

NOTES



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2003

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

DONALD SPOTO

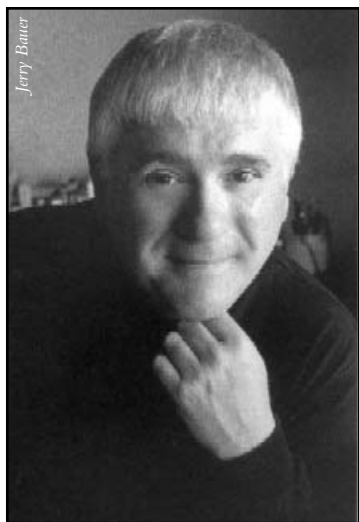
BIOGRAPHY, ART AND CRAFT: A LECTURE/WORKSHOP SERIES

PART I: THE CRAFT OF BIOGRAPHY: TECHNIQUE, METHODS AND MATERIALS

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

PART II: THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY: TAKING LIVES SERIOUSLY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM



Jerry Baier

Donald Spoto, who earned his Ph.D. in theology from Fordham University, is the author of 19 books, including highly praised biographies of Alfred Hitchcock, Tennessee Williams, Laurence Olivier, Marlene Dietrich, Marilyn Monroe, and Ingrid Bergman. His most recent books are best-selling biographies of Jesus of Nazareth and Francis of Assisi. His work has been translated into more than 25 languages, and reviewers praise his “impressive research skills,” “exhaustive thoroughness,” and “rich language, silken storytelling and tough scholarship.”

“Inevitably, writing biography alters the perceptions of the writer – just as reading biography should alter the perceptions of the reader,” Spoto says. “The accurate and artful recreation of a life must, at its best, take us not only into the depths of the subject but also into those depths common to all life....Never a judge, the biographer must, however, assess the connecting threads of meaning in a subject’s life, and in so doing the biographer is unavoidably led to a consideration of the inner consistencies (or lack of them) in one’s own life. The best biographies enable the reader, as well, to experience this sort of thing. That these have been among the benefits of the biographer’s work has

been a great blessing in my life. I can only hope to have shared some of this illumination with my readers.”

Spoto will share his expertise on the theory, resources, and techniques of writing lives. Members and their guests may attend both sessions for \$20 per person, or either session for \$10 per person. Contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or sholliday@nysoclib.org to register.

CALENDAR

BARNET SCHECTER
*THE BATTLE FOR
NEW YORK*
January 23, 6:00 P.M.

CAROL WESTON
GIRLTALK
January 28, 6:00 P.M.

AHMED RASHID
*JIHAD: THE RISE OF MILITANT
ISLAM IN CENTRAL ASIA*
February 12, 6:30 P.M.

ANTHONY HECHT
*THE DARKNESS AND THE
LIGHT AND OTHER POEMS*
February 25, 6:00 P.M.

JULES FEIFFER
PICTURE THIS
February 28, 4:00 P.M.

ALAN FURST
SEARCHING FOR TITLES
March 4, 6:00 P.M.

DONALD SPOTO
BIOGRAPHY: ART AND CRAFT
March 18 and 19, 6:00 P.M.

☞ Reading Groups are listed on page 3, technology issues and events on page 4, and Children’s Events on page 5. To receive technology news and articles electronically, send an e-mail to webmaster@nysoclib.org. To receive the monthly Children’s Events Calendar, call the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230.

LIBRARY LECTURES

To register for programs, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or sholliday@nysoclib.org.

BARNET SCHECTER

AUTHOR OF *THE BATTLE FOR NEW YORK:*

THE CITY AT THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM



Jefferson Spady

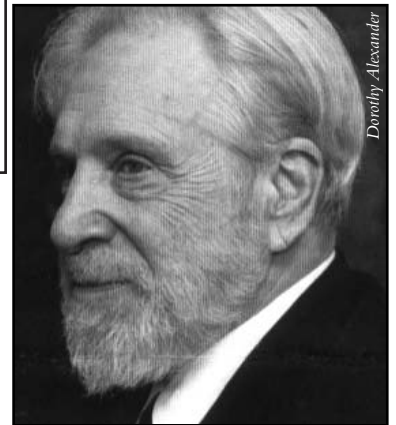
On September 15, 1776, the British army invaded Manhattan Island, landing where the United Nations sits today. George Washington's Continental Army was forced to surrender the city to British control and retreat to Harlem Heights. The British expected New York to be the key to their success in the American Revolution, but to their surprise, the city would become the pivot that gave victory to the revolutionaries. Barnet Schecter's *The Battle for New York* not only tells the riveting story of the city's central role in the Revolution, but also reveals the familiar modern locations where history was made in 1776. *Publishers Weekly* says, "Schecter's research is impeccable," while *Booklist* calls the book "gripping...superbly written." This lecture is \$10 for Library members and guests.

ANTHONY HECHT

THE DARKNESS AND THE LIGHT AND OTHER POEMS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM

"Long gone the smoke-and-pepper childhood smell And I myself have whitened in the weathers
Of the smoldering immolation of the year, Of heaped-up Januarys as they bequeath
Leaf-strewn in scattered grandeur where it fell, The annual rings and wrongs that wring my withers,
Golden and poxed with frost, tarnished and serene. Sober my thoughts and undermine my teeth.
--from "Sarabande on Attaining the Age of Seventy-seven" (2001)



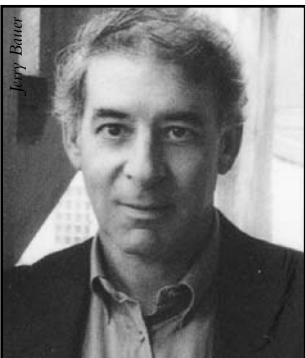
Dorothy Alexander

Anthony Hecht is one of the major voices in modern poetry. In addition to *The Darkness and the Light*, he is the author of *Flight Among the Tombs* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Hard Hours*. A book of his essays, *Melodies Unheard*, will be published this spring. Hecht, who taught for many years at Georgetown University, received the Frost Medal from the Poetry Society of America. *Library Journal* says, "Hecht's refreshing and liberating verse possesses a quality that transcends both time and space." This event is \$10 for members and their guests.

ALAN FURST

SEARCHING FOR TITLES: MOMENTS FROM THE WRITING PROCESS

TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM



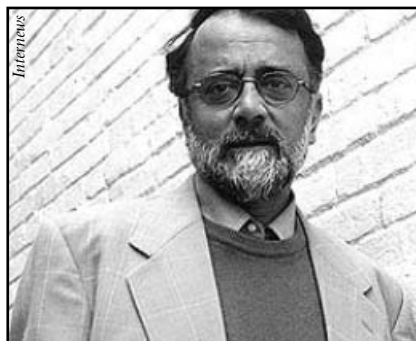
Jury Bauer

Alan Furst is widely recognized as the master of the historical spy novel and considered the successor to Graham Greene and Eric Ambler. "Nothing can be like watching *Casablanca* for the first time," says *Time* magazine, "but Furst comes closer than anyone has in years." His phenomenally popular books include *Night Soldiers*, *The Polish Officer*, *Kingdom of Shadows*, and *Blood of Victory*. "What I do is use the stories that happened, then create the sorts of characters who could have taken part in those stories," says Furst.

In this lecture, Furst explores how ideas turn into books and why the thoughts a writer begins with are seldom the same in the finished work. His anecdotes reveal the writing process from the first story idea to the "effortless" style attributed to him by *The New York Times*. This event is \$10 for Library members and their guests.

**2002-2003 AUTHOR SERIES**

To register for programs, contact the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230 or sholliday@nysoclib.org.

AHMED RASHID**AUTHOR OF *JIHAD: THE RISE OF MILITANT ISLAM IN CENTRAL ASIA*****WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 6:30 P.M.****TEMPLE ISRAEL, 112 EAST 75TH STREET**

While writing his book *Taliban*, Ahmed Rashid gained the trust of all but the highest Afghan leaders. "I know everyone and they know me," he says. One of the world's most respected authorities on Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia, Rashid has written for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Wall Street Journal*, spoken at venues around the world, and consulted for the U.S. State Department. In *Jihad*, published in 2002, he turns his attention to the wider base of Islamic extremism. He examines how repression and poverty have fed fundamentalist rage in the small countries surrounding Afghanistan, and how that rage may be alleviated. This lecture, presented in cooperation with Channel 13/WNET, is free for members and guests.

READING GROUP

NOTE: Reading Groups are free of charge, but space is very limited. Registration will ONLY be accepted in the order of calling beginning at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, January 14. Leave a message at 212-288-6900 x230.

SECRETS AND LIES IN FICTION WITH NANCY NEWMAN**THURSDAYS, JANUARY 30, FEBRUARY 27,****AND APRIL 3, 11:00 A.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM**

Novelist and noted lecturer Nancy Newman will lead a discussion of three novels in which protagonists set off to unravel mysteries about other people and, in the process, shatter crippling myths about themselves. Newman is the author of *Disturbing the Peace*, which tells the story of a successful woman who changes her life by searching for her unknown birth mother. Reviewers have called the book "delicious" and "heartfelt" and the author, "a brave and vibrant writer." Newman has also lectured at many Manhattan schools and at the 92nd Street Y. The novels to be discussed in this group are *Motherless Brooklyn* by Jonathan Lethem, *The Third Man* by Graham Greene, and *Disturbing the Peace* by Newman herself.

INSIDE THE LIBRARY**CAPTURING THE STATE OF THE LIBRARY**

The Long-Range Planning Committee, formed in 2000, finished its tasks of assessing the state of the Library and recommending future changes in June 2002. The result of their work is the Long-Range Planning Report, available by request at the circulation desk or on the Web at www.nysoclib.org/long_range_planning.html. The report covers current Library statistics, the collection-review process, space problems, programs, technology, governance issues, and the proposed renovation. It provides a look at the Library as it is now and what it may become in the future.

NEW MEMBER RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Long-Range Planning Report recommended the establishment of a new committee of Library trustees, members and staff to respond to members' concerns about Library services and procedures. The committee's chair, Linn Cary Mehta, expects that the group will serve, in part, as a funnel to direct members' requests to the Board. The Member Relations committee welcomes suggestions and comments via suggestion books in the Reference Room and Large Study Room, by letter, or by e-mail to Member_Relations@nysoclib.org.

**TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS NEWS****THE NYSL COMPUTER USERS GROUP**

EVERY MONTH, FIRST AND THIRD TUESDAYS, 5:00-6:00 P.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM

FIRST MEETING TUESDAY, JANUARY 21



The Computer Users' Group is a new, ongoing, informal gathering for members interested in learning more about using computers, both in the Library and in their homes. In each session a staff member will briefly introduce a topic, computer basics will be taught and reviewed and common problems addressed, and there will be an open forum to answer specific questions from participants.

The group will be led alternately by Ingrid Richter, systems specialist, and Paul Burley, cataloger. Registration is not required, and there is no charge. The Users Group is not a cumulative class - drop in any first or third Tuesday.

NEW THINGS AT [WWW.NYSOCLIB.ORG](http://www.nysoclib.org)

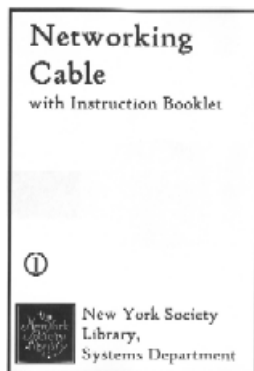
The New York Society Library website has grown significantly since its launch in December 1998. Approximately 300 people visit our site each day. Popular pages in October 2002 included Marilyn Bender Altschul's travel article, "Franz Kafka's Prague" (<http://www.nysoclib.org/travels/kafka.html>), Christopher Gray's article, "Researching the History of a New York City Building" (http://www.nysoclib.org/building_history.html), and Children's Library articles on Nancy Winslow Parker and other authors. A search engine was recently added to the main page for simple indexing of the Library's 200+ web pages. To enter a search, use lowercase letters (including proper names). Further information on Library technology issues is available on the site at www.nysoclib.org/tech/index.html.

CONNECT TO THE INTERNET THROUGH YOUR LAPTOP

Recent rewiring on the fifth floor allows members to connect to the Internet via any personal laptop computer equipped with a networking card. Ten connection ports are available in the Large Study Room, two in the online catalog room, and one in each individual study room.

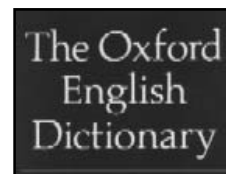
For access, please check out at the circulation desk one of the cases labeled "Connecting to the Internet From the New York Society Library." The cases, located below the books-on-tape shelf in the lobby, contain network cables and instruction booklets. It is necessary to change the network settings on your laptop to connect. Please follow the directions in the instruction booklet carefully.

Contact Paul Burley at (212) 288-6900 x245 for help, questions, and comments.

**ACCESS TO ARCHIVES AND ARTICLES**

The Library is pleased to announce in-house and remote access to *The New York Times Archives* (through ProQuest), the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Oxford Reference Online*, *American National Biography*, and FirstSearch articles. Computers in the Library have automatic access through the following sites:

ProQuest/*New York Times*: <http://proquest.umi.com/pdqweb>
Oxford English Dictionary: <http://dictionary.oed.com>
Oxford Reference Online: <http://www.oxfordreference.com>
American National Biography: <http://www.anb.org>
 FirstSearch Databases: <http://newfirstsearch.oclc.org>



To access these sites from home, you will need to configure your web browser to use our proxy server. For more information, contact Ingrid Richter at webmaster@nysoclib.org.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

GIRLTALK: AN EVENING WITH CAROL WESTON

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 6:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM
FOR THIRD GRADE AND OLDER**

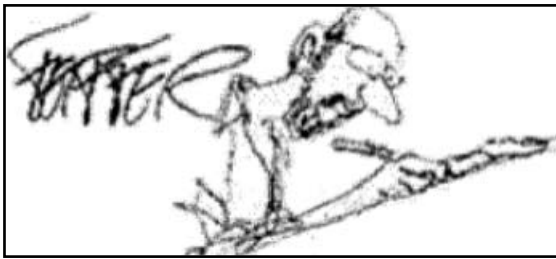


Known as "Dear Abby" for the younger set, Carol Weston has given advice to more than 4,000 girls and teens through *Girl's Life* magazine. She is the author of nine books, including *Girltalk* and *For Teens Only*, and the *Melanie Martin* series, which *Booklist* calls "achingly real...especially gratifying." Weston will share real letters and responses from her advice column, the fun of living and writing abroad, and the ideas behind her hilarious characters. The event is free of charge for Library members and their guests. Contact the Events Office at (212) 288-6900 x230 or sholliday@nysoclib.org to register.

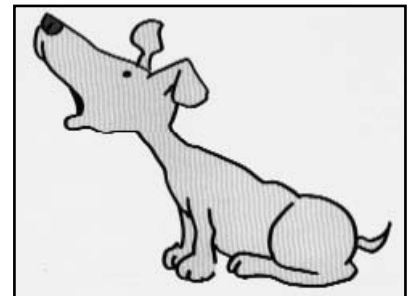


PICTURE THIS: JULES FEIFFER DRAWS HIS FAVORITE STORIES

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 4:00 P.M., MEMBERS' ROOM
FOR AGES FIVE AND OLDER**



Jules Feiffer is one of America's most important editorial cartoonists as well as a playwright, novelist, screenwriter, and illustrator. Since 1993, he has crafted a brilliant new career writing for children, with books such as *Bark*, *George*, *The House Across the Street*, and *A Barrel of Laughs, a Vale of Tears*. His works have been selected by *Publishers Weekly* and the New York Public Library as outstanding children's books, while in other fields his honors include an



Academy Award for an animated short film and the Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning. In this event, he will narrate and draw episodes from his picture books and illustrate a new story created by participants. This program is free for Library members aged five and older. Contact the Children's Librarian at 212-288-6900 x234 or csilberman@nysoclib.org to register.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Mothers and their daughters are invited to join Children's Librarian Carrie Silberman for a discussion of one of these beloved books. Please call the Children's Library at 212-288-6900 x234 to register. Both sessions will take place in the Whitridge Room.

UNDERSTOOD BETSY, BY DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

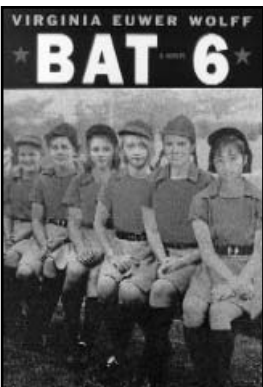
FOR THIRD AND FOURTH GRADES * THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13 AT 5:30 P.M.

Betsy embarks on a journey of self-discovery as she leaves a sheltered city life to live with her rough-mannered cousins in Vermont.

BAT 6, BY VIRGINIA EUWER WOLFF

FOR FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES * THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20 AT 5:30 P.M.

The Bat 6 softball game of 1949 is the event of the year for two small Oregon towns, until prejudice strikes the field.



**OUTREACH****THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS****SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 3***Elizabeth
Winthrop**Edra Ziesk*

The Library is proud to announce its first annual Young Writers Awards. Young writers in grades 3 through 12 are invited to submit a short story or essay, fiction or nonfiction, which evokes the spirit of New York City. Entries will be considered in four age divisions and an awards ceremony will honor the winning writers. Judges include member authors Robert Quackenbush, Elizabeth Winthrop, and Edra Ziesk. Prize-winning stories will be posted on the Library website and bound into a book for its permanent collection.

All stories are subject to the competition rules, which are available at the circulation desk, on the web at www.nysoclib.org, or by mail by calling 212-288-6900 x230. Entrants must be children or grandchildren of Library members. Entries must be postmarked no later than April 1 or hand-delivered to the Library by April 3. Watch this space for announcements of the awards ceremony and the winning stories.

*Robert
Quackenbush***PROJECT CICEROSM 2003: CREATING NEEDED CLASSROOM LIBRARIES****BOOK COLLECTION AT THE LIBRARY: MARCH 3-6****BOOK SORTING AT THE LIBRARY: MARCH 5, 3:30 P.M., WHITRIDGE ROOM**

In the past two years, Project CiceroSM has distributed more than 150,000 books to create classroom libraries in under-served New York City schools. The project is a partnership of the Library with independent, private, and parochial schools, as well as other leading New York institutions and individuals.

To help, bring new or gently used children's and young adult books to the Library March 3-6. Donations of time or money are also welcome. Children's participation is particularly needed to sort books at the Library on Wednesday, March 5. To sign up or for more information, leave a message at 212-288-6900 x511.



Please write or telephone the Library with any comments or suggestions. Visit our website at www.nysoclib.org, which is updated frequently.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY

53 East 79th Street
New York, NY 10021