and all other genres **except** young adult, science fiction, Harlequin-style romances, horror, and westerns. Her non-fiction specialties include popular reference, business, health, psychology, poker, spirituality, self-help, humor, cookbooks, pop culture, biography, women's issues, decorating & crafts, music, and much more. Among Sheree's non-fiction clients are Taro Gold, Jane Eldershaw, Bill Walsh, Margo Perin, Albert Ellis, John Carpenter (first millionaire on "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?"), Bill Baker (President of Channel 13, PBS in NYC), Supermodel Roshumba, and Richard Roeper (of Ebert and Roeper). In the area of fiction, Sheree's clients include Donna Anders and Leslie Rule.

Sheree will be assisted by Marjorie Preston, a new agent who will be doing the critiques for Sheree Bykofsky Associates. With over 20-some years as a journalist/editor/writer, Marjorie has written for local and regional newspapers and magazines and national publications including

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*Ladies Home Journal, Fitness and New Woman.* Two of her *LHJ* articles were later featured on Oprah. In 2002, her first book was published by Simon & Schuster.

If Marjorie critiques an author at the conference who is someone the agency should represent, she will do the initial work with the author editorially, etc., but everyone at the agency will make efforts to place the works with publishers. Sheree will personally negotiate all of the contracts with the author as well as represent the author for all of the negotiations with publishers, studios, etc.

At the Atlanta Writers Conference, Sheree will discuss Marjorie's critiques with those participants, and Marjorie will be present to add clarification. During the pitch sessions, Sheree will listen and respond personally.

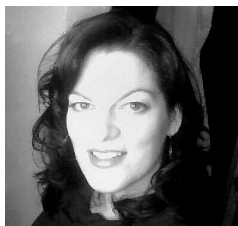


**Matthew Elblonk – The Creative Culture, Inc.**

([www.thecreativeculture.com](http://www.thecreativeculture.com))

Formerly an agent with Collins Literary, Matthew joined The Creative Culture in 2008. He currently represents writers in the world of pop culture, music, young adult, literary fiction and humor. Interests also include narrative non-fiction and science. He is always on the lookout for authors with great ideas and an equally strong platform. He does NOT handle commercial fiction, romance, self-help, or new age.

The Creative Culture, Inc. is a boutique literary agency founded in 1998. They are known for their emphasis on lifestyle books that enhance readers' overall wellbeing--be it through health, inspiration, entertainment, thought-provoking ideas, life management skills, beauty and fashion, or food. As agents, their approach is that of a partnership: they work closely with authors to help shape and polish ideas and marketing platforms to maximize their books' potential and grow their careers. They emphasize a collaborative effort; each agent brings to the table strong editorial vision and business development skills, and though each agent represents his or her individual clients, this strong pool of resources is tapped for every client.



**Sorche Fairbank – Fairbank Literary Representation**

([www.fairbankliterary.com](http://www.fairbankliterary.com))

Since establishing Fairbank Literary Representation in 2002, Sorche Elizabeth Fairbank has had the pleasure of working with a dynamic and varied list, representing best-selling authors, Edgar recipients, award-winning journalists, and one of her favorite kinds of client--the debut author. Her tastes in novels tend toward literary fiction, international voices and women's voices, distinct Southern voices, and the occasional work of mystery/suspense. On the nonfiction side, she is most likely to take on books that tackle current events and societal issues with a narrative treatment. She has a strong interest in women's voices and class and race issues, quality lifestyle books (food, wine, and home design), and humor and pop culture, which have been exceptionally strong sellers lately.

See her website for a complete list of genres her agency represents. Subjects and genres NOT of interest by Sorche and Fairbank Literary include: sci-fi and fantasy, children's and Young Adult, self-help, romance, sports fiction, or generally anything that opens with a dream scene and/or exhaustive descriptions of weather. Unless, of course, it's really, really, REALLY good.



**Robert Guinsler- Sterling Lord Literistic ([www.sll.com](http://www.sll.com))**

Robert Guinsler has been with Sterling Lord Literistic since 2000. His primary interests include literary and commercial fiction, journalism, narrative nonfiction--with an emphasis on pop culture, science or current events--and memoirs and biographies. Robert's clients are journalists, including a number of Pulitzer Prize winners, novelists and academics. The agency website lists authors he represents.

One of the most dynamic independent agencies in New York, Sterling Lord Literistic combines a long tradition of literary excellence with a diverse and successful client list unparalleled in the industry. The Agency represents a wide range of authors, including National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize winners, *New York Times* bestsellers, literary and commercial novelists, politicians, journalists, and scientists. A full service literary agency, Sterling Lord Literistic is equipped to represent every aspect of an author's professional life.



**Eddie Schneider – JABberwocky, A Literary Agency ([www.awfulagent.com](http://www.awfulagent.com))**

Prior to joining JABberwocky Literary Agency, Eddie Schneider worked for Folio Literary Management, where he assisted on a wide variety of different projects, including those by best-selling authors Garth Stein, Will Lavender, Robert Hicks, and Phillip K. Dick award winner Chris Moriarty. Here are the genres he is seeking:

*Literary fiction* – he's looking for literary novels with both great writing and a strong conceptual anchor. Ideally, he'd like something that can both push boundaries and keep readers along for the ride. An example of a (non-client) novel he enjoyed that meets these criteria is Italo Calvino's *IF ON A WINTER'S NIGHT A TRAVELER*.

*Fantasy* – he's looking for literary fantasy with one foot in the real world and one foot in the fantastic. He goes for character-driven novels with intricate, imaginative settings that are internally consistent and have verisimilitude. An example of a (non-client) novel he enjoyed that meets these criteria is Susanna Clarke's *JONATHAN STRANGE & MR. NORRELL*. Other subgenres and special areas of fantasy that are of interest to him include: magical realism (e.g. Isabel Allende's *THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS*), steampunk, and urban fantasy.

*Science fiction* – he's looking for science fiction with evocative writing and a good sense of adventure, in which the info-dumping takes a back seat to character and narrative. An example of a (non-client) novel he enjoyed that meets these criteria is Ursula K. Le Guin's *THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS*. Other subgenres & special areas of science fiction that are of interest to him include: dystopian novels, for which he has a special place in his heart (e.g. Ray Bradbury's *FAHRENHEIT 451*), some space opera, and novels involving near-future space exploration and first contact (e.g. Robert Charles Wilson's *SPIN*).

*Young adult and middle grade* – he is happy to consider young adult and middle grade submissions in any of the above genres or subgenres.

*Other genres* - he also will consider adventure, horror, and humor/satire.

Nonfiction: Science, history, and narrative nonfiction for adult trade.



**Jacques de Spoelberch- J de S Associates** (no website available)

Jacques de Spoelberch was an editor at Houghton Mifflin both in Boston and New York, working with James Dickey, Galway Kinnell, Anya Seton, and Cornelia Otis Skinner, before heading the International Literary Agency in New York, an agency which specialized in books by sports and other celebrities.

He became a generalist literary agent in 1975--forming J de S Associates--with special interests in:

- Historical fiction (the late Dorothy Dunnett, Margaret George, Anna Elliott)
- Contemporary southern fiction (Joshilyn Jackson, Amanda Gable)
- Suspense, mystery, and private investigator thrillers
- Narrative non fiction and biography (Mike Veron, Todd DePastino)
- Sports (Mike Veron)

He also has represented literary fiction, commercial fiction, family sagas, westerns, Young Adult, religion, cookbooks, spirituality, and true crime.

## THE COST

Because some might want to take advantage of only one event, while others will do it all, we offer the following ala carte pricing:

- Critique: \$125
- Pitch: \$35
- Workshop: \$20
- Atlanta Writers Conference package deal (all three activities): \$160

You must be a 2010 Atlanta Writers Club member to register for the conference. If you would like to join the club or renew your dues so you can participate, please add \$40 to your total to cover club dues.

## REGISTRATION

Contact AWC VP George Weinstein at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com) and tell him the following:

**1. Which event(s) you're registering for:**

- a. Critique
- b. Pitch
- c. Workshop
- d. All 3

**2. If you want the critique and/or pitch, tell him your rank-ordered preference for agents for each activity, with the most preferred at the top (list at least three, if possible).** Choose different individuals for the critique and the pitch to maximize the number of professionals you introduce to your work. If your first pick has no spots remaining, George will try to assign you your second choice. If that agent's spots also are filled, he will go to your third pick, etc. If all spots for all your agents are full, you will be put on standby for the agent you chose with the

fewest on standby ahead of you. In 2008 and 2009, nearly everyone who went on the standby list got a chance to pitch or receive a critique, so hopefully you'll still get the opportunity to participate. The agents are:

- a. Sheree Bykofsky - Sheree Bykofsky Associates
- b. Matthew Elblonk – The Creative Culture, Inc.
- c. Sorche Fairbank – Fairbank Literary Representation
- d. Robert Guinsler- Sterling Lord Literistic
- e. Eddie Schneider – JABberwocky, A Literary Agency
- f. Jacques de Spoelberch- J de S Associates

**\* If you do not want a specific agent, do not put that person on your rank-order of preferences.**

**\* If you want to receive a critique and do a pitch, remember to give George your rank-ordered agent-preference list for each activity.**

NOTE: So that we can accommodate the maximum number of club members, you may only register for one critique and one pitch. If spots remain open as the deadlines approach, we will offer you the chance for more than one critique and/or pitch.

**3. Indicate if you intend to stay at the Westin on Friday, May 14.** The hotel is holding a block of rooms at the special price of \$95 each. George will provide reservation details so you get the conference discount price.

George will respond to your e-mail with the cost due, confirm which agent has been assigned to you for critique and/or pitch, and give you payment instructions. Upon receipt of your check, he will provide you with formatting instructions for the materials you need to provide to him and the due date for these items, if you selected the critique. If you choose to pitch, he'll give you some recommendations and resources for pitching an agent.

In early May, you will receive the conference schedule, with your time assignment for the critique and/or pitch if you have registered for these.

## **DEADLINES**

Spots probably will fill completely during the first few weeks of enrollment, so if you want to participate, **respond now!** The deadline to register for a critique and submit your work for this evaluation is April 17. The deadline to register for a pitch is May 11, assuming spots remain unfilled. You may register and pay for the workshop all the way up to the morning of May 15. **After you send your request to register to George and receive his instructions, you will have two weeks to send in your payment. If you fail to do so, you will be removed from the registration list so that others can fill those spots.**

## **REFUND POLICY**

If you paid for a critique but cannot make it to the May 15 event, you will receive a refund if you notify George Weinstein at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com) no later than April 1. If you already submitted your materials for critique, you will not receive a refund. If you paid for a pitch but cannot make it to the May 15 event, you will receive a refund if you notify George at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com) no later than April 30.

Finally, if an agent has to withdraw from the conference, we will consult your rank ordering to connect you with the next pick on your list. If time permits, we'll enlist another agent to fill that opening and we'll confirm if that individual will suit you. Likewise, if we add more agents to the conference lineup, you will have a chance to switch to the new person on a first-come basis. If your top pick withdraws and all spots are full for the others you indicated, you will be put on standby for all of these remaining agents and be given a spot for whichever one opens first. If no openings occur, you will receive a full refund regardless of the deadlines.

## **QUESTIONS?**

Please contact George Weinstein at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com).