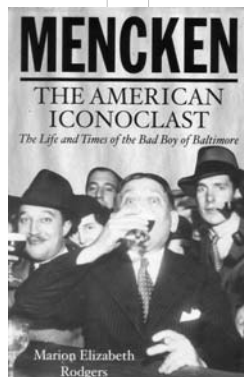


# Book of the Month

Marion Elizabeth Rodgers, *Mencken: The American Iconoclast*, New York: Oxford University Press 2005, 662 pages with index, bibliography and photos

I  
In 1938, critic, reporter, and magazine editor Henry Louis Mencken (1880-1956), 58 years old and arguably the most famous journalist in the English-speaking world, went to Germany, the last trip he was to make to Europe in his life, because he wanted to see for himself if what was being said about Jewish persecution there was true. Germany was, of course, the center of Mencken's psychological and intellectual universe, his ancestral home (Mencken was an honored and respected name there and indeed his forbears were lawyers and professors in Leipzig; two in particular, Otto Mencken and his son Johann, were greatly admired by Henry) and the core of Western culture. He was certain that the reports about the Jewish plight were exaggerated. He was willing to admit that Hitler was a "maniac," and a "lunatic." He had no love of Nazism. But he did not take Hitler seriously as a threat. Mencken dismissed him as a mediocre mind in politics, as if he were a German version of William Jennings Bryan, a man he despised. He also did not trust the American journalists there. After all, he remembered all too clearly his 1917 visit to Germany during World War I where he discovered how biased American reporting was and how stories of German atrocities (raping nuns, killing children) were mostly unsubstantiated and largely the invention of the British propaganda machine. He remembered how Woodrow Wilson manipulated to get the United States into the war on the side of the Allies, and how his neutrality



was a transparent cover of his British bias. Mencken also remembered how rabid anti-German sentiment was during World War I and how much he was personally abused by it. He knew America was an Anglophile country, although he may have been mystified or bemused by the fact. And he felt great sorrow for what Germany endured after the war, forced to sign an unfair peace treaty and being blamed entirely for the war.

Mencken's latest biographer, Marion Elizabeth Rodgers, writes that Mencken sent his friends postcards of "Hitler smiling in the company of small children," asking "Does this look like a tyrant?" (quoted on page 449). He wrote, "Save for one or two smashed windows, I could see no evidence of violence [against Jews]" (quoted on page 448). He was also impressed by the progress Germany had made, or seemed to have made, economically, under Hitler. There was no unemployment. Industrial plants seemed to be humming. "The Hitler New Deal seems to be working better than Franklin's." (quoted on page 451) He admitted that Jews had it bad there, that, as he wrote, "the state of the poor Jews is very depressing." (quoted on page 453) But Mencken could not bring himself to publicly criticize Germany. He refused to write anything about it while he was in Germany or when he returned. This reticence was simply amazing from the man who had been the champion of the First Amendment and Free Speech, who had taken on Fundamentalists and repressive state law in 1925 when he reported on the Scopes "Monkey" trial, who had challenged Boston "Bluenoses" with the Hatrack case in 1926, the story about a prostitute he published in the *American Mercury*, for which he

worked as editor, that promptly got the magazine banned in the New England city, who had supported Theodore Dreiser against the "Puritans" when *The Genius* was published and banned in 1916, although he disliked the novel. The grand knight who fought censorship decided in 1938 to censor himself in writing about Germany.

He had, since 1908, when he first visited Germany as the boy wonder journalist, totally committed himself to the defense of his romantic Teutonic dream of German culture. His blind spot about Germany and Hitler was to be held against him by some for the rest of his life, for he turned out, in this instance, to be terribly, terribly wrong. The reports of atrocities this time, unlike in the 1914-1918 War, were true and they were only to get worse, once the Second World War started. Hitler was going to do the unthinkable.

As smart and discerning a man as Mencken was, as courageous as he had been, he made a very common mistake, something any experienced military person would have warned him against. Mencken chose to re-fight the last war and, as is always the case in such actions, he lost.

II  
*Mencken: The American Iconoclast* is not the definitive biography of the great American newspaperman, although it certainly has the length of one. But it is well-researched, solidly written work, particularly attractive to the general reader. If there is a weakness with this work, it is that it provides little analysis of Mencken's work or little contextualization of him within the framework of American letters and intellectual life generally. Mencken's life is not presented here against the background of American intellectual or literary history. Earlier biographies by Carl Bode and Fred Hobson do a better

job on that score. Terry Teachout's 2002 biography, *The Skeptic*, is engaging, highly readable work that is shorter but far less comprehensive.

*Mencken: The American Iconoclast* is a very good book, using materials that not been exploited as fully before and giving a fuller picture of Mencken's personal life, particularly his writer and women friends. The book gives the complete story of the rise of the middle class Baltimore boy who wound up, except for the five years he was married in late middle age, living nearly his life in the house in which he was reared from the age of two. We learn of his happy childhood, his unhappy apprenticeship in his father's cigar factory, the death of his father, and his consequent liberation to become what he always dreamed, a newspaperman. We learn about the incredible career as co-editor of the *Smart Set* with George Jean Nathan, the editorship of *American Mercury*, the years of writing columns, the books he produced from his monumental *The American Language* series to his works on Nietzsche, religion, women, the state of democracy, his autobiographies, and the like. He was amazingly prolific. We learn of his impact on other writers like Fitzgerald, Dreiser, and Sinclair Lewis, the high regard in which he was held by black writers of the '20s and '30s.

(Charles Scruggs' *The Sage in Harlem: H. L. Mencken and the Black Writers of the 1920s* is essential reading. Ms. Rodgers mistakenly identifies Richard Wright's 1940 novel, *Native Son*, as a Pulitzer Prize winner (p. 310). It was not.) We also learn of Mencken's growing conservatism as he aged, his almost fanatical hatred of FDR, and his singular lack of sympathy of the downtrodden as a mass, although he was deeply generous man with stricken individuals. It is the fascinating story of controversial, brilliant, hard working, hard drinking, honest man. At the 1948 Progressive party national convention, the last political convention Mencken covered in a long career of such reporting, Mencken got into trouble for referring to an African American who was giving a keynote address as "a tall, full-bodied barrister of the color of a good ten-cent cigar" (quoted on page 523). A petition was drawn to censure Mencken and kick him out of the convention. "Mr. Mencken Red-baits, Jew-baits, and Negro-baits," the petition read. When presented on the floor of the convention, it failed to pass. Later, Mencken said, "Nobody denounced me as a white-baiter when I wrote [at an earlier national convention] that Herbert Hoover had a complexion like unrisen dough" (quoted on page 524). That reply was vintage Mencken.

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Financial assistance for this project  
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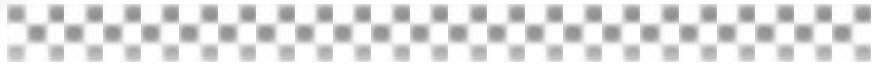


# the figure in the carpet

March 2006 Vol. 4, No. 7

One Civilized Reader Is Worth a Thousand Boneheads

Published by The Center for the Humanities at Washington University



## A Short Cut

A 'short cut' is, of course, a shorter or easier path to a selected goal. Seeking easier and shorter methods seems to be human nature. We've all taken easier or shorter paths, and, thanks to technology and the economic power of the market, everyday there are more and more of them available. Some short cuts allow us to do more with our lives; others merely allow us to avoid doing things we would rather not do.

Short cuts range from the simple to the complex. On the simple end of the spectrum, I like homemade Chinese dumplings but rarely take time to make them. Now, a local take-out restaurant makes them by hand and sells them frozen in bags of fifty, offering me a short cut to one of my favorite evening meals. On the complex end of the spectrum there are technological advances that offer shorter and easier paths to fulfill our desires. I count among these my laptop with wireless internet, and my cell phone. My goals in all these examples are still relatively simple: an enjoyable meal of fresh-bought 'homemade' dumplings, talking on my cell phone, reading email, surfing the net, or writing these notes on my laptop wherever I happen to be.

But what if my goals were much more demanding? If I wanted something like 'happiness,' could I get that by a short and easy path? The answer may be yes. Short cuts to these kinds of 'states of being,' it seems, are no longer a problem for

technology and the marketplace. We live in an era when the role of some types of medicine is not only to heal the sick but also to enhance the well.

For example, providers of the antidepressant Prozac now promise easier solutions to all sorts of generalized anxiety disorders. Prozac and similar drugs are now prescribed for people who would not have previously been diagnosed as clinically depressed, people who are merely shy, unhappy, emotionally rigid, or socially isolated. But are these people actually suffering from mental diseases? When does melancholia turn into depression or shyness into social phobia? As Carol Elliott and Todd Chambers remind us in their book, *Prozac as a Way of Life* (2004), distinctions between treatments for vaguely described anxiety disorders and searches for short cuts to an enhanced experience of life – such as happiness – are easily blurred. While formerly we might have perceived illness as something outside normal human functioning, we now must ask whether there is a short cut to being better than normal – better than well!

What started me thinking about being better than well was an article in *The Week* (January 20, 2006). The article, entitled "Treating Shortness as a Disease", was about the author's younger brother who had begun taking human growth hormone to cure his 'disease' - shortness. The interesting part of this story is that, clinically speaking, there was no

disease because the fourth grader was otherwise healthy and tests indicated that he was producing growth hormones in roughly the expected range. For reasons that science has not yet figured out, despite producing the requisite growth hormone, the boy was shorter than 97% of boys his age and, at 3-foot-11 ¾ inches, shorter than all the other children in his class. The issue was that his predicted adult height would be 5 foot 6 inches in a society where the average is 5-foot-9 inches.

There is no short cut to the 'cure,' which involves an injection every day for anywhere from four to eight years. Neither is it cheap, currently costing around \$20,000 a year (although a generic will be available soon, lowering the cost significantly). Moreover, it is not a choice entered into by an adult. The treatments are best begun with preschool age youngsters, so parents will be guessing that the extra three to four inches will give their child important advantages that the child would later want. The parents making these decisions worry that their children will not be taken seriously, will not rise to the tops of their professions, and will be discriminated against because of their substandard heights.

There is some evidence that people are discriminated against if they are perceptibly shorter than average. Researchers Timothy Judge of the University of Florida



Dr. Jian Leng

editor's notes

Continued...

and Daniel Cable of the University of North Carolina speculate that tall people have more self-confidence and may be perceived as more authoritative and better leaders. According to the University of Florida study, tall people receive more than just increased respect and status; they also earn more money than their shorter peers. The study found that each inch in height amounts to about \$789 more a year in pay. So an employee who is 6 feet tall will earn about \$4,734 more a year than a person who is 5-feet, 6-inches - the projected height of the boy in the story. Over the course of a 30-year career, a taller person has an earnings advantage of literally hundreds of thousands of dollars. So, perhaps the injections and expense involved in 'curing' shortness - of being better than well - is worth it in the long run.

One question here is whether such discrimination is a sufficient reason to "treat" shortness? Further questions might include what other attributes should be "treated" to avoid undue discrimination? Skin color? Homosexuality? Obesity? Unattractiveness? Will we give the diagnoses billing codes and pressure the insurance companies to cover the costs, or will only the wealthy be able to afford them? As I noted above, some short cuts allow us to do more with our lives; others merely allow us to avoid doing things we would rather not do. As scientific research makes it possible for all of us to be taller, smarter, faster, thinner, happier, and hence more and more alike, we must ask whether such alterations really make us better, or do they merely enable us to avoid the harder task of facing our shortcomings and doing something about them. Perhaps it's time we looked for a human growth hormone allowing us to outgrow stereotypes and discriminations that we use as short cuts to judge people - including ourselves.

*Jian Leng  
Associate Director  
The Center for the Humanities*

## The Center for the Humanities Faculty Fellows' Lecture and Workshop Series

### Thursday, March 2

"Objects for the Table: La Bruyère, Descartes, and Dutch Golden Age Painters"

Harriet Stone (WU, Department of Romance Languages)

4:00 pm, McDonnell Hall, Room 162

Studying objects at the court of Versailles and in Dutch genre painting, Harriet Stone explores the expansion of knowledge in the seventeenth century as informed through Descartes's revolutionary scientific method. Prof. Stone will show how the table of knowledge that we construct by considering together the depictions of objects in science, literature, and art reflects less a final truth than the art of science itself.

### Thursday, March 9

"An Accurate Empire: How American Explorers Described their Country and Themselves"

Peter Kastor (WU, Department of History and American Culture Studies)

4:00 pm, Anheuser-Busch Hall, Room 305

How could Americans describe the North American West? Professor Peter Kastor addresses this question by examining the half-dozen expeditions dispatched to explore the North American West during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. He will consider how maps, atlases, written narratives, and scientific reports came together (or collided) as men with no formal training in writing or drawing found themselves forced to become both writers and artists.

### Thursday, March 23

"Western Photographs, National Culture"

Martha Sandweiss (Amherst College, Department of American Studies and History)

4:00 pm, Anheuser-Busch Hall, Room 305

Martha Sandweiss will explore how the North American West came of age in national culture by exploring photography in the second half of the nineteenth century. Professor Sandweiss will investigate contextually how Americans represented and interpreted the western landscape. A specialist in nineteenth-century culture who also worked for many years as a photography curator, Professor Sandweiss will further consider ways of applying visual culture to the historical past.

### Friday, March 24

"American Material Culture: Reading Photographs from Local Collections"

Martha Sandweiss (Workshop with graduate students)

10:00 am, Laboratory Sciences Bldg. Room 201

Events are free and open to the public. Please call the Center at 314-935-5576 for a free parking sticker and to reserve a seat so that we can have an accurate count. Refreshments will be provided.



Event  
Ma

All events are free unless  
events are followed by sig  
take 314 prefix unless ind

Wednesd

SLCL Rock Road Branch h  
Kick-Off, refreshments an  
Charles Rock Rd, 9am to

SIEU ELLA Speaker Ser  
Wagner-Martin, Mississipp  
University Center, 7pm, for

The Borders Book Club m  
*White Women*, 10990 Suns  
0300.

Thursda

SLCL Mystery Lovers' Bo  
*Night Prey*, HQ Branch, 16  
3300.

WU Ctr. for the Humanities  
Stone lecture, 305 Anheus  
Campus, 4pm, 935-5576.

The WU Writing Program S  
presents poet Linda Greg  
Duncker 201, WU Campus

Sunday

The Jane Austen Bookclu  
Hwang, who will be speak  
Jane Austen's Novels," U  
Delmar, 2pm, 822-4831.

B&N Local Author Series  
event featuring Dan Dillon,  
Hoessle, Mary Henderson  
Little, Ryan Jones, Connie  
Green, Booksigning, 8871  
6280.

# St. Louis Literary Calendar

nts in  
arch

otherwise indicated. Book  
gnings. All phone numbers  
icated.

ay, March 1

hosts the **Adult Reading Club**  
d book giveaway, 10267 St.  
9pm, 429-5116.

ies 2005-06: Linda  
/Illinois Room, Morris  
info email [jmoy@siue.edu](mailto:jmoy@siue.edu).

ets to discuss *1000*  
et Hills Plaza, 7pm, 909-

y, March 2

ok Club meets to discuss  
40 S Lindbergh, 10am, 994-

s Faculty Fellow Harriet  
er-Busch Hall, Hilltop

pring Reading Series  
erson, Hurst Lounge,  
8pm, 935-7130.

y, March 5

o welcomes Sheila  
ng on "Resort Culture in  
City Public Library, 6701

presents local author  
Marie Bauer, Maureen  
Gass, Jean Eberle, Judith  
McIntyre, and Peter H.  
Ladue Rd, 1-5pm, 862-

Monday, March 6

UMSL Faculty Reading, "In Love and War: The Poetry of Foreign Language," 229 JC Penney Conf. Bldg., 12:15pm, 516-5699.

Free storytelling at Laumeier Sculpture Park with Bobby Norfolk presenting Springtime Stories of the Harlem Renaissance, registration required, 12580 Rott Rd, 2pm, 991-1529.

"Avoiding Legal Thrillers: A Lawyer's Tips for Authors & Publishers," a talk by attorney and award-winning author Michael Kahn, Regional Arts Commission, 6128 Delmar, 7-9pm, for tickets & info call 863-6930.

Tuesday, March 7

LBB & SLPL Schlafly presents Gloria Allred, author of *Fight Back & Win: My Thirty-Year Fight with Injustice—and How You Can Win Your Own Battles*, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-4120.

Borders 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday Book Club meets to discuss *The Meadow*, 1519 S Brentwood Blvd, 7pm, 918-8189.

SLCL Indian Hills hosts a discussion of *Love Comes Softly*, 8400 Delpport, 7:30pm, 428-5424.

Wednesday, March 8

SLCL Oak Bend hosts Bookies Book Discussion Group, focusing on *The Great Fire*, 842 S. Holmes, 2pm, 822-0051.

Discuss *The Dogs of Babel* with Boone's Bookies at the SLCL Daniel Boone Branch, 300 Clarkson Rd, 2 pm & again at 7pm, 636-227-9630.

Sisters in Crime hosts "How to Get More Words on Paper-Fast!" at SLCL HQ Branch, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 6:45pm, 636-938-7163.

LBB presents author of *Snow Flower & Secret Fan*, Lisa See, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

SLPL Julia Davis Branch presents Authors @ Your Library featuring Dr. A. Wayne Jones discussing and signing his latest work, *Anagrams*, 4415 Natural Bridge Ave, 7pm, 383-3021.

Thursday, March 9

Join the Murder of the Month Club in a discussion of *The 27\* Ingredient Chili Con Carne Murders*, SLCL Indian Trails Branch, 8400 Delpport Dr, 3:30pm, 428-5424.

WU Ctr. for the Humanities Faculty Fellow Peter Kastor lecture, 305 Anheuser-Busch Hall, Hilltop Campus, 4pm, 935-5576.

The Kirkwood Public Library series *Between Two Worlds* continues with Kathleen Nigro leading discussion about *Lost in Translation*, 140 E Jefferson, Kirkwood, 7pm, 821-5770.

Meet bestselling author Suzanne Lyon at the SLCL HQ Branch as she discusses and sings her latest novel, *A Heart for Any Fate*, 1640 S Lindbergh Ave, 7pm, 994-3300.

LBB presents author of *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India, & Indonesia*, Elizabeth Gilbert, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

SLPL Carpenter Branch hosts the Contemporary Issues Book Discussion Group to talk about *Our Culture, What's Left of It*, 3309 S. Grand Blvd, 7pm, 772-6586.

Friday, March 10

Join the SLCL Rock Road Book Discussion Group, Great Expectations, to talk about *Amateur Marriage*, 10267 St. Charles Rock Road, 10am, 429-5116.

LBB & SLCL HQ Branch welcomes author Sue Monk Kidd discussing and signing her latest work, *The Mermaid Chair*, 1640 S Lindbergh Ave, 7pm, 994-3300.

Saturday, March 11

The Mystery Lover's Book Club meets at the SLPL Carondelet Branch to discuss *Dying to Call You*, 6800 Michigan Ave, 10-11:30 am, 752-9224.

Bring your creative work to the Write Along Writers' Workshop at the SLCL Indian Trails Branch, 8400 Delpport Dr, 11:30am & again on the 25th, 428-5424.

SLCL Oak Bend Branch hosts a talk by Daniel Flynn on Plato's *The Republic*, 842 S Holmes, 1:30pm, 822-0051.

SLCL Mid-County Branch hosts a Writer's Workshop designed for amateur writers, 7821 Maryland Ave, 2-4pm, 721-3008.

Sunday, March 12

The BookClub has a discussion on *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books*, for time and venue, 636-451-3232.

Monday, March 13

UMSL presents professor and author Frank Grace discussing "How to Recognize a Virtuous Pagan When You See One," 229 JC Penney Conf. Bldg., 12:15pm, 516-5699.

SLCL Samuel C. Sachs Branch welcomes author. Baker discussing and signing his historical St. Louis book *King Trolley and the Suburban Queens*, 1640 Burkhardt, 2pm, 636-728-0001.

UMSL welcomes Lucy Ferriss reading from her new memoir, *Unveiling the Prophet*, Museum Room of Honors College, 5:30pm, 516-6845.

LBB presents local author J.E. Robinson, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

Tuesday, March 14

SLCL Grand Glaize Book Discussion Group meets to discuss *Betsy Brown*, 1010 Meramec Station Rd, 636-225-6454.

SLPL Kingshighway Branch hosts a Book Discussion on *The Shadow of the Wind*, 2260 S Vandeventer Ave, 6:45pm, 771-5450.

LBB presents St. Louis native and author of *Unveiling the Prophet: the Misadventures of a Reluctant Debutante*, Lucy Ferriss, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

SLCL HQ Book Discussion focuses on *Pope John*, 1640 S. Lindbergh, 7pm & also at 2pm on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 994-3300.

SLCL Weber Road Book Group, As the Page Turns takes on *Our Lady of the Forest*, 4444 Weber Rd, 7pm, 638-2210.

WU Foreign Literature Group discusses *A Late Divorce*, LL of West Campus Bldg, 7425 Forsyth, 7:30pm, 727-6118.

*All Over but the Shoutin'* is the topic for the new Reader Rendezvous Book Discussion Group, SLCL Tesson Ferry Branch, 9920 Lin-Ferry Dr, 7pm, 843-0560.

Wednesday, March 15

SLCL Oak Bend hosts The Evening Book Group discuss *The Secret Life of Bees*, 842 S. Holmes Ave, 7:30pm, 822-0051.

Thursday, March 16

The Borders Historical Book Group discusses *The Linnet Bird*, 10990 Sunset Hills Plaza, 1pm, 909-0300.

LBB presents William Gass, author of *A Temple of Texts: New Essays*, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

Borders Creve Coeur presents author Larry Swedroe signing *The Only Guide to a Winning Bond Strategy*, 11745 Olive Blvd, 7pm, 432-3575.

St. Louis Writers Guild Lecture Series welcomes Sci-Fi author Mark Tiedemann, 7pm, for location call 821-3823.

Saturday, March 18

SLPL Julia Davis hosts the Adult Readers Group discussing *Suddenly You*, 4415 Natural Bridge Ave, 12pm, 383-3021.

Borders Brentwood presents author Evan McNamara signing *Fair Game*, 1519 S Brentwood Blvd, 2pm, 918-8189.

Sunday, March 19

Pre-submit your writing to the St. Louis Poetry Center's poetry workshop critiqued by David Lehman, U City Library, 6701 Delmar at Harvard, 1:30-3:30pm, 770-9130.

Monday, March 20

LBB presents best-selling author Rosalind Wiseman reading from her new book, *Queen Bee Moms & Kingpin Dads*, Clayton H.S., 1 Mark Twain Circle Dr, 7pm, 367-6731.

Leamos! Let's Read! Spanish Book Discussion Group meets to discuss *El Sol de Breda*, SLPL Carpenter Branch, 3309 S. Grand, 7pm, 772-6586.

The River Styx Reading Series presents Catherine Rankovic and Lee Ann Roripaugh, Duff's Restaurant, 392 N Euclid, \$5, 7:30 pm, 533-4541.

Tuesday, March 21

Southwestern Illinois College presents Martha Patterson, author of *Beyond the Gibson Girl: Reimagining the American New Woman, 1895-1915*, Belleville Campus, 11am, (618) 235-2700.

SLCL Bridgeton Trails Book Discussion Group meets to discuss *A Painted House*, 3455 McKelvey Rd, 7pm, 291-7570.

Wednesday, March 22

SLCL Oak Bend Branch hosts Bookies Book Discussion Group, who will be talking about *Messages from My Father*, 842 S. Holmes, 2pm, 822-0051.

SLPL Schlafly Branch Authors @ Your Library welcomes a discussion and book signing from author Frankie Freeman, 225 N Euclid, 7pm, 367-4120.

Thursday, March 23

WU Ctr. for the Humanities welcomes guest lecturer Martha Sandweiss, 305 Anheuser-Busch Hall, Hilltop Campus, 4pm, 935-5576.

LBB presents SLU Professor and editor of *The Andre Hodeir Jazz Reader*, Jean-Louis Pautrot, 399 N Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

SLPL Schlafly Book Discussion Group talks about *Birth of Venus*, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-4120.

SLPL Authors @ Your Library hosts Patricia Rice, author of *Small Town Girl*, at Buder Branch, 4401 Hampton Ave, 7pm, 352-2900.

Authors of *The Boys That Were Left Behind: The 1944 World Series Between the Hapless St. Louis Browns and the Legendary St. Louis Cardinals* John Heidenry and Brett Topel join a panel discussion on St. Louis baseball history, 7:30pm, for ticket prices & info call 442-3299.

The WU Writing Program Spring Reading Series presents First-Book Poets Matthew Zaprunder, Richard Siken, and Kerri Webster, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU Campus, 8pm, 935-7130.

Friday, March 24

WU Ctr. for the Humanities guest lecturer Martha Sandweiss leads workshop, 201 Lab Sciences Bldg, Hilltop Campus, 10am, 935-5576.

Saturday, March 25

Borders Fairview Heights presents Debbi Stinnett signing *The Sinfully Healthy Cookbook*, 6601 N Illinois, 3pm, 618-397-6097. Catch her again at Borders Creve Coeur on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 11745 Olive Blvd, 2pm, 314-432-3575.

Monday, March 27

LBB presents author of *Pretty, Little, Dirty*, Amanda Boyden, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

Tuesday, March 28

SLCL Grand Glaize Book Discussion Group meets to talk about *The Namesake*, 1010 Meramec Station Rd, 2pm, 636-225-6454.

SLCL Weber Road Book Group, As the Page Turns, discusses *Carpe Demon*, 4444 Weber Rd, 7pm, 638-2210.

Poetry at the Point presents readings by Marie Chewe-Elliott, Gaye-Gambell-Peterson, and Niki Nymark, Focal Point, 2720 Sutton Blvd, 7:30pm, 636-225-5423.

Wednesday, March 29

LBB presents author of *The Geographer's Library*, Jon Fasman, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

Thursday, March 30

WU Assembly Series presents William Gass presenting a lecture on "Metaphor," Graham Chapel, WU Hilltop Campus, 4pm, for more info see <http://assemblyseries.wustl.edu/>.

The Kirkwood Public Library series *Between Two Worlds* continues with Kathleen Nigro leading discussion about *Out of Egypt*, 140 E Jefferson, Kirkwood, 7pm, 821-5770.

LBB presents author of *Mama's Windows*, Lynn Rubright, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm, 367-6731.

B&N presents former St. Louis native Deborah Richmond Foulkes signing *My Truth Lies in Ruins and In the Shadow of My Truth*, 8871 Ladue Rd, 7pm, 862-6280.

The WU Writing Program Spring Reading Series presents novelist and visiting Hurst Professor Sigrid Nunez, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU Campus, 8pm, 935-7130.

Notices

21st-Annual New Letters Awards for Writers with \$4,500 in prizes & publication. For information, visit <http://www.newletters.org/awards.asp>. Deadline: May 18, 2006.

Abbreviations

B&N: Barnes & Noble; LBB: Left Bank Books; SLCL: St. Louis County Library; SLPL: St. Louis Public Library; WU: Washington University.

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