

SYLLABUS: CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP at PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Instructor: Pat Schneider

Contact information: 413-253-6353

Workshop Sessions: Meet July 16 – 20, 9am – 1pm.

Information about Instructor: Pat Schneider, M.A., Religious Studies, Pacific School of Religion; M.F.A. in Creative Writing, University of Massachusetts. Founder, Amherst Writers & Artists; Author, ten books including *Writing Alone and With Others*, and (forthcoming) *How the Light Gets In: Writing as a Spiritual Practice*, both from Oxford University Press. This writing method that has gained national and international attention, both for its effectiveness in deepening the artistry of the individual writer, and as a way of empowerment for low-income and other under-served populations.

The purpose of this workshop is twofold: (1) to enable the artist in each person to become more free, more able to write, and (2) to model a methodology for using writing to create a healing community.

Course Description: We will meet for five days, Monday through Friday, from 9 am until 1pm in Mudd 100. There will be an additional, optional session on Wednesday evening for the showing of the 23 minute international award winning documentary film, *Tell Me Something I Can't Forget* and a presentation of the use of this method with village women in Malawi, pioneered by Mary Tuchscherer of John F. Kennedy University. This session is open to the public) and will include a discussion on how to use this workshop method to empower low-income persons and those in need of healing. There are no required readings or papers for this workshop, but full participation in the twenty in-workshop hours are required.

Each participant is invited to have one private consultation with Pat outside the workshop time, to be arranged during the afternoons of the week of workshops. Participants may bring two fully double-spaced pages of prose or two poems to discuss in the conference, or the time may be used for conversation about the participant's work.

I intend to create a sense of freedom and excitement about writing. It is fun; good writing can be as easy as talking to one's closest friend or lover. We will spend the time together writing in response to exercises I will provide, and then we will share what we have written, always with the freedom to remain silent if the writer does not wish to read. We will suggest in positive ways what might be done with a piece of writing, and we will talk about what the writer has done well. No one will be embarrassed or "put down" in this workshop. Techniques for writing more freely and more powerfully will be discussed in relation to writing that is shared in the workshop.

There will be a good number of photocopied handouts provided during the workshop on topics we discuss. My book, *Writing Alone and With Others*, Oxford University Press, is available in bookstores or from Amazon.com. Signed copies may be purchased from me at a discount in workshop or on my website, www.patschneider.com. Other books I have found helpful: *On Becoming a Novelist*, John Gardner, Harper Colophon Books, and *Writing Fiction* by Janet Burroway on writing fiction. For poets: *The Poetry Home Repair Manual*, by Ted Kooser; *A Formal Feeling Comes*, Annie Finch, editor; and Millar Williams' book on poem forms. Favorites for inspiration: *Bird by Bird*, Anne Lamott and *remembered rapture*, bell hooks.

Please be informed regarding PSR policies regarding such issues as "ESL, technology use, plagiarism, etc": <http://www.psr.edu/student-policies>.

I look forward to writing with you.

– Pat Schneider