Fall 2022 KCVWT Veterans Writing Workshop
Theme: War and Truth
October 7-8 and 15, 2022

Kansas City Public Library: Plaza Location
4801 Main St.
Kansas City, MO 64113

Friday, October 7

AM Schedule
9:00 - 9:15 Welcome, Announcements, Evaluations: Nick Lopez
Introductions: HC Palmer

9:15–10:00 Moral Injury: What is it, and How do we Recognize it? Dr. Rita Brock

10:00 – 10:15 Q and A: Dr. Rita Brock (moderator - Dr. H.C. Palmer)

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30 - 11:15 Recovery from Moral Injury: Why Writing Matters for Soul Repair
Dr. Rita Brock

11:15-11:45 Moral Injury Roundtable
Dr. Rita Brock, Dr. Thomas McGuire, Dr. Katherine McGuire, Dr. H. C. Palmer

11:45 –12:15PM – Lunch A free sandwich lunch with water is provided. If you have dietary restrictions, please bring your own brown bag.

Friday, October 7

PM Schedule
12:15 - 1:00 Moral Injury Summary Dr. Rita Brock

1:00 - 1:45 The Process of Writing I: Virginia Brackett
Writing is a process – few pieces appear perfectly the first time we sit down to write. This session presents several of those steps along with demonstrations of each
1:45 - 2:00 - Break

2:00 – 2:45 How to Tell a True War Story: A Writer’s & Reader’s Guide to the True War Story Tradition Dr. Thomas McGuire
Chaim Potok once said, "Good writers read, and good readers write." Eyeing this truism, we'll discuss how you can bolster your efforts to write true war stories through a creative discipline that combines frequent writing with a habit of regularly reading exemplary war stories. Along the way, we'll explore some essential qualities and continuities that define the true war story tradition, taking Tim O'Brien's "How to Tell A True War Story" and the work of WLA contributors as exemplars of that tradition.

2:45 - 3:30 How to Tell A True War Story: Negotiating War's Brokenness and the Quest for Healing Dr. Katherine McGuire
A psychological introduction to understanding and negotiating the psychological fragmentation resulting from war, with focus on how telling a true war story may facilitate healing and reintegration

3:30 – Evaluations & Announcements Dr. H.C. Palmer

Saturday, October 8

AM Schedule

9:00 - 9:15 Announcements Nick Lopez
Introduction of workshop leaders Dr. H. C. Palmer

9:15 – 10:00
How to Tell A True War Story: Why Poetry Makes The Stomach Believe Dr. Thomas McGuire
Tim O'Brien writes, "A true war story, if told truly, makes the stomach believe." This session considers how common poetic elements and techniques (e.g., constructing images, making sensory appeals, balancing sounds and silence) can make "the stomach believe." Examining well-made poems from the WLA archive, we'll discuss how tapping into the power of poetic expression will equip you to make art that moves not only readers' intellects, but also their bodies and emotions.

10:00 – 10:45 How to Tell a True War Story: How Psychological and Somatic Responses Impact the Narration and Reception of War Stories Dr. Katherine McGuire
Noting the military/civilian gap, Tim O'Brien writes, "Nobody listens. Nobody hears nothin'." This session explores the common psychological and physical responses to the war experience/narrative, and how such responses impact both the hearing and telling of a true war story. Specifically, we will examine how these psychological responses affect veterans, family members and other civilians.

10:45-11:00 Break
11:00 – 11:45 The Process of Writing II  Virginia Brackett
Discussion of the steps to achieve a polished draft continue, with focus on Prewriting and Drafting

11:45 - 12:30 Lunch A free sandwich lunch with water is provided. If you have dietary restrictions, please bring your own brown bag.

Saturday, October 8

PM Schedule
1:00 - 1:45 How to Tell A True War Story in Private: A Psychologist and Writer in Conversation Dr. Thomas McGuire and Dr. Katherine McGuire
A dialogue about vulnerability and the essential need to both talk and write about war and military life, even if only for yourselves. The moderators will begin by discussing the benefits and challenges of reflecting on war and military experience either in private or with another person. This dialogue will be followed by a question-and-answer session with workshop participants.

1:45 - 2:00 Reader’s Theater Discussion George Pettigrew, Jon Michael Jonson

2:00 - 2:15 Break

2:15 - 3:30 Focus on Writing Dr. H.C. Palmer

3:30 - 4:00 Evaluations and Questions. Discussion prompts for “Speaking of Courage” from Tim O’Brien’s The Things They Carried Dr. H.C. Palmer

Saturday, October 15

AM Schedule
9:00 - 9:15 Announcements, Reminders Nick Lopez

Introduction of Shana Youngdahl and Kaite Stover Dr. H. C. Palmer

9:15 - 10:00 Tim O’Brien’s “Speaking of Courage”: a Civilian Point of View Katie Stover

10:00 - 10:15 Break

10:15 - 10:45 The Process of Writing III: Focus Points for Revision Virginia Brackett
10:45 -11:45 AM: Fact, Fiction, or Poem: Writing Your Emotional Truth Part 1:
Shana Youngdahl
In this workshop we will consider the differences between emotional truth, literal truth, and memory. Participants can expect to engage in writing exercises to probe these questions more deeply.

11:45 - Noon Reader’s Theater: George Pettigrew, Jon Michael Jonson

Noon -12:30PM Lunch A free sandwich lunch with water is provided. If you have dietary restrictions, please bring your own brown bag.

Saturday, October 15

PM Schedule
12:30 -1:30PM: Fact, Fiction, or Poem: Writing Your Emotional Truth Part 2:
Shana Youngdahl
In this hour participants will continue to write their emotional truth through writing exercises that build from our first hour. Participants can expect to leave with the groundwork to keep building their own “emotionally true,” story, poem or essay.

1:30 -1:45  Break

1:45 - 2:15 PM Fact, Fiction, or Poem: Writing Your Emotional Truth: Next Steps
Shana Youngdahl

2:15 - 3:00 Participants Read Dr. H. C. Palmer

3:00 – 3:15 Evaluations, Closing Remarks Nick Lopez

Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock is a leading American theologian and an expert on moral injury in combat veterans, frontline caregivers, first responders, and international humanitarian aid workers. She has offered training in recovery strategies for veterans, their families, mental health workers, professional chaplains, spiritual caregivers, social workers and the general public.

Dr. Katherine McGuire is a clinical psychologist. She specializes in trauma resolution work, including war trauma, family trauma from war, and PTSD.
Dr. Thomas McGuire is a poet. He is editor of the acclaimed literary journal, *War, Literature and the Arts*. He is a professor at The United States Air Force Academy and a Fulbright Scholar.

Shana Youngdahl loves helping people embrace the stories they need to tell. Educated at Mills College, The University of Minnesota, and The University of Maine, Shana currently teaches writing in the MFA program at Lindenwood University. She is the author of the poetry collection *History, Advice and Other Half-Truths* (SFSUPress), and several poetry chapbooks. Shana’s debut novel *As Many Nows As I Can Get*, was a Kirkus Best Book of 2019, and a New York Public Library top-ten book of 2019 (Dial/Penguin Teen). Her second novel *A Catalog of Burnt Objects* is forthcoming. Connect with her online at www.shanayoungdahl.com, twitter @shanayoungdahl or Instagram @shanayoungdahl

Virginia Brackett, PhD writes mainly prose. She has published dozens of articles, blog entries and stories for all ages, including an article in *War, Literature and the Arts* and was invited to write the Foreword for the upcoming edition of *Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors* (SEMS UP). Brackett’s 15 books have been cited by the New York Public Library, the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association, the American Library Association, and Booklist (Editor’s Choice, Reference Sources, 2008). Tom Strelich wrote in the *New York Journal of Books* about her memoir, *In the Company of Patriots* (Sunbury Press, 2019): “The book is an absorbing hybrid: a classical drama crossed with an archeological dig, only instead of pottery shards, burial mounds, and stone tools, it uses scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, letters, emails, and family lore to reveal a multi-generational personal history linking the past to the present.” www.virginiabrackett.com.

Books available for purchase

By Virginia Brackett, Ph.D.:

*In the Company of Patriots*  $20  please pay with cash

By Shana Youngdahl:

*History, Advice, and Other Half-Truths*  $12  cash preferred
*As Many Nows As I Can Get*  $15
*Donner: A Passing*  $8

By Dr. H.C. Palmer:

*Feet of the Messenger*  $14  please pay with cash