Chicago Literary Hall of Fame presents its

2023 INDUCTION CEREMONY

Tuesday, July 11
6-8pm

Chopin Theatre
1543 W. Division St.
Chicago, IL 60642

Bette Howland

Nella Larsen

Finley Peter Dunne

Emcee J-L Deher-Lesaint

Presenters

Brad Armacost
Martha Bayne
Chaz Ebert
Cat Evans
Mike Houlihan
Jacob & Frank Howland
Jennifer Smith
James R. Sullivan
Rachel Swearingen

CHICAGO Literary Hall of Fame

designed by Dmitry Samarov

est. 1918 CHOPIN THEATRE

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Cover Design Artist: Dmitry Samarov

Program Designer: Jeff Waggoner

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

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Bette Howland Presentation	Martha Bayne
Bette Howland Reading	Rachel Swearingen
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Thank You and Come to Reception	

Finley Peter Dunne

Nella Larsen

Bette Howland

CHICAGO LITERARY HALL OF FAME

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame (CLHOF) honors, celebrates, preserves, and promotes the development of Chicago's great literary heritage—past, present, and future. CLHOF seeks to realize this purpose by annual inductions of selected great writers from the past; ceremonies honoring living writers whose lifetime contributions to the literary arts warrant the highest recognition; literary awards to young people; classes, panels, and other literary endeavors designed to encourage the development of writers at all ages. CLHOF also creates written materials that record the lives and works of Chicago's most important literary figures and presents these and other materials on its website, in exhibits, author events, public art installations, literary tours, and programming relevant to the organization's goal of promoting Chicago's vibrant literary tradition and culture. CLHOF formed as a project of the Chicago Writers Association in 2010, and splintered into its own nonprofit 501(c)(3) entity in 2014.

Visit us at ChicagoLiteraryHOF.org

OUR HOST:

est. 1918
CHOPIN THEATRE

Since 1990, when Zygmunt Dyrkacz purchased the Chopin Theatre, more than two thousand different theater, literary, music and film presentations have been staged, before audiences in total of more than one million people. That includes more than 100 in-house productions, many Eastern European. Chopin has hosted performers from each American state and from more than 40 countries.

Lela Headd married Zygmunt in 2001 and soon became managing director. It is the team of Zyggy and Lela that keeps up the breathless pace of world-class quality programs, on average eight-to-10 per week.

Chopin Theatre Productions is a not-for-profit art presenter and producer. It received its 501(c)(3) status in 2019, but its activities are a continuation of work done in almost thirty years as the for-profit Chopin Theatre. It operates in the historic Chopin Theatre, originally constructed in 1918 by Worthmann & Steinbach Architects as a 546-seat nickelodeon in the heart of Chicago's Polish community. In 1990, Zygmunt purchased the vacant building, continuously rehabbing it while at the same time presenting programs to a large artistic community living in the then-crumbling Wicker Park neighborhood. Today it houses a Main Stage (200 capacity), Cabaret Studio (50-100) with its Pregnant Buffalo Lounge, the Nelson Algren Café, East Wing Art Gallery and office/ residence of the owners.

The Algren Café got its name in large part because Zygmunt was heavily involved in the name change across the street, from Nelson Algren Fountain to Nelson Algren Fountain at the Polish Triangle. "It was a very historical place for over one million Polish immigrants," Zygmunt said. "Even in Algren's books, he called it Polish Triangle. We named it Nelson Algren Café to balance that Algren/Polish Community controversy. We've had at least half a dozen events for Nelson Algren including parties for him attended by Studs Terkel, Art Shay and their friends."

Chopin, now regarded as one of America's most active arts centers, takes as its mission the promotion of enlightened civic discourse through a diverse range

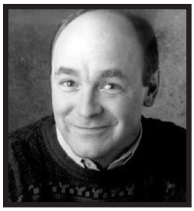
of artistic offerings. Its many guests have included Pulitzer winners Gwendolyn Brooks, Yusef Komunyakaa and Studs Terkel; renowned authors Stuart Dybek, Aleksandar Hemon, Haki Madhubuti, Sara Paretsky, Zadie Smith, Bronislaw Wildstein, Phillip Levine, and Howard Zinn; celebrated poets Nikki Giovanni, Li-Young Lee, Luis Rodriguez, Charles Simic, Marc Smith, Michael Warr and Adam Zagajewski; popular actors John Cusack and Jeremy Piven; acclaimed musicians Edward Auer, Peter Brotzman, Chuck D., Kurt Elling, Von Freeman, Fareed Haque, Adam Makowicz, Rob Mazurek, Dominic Miller and Paul Wertico. Chopin has been the site of many important Chicago literary occasions, including the Leon Forrest Prose Awards, the Gwendolyn Brooks Open Mic, journal launches and poetry festivals. The Young Chicago Authors regularly did readings at Chopin and the National Poetry Slam twice hosted its finals there.

"Chicago writers are a permanent feature in the history of Chopin Theatre," said Zygmunt. "One of the first writers was Studs Terkel who came when the theater did not yet have much except a few chairs in a dinky basement. He was extremely cheerful when I announced that Chopin Theatre was back. I'm not sure why people choose Chopin Theatre for their readings. Perhaps they see that we try out best; we were committed to each reading to associate it more with music and visuals, etc."

A multitude of local media have heralded Chopin as one of Chicago's best venues, including the likes of *Time Out Chicago*, which wrote that the theater was one "of the last old-school entertainment venues in Wicker Park." Venus Zarris, writing in *Chicago Stage Review.com*, called Chopin "a rare and wonderful location" and applauded the owners' "uniquely lovely vision. You see the evidence of it in every nook and cranny at the Chopin and you can feel the inviting warmth as soon as you step inside." *Chicago Journal's* Timothy Inklebarger wrote that "The gritty theater regularly presents performances like the (Bill) Gates piece that aim to challenge the status quo and take an honest look at the human condition."

Zygmunt acknowledged that "Father Time" was catching up to him, but that he and Lela were as passionate as ever about their project. "What drives us to do what we do is to be with like-minded people who enjoy unconditional friendship and the arts," said Zygmunt. "We hope that we would not have many regrets that we did not try. That we extended the conversation beyond the popular media noise and created a climate for enlightened civic discourse."

PARTICIPANTS



Brad Armacost has a long association with Irish Theatre of Chicago, garnering multiple Jeff nominations for his work in *The Weir, Aristocrats*, and *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. He received the Joseph Jefferson Award for the role of Teddy in Brian Friel's *Faith Healer* at Steppenwolf Studio/TurnAround Theatre and the 2014 Joseph Jefferson Ensemble Award for *Seafarer*. Among his many theatrical credits, Armacost appeared in *Playboy of the Western World, A Touch of the Poet* at Goodman Theatre with Brian Dennehy, and numerous other roles at Goodman and Chicago Shakespeare, including the Jeff Award-winning Best Production of *The Madness of King George III*. He has served as an artistic associate at Provision Theatre, as well as an ensemble member of Irish Theatre of Chicago. His television credits include *Empire, Mind Games, Chicago Fire, Missing Persons, Angel Street, The Untouchables, Early Edition,* and *The Exorcist*. Film credits include *Warren, The Company, Barbershop 2, Repetition, Eight Men Out, Backwoods, Night Sky,* and *Patriot*. He has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a narrator in the *Beyond the Score* series.

Martha Bayne is a writer and editor based in Chicago. Currently a senior acquisitions editor at the University of Illinois Press, she is the editor of two anthologies of writing about Chicago -- *Rust Belt Chicago* and *The Chicago Neighborhood Guidebook* -- and the collection *Red State Blues: Stories from Midwestern Life on the Left*, all published by Belt Publishing. Her reported work and essays have appeared in local and national outlets including the *Chicago Reader, The Chicago Reporter, The Baffler, The Rumpus, Eater, Belt Magazine,* PRI's *The World*, and *South Side Weekly*, where she is a senior editor. A member of Theater Oobleck's artistic ensemble, she has also written work for solo performance, and she teaches advanced editing at Columbia College Chicago. In 2009 she founded the long-running community meal project Soup & Bread, and her *Soup & Bread Cookbook: Building Community One Pot at a Time*, a narrative cookbook based on that event, was published by Agate Publishing in 2011. She can be found online at marthabayne.com or on Substack, where she writes a weekly newsletter called "Bell, Whistle."

J-L Deher-Lesaint, born and raised in Guadeloupe (French West Indies), moved to Chicago in 1995 and subsequently earned degrees from Harold Washington College, Loyola University Chicago, the University of Virginia's MFA program and Northwestern University's School of Continuing Studies. He has taught English, creative writing, literature and cinema at Harold Washington College since 2004.

Chaz Ebert is the CEO of Ebert Digital LLC, which publishes the acclaimed movie review site, Rogerebert.com. She is also a producer of movies and television shows. She co-founded the Ebertfest film festival, now in its 23rd year, at the University of Illinois Champaign, with her late husband Roger Ebert. Her civic passions include programs to help break the glass ceiling for women and people of color, and to provide education and arts for women, children and families. Her philanthropic endeavors include providing grants to support films with strong social justice themes, and encouraging emerging writers, filmmakers, and technologists in the arts and sciences. She was the 2019 International Beethoven Project Beethoven Laureate for being "a humanist who promotes justice and a better world through the arts." She received the Black Reel Ruby Dee Humanitarian Award and the Facets Legend Award at the Screen Gems Benefit, both in 2022.

Cat Evans (They/She/Him) is a two-time Jeff nominee Chicago-based actor, voice over artist, and stage manager. They received their BFA in Acting from Northern Illinois University and is currently an ensemble member at Theatre Y. Notable works include *Little Carl* (Chicago Shakes), *Laughing Song* (Theatre Y), and *The Crucible* (Edge of the Wood).

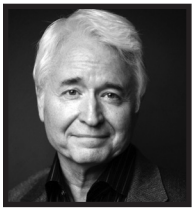
Mike "Houli" Houlihan is a former features columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, wrote the "Hooliganism" column in the *Irish American News* for over twenty years and currently writes the "Chicago Calling" column for *The Irish Echo*. He began his professional career as an actor over fifty years ago in 1973 with the American Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford CT, appeared onstage with regional theatres across the nation as well as off-Broadway, on-Broadway, and on television and in major motion pictures. His experience as an actor, director, and producer paved the way for his career as

a playwright. His play *Goin' East on Ashland* ran for over six years in Chicago, and his play *Mickey Finn* had its world premiere at the Royal George Theatre. He has written and/or starred in several independent feature films, including *Tapioca*, *In Search of Weeping Jim*, *Her Majesty Da Queen*, and *Our Irish Cousins*. Houli was co-host of *The Skinny and Houli Show* on radio in Chicago for many years as well as his *Hibernian Radio Hour*. His books include *Hooliganism Stories*, *More Hooliganism Stories*, and *Nothin's on the Square*. His latest book, *Chicago Irish Mythology*, was published on St. Patrick's Day and is now available through Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

Frank Howland was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1958. He received an A.B. from Harvard College and a Ph.D. in economics from Stanford University. Frank has taught economics at Wabash College since 1988, where he is the John W. Bachmann/Edward Jones Professor of Economics and Leadership. He is currently the chair of the Politics, Philosophy and Economics major at Wabash. Frank is the co-author of a textbook on econometrics and is currently researching the history of economic thought. He and his wife Elizabeth Justice live in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

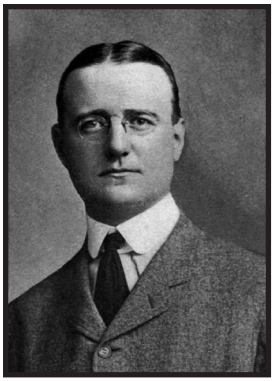
Jacob Howland is Provost and Director of the Intellectual Foundations Program at UATX, commonly known as the University of Austin. He was formerly McFarlin Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tulsa, where he taught for 32 years. He is the author of *Glaucon's Fate: History, Myth, and Character in Plato's Republic* (2018), *Plato and the Talmud* (2011), *Kierkegaard and Socrates: A Study in Philosophy and Faith* (2006), *The Paradox of Political Philosophy: Socrates' Philosophic Trial* (1998), and *The Republic: The Odyssey of Philosophy* (1993). His articles on literature, politics, and the academy have appeared in *The Nation*, *The New Criterion*, *Commentary*, the *Claremont Review of Books*, the *Jewish Review of Books*, *City Journal*, and the on-line magazines *Mosaic*, *UnHerd*, and *Quillette*, among other venues.

Jennifer Smith is Associate Professor and Chair of the English Department at North Central College. Her book, *The American Short Story Cycle*, spans two centuries to tell the history of a genre that includes both major and marginal authors. Her published journal articles and essays often focus on modernist writers for whom Chicago has had a transformative effect: Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, Susan Glaspell, and Margaret Anderson.



J.R. Sullivan is a director and producer, having worked in theaters nationwide as well as heading companies as artistic director. From 2009-2013, Jim was the Artistic Director of New York's Pearl Theatre, whose resident acting company was presented with a Drama Desk Award recognition in 2011. For the Pearl, Jim directed productions of *Hard Times*, *Playboy of the Western World*, *Widowers' Houses*, *Biography*, *Richard II*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, and *Wittenberg*. More recently, Jim directed an acclaimed off-Broadway revival of Lillian Hellman's *Days to Come* for the Mint Theatre Company. Sullivan's Chicago work has included productions for Northlight Theatre, Remy Bumppo, American Theatre Company, A Red Orchid Theatre, Touchstone, Live Bait Theatre, Prop Theatre, Onyx Theatre, and The Shakespeare Project. His Chicago production of Brian Friel's *Faith Healer* played an extended run for Turnaround Theatre, before transferring to Steppenwolf's Upstairs Theatre and an extended run as the inaugural presentation there. From 2018 to 2022 Jim served as Interim Artistic Director of the Irish Theatre of Chicago.

Rachel Swearingen is the author of the story collection *How to Walk on Water and Other Stories*. Her stories, essays, interviews and reviews have appeared in *Electric Literature*, *VICE*, *The Missouri Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *American Short Fiction*, the on-line magazine *Off Assignment*, the journal *AGNI*, and elsewhere. She lives in Chicago.



FINLEY PETER DUNNE

(July 10, 1867 - April 24, 1936)

Th' newspaper does ivrything f'r us. It runs th' polis foorce an' th' banks, commands th' milishy, controls th' ligislachure, baptizes th' young, marries th' foolish, comforts th' afflicted, afflicts th' comfortable, buries th' dead an' roasts thim aftherward.

by June Sawyers

He was one of the most famous people in the world. At the peak of his popularity, Finley Peter Dunne was considered one of the great American humorists of his day, comparable to Mark Twain. Dunne was read by most everyone from the common man and woman on the street up to the president of the United States.

In this day of social media and artificial intelligence--not to mention short attention spans--it may be hard to imagine that one literary figure could wield such cultural influence, but Dunne was no ordinary journalist. Dunne was part of a long and rich Chicago tradition of literary journalists, ranging from George Ade and Eugene Field to Ben Hecht and Mike Royko, who combined exquisite prose with biting wit. Dunne's career was distinctive for another reason. It intertwined three different aspects of American popular culture: Irish immigration, journalism, and saloons.

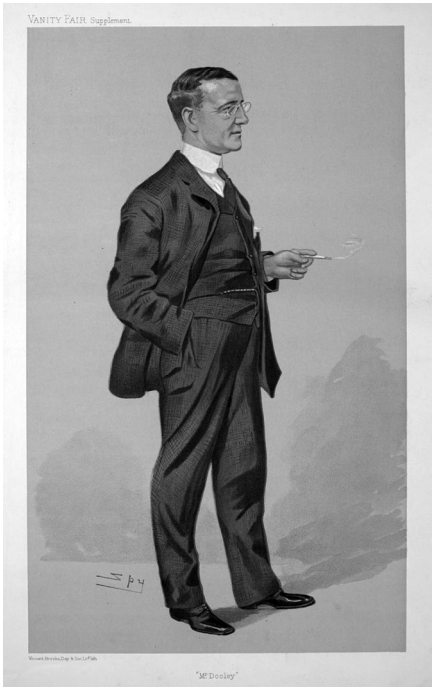
Peter Dunne was born in Chicago on July 10, 1867, to Peter Dunne and Ellen Finley, both Irish immigrants, and was raised in St. Patrick's parish on the city's Near West Side. His father owned a small lumberyard, while his relatives were active in Democratic ward politics; they also included a number of prominent Chicago priests. After graduating from West Division High School, young Pete--he added his mother's maiden name Finley later--entered the newspaper business at the tender age of 16 as a copy boy at the *Chicago Telegram* before being promoted to police reporter. Like other journalists around town, he worked at other newspapers (and there were plenty of them including the *Chicago Daily News*), under various beats until, in 1892, he joined the staff of the *Chicago Evening Post* as an editorial page editor.

It was at the *Post* where Dunne truly came into his own.

Given that booze and writing have always been big parts of the Chicago literary scene it may not be surprising that Dunne decided to combine the two "ingredients" into one singular creation, Martin Dooley. And in perhaps his boldest move, he allowed his character to speak in Irish dialect. Literary historian Charles Fanning called Martin Dooley, or Mr. Dooley, as he was known, the first dialect voice of genius in American literature.

Mr. Dooley dispensed his wisdom while offering ample pours to his working-class customers along Archer Avenue (Archey Road to him) in the Bridgeport neighborhood. Mr. Dooley was not only a sage and street corner philosopher he was also a survivor of the Great Irish Famine. He was especially known for his acerbic commentary on events of the day, particularly the dubious behavior of politicians.

Mr. Dooley was based on an actual bartender, Jim McGarry, who owned a bar in downtown Chicago and was famous in his own day for displaying equal measures of warmth and wisdom as well as for his gregarious nature. Among the customers who patronized his saloon was a young newspaperman by the name of Finley Peter Dunne. Dunne loved the ambiance of the bar but most of all he loved McGarry's sparkling personality and his gift of the gab. Before long, Dunne began writing McGarry's words down on paper.



Given that the saloon was located at the crossroads where politics and culture came together, McGarry's also happened to be a favorite gathering spot for politicians, judges, actors, and other assorted denizens of the city. McGarry epitomized the nineteenth-century ideal of the bartender: he was everybody's best friend but he also knew when to keep his mouth shut. (As saloon culture historian Bill Savage once said, "Bars are where people tell each other secrets.") Significantly, Dunne moved the setting of the tavern from the Loop to Bridgeport, then a predominantly

"The past always looks better than it was. It's only pleasant because it isn't here."
– Finley Peter Dunne

Irish neighborhood on the South Side.

Bartenders were respected figures in the community. They were looked up to. Reflecting his status, Dunne made sure Mr. Dooley dressed the part of the upstanding citizen. In a famous drawing of him, the barkeep is attired in black trousers accompanied by a white shirt worn under a black vest accentuated with a bowtie.

From 1893 to 1898, Dunne's weekly columns created a fully rounded picture of Irish American working-class life. His portraits of laborers, streetcar drivers, and mill workers, among other occupations, contain memorable moments of dignity and depth. Satirist, social critic, and all-around thinker, Mr. Dooley was an immensely popular character.

Readers identified with Mr. Dooley's resourcefulness, his quick wit, and his commonsense approach toward life. Through Mr. Dooley, Dunne examined the customs, habits, and attitudes of a working-class Chicago neighborhood and explored other themes too—the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s, the plight of the immigrant, the fight for Irish independence, the struggle of the mostly Catholic Irish to attain respectability in then-Protestant America, and the subsequent pains of assimilation.

In sum, Dunne wrote hundreds of Dooley pieces, many of which were later published in book form. Most of them were humorous and droll commentaries on contemporary life in Chicago as seen through the eyes of the fictional barkeep. "As a creator of character sketches of Irish immigrants, [Dunne] affirmed that the lives of common people were worthy of serious literary consideration," wrote Charles Fanning.

In addition to Irish topics, Dunne also addressed other themes in his work, such as social reform, the Pullman strike, and Chicago politics. Dunne's satirical comments on the Spanish-American War, for example, in 1898 were widely reprinted and ushered in the second phase of his career. In 1900, he moved to New York and his columns became nationally syndicated. By the outbreak of World War I, Dunne reportedly was the most famous columnist in the country.

"Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable."
– Finley Peter Dunne

Decades later, in April 1936, Dunne died in New York of throat cancer. By that time, he had fallen into relative obscurity although his most famous character, Mr. Dooley, was still fondly remembered.

Dunne should also be remembered for another reason. He helped establish one of Chicago's most distinctively macabre, if short-lived, literary institutions, the Whitechapel Club in 1889. Inspired partly by the Jack the Ripper murders in the Whitechapel neighborhood of London and regulated by the arcane rules of the Clan na Gael, the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Irish republican organization, the Whitechapel Club was a social group of journalists who met in the back room of a saloon on Calhoun Place in so-called Newsboys' Alley, where they told stories, recited poems, read from works in progress, and typically ended their evening with a round of jovial drinking songs. The unconventional ambiance included skulls and hangman's nooses that adorned its walls and ceilings. The chief focus of the room, though, was a huge coffin-shaped dining table. Ostensibly, the qualifications for membership were "wit and good fellowship" but the real purpose of their "meetings" was "serious drinking and newspaper gossip."

Finley Dunne's Tavern on Lincoln Avenue in Lakeview honors Dunne's memory and even has a sandwich named after him: Dooley's Sandwich consists of grilled cheese with a fried egg and bacon or sausage.

Born in Glasgow, June Sawyers wrote three columns for the Chicago Tribune *(*"Way We Were," "After Hours," and "The Resourceful Traveler"*). Her work has also appeared in* Newcity *and* Third Coast Review*, among other publications. She is the author of nearly 30 books, including* Chicago Portraits *(Northwestern University Press) and* Chicago Beer *(History Press) and is currently working on* Midwestern Coffeehouses: A Cultural History *to be published by University of Illinois Press. In addition, she is the founder of Phantom Collective, a group that presents dramatic readings and musical performances in the Chicago area; an associate producer of* Voices over the Water*, a documentary on the Scottish diaspora; and the author of* The World Is Not Empty without Reason*, an unproduced screenplay on the Highland Clearances.*.

Finley Peter Dunne
Bibliography/Awards and Recognitions

Collections of Sketches and Essays

Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War (1898)

Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of His Countrymen (1899)

Mr. Dooley's Philosophy (1900)

Mr. Dooley's Opinions (1901)

Observations by Mr. Dooley (1902)

Dissertations by Mr. Dooley (1906)

Mr. Dooley Says (1910)

Mr. Dooley on Making a Will and Other Necessary Evils (1919)

Archives

Finley Peter Dunne's papers are archived at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

About Finley Peter Dunne

Mr. Dooley's America: A Life of Finley Peter Dunne (1941) by Elmer Ellis, a biography that contains Dunne's unfinished memoirs and explores his life and work in relation to the Progressive Era.

Mr. Dooley and Mr. Dunne: The Literary Life of a Chicago Catholic (1981), by Edward J. Bander, a collection of Finley Peter Dunne's political aphorisms, articles, and essays dating from 1893 to 1926, providing biographical and historical context for Dunne's life and work and his influence on American literature and culture.

Finley Peter Dunne: 1900-1926: The Forgotten Works of Finley Peter Dunne, America's Greatest Political and Social Humorist (2016) by Jan R. Van Meter, a collection of Dunne's essays and sketches that were published after he left Chicago for New York, with context and commentary.

"There ain't any news in being good. You might write the doings of all the convents of the world on the back of a postage stamp, and have room to spare."
– Finley Peter Dunne

NELLA LARSEN

(April 13, 1891 - March 30, 1964)

Authors do not supply imaginations, they expect their readers to have their own, and to use it.

by George Hutchinson

Nella Larsen is commonly associated with the Harlem Renaissance, yet she was a Chicago native whose personality was decisively shaped by her youth on the near South Side. The Chicago of her early childhood was a sprawling chaos sprung from the ashes of the Great Fire of 1871 and already surpassing in population every American city but New York. "Think of all hell turned loose," wrote the newcomer John Dewey to his sister in 1894, "& yet not hell any longer, but simply material for a new creation." Born in 1891 at 2124 S. Armour Street (Federal Street today) to a white Danish immigrant named Marie Hansen and a man of color named Peter Walker from the then-Danish Virgin Islands, Larsen (initially Nellie Walker) grew up in one of the Western Hemisphere's most notorious vice districts, the so-called Levee. Prowling the area bordering Nella's to the north, the young journalist Theodore Dreiser wrote in his first feature newspaper story, "Entering the district at midnight and wandering along the broken wooden pavement, ill-lighted by lamps and avoided by the police, the nerves tremble at the threatening appearance of the whole neighborhood." He could see only filth, misery, and vice in the area--drunken men and despondent women, children with "wan, peevish faces."

Peter Walker abandoned his wife and daughter soon after Nella's birth, and Marie could not legally remarry for seven years, but she took up soon after Walker's disappearance with a white Danish immigrant named Peter Larsen, and they considered themselves married. Marie gave birth to a second, white daughter when Nella was a year old; both daughters were given the Larsen surname and grew up in a Danish-American home.

Residential segregation was already an issue but there was no true "ghetto," because African Americans were still so few. As of 1890, only one point three per cent of the Chicago population was black. By 1910 the number had risen to just two per cent, but a distinct "black belt" had taken form. As a "mixed" working-class family in rapidly segregating Chicago, the Larsens were forced

to live in the red-light district, and Larsen's relationship to the black community was tenuous. Being born to a white woman was enough in itself to cast suspicion upon her legitimacy. Knowing little about her natural father throughout her life made the situation even worse. White women with mixed-race children were routinely assumed to be prostitutes. For young Nella Larsen, the racial culture of the United States imperiled her primary attachments and vexed every aspect of her family's life. To be identified with her mother, to be carried on her mother's hip in the butcher shop, to toddle down the sidewalk at her sister's side, meant braving catcalls and dirty looks.

For a period of their early youth before starting school, Nella and Anna accompanied their mother to Denmark to live with relatives, apparently for three years, while Peter Larsen moved to the "white" West Side. They returned to Chicago in 1898 after Marie's mother died and the family promptly moved back to the vice district at State Street and Twenty-Second Street. Seven months later Marie and Peter Larsen were finally able to legally marry, the seven-year waiting period having elapsed since Peter Walker's disappearance.

In adulthood Larsen would be less than forthcoming about her early life and allowed people to assume she came from a bourgeois background. Many who knew Larsen later in her life in New York were fully aware of the reputation of her birthplace. Many had lived in Chicago themselves. If queried on the issue of her parentage, Larsen had little defense at a time when being thought the illegitimate "mulatto" daughter of a white woman would have devastating consequences for any attempt to "make it" in respectable society, a fact that is foundational to Larsen's first novel *Quicksand* (1928).

Larsen's stepfather became a streetcar conductor and her mother a dressmaker, a skilled trade particularly identified with Scandinavian women. As they became more financially secure, they moved to a working-class stretch of State Street in the 4500 south block, in an area with several other "mixed" families as well as black ones. In general, however, the white families were gradually moving out. Chicago's great labor battles, in Larsen's own neighborhood, quickly started turning into white race riots as capitalists brought in black workers from the South to break the unions. Black people, excluded from most unions, became

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"I feel like the oldest person in the world with the longest stretch of life before me."
– Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

"I'm not such an idiot that I don't realize that if a man calls me a nigger it's his fault the first time, but mine if he has the opportunity to do it again."
– Nella Larsen, *Passing*

automatically equated with "scabs." Soon white families moving up from the southern border-states began complaining about racially mixed social events in the public schools and the integrated cafeteria at Larsen's high school. A few black and "mixed" families moving into "white" neighborhoods around Kenwood had their homes bombed, and neighborhood covenants took form to maintain racial "deadlines" at Wabash Avenue to the east and Wentworth to the west. The black belt that Richard Wright would write about in *Native Son* was taking form.

Larsen nonetheless did well in school at a time when Chicago public schools were considered among the most progressive in the nation. English classes assigned "modern" literature and encouraged creative writing. Larsen graduated eighth grade and spent two successful years at Wendell Phillips High School, the most integrated in the city by far. This at a time when only 12,400 Chicagoans enrolled in secondary school out of a population of two million. There being very few vocational options for working-class black girls, Larsen's parents clearly knew that Nella would have to somehow find a way into a profession, and into the black world. In contrast, Nella's white half-sister never even attended high school; nor did the two girls ever attend the same primary school, although they were only a year apart. Marie Larsen was especially concerned that her first daughter receive good schooling--an education far better than the average for working-class people. In 1907 Marie Larsen's dressmaking--along, perhaps, with the help of a recently arrived uncle from Denmark--enabled the family to send Nella to Fisk University's Normal School for training black teachers. Fisk educated the children of the nation's black elite, and many marriages came out of there.

In the same year Nella took the train south to matriculate at Fisk, her stepfather and mother bought a house on West 70th Place, in a "white" neighborhood only a few blocks away from the Chicago Normal School, which Larsen could have attended for free. Nella never lived in Chicago for an appreciable time thereafter. When she was expelled from Fisk after only a year, apparently over a student rebellion against the dress and social codes for girls, Nella went to live with her

mother's people in Denmark. Her Chicago years were over, but they left an enduring imprint on her personality. The relentless pressures on her most intimate relationships bred a constant fear of abandonment she would never be able to shake. Keenly sensitive to the stigma of blackness, on the one hand, and that of presumed illegitimacy on the other, she adopted a protective mask of diffidence and intense self-restraint. As much as she longed for intimacy, she would always be ready to break off with people before they could break off with her. She was used to being on the outside, attentive to hypocrisy and accustomed to slights. She approached group identity cautiously. To what "group," after all, had Nella Larsen ever really belonged? Groups had always spelled trouble for her, inhabiting as she had the bristling borders along which they faced off.

Denmark did not ultimately work out for Nella Larsen, either. She returned to America after three years, promptly entering a black nursing school in an almost all-white hospital in the Bronx. Becoming a highly-regarded nurse and nursing educator, Larsen managed to rise into the black bourgeoisie after a stint at Tuskegee Institute and marry a cosmopolitan man of good family, America's first black PhD in physics. She then turned to library work, becoming the first black graduate of a professional library school, and found herself, as the Harlem Renaissance took form, on the springboard to a literary career. Her first publications introduced black children to Danish children's games and rhymes in *The Brownies' Book*, a black children's magazine associated with *The Crisis*, a journal of the NAACP in New York. Her highly autobiographical first novel, *Quicksand*, established her as one of the leading fiction writers of the Renaissance and was quickly followed by *Passing*, an even more admired work. In both novels, the protagonists are natives of Chicago who straddle the black/white divide and have been profoundly

shaped in childhood by the city's racial culture before moving to New York as adults. *Passing* earned Larsen a book award from the Harmon Foundation and a Guggenheim Fellowship to travel in Europe and North Africa while working on another novel. She was the first black woman so honored.

But even as these honors came and she started work on a third novel, her marriage disintegrated. Her husband had begun an affair with a white administrator at Fisk whom Larsen knew, and Larsen began spiraling into depression. Her novel, apparently about a white suburban couple with marital problems, was rejected. (The manuscript has never been found.) Larsen survived on alimony for some years, and after her ex-husband died in 1941 went back to nursing, ultimately becoming a head nurse at a hospital on New York's multi-ethnic Lower East Side and then at Metropolitan Hospital serving the Upper East Side and East Harlem. Forced to retire at the age of seventy-one, within a year she passed away from a

"And yet she hadn't the air of a woman whose life had been touched by uncertainty or suffering. Pain, fear, and grief were things that left their mark on people. Even love, that exquisite torturing emotion, left its subtle traces on the countenance."
– Nella Larsen, *Passing*

"She isn't stupid. She's intelligent enough in a purely feminine way. Eighteenth-century France would have been a marvellous setting for her, or the old South if she hadn't made the mistake of being born a Negro."
– Nella Larsen, *Passing*

heart attack, over Easter weekend, alone in her apartment on Second Avenue near 18th Street. Her body was discovered by the building supervisor.

When her white half-sister, now living in California, heard that she was to inherit some money from Larsen, she exclaimed, "Why, I didn't know I had a half-sister!" But she did know, and there was no need for the ruse. Even the friend she said this to, Mildred Phillips (also raised in Chicago), knew about Anna's dark half-sister, Nella. Marie Larsen had spoken of her to Mildred's mother many years before. But Mildred had known never to ask Anna or Marie about the "other" Larsen daughter, and never heard her mentioned in either Marie's or Anna's homes. Larsen was buried in Brooklyn in an unmarked grave by a former black nursing friend, in that friend's family plot.

For several decades, Larsen's novels were largely forgotten. In the 1960s, with the rise of the Black Arts Movement, they were dismissed as "rear guard" attempts to prove to white people that some Negroes in America were just like them, with refined European manners and nice belongings, who ought to be allowed into white people's churches and homes. Such was the critical consensus when Larsen's novels were first reissued and began to be discussed in university classrooms in the early 1970s. Biographical speculation about her was often wildly inaccurate. In the late 1980s and 1990s, her work was rescued by black feminist critics constructing an alternative womanist tradition to balance the folk orientation of Zora Neale Hurston; but this reclamation came at the expense of her consciously interracial position, and the story of her life retold in a way to deny much of her life experience, particularly her ties to her mother's family and her claims of having lived in Denmark, which were now viewed as pathetic attempts to play up her "whiteness." In related fashion, her novels were critiqued for their allegedly superficial emphasis on mulatto characters and passing, which had prevented her from more boldly investigating her real theme--black female sexuality, black sisterhood--and had compromised their literary value. In the twenty-first century the buried record of her life in scattered and unexpected archives was finally corrected. At the same time, her

novels have come to be recognized as among the most psychologically probing investigations we have of America's color line culture, of the reproduction of the black/white divide, and the roles of gender and sexuality in sustaining that divide. She would undoubtedly be proud, if somewhat surprised, to find herself in the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame. It is surely where she belongs.

George Hutchinson is Cornell University's Newton C. Farr Professor of American Culture. His teaching and research concern nineteenth and twentieth century American literature, American racial culture, and more recently literary ecology. He also directs the John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines. His book In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line*, won the Christian Gauss Award, was named one of the Best Books of 2007 by* The Washington Post*, and was an Editors' Choice of* The New York Times Book Review *and* Booklist*. It also won a bronze medal for Biography in the Independent Publishers Book Awards, and was named an Outstanding Academic Title by* Choice*. He also wrote the Pulitzer Prize-nominated book,* The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White*, as well as* Facing the Abyss: American Literature and Culture in the 1940s*. He has edited four books and a journal special issue concerning African American literature, most recently the Penguin Classics edition of Jean Toomer's* Cane*, an Editors' Choice of* The New York Times Book Review.

"Incited. That was it, the guiding principle of her life in Copenhagen. She was incited to make an impression, a voluptous impression. She was incited to inflame attention and admiration. She was dressed for it, subtly schooled for it. And after a little while she gave herself up wholly to the fascinating business of being seen, gaped at, desired."

– Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

Nella Larsen's Chicago

by Amina Gautier

Very little about the writer Nella Larsen's early life has gone undisputed. In less than 15 years, three substantive biographies on Nella Larsen were produced. They are *Invisible Darkness: Jean Toomer and Nella Larsen* (1993) by Charles Larson, *Nella Larsen: Novelist of the Harlem Renaissance* (1994) by Thadious Davis and *In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line* (2006) by George Hutchinson. In their attempts to chronicle her life and reconcile the conflicting narratives that have long circulated about her, biographers often fail to agree on her given name at birth, her father's racial heritage, her legitimacy or lack thereof, her correct birth date, whether she actually visited her mother's native Copenhagen as a child as she claims to have done, and whether she passed for white at the end of her literary career.

The fascination with Larsen's life and work is easy to comprehend. Although Nella Larsen is primarily known as a writer of the Harlem Renaissance, her career as a writer was short-lived and sandwiched between successful careers as a librarian and a nurse. The author of two novels, *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929), and a handful of short stories and essays, her body of work could easily be described as "scant," especially when compared to her contemporaries, such as Countee Cullen, Jessie Fauset or Rudolph Fisher who published at least twice as much as Larsen. Not only might Larsen's body of work be seen as "scant," but in terms of word count/page length, her individual novels are also on the slim side. With both *Quicksand* and *Passing* each clocking in at under 40,000 words, Larsen's two novels could easily be classified as novellas. The slimness of her volumes, however, is unimportant, given the fineness of her writing. In Larsen's novels, there are no wasted words. Her writing is fine and concise, capturing and rendering quickly and then moving on. In *Quicksand*, a novel that clocks in around 135 pages depending on the edition, the protagonist Helga Crane quits a teaching job in the South, moves back to Chicago, travels on to New York where she lives for several years, journeys to Denmark where she spends a year, returns to New York, marries and moves to Alabama. In a mere 135 pages, Larsen details five different geographical spaces and each space Helga Crane moves to or through alludes to a different stage in her emotional and psychological growth. Another writer would have needed a few hundred extra pages just to begin to scratch at the surface of the disparate themes of sexual repression,

racial self-hatred, colorism, classism, miscegenation, cosmopolitanism and intra-racial prejudice that Larsen tackles in her novel. W.E.B. Du Bois praised her first novel *Quicksand* as the "best piece of fiction that Negro America has produced since the heyday of Chesnutt." Based on the reputation earned by her first two novels, Larsen was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to conduct research in Europe for the completion of a third novel. Larsen was the first black woman writer to receive this prestigious honor. For the sheer skill displayed by her writing alone it is easy to see why biographers find her so compelling.

Despite the biographical disputes, there is one thing on which all three Larsen biographers agree: Nella Larsen was a Chicago native. Whether born in 1891 or 1893; whether born as Nellie Walker, Nellye Larsen or Nellie Larson; there is no disputing Chicago as the place of Nella Larsen's birth. Indeed, Chicago is given as the place of birth for the three female protagonists—Helga, Irene and Clare—who appear in Larsen's two novels as well. Although her novels are primarily set in Harlem, her protagonists are not native New Yorkers, but Chicagoans who become transplants in Harlem.

I offer the following two examples from her two novels in order to show the deft ways in which Larsen writes Chicago into her work.

Nella Larsen's novel *Passing* (1929) begins with a letter that causes the protagonist, Irene Redfield, to recall a chance meeting in a restaurant at the top of the Drake Hotel (fictionalized in the novel as The Drayton). On a visit back to her native Chicago, Irene takes shelter in The Drayton to escape the blistering heat of a Chicago summer day:

Chicago. August. A brilliant day, hot, with a brutal staring sun pouring down rays that were like molten rain. A day on which the very outlines of the buildings shuddered as if in protest at the heat. Quivering lines sprang up from baked pavements and wriggled along the shining car-tracks. The automobiles parked at the kerbs were a dancing blaze, and the glass of the shop-windows threw out a blinding radiance. Sharp particles of dust rose from the burning sidewalks, stinging the seared or dropping skins of wilting pedestrians. What small breeze there was seemed like the breath of a flame fanned by slow bellows.

"It hurt. It hurt like hell. But it didn't matter, if no one knew."
– Nella Larsen, *Passing*

"But there was, she knew, something else. Happiness, she supposed. Whatever that might be. What, exactly, she wondered, was happiness. Very positively she wanted it."

– Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

Once seated and served in the hotel's restaurant, Irene, a black woman whose light skin makes her racially ambiguous enough to "pass" for white, finds herself the object of a strange woman's gaze. Anxious under the scrutiny, she fears that her racial secret has been discovered, only to discover that the woman watching her so intently is a childhood friend who grew up with her on Chicago's South Side, who has also returned for a brief visit and who is also passing for white. The reconnection of the two friends, Irene and Clare, provides the main source of conflict in the novel, as Clare's insertion back into Irene's life becomes an unwelcome intrusion that upsets Irene's emotional and domestic stability.

In her first novel *Quicksand* (1928), Larsen's protagonist, Helga Crane, abruptly quits her job as a teacher in Naxos, a model Southern school for blacks. With no plans and nowhere to go, she takes a train and returns to her native Chicago. When she first arrives, the city's coldness stands in direct contrast with the Southern clime she's left behind: "Grey Chicago seethed, surged and scurried about her." She takes a room at the YWCA until she can gather the courage to go to the North Side where her white uncle lives, so she can beg him for a loan. Rebuffed by his new wife who refuses to recognize Helga as a legitimate family member because of her mixed race background, Helga runs away into the night, boards "the rushing swiftness of a roaring elevated train" and loses herself in the "dirty, mad, hurrying city." Depressed by her rude reception and disheartened by her lack of job prospects and her dwindling amount of savings, Helga tells herself she is due for a vacation, and instead of securing her future by looking for a job, wanders the streets of Chicago "in aimless strolling about the hustling streets of the Loop district." For three days, she takes in "the leisure, the walks, the lake, the shops and streets with their gay colors." Just when her prospects seem darkest, Helga is called in by the employment agency at the YWCA and is given a lucrative job opportunity which sets her life on an upward spiral.

In both *Quicksand* and *Passing*, Chicago functions as both the physical and metaphorical space in which Larsen's protagonists transition between psychological stability and instability. In Larsen's novels, the city figures as an

escape. When Irene and Helga both return to Chicago, the city of their birth, their lives are redirected. Both leave places of relative safety and security to come to Chicago and when they leave Chicago neither is the same woman she was upon arrival. In her writing, Nella Larsen, a Chicago hero, captures not only the physical dimensions and descriptions of the Chicagoland city landscape, but the psychology of the city and the ways in which the city of Chicago plays upon her characters' psychological well-being.

Amina Gautier is a scholar of 19th century American Literature. She is the author of three award-winning short story collections: The Loss of All Lost Things, Now We Will Be Happy, *and* At-Risk. *She has published nearly 150 short stories and has won many awards for them, including the Prairie Schooner Book Prize, the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction, the Chicago Public Library Foundation's 21st Century Award, and the Pen/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story. Her critical essays and reviews appear in* African American Review, The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story, Critical Insights: Frederick Douglass, Daedalus, The Journal of American History, Libraries and Culture, *and* Nineteenth-Century Contexts. *This essay originally appeared on April 3, 2015 as part of the Chicago Public Library's blog series* Chicago Heroes: Real & Imagined!

"Somewhere, within her, in a deep recess, crouched discontent. She began to lose confidence in the fullness of her life, the glow began to fade from her conception of it. As the days multiplied, her need of something, something vaguely familiar, but which she could not put a name to and hold for definite examination, became almost intolerable. She went through moments of overwhelming anguish. She felt shut in, trapped."

– Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

Nella Larsen
Bibliography/Awards and Recognitions

Novels

Quicksand (1928)

Passing (1929)

Short Pieces and Stories

"Playtime: Three Scandinavian Games" (1920)

"Playtime: Danish Fun" (1920)

"Freedom" (1926)

"The Wrong Man" (1926)

"Correspondence" (1926)

"Sanctuary" (1930)

"The Author's Explanation" (1930)

Archives

Nella Larsen's papers are archived in the James Weldon Johnson Collection in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, and in the Carl Van Vechten Collection, New York Public Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Division.

"These people yapped loudly of race, of race consciousness, of race pride, and yet suppressed its most delightful manifestations, love of color, joy of rhythmic motion, naive spontaneous laughter. Harmony, radiance, and simplicity, all the essentials of spiritual beauty in the race they had marked for destruction."

– Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

Awards

1929 Harmon Foundation Bronze Award for *Quicksand*

1930 Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Writing

About Nella Larsen

Invisible Darkness: Jean Toomer and Nella Larsen (1993) by Charles Larson, interprets the lives of two major novelists of the Harlem Renaissance and examines the common belief that both writers disappeared after the Renaissance and died in obscurity.

Nella Larsen, Novelist of the Harlem Renaissance: A Woman's Life Unveiled (1994) by Thadious M. Davis, a biography that explores Larsen's life and work in relation to her racial and gender identity.

In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line (2006) by George Hutchinson, a biography that traces Larsen's family history and cultural influences, and examines her literary legacy and reputation.

Nella Larsen Reconsidered: The Trouble with Desire (2008) by Lori Harrison-Kahan, a collection of essays that analyze Larsen's novels and stories from various critical perspectives, such as feminism, psychoanalysis, queer theory, and post-colonialism.

Nella Larsen's Quicksand and Passing: A Critical Guide (2019) by Charles Larson, a guide that provides historical and literary context, summaries and analyses, and discussion questions for Larsen's two novels.

"She wished to find out about this hazardous business of "passing," this breaking away from all that was familiar and friendly to take one's chance in another environment, not entirely strange, perhaps, but certainly not entirely friendly."

– Nella Larsen, *Passing*

BETTE HOWLAND: THE TALE OF A FORGOTTEN GENIUS

How Brigid Hughes Discovered a Lost Writer, and Her Letters from Saul Bellow

by A.N. Devers

In 1984, writer and critic Bette Howland won a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship.

In 1983, she published *Things to Come and Go: Three Stories.* In 1978 she published her first story collection, *Blue in Chicago.* The same year, she won a Guggenheim Fellowship. Her first book, the memoir *W-3*, was published in 1974.

On June 2, 2015, Brigid Hughes, editor of the Brooklyn-based literary magazine, *A Public Space*, was browsing through the cart of books priced $1.00, the cast-offs, at Manhattan's Housing Works Bookstore, when a book caught her eye. She didn't recognize the author, but she picked it up with a few other books and went home and started reading it.

Here are the first sentences of *W-3:*

In the Intensive Care Unit there was a woman who had undergone open-heart surgery. A monitor was implanted in her heart; it beeped every second of the day and night, a persistent tempo, never racing or slowing down as a human heart seems to, unaccountable times on the most ordinary days of our lives. If it had, the nurses would have been there on the double, their brisk white heels disappearing behind the swaying curtains. The woman was unconscious, she had never come out of it; her life was just a mechanism--its regular pace audible all through the ward.

I must have been hearing this beeping sound for a long time before I knew it.

Hughes had stumbled upon the memoir that launched Howland's career. Howland's title, *W-3,* refers not to the government tax form, but to the name of the psychiatric wing of a Chicago hospital. In 1968, Howland was a single mother of two boys, piecing together an income from low-paid librarian shifts and editorial work for the University of Chicago Press. The daughter of Jewish immigrants, she had married a Mayflower descendent, but they divorced. After that, she had no family support. The winter's chill, the poverty, the providing-on-a-shoestring, became too much. She swallowed a bottle of sleeping pills one

afternoon and was hospitalized. It so happens that at the time of their taking, she was in Saul Bellow's apartment while he was traveling overseas.

It's a safe bet that if Hughes, who prior to starting *A Public Space* in 2006 edited *The Paris Review* after George Plimpton's death, hadn't heard of Howland, then those in-the-know in the literary world hadn't either. All three of her books are out-of-print, and since winning the MacArthur she hadn't published another book.

(Full disclosure: I rent a desk at the offices of *A Public Space*, and volunteered at the magazine in graduate school. I saw the striking cover of *W-3* on Hughes's desk and then nosily interrupted her to ask what the book was. "Funny you should ask," was her reply, "That was my reaction when I saw the book, too." That night, unable to contain my curiosity, I went home and ordered my own *W-3,* as well as Howland's other books.)

The mystery of Howland's life, and her writing, and why she wasn't more known even in literary circles, drew Hughes in entirely. She had earlier in the year started to think about forgotten women writers, and about the feasibility of focusing an issue of the magazine on them, if she could find them. The seed of the idea emerged from a lecture by another off-the-radar writer, 78-year-old Martha King, about her time in 1955 at Black Mountain College. She spoke about how isolating and difficult the pursuit of independent work is, how recognition is fleeting and rarely received.

Finding Howland proved difficult. An Internet search turned up very little, "She had just vanished" said Hughes, except for a Wikipedia page with a picture of a cheerful, red-faced blond woman that wasn't actually Howland, and an article about a return to Chicago in a local paper. Hughes turned some of the sleuthing over to Laura Preston, the magazine's assistant editor. They ordered her books from online used-book dealers. *Blue in Chicago* arrived as a discarded library book. The card in the back showing it was popular, being checked out at least once a month for several years.

Preston went down into an Internet rabbit hole. She read some of Howland's writing and was amazed she had never heard of her before. "I was shocked it hadn't been anthologized or taught in workshops. It was just really good writing. We spent about three weeks looking for her and started to think she had passed away. She was really tricky to find. We knew she was an alum of the University of Chicago. We learned she taught there in the 1990s with the Committee for

Social Thought, but there was no address or email on file. We discovered she'd been to the Yaddo writing colony twice, we learned about the prizes she won, the MacArthur, the Guggenheim, and an NEA grant. We went through all these different channels. No one knew how to find her," explained Preston, adding that a Yaddo administrator told her that, "'She's on our list of the lost.'"

Finally, Hughes came across an obituary for Howland's mother. It listed the surviving family members including the names of Howland's two sons. One of them, Jacob Howland, Hughes discovered, was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tulsa.

He responded to an email: Yes, Bette was his mother. Unfortunately, she had had a car accident several years earlier, and for some time had been suffering from dementia. She wouldn't be able to talk to her. But, Jacob did have some unpublished work of his mother's, and something else to share with *A Public Space,* a safety deposit box full of letters from 1961-1990, written to his mother from Saul Bellow. "…Brigid," he explained, "is the reason we found the letters. My wife and I started looking through Bette's papers for unpublished material, and that's when we ran across the letters."

The letters are part of a portfolio on Howland in the new issue of *A Public Space*. In the October issue of *Commentary* magazine, where his mother had also published some work, Jacob explored the relationship between Bellow and his mother: "Bellow was a literary father to Bette (she was 24 and he was nearing 50 when they met at a writer's conference on Staten Island in the summer of 1961) and an occasional lover. He mentored her and helped nurse her through a defining illness; she ruthlessly critiqued his manuscripts and dispensed cherished praise," he writes.

"You get an oblique portrait of her because you are not getting what she has to say," explained Preston, who transcribed the letters for print. "You have to fill in some of the gaps. Bellow is charming, over-the-top, and melodramatic. They are all entertaining to read."

It is also clear that Bellow believed in her talent deeply. Even while she was in the hospital after her suicide attempt he tried to rally her and encouraged her to write her way out of her depression. He says in one letter: "As for writing (your writing) I think you ought to write, in bed, and make use of your unhappiness. I do it. Many do. One should cook and eat one's misery. Chain it like a dog. Harness it like Niagara Falls to generate light and supply voltage for electric chairs."

And Howland did harness her misery and convert it into electricity for *W-3*. On her decision to take the pills she writes, "I wanted to abandon all this personal history--its darkness and secrecy, its private grievances, its well-licked sorrows and prides--to thrust it from me like a manhole cover."

In the portfolio, through her stories, an essay, and the letters, a portrait of the writer begins to emerge, but questions remain. What happened to a career that held such talent and promise? Howland was nomadic and often lived in isolation. Why did she retreat from what she had earned for herself? What role has the literary community played in allowing her work to fall from memory? Her son Jacob thinks the MacArthur is part of the answer.

The MacArthur turned into an albatross. "…I think the award may have sapped her confidence," said Jacob. "If people don't expect great things from you, it's easier to please them. But people expect great things from a writer who has won the MacArthur."

Reginald Gibbons, who as the editor of *TriQuarterly* in the 1990s published her novella *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*--the piece Jacob thinks is her best work: "I managed to get that story from her by asking again and again for something. She seemed so tentative about her work."

Hughes isn't finished with Howland. There are her letters to Bellow, which she has discovered in Bellow's archive at the University of Chicago, and when she is able to access them, she hopes to be able to run Howland's side of the correspondence in the magazine. She is still trying to track down a story she published called "The Lost Daughter." "There is a lot more I want to understand," said Hughes. "Why has she been forgotten?"

The issue of *A Public Space* did turn into one dedicated to pieces by other under-recognized women writers including Martha King, Kathleen Collins, Rosalyn Drexler, and Friederike Mayröcker. Between these women, Hughes sees not just a commonality in their obscurity, but in the space they shared in their lives. For example, Howland's first story was published in Bellow's magazine, *Noble Savage*, along with a Lucia Berlin story. Berlin, another recently rediscovered writer, has been brought back into print with wide acclaim. In *A Public Space*, Martha King writes about being at Lucia Berlin's memorial service. Only a handful of people are there. It is a quiet overlapping dance of underappreciated writers.

As I was sitting at my desk researching this piece, *A Public Space* managing editor, Lena Valencia, announced to her co-editors, "I found a Rosalyn Drexler book on the discount cart at Unnameable Books this weekend." They all cheered and passed it around.

The following letter, from Saul Bellow to Bette Howland, is reprinted in full with permission of Mr. Bellow's estate. A larger selection of letters from Mr. Bellow to Ms. Howland is featured in A Public Space.

JULY 24, 1968

Dear Bette–

I started to write, then decided to wait until Peltz's visit, just concluded. The message he transmitted was authentic. We are friends, and no friend would let you lose the year--not *this* year. I thought it unkind--*horrible*--that your husband would not take the boys in August but tried to bargain with you, taking advantage of your illness.

Peltz's report on the state of your health was less pessimistic than yours. Of course as a believer in the triumph of vitality, looking on the *bright* side, Peltz is not a trustworthy informant. But I hope he is right, and that you won't be an invalid-prisoner for a whole year. Anyway, you must have your own place. That I'm sure can be worked out--in Chicago, if necessary. You don't really mind Chicago too much, apart from weather conditions.

My plans (Oh God, my *plans!*) for coming to Chicago are in embryo--perhaps not even conceived--but I believe I will come on about Aug. 5th after visiting little Daniel on the Vineyard.

As for writing (your writing) I think you ought to write, in bed, and make use of your unhappiness. I do it. Many do. One should cook and eat one's misery. Chain it like a dog. Harness it like Niagara Falls to generate light and supply voltage for electric chairs.

Love,
Saul

A.N. Devers is a writer, editor, and owner of The Second Shelf, a rare book business focused on the work of women. Her first book Train *is forthcoming from Bloomsbury.*

REDISCOVERING BETTE HOWLAND

How the work of a celebrated Chicago writer was lost and found again.

by Carrie Golus

It was the cover that drew Brigid Hughes in.

The book, which she picked out of the bargain bin at Manhattan's Housing Works Books in 2015, had "this fabulous 1970s cover" with neon-green lettering. On the back, a blurb from Saul Bellow.

Hughes had never heard of the author, and it is her business to know authors. She was the second editor of *The Paris Review,* after George Plimpton; then she founded the literary magazine *A Public Space*.

"I'm sure you've had those moments," she says. "You open a page at random and there's a sentence or a paragraph that resonates very powerfully." The book's price: one dollar. Hughes bought it.

W-3 (Viking, 1974), the first book by Bette Howland, is a lightly fictionalized memoir of her stay in the University of Chicago Medicine's psychiatric ward, recovering from a suicide attempt. Hughes read the book quickly, though she found it harrowing: "There are a number of sentences where you want to pause and take them in and walk around thinking about them."

She wanted to know more about Howland. An internet search brought up nothing at first. More digging yielded an obituary for Howland's mother, which mentioned a grandson, Jacob, a philosophy professor at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma. Bette Howland was his mother, Jacob confirmed, and she was still alive. But she was suffering from multiple sclerosis and dementia.

Later in 2015, with Jacob's help, *A Public Space* published a portfolio of Howland's work. It included two short stories (one, discovered in a Tulsa safe deposit box, published for the first time), an essay on heroines in American literature, and excerpts from postcards and letters sent by Bellow (also from the safe deposit box). Jacob told his mother all about it; she was "mildly pleased," he says.

In October 2017, two months before Howland's death, Hughes launched an imprint, A Public Space Books. Its first publication, *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* (2019), includes a novella of the same title and 10 other short stories by Howland. Now articles and reviews are everywhere: *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times*, *Harper's*, *Lit Hub*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

But Howland's reviews were always good. A *Commentary* review of *W-3* points out that, unlike other memoirists of mental illness, "she writes as if she were a participant-observer, a novelist-anthropologist in a strange, often perplexing new place." When her second book, *Blue in Chicago* (Harper & Row, 1978) was published, Studs Terkel invited her on his WFMT radio show. "Bette Howland is one of the most perceptive observers of a city, Chicago," he said, introducing his guest. "Her picture of the city is a haunting one, a poignant one." *The New York Times* described her third and final book, *Things to Come and Go* (Knopf, 1983), as "a quirky collection of three long stories by a writer of unusual talent, power and intelligence," just like "the brilliantly executed *Blue in Chicago*."

How did a well-reviewed writer with such a prestigious pedigree--an MFA from the University of Iowa in 1967, a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1978, a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant" in 1984--come to be so thoroughly forgotten?

Author and critic Bill Savage, who teaches Chicago literature at Northwestern University, wrote his dissertation on how Nelson Algren was pre-canonical, canonical, and then de-canonized. (Twenty years later, he's being canonized again.)

W-3 cover courtesy Viking; *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* cover courtesy A Public Space; *Blue in Chicago* cover courtesy Harper & Row; *Things to Come and Go* cover courtesy Knopf

Howland around 1940 in front of her childhood home in West Lawndale. In later years, Howland's relationship with her parents grew strained--but she never stopped writing about them. (Photo courtesy Frank Howland)

When Savage teaches canon formation, he starts by explaining the competing definitions. "There's the right-wing, conservative, Allan Bloom / Saul Bellow definition," he says. "The canon is those timeless works that everyone agrees speak universal human truth… It is *the* canon, singular." But this notion is not historically accurate, he says: "Things move in and out of canonicity. Shakespeare was the equivalent of television. Twain was the equivalent of *Game of Thrones*--pop fiction."

The "left-wing idea," in contrast, claims "the canon is just a political process by which people in power make other people read things. That has truth to it too, but it's not 100 percent." (His own preferred definition: the canon is that list of books and/or writers that educated people "either have read, feel guilty about not having read, or can fake having read.")

When editors like Hughes seek to broaden the canon, they often look for "scenes," as Savage puts it: "who's sleeping with who, who's publishing each other's work, who's blurbing each other." Howland's relationship with Bellow encompassed all three.

Among Bellow's papers in the UChicago Library's Special Collections Research Center is a decades-long correspondence between the two. Howland sent Bellow numerous short stories, including at least one that to my knowledge has not been published anywhere. I immediately emailed Jacob to let him know.

"See, you are demonstrating how the canon process works," Savage says. "You're part of that process too, with the alumni magazine."

***For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin--real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way… At last it had dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.*--W-3**

Bette Sotonoff was born in 1937--in January, of course, the bitterest month of the bitter Chicago winter--and grew up in Lawndale on the West Side. Her father was a factory worker, her mother a social worker. At 15 she enrolled at the University of Chicago, earning a 12th-grade certificate in 1953 and taking the blandly named Core courses of the time: humanities, history, and so on.

For her final quarter, autumn 1955, her transcript lists five law classes: Elements of the Law, Contracts, Civil Procedure, Torts, and a tutorial. But rather than completing a law degree, she withdrew her registration in January 1956 and married Howard Howland who became a prominent neurobiologist. She was 19.

The couple had two sons, Frank (born in 1958) and Jacob (born in 1959). Around the same time, Bette Howland's first published stories began to appear: "Sam Katz" in the literary magazine *Epoch*, "Julia" in *Quarterly Review of Literature*.

In July 1961 she attended a two-week literary conference at Wagner College on Staten Island, where Edward Albee taught drama, Robert Lowell poetry, and Saul Bellow fiction. Howland, then 24, and Bellow, 46, were immediately taken with each other. "Bette was easily the most accomplished of the young people who had signed up," Bellow wrote in a recommendation for her more than 30 years later. "Even then, before she had fully organized her talents, she was quite obviously the real thing."

In August, Howland sent Bellow a submission to his literary magazine. "I've no great hopes that *Noble Savage* will take this, in spite of its commendable qualities and my fine connections," she wrote. The story is not with the letter in Bellow's papers, but presumably it was "Aronesti," published in *Noble Savage* in 1962, along with work by Nelson Algren and Arthur Miller.

When Howland was visiting her parents in Chicago that winter, Bellow phoned; he was spending a quarter as "Celebrity in Residence"--so named by the University of Chicago's public relations office--in the English department. (Bellow had just married Susan Glassman, wife number three of five, but she

remained in New York.) "It was his alma mater; mine too; and one of the few places you really can go back to--maybe, in Chicago, the only place," Howland recalled in an unpublished scrap of memoir titled "Herzog's Bellow." He invited her to a small gathering with Algren and a group of visiting Russian writers. As glamorous as that sounds, the evening, in Howland's retelling, was awkward and tiresome.

By 1963 Howland was a divorcée--"that lurid word," she called it in *W-3*, "that benighted condition"--and had enrolled in the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop, partly thanks to Bellow's recommendation. Howland completed her MFA in 1967. Her thesis, "The Iron Year," includes early versions of some of the stories published a decade later in *Blue in Chicago*.

In letters to Bellow from Iowa, she insisted that she was happy there, but an incident at the very end marred it. Her thesis had a minor error in formatting. A secretary refused to accept it, and she was not allowed to graduate with her class. Howland never forgot; she refused to let the school ever use her name.

By 1968 Howland was living in the same decrepit Uptown building as her grandmother, working part time at the branch library and editing manuscripts for the University of Chicago Press. It was not much to raise a family on. Jacob, whose darkly funny observations mirror his mother's, recalled in an essay that the three of them once collected six dollars in change from a puddle of blood in their building: "We needed the money."

Around this time, Howland was hospitalized. The unnamed narrator of *W-3* (the name of the psychiatric ward) does not die, despite the bottle of sleeping pills she swallowed, because she immediately thinks better of it and calls the doctor, who alerts the police. In real life, Howland took the pills in Bellow's apartment. According to Bellow's biographer Zachary Leader, Bellow discovered her and probably hushed everything up.

But Howland rarely hushed anything. *W-3* is an unsparing look at life in a psychiatric ward: the humiliations of institutional life, the peculiar behavior of the patients, the haplessness of the doctors and nurses, whose speech is usually rendered in all caps. "NOW YOU'RE MUCH TOO YOUNG, TOO PRETTY A GIRL, TO HAVE TRIED A THING LIKE THAT," she is told soon after she's admitted. "NOW THAT WON'T DO AT ALL." Her young sons are not allowed to visit. In one

Howland with her son Frank (left), novelist Henry Roth (far right), and Roth's wife, Muriel, around 1980. (Photo courtesy Frank Howland)

heartbreaking scene, her mother brings them by so she can wave to them from the window; they can hear their mother's voice calling but can't find her. "It was a terrible thing I had done to them," Howland writes. "And I felt like a ghost."

W-3 ends on an optimistic note: her sons return from her parents' home in Florida, she moves to a new apartment, she paints the walls late at night as the boys sleep. In reality Howland still wasn't well. Her sons begged their father to let them live with him and his new wife, who was pregnant with their first child; Frank and Jacob visited their mother during the summers.

She made every effort to make up for her absence, both sons recall, taking them to concerts, museums, and plays, and on trips abroad. "She loved us very much," says Jacob. "But having said that, her writing always came first."

***It seems to me that there is something immoral--because inattentive--about reading when your body is in transit. And maybe I felt even then that I should be paying attention instead. But paying attention to what?--"*Blue in Chicago,*" from* Blue in Chicago**

In 1971, at Bellow's suggestion, Howland enrolled as a graduate student in the Committee on Social Thought, where he had recently become chair. During this period she published several short pieces in *Commentary*.

"Public Facilities--A Memoir" is set in the Borglum Branch (actually Bezazian) of the Chicago Public Library in Uptown, where she had worked part time. Howland writes mercilessly about its oddball librarians and shabby regulars: the elderly, the poor, the nobodies with nowhere else to go. (The story is "hilarious," says Bill Savage. "It should be samizdat-xeroxed and sent to every library branch in CPL.") *Commentary* published a long, furious letter from Bezazian's reference librarian: "Parts of her article were highly exaggerated and other parts were downright fictitious and malicious."

In 1974, the final year Howland was enrolled in the Committee, *W-3* came out. Her thesis, never completed, was on Henry James.

Howland's second book, *Blue in Chicago*, collected six short pieces, four previously published in *Commentary*. Readers, even professional ones, weren't sure what to make of *Blue in Chicago*: Was it a short story collection or not? Some publications reviewed it as fiction, others as nonfiction. "I certainly don't want it reviewed as fiction," Howland complained to Bellow. "For one thing, I went to a hell of a lot of trouble--no one will ever know how much--to work with the facts."

Throughout *Blue in Chicago*--as in her work in general--Howland's powers of observation are like military-grade weapons, deployed most often against her family. Her mother "seemed to talk only when her mouth was full and her cheek was bulging like a fist. As if she were chewing a quid of tobacco, and about to squirt." Uncle Rudy "had to be trundled through high school in a wheelbarrow." The house he shares with Aunt Roxy: "Unmade beds, unwashed cups, cigarette butts, dishes in the sink; it's like a frat house." There's more.

"I recognized everybody, and she just nails them," says son Jacob. What did her relatives think of these sharply drawn portraits? "Roxanne—that's my Aunt Jane. She loved it. She just was so thrilled….Her husband, not so much." What his grandparents thought, Jacob never knew. Although Howland wrote of her parents again and again, her relationship with them was strained to the point of breaking. She didn't speak to her father for years, "until she couldn't speak to him anymore, because he was in a coma, on his deathbed," says Jacob. "She expressed the love in her writing."

Writing from life was what Bellow was known for too, and in his novel *More Die of*

Howland with her extended family--the frequent subjects of her stories--in her parents' West Rogers Park apartment around the time of her hospitalization. Younger son Jacob stands with Howland at right; Frank is at left. (Photo courtesy Frank Howland)

Heartbreak (Morrow, 1987) it was Howland's turn. The character Dita Schwartz, based on Howland, is self-conscious about her acne scars, so she tries a new technique, dermabrasion, to smooth them. Bellow writes about her coarse skin and her gruesome recovery from the procedure in cruel detail.

How must Howland have felt? Her letter to Bellow offers few clues. "I'm longing to talk with you," she wrote. "Your book held me strangely; I dreamed of it every night. It was like seeing you or talking to you--& yet still in a kind of disguise." Their correspondence, and friendship, continued.

***There is nothing here I would ever choose--and nothing I can ever part with.* --"The Life You Gave Me," *from* Things to Come and Go**

In 1983 Howland published her third book, *Things to Come and Go: Three Stories* (Knopf). The following year she won a MacArthur Fellowship, thanks to the strong support of Bellow, who served as an evaluator. Yet in the last three decades of her life, with her children grown and financial pressures removed, she published no more books. It's not clear why.

Her biography on the MacArthur Foundation site states "she is at work on a

monograph, *Jacob: A Life*, and a short novel, *A Time for Kennedys*." Neither of those works ever appeared.

In 1993 Howland accepted a three-year position teaching literature in the Committee on Social Thought. The curriculum vitae she submitted includes two books described as "in progress": *The Landlady* (Knopf, 1992) and *Grisha Lapidus: My Life* (Knopf, under contract). Those books were never published either. (Her curriculum vitae also lists her 10 years in the Chicago Public Schools while omitting her MFA from Iowa, although a terminal degree from a respected program would have made her hiring easier.)

Seeing his friend's career stalling, Bellow, as always, tried to help, submitting her work to his new agent and to *The New Yorker*: "You are not likely to have heard of her, although she is the author of several books of the highest quality, each of them a succès d'estime."

Howland continued to write and to publish literary criticism. Jacob suspects winning the MacArthur sapped her confidence; too much was expected from a certified genius. In 1999 she published her final piece of creative work, the novella "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage," in the literary magazine *TriQuarterly*. The journal's former editor told *The New York Times*: "She seemed doubtful of the worth of what she had done and of what she was doing, and she was reluctant to be published."

Howland's older son, Frank, blames her perfectionism. "She spent a lot of time trying to write things that didn't come out," he says, such as *Grisha Lapidus*. "She never completed that to her satisfaction."

The novel was based on an unpublished memoir by her grandfather's cousin. Born in Europe, he lived in Palestine, got caught up in the Russian Revolution and the Mexican Revolution--then moved to New York and led an entirely ordinary life. Frank has a 200-page typescript, plus a large sketch pad--14 by 17 inches--with 80 pages, front and back, written in pencil. "This is clearly something she hoped to publish after the MacArthur award."

By 2005 "cognitive decline begins to set in," says Frank. She had learned to use a computer but would get confused and lose her revisions. Howland was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2010, and in 2014, while walking

home from the grocery store, she was hit by a pickup truck, which worsened her dementia. As Jacob wrote at the time, "Her words scatter like vegetables bouncing on asphalt."

A year after the accident, the neon-green cover art of *W-3* caught Brigid Hughes' eye.

Illness, old age, funerals, and death were constant themes in Howland's writing. An observer to the core, she seemed aware of her diminished capacities, Jacob says. One writer, A. N. Devers, insisted on trying to interview her; Jacob agreed to let her. "What does it feel like to be Bette Howland?" Devers asked.

"Bette Howland died a long time ago," she replied.

What would she have made of the furor over her rediscovered work? Jacob suspects she would be irritated by the focus on gender, a perpetual theme in reviews and articles. "I can hear her voice saying, 'I'm not just a woman writer, I'm a writer,'" he says. "She thought of herself as an American writer, and more specifically as a Chicago writer," working in the tradition of Theodore Dreiser, James T. Farrell, Richard Wright.

And yet she was a woman writer, writing from her own distinct perspective--as a daughter, as a mother--and that fact shifts the Chicago literature canon, which is still "a boys' club, a sausage fest," as Savage puts it. Its beginning is often traced to Carl Sandburg's poem "Chicago," Savage says, "where he actually personified the city as a working-class man." (Interestingly, the few women writers added to the canon in the more recent decades--Lorraine Hansberry, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sandra Cisneros--are all women of color.)

One mark of canonicity, of course, is the price of first editions. Wanting to buy *Blue in Chicago*, Savage searched online, but all the copies he found cost hundreds of dollars. Until this year, Howland's work had never been available in paperback.

Brigid Hughes keeps that bargain-bin copy of *W-3* on her desk at *A Public Space*. The bright orange "$1.00" sticker is on the back, a few inches below Bellow's blurb: "I was much moved by *W-3*. ... No poses are struck and no vain gestures made in this brave and honorable book. Bette Howland is a real writer."

Carrie Golus is a writer and editor in Chicago. She edits the Core, *the alumni magazine for the University of Chicago's undergraduate college. She's also a contributing editor for the* University of Chicago Magazine*, and writes children's books. This essay originally appeared in the Fall 2019 issue of* the University of Chicago Magazine*, published quarterly by the University of Chicago in cooperation with the Alumni Association. Published continuously since 1907. All family photos are courtesy Frank Howland.*

Bette Howland in an undated photo which she sent to her longtime friend and mentor Saul Bellow. (Photography by Wolfgang (Bill) Price; Bellow, Saul. Papers, Box 32, Folder 8, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library)

"Reason is a passion, an instinct, a drive."
– Bette Howland

Bette Howland
Bibliography/Awards and Recognitions

Novels / Novellas

W-3 (1974)

Things to Come and Go: Three Stories (1983)

Short Story Collections

Blue in Chicago (1978)

Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (2019)

Awards

1978 Guggenheim Fellowship for Fiction

1984 MacArthur Fellowship

"If we're not lost—what are we doing here?"

– Bette Howland,
Blue in Chicago: And Other Stories

Archives

Bette Howland's papers are archived at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

About Bette Howland

The Company They Kept: Writers on Unforgettable Friendships (2006) edited by Robert B. Silvers and Barbara Epstein, a collection of essays from *The New York Review of Books* that celebrate literary friendships, and includes an essay by Saul Bellow on his friendship with Howland.

"Bette Howland: The Tale of a Forgotten Genius" A.N. Devers (*Lit Hub*)
https://lithub.com/bette-howland-the-tale-of-a-forgotten-genius/

"Rediscovering Bette Howland" by Carrie Golus (*UChicago Magazine*)
https://mag.uchicago.edu/arts-humanities/rediscovering-bette-howland

"Rediscovering Bette Howland: A vital Chicago voice resurfaces in *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*" by Kathleen Rooney (*Chicago Tribune*)
https://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/books/ct-books-bette-howland-1124-20191120-tmup4wbdhbdctenle3frs4y6nq-story.html

"Re-Covered: Bette Howland" by Lucy Sholes (*The Paris Review*)
https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2021/01/07/re-covered-bette-howland/

The New York Times published an obituary for Bette Howland on December 17, 2017, written by Neil Genzlinger: Bette Howland, Author and Protégée of Bellow's, Dies at 80 (nytimes.com)

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SPECIAL THANKS

Most of the people who've made this ceremony so special, including writers, speakers, board and associate board members, and partners, are acknowledged elsewhere in this program. Those on the stage tonight and those who contributed written pieces for the program deserve our hearty and sincere thanks. Same goes for our extraordinary cover and book designers. And, of course, our hosts at the Chopin Theatre.

Others were instrumental in tonight's success, and also deserve acknowledgement.

- Shanti Nagarkatti, Nora Duff and Jim Ylielsa, Eve Moran, and Barry Benson, for their generous support of this evening's ceremony.
- Hannah Jennings, for the diligence and artistic excellence she brings to maintaining our website.
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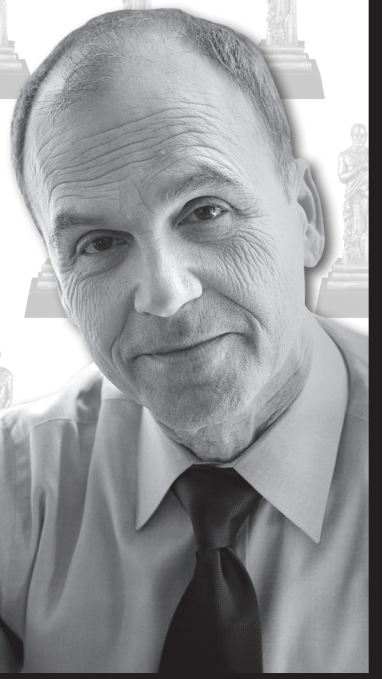
- Marisella Kidd, for tireless and careful work as a summer intern focused on this evening.
- Kylie Knur, for using her vast wells of creativity and our social media platforms to broadcast this event.
- Rich Kono, for skillful technical support and slideshow design.
- Vicente Morales, of Best Catering, for bringing his culinary excellence to the delicious food.
- Don Seeley, for once again capturing the evening with lovely photos.
- Rana Segal, for bringing to bear her phenomenal skills on the videotaping of the ceremony.
- Ron Swanson, for making the classy, memorable award statues.

FULLER AWARD
for
SCOTT TUROW



Thursday, October 5

5:00 P.M.

Harold Washington Public Library
Cindy Pritzker Auditorium
400 S. State Street, Chicago

The event will be free and open to the public, with a reception to follow the ceremony.

For registration information visit **ChicagoLiteraryHOF.org**

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Nelson Algren (2010)
Margaret Anderson (2014)
Sherwood Anderson (2012)
Rane Arroyo (2015)
Margaret Ayer Barnes (2016)
L. Frank Baum (2013)
Saul Bellow (2010)
Marita Bonner (2017)
Ray Bradbury (2021)
Gwendolyn Brooks (2010)
Frank London Brown (2019)
Margaret T. Burroughs (2015)
Fanny Butcher (2016)
Cyrus Colter (2011)
Carlos A. Cortéz (2019)
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Finley Peter Dunne (2022)
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James T. Farrell (2012)
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Ben Hecht (2013)
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Harriet Monroe (2011)
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Carol Shields (2021)
Shel Silverstein (2014)
Upton Sinclair (2015)
Studs Terkel (2010)
Era Bell Thompson (2020)
Margaret Walker (2014)
Theodore Ward (2015)
Ida B. Wells (2011)
Thornton Wilder (2013)
Gene Wolfe (2019)
Richard Wright (2010)

Photo by Don Seeley