21st Annual

Norman Mailer Society Conference
November 14–16, 2024

Sirata Beach Resort, St. Petersburg, Florida

21st Annual

Mailer Conference Program

All meetings and activities will take place in the Majestic Palm, 2nd floor, unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, November 14

9:00–9:45 Business Meeting

10:00-11:00 **Panel #1**
***Of a Fire on the Moon:* New Views**

Moderator: Gerald R. Lucas
Salvatore J. Fallica, "Norman Mailer, the Moon, and Jacques Ellul: Mailer Confronts Technopoly"
James A. Taylor, "Shooting the Moon: Mailer and Wernher Von Braun"
Jason Mosser, "*Of a Fire on the Moon* and the Myth of Objectivity"

11:15–12:15 **Panel #2**
Mailer, *Marilyn*, and Media

Moderator: John Buffalo Mailer
Nicole DePolo, "Just the Factoids, Ma'am: Marilyn in the Age of Fake News"
Salvatore J. Fallica, "Mailer, *Marilyn*, and Understanding Celebrity"

12:15–1:45 Lunch on your own

2:00–3:00 **Panel #3**
Defining and Redefining Mailer

Moderator: Enid Stubin
Maggie McKinley, "The 'I' of the Storm: Reconsidering Mailer's Literary Personae"
David Mikics, "Mailer's Left Conservatism: A History"
Raj Chandarlapaty, "The Nemesis and the Cross: Norman Mailer's Thoughts on the Counterculture"

3:15–4:15 **Panel #4**
Of Time and the Author: Mailer on and in History

Moderator: MaryLynn Navarro
Victor Peppard, "The Collaboration of the Narrator of *The Castle in the Forest* and Rasputin"
Robert Francis Saxe, "The Doolittle Report, *The Naked and the Dead*, and the Problem of Democracy in the World War II Military"
Raymond M. Vince, "Dreams, Enigmas, and Ghosts: Reading Mailer in the 2020s"

4:30–5:30 **Panel #5**
The Problem of the Sequel: *Harlot's Ghost* and Beyond

Moderator: Raymond M. Vince
Robert J. Begiebing, "The Uncompleted Sequels: *Harlot's Ghost* and *The Castle in the Forest*"
J. Michael Lennon, "*Harlot's Grave:* The Unwritten Sequel"

5:45–7:15 Reception and Cash Bar, Beachfront Breezeway

7:15 Dinner on your own

Friday, November 15

9:00–10:00 **Panel #6**
The Norman Mailer Archives at Wilkes University

Moderator: Bonnie Culver
Panelists: Suzanna Calev, J. Michael Lennon, and Victoria Rendina

10:15–11:15 **Panel #7**
Walter Anderson in Conversation with J. Michael Lennon

11:30–12:30 **Panel #8**
Mailer's Short Fiction

Moderator: Maggie McKinley
Peter Balbert, "The First Orgasm and the Flowing Soul: The Time of 'The Time of Her Time'"
Phillip Sipiora, "Reading Mailer Philosophically"
Gerald R. Lucas, "Bullfighting in the Village: Notes on 'The Time of Her Time'"

12:45–2:00 Lunch on your own; Executive Board meeting

2:15–3:15 **Panel #9**
Mailer and the Biographical Impulse

Moderator: Enid Stubin
Emily Benedek, "Jack Henry Abbott in His Letters"
David Denby, "Mailer and the Lost Boys—Gilmore and Oswald"
Robert Dean Lurie, "Mailer as Biographer"

3:30–4:30 **Panel #10**
Mailer at the Movies: Themes and Variations

Moderator: Salvatore J. Fallica
MaryLynn Navarro, "*When We Were Kings*, *The Fight*, and the Succubus"
Olivia Rutigliano, "On *Tough Guys Don't Dance*"

4:45–7:15 Dinner on your own

7:30–9:30 **Screening**
How to Come Alive with Norman Mailer

Introduced by John Buffalo Mailer
Q&A with Olivia Rutigliano and John Buffalo Mailer

Saturday, November 16

9:30–10:30 **Panel #11**
Women, Mothers, and La Luna: Mailer's Complicated Feminisms

Moderator: Nicole DePolo
Evguenia Davenport, "Dreaming of 'La Luna': Sex, Madness, and Death as Contraptions of Power in *An American Dream*"
Nicole Musselman, "Mailer's Poor Kids: Family Dysfunction in the Harvard Short Stories"
Lidiana Rios, "The Portrayal of Female Characters in *Tough Guys Don't Dance*"

10:45–11:45 **Panel #12**
20th Anniversary of Wilkes University Readers: *Town Bloody Hall*

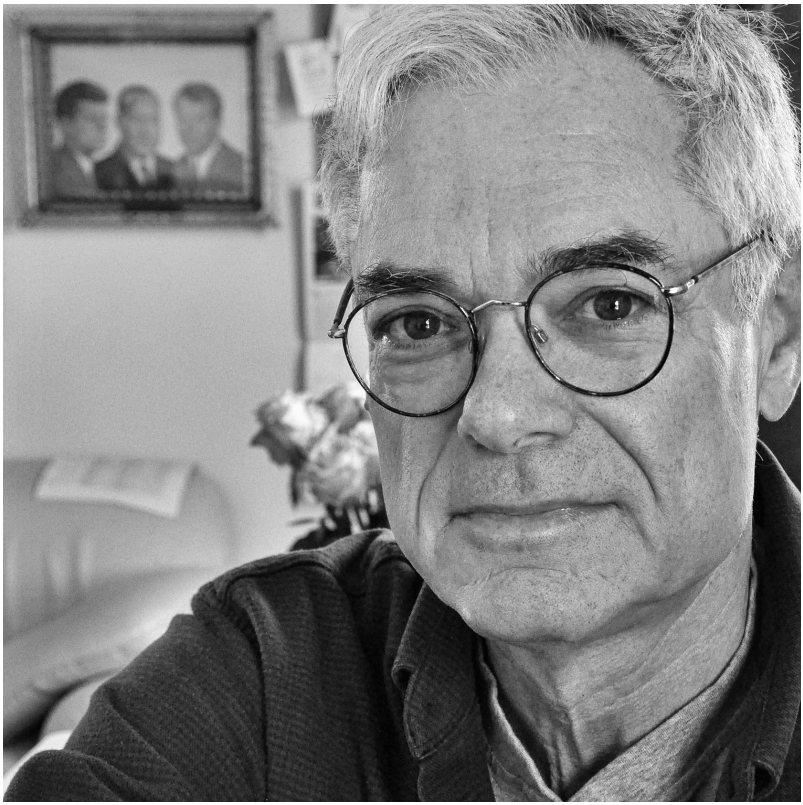
Bonnie Culver
John Buffalo Mailer

12:00–2:00 **Luncheon and Keynote Address: David Margolick**

21st Annual

Mailer Conference Presenters and Moderators

Keynote Speaker



David Margolick is a former longtime legal affairs writer and columnist for *The New York Times*, where he covered, among other cases, the trial of O.J. Simpson, during which he first encountered Larry Schiller. Following that, he was a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, where he profiled, among many other people, Tony Blair, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Larry Schiller. He is the author of several books, including *Beyond Glory: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling, and a World on the Brink*; *Strange Fruit: The Biography of a Song*; *The Promise and the Dream: The Untold Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy*; *Elizabeth and Hazel: Two Women of Little Rock* (about the two schoolgirls in the famous photograph taken during the desegregation crisis there in 1957); and *Dreadful: The Short Life and Gay Times of John Horne Burns*. He is currently completing books on Sid Caesar (Schocken) and Jonas Salk (for the Jewish Lives series of Yale University Press). He lives in New York.

Presenters and Moderators

Walter Anderson was *Parade* magazine's Editor-in-Chief when the publication's circulation rose by more than 50% to 37 million, the world's largest. He brought in acclaimed writers such as Norman Mailer, Carl Sagan, Elie Wiesel, and Julia Child, transforming the magazine. A former Marine sergeant who served in Vietnam, he has written five books, including the bestsellers *Meant to Be* and *The Confidence Course*. His first play, *Almost Home*, was produced by The Directors Company at the Acorn Theatre in New York City. His most recent play, *The Trial of Donna Caine*, premiered at the George Street Playhouse.

Above: Lisa Birnbach, Dotson Rader, Norman Mailer, Bill Hoest, Walter Anderson, and Eddie Adams, Parade *Magazine, 1980*

Peter Balbert is Professor of English at Trinity University, where he formerly served for sixteen years as department chair. He is the author of *D.H. Lawrence and the Marriage Matrix*, *D.H. Lawrence and the Phallic Imagination*, and *D.H. Lawrence and the Psychology of Rhythm*, and the co-editor of *D.H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration*. He has published more than fifty articles on modern and contemporary fiction, including many on Norman Mailer, and on university administration. He has also served as a Panelist for the National Endowment for the Humanities and as associate editor of Planning for Higher Education. His book-in-progress, from which several sections have been published in *The Mailer Review*, is entitled "D.H. Lawrence and the Great Black-Backed Gull: Essays on Lawrence, Freud, Mailer, and the Subversive Art of Conte à Clef."

Robert J. Begiebing, Professor of English Emeritus at Southern New Hampshire University, is the author of ten books, including criticism, fiction, memoir, and collected journalism. His most recent book on Mailer, in celebration of the Mailer centenary in 2023, is *Norman Mailer at 100: Conversations, Correlations, Confrontations* (Louisiana State U Press, 2022).

Emily Benedek graduated from Harvard College. Her articles and essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, *Mosaic*, *Tablet* Magazine, and on National Public Radio. Her first book, *The Wind Won't Know Me: A History of the Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute* (Knopf), was a finalist for the Robert F. Kennedy Book Prize. She is the author of *Beyond the Four Corners of the World: A Navajo Woman's Journey* (Knopf), and a memoir, *Through the Unknown, Remembered Gate* (Schocken). She is also the author of *Hometown Betrayal: A Tragic Story of Sexual Abuse and Secrecy in Mormon Country*, and *Red Sea* (St. Martin's Press), a thriller about terrorism and counterterrorism. She has two daughters and lives in New York City.

Suzanna Calev has worked at Wilkes University since August 2018 as a Public Services Librarian and Archivist. She is a native New Yorker and holds a dual Master's degree in History and Archives Management from Simmons College in Boston. She has worked in a variety of archival repositories, museums, and libraries, including the Museum of the City of New York, the Jewish Museum, the JFK Presidential Library, Boston Public Library, Harvard University, and Mount Sinai. She re-created Norman Mailer's Provincetown study on the second floor of Farley Library for the Fall 2019 Mailer conference and has continued to supervise and oversee the processing of Norman Mailer collections at Wilkes University.

Raj Chandarparlaty, Ph.D., is the author of four books, the most recent of which is *Psychedelic Modernism: Literature and Film.* He has published articles in *ARIEL*, *The Mailer Review*, and *Storytelling, Self and Society.* A teacher for seventeen years, he is currently working on writing projects.

Bonnie Culver's plays have been produced nationwide in community theaters, colleges and regional theaters, including the critically acclaimed and award-winning *Sniper at Center Stage* in New York City. Her one-woman show, *A Ticket to the Circus*, based upon the memoir by Norris Church Mailer, streamed for 20 performances in 2023, starring Anne Archer and directed by Michelle Danner. Culver has had three screenplays optioned, including *Rainbow Man* by Solo One Productions, Marlee Matlin's film development company. Her screenplays *I Do* and *Rainbow Man* were finalists in the Mystic Film Festival in 2022, and *I Do* was a Second Rounder finalist in the Austin Film Festival in 2021. *Rainbow Man* and *I Do* were finalists in the Southern California and Mystic Film Festivals, 2023. Culver retired in 2020 after 32 years from Wilkes University, where she served as a faculty member, dean, and co-founder (with J. Michael Lennon) and director of the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing. She remains a faculty member in the program and professor emerita at the university.

Evguenia Davenport is a third-year Ph.D. student in English Literature at the University of South Florida. Her primary area of focus is contemporary (twentieth- to twenty-first-century) American literature combined with her interest in Latin American and Russian literature. Her research field is based on comparative literature theories and an inter-disciplinary approach fusing literary criticism, linguistics, political history, feminism, and psychoanalysis. Evguenia's dissertation will focus on translingual literary research about power and discourse and how discourse is used by intellectuals and individuals within the constraints of an oppressive system, state, and/or regime to promote cultural awareness and social change.

David Denby was born in New York in 1943 and attended Columbia (A.B.), the Columbia School of Journalism (M.S.), and the Stanford Department of Communication (M.A.). He worked as film critic for *The Atlantic Monthly* (1970-73), *The Boston Phoenix* (1976-78), *New York* magazine (1978-1998), and *The New Yorker* (1998-2014), where he is currently a staff writer. His books include *Great Books*, *American Sucker*, *Lit Up*, *Do the Movies Have a Future?*,

and *Eminent Jews: Bernstein, Brooks, Friedan, and Mailer*, coming out in April 2025. He lives in New York with his wife, novelist Susan Rieger (*Like Mother, Like Mother*).

Nicole DePolo is a full-time Associate Professor of English at Fisher College and a part-time Associate Professor of English at Berklee College of Music, both in Boston. She serves as the Vice-President of the Norman Mailer Society and Co-President of the Board of Governors for BRAWN (the Boston Rhetoric and Writing Network). She holds a Ph.D. in Editorial Studies from the Editorial Institute at Boston University, an MFA in Creative Writing from Wilkes University, and a BFA in Illustration from Rhode Island School of Design. Her doctoral dissertation, "Norman Mailer's Book of the Dead: A Companion to *Ancient Evenings*," was completed under the direction of Christopher Ricks and includes a critical edition of the second chapter of Mailer's ancient Egyptian novel, "The Book of the Gods."

Salvatore J. Fallica was born in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his doctorate at New York University in the Department of Media, Culture and Communication, where he studied with Neil Postman and where he teaches courses in media culture, political communication, and political rhetoric. Dr. Fallica has published and presented on the work of Bob Dylan, Marshall McLuhan, Norman Mailer, and on various cultural topics, including celebrity culture and political celebrity. His work in education has been acknowledged by New York University's Steinhardt School of Education with its Excellence in Teaching Award.

J. Michael Lennon is a writer, editor, archivist, teacher, and the co-founder of the Maslow Family Graduate Creative Writing Program at Wilkes University. He has written or edited fifteen books, including Mailer's authorized biography; a memoir, *Mailer's Last Days: Remembrances of a Life in Literature* (2022); edited three volumes of Mailer's work for the Library of America; and, recently, *Lipton's: A Marijuana Journal, 1954-55* (with G. R. Lucas and Susan Mailer). He received the Ph.D. from the University of Rhode Island and is married to Donna Pedro. They live in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

Gerald R. Lucas is co-editor of *Lipton's: A Marijuana Journal, 1954-55* (2024), editor of *Norman Mailer: Works and Days* (2018), and creator and editor of *Project Mailer*. Jerry serves as President of the Norman Mailer Society, the Society's webmaster, and the Digital Editor of *The Mailer Review*. He is Professor of English at Middle Georgia State University.

Robert Dean Lurie is the author of two music biographies: *Begin the Begin: R.E.M.'s Early Years* and *No Certainty Attached: Steve Kilbey and the Church*. His essays on arts and culture have appeared in *The Spectator*, *National Review*, *Modern Age*, *America*, *Blurt Magazine*, *The American Conservative*, and *Dangerous Minds*. Lurie received his MFA in Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, and is currently at work on another book with (and about) acclaimed Australian songwriter Steve Kilbey.

John Buffalo Mailer is an award-winning screenwriter, journalist, playwright, actor, and producer. He is currently Creative Director for Mailer Tuchman Media, a development and production company based in New York. He has been published in three books of collected essays, has published two plays, has had four feature screenplays produced, and has been an editor for three national magazines—*High Times*, *Tar*, and *Stop Smiling*. He is a member of the Screen Actors Guild and a lifetime member of The Actors Studio. He recently executive-produced a feature Showtime documentary about the life of his father, *How to Come Alive with Norman Mailer*, directed by Emmy Award Winner Jeff Zimbalist (*Remastered*). He is also creating a dramatic scripted series of his father's life with James Gray (*Ad Astra*, *Lost of City of Z*, *Little Odessa)* based on the authorized biography by J. Michael Lennon, *Norman Mailer: A Double Life*, and with Lennon co-edited *The Mysterious Country: The Grace and Fragility of American Democracy* (2023).

Maggie McKinley is Professor of English at Harper College, where she teaches courses in composition and American literature. She is the author of *Masculinity and the Paradox of Violence in American Fiction, 1950-75* (Bloomsbury, 2015)

and *Understanding Norman Mailer* (U of South Carolina Press, 2017), and the editor of *Norman Mailer in Context* and *Philip Roth in Context* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

David Mikics is Professor of English and Honors at New College of Florida, as well as a regular columnist for *Tablet* magazine, where he has published several pieces about Norman Mailer. He has also appeared in *The Mailer Review*. Mikics's recent books include *Stanley Kubrick: American Filmmaker* (Yale UP), *Bellow's People: How Saul Bellow Turned Life into Art* (W.W. Norton), *Slow Reading in a Hurried Age* (Harvard UP), and *The Annotated Emerson* (Harvard UP). He recently edited *The MAD Files: Writers and Artists on the Magazine that Warped America's Brain* (Library of America). He was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2017. He lives in Sarasota and Brooklyn with his wife and son.

Jason Mosser is Professor of English at Georgia Gwinnett College. A native West Virginian, he received his B.A. and M.A. in English from West Virginia University and his Ph.D. in English from the University of Georgia. He has taught at WVU, UGA, Georgia Tech, the Atlanta College of Art, Rockford College, and the University of North Georgia. His primary area of interest is contemporary American literature, especially literary journalism. His most recent articles and reviews have been published in *The Mailer Review* and *Literary Journalism Studies*. His book on the New Journalism of the 1960s and 70s was published in 2012. He published a chapbook, *Salvage and Other Poems*, in 2018.

Nicole Musselman is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the University of South Florida's Department of English. Her area of interest is nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American literature, particularly depictions of mothers and how culture has constructed motherhood as an institution. She was the editor of the 2022 edition of *JourMS, Journal of Mother Studies*. In addition, she was an editorial assistant for *The Mailer Review*, Volume 15, and is currently an editorial assistant for Volume 16. She lives in Florida with her husband and toddler, who inspire her research in American mother studies.

MaryLynn Navarro earned her doctorate from New York University in 1997. She is Associate Professor in the English Department of Kingsborough Community College, The City University of New York. She has written articles on race and representation, popular culture, and film. Her current work spans diverse areas of interest, from creative nonfiction to documentary filmmaking, and academic program development and assessment.

Victor Peppard is Professor of Russian at the University of South Florida in Tampa. He has published on such writers as Babel, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Mailer, Nabokov, Solzhenitsyn, Olesha, and Voinovich, and on the history of Russian and Soviet sport. He has also published several short stories.

Victoria Rendina is a writer from Kingston, Pennsylvania, completing the Creative Writing MFA program at Wilkes University. Victoria earned a Master's degree in Creative Writing at Wilkes University and was the recipient of the Norris Church Mailer Scholarship in January 2024. Victoria is slated for publication in *Fantasy & Science Fiction* Magazine.

Lidiana Rios is a fifth-year Ph.D. candidate in literature at the University of South Florida. Her dissertation examines twentieth-century literary representations of Black military service during the Great War. Her expected graduation date is Summer 2025. Her primary areas of interest are twentieth-century American and French literature, as well as African American and war studies.

Olivia Rutigliano is a writer and critic specializing in the history of mass entertainment from the late-nineteenth through the twentieth century. She has a Ph.D. from the departments of English Literature and Theatre at Columbia University, where she was the Marion E. Ponsford Fellow. Olivia is an Editor at the publishing house Grove Atlantic, as well as an Editor at its publications *Lit Hub* and *CrimeReads*, where she writes essays and reviews. Her other writing has appeared in *Vanity Fair*, *Vulture*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, *the Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Public Books*, *The Baffler*, *Politics/Letters*, *Truly Adventurous*, and elsewhere.

Robert Francis Saxe is Associate Professor of History at Rhodes College. He is the author of *Settling Down: World War II Veterans' Challenge to the Postwar Consensus* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and co-editor of *The Underground Reader: Sources in Trans-Atlantic Counterculture*, with Jeffrey H. Jackson (Berghahn Books, 2015).

Phillip Sipiora is Professor of English at the University of South Florida. He is the author or editor of five books and has published approximately fifty scholarly essays. He has lectured nationally and internationally on twentieth-century literature and film and is the founding editor of *The Mailer Review*.

Enid Stubin is Professor of English at Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York, where she teaches courses in composition, literature, and Shakespeare. Her interests include the intersection of politics, culture, and writing in the seventeenth and twentieth- and twenty-first centuries.

James A. Taylor has a B.A. in Philosophy from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and an MLS from Emory University. He retired from the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library system after 31 years of service. During that time, he hosted a weekly television show, interviewing hundreds of authors as they passed through Atlanta on national book tours.

Raymond M. Vince has taught American Literature and Writing at the University of Tampa, University of South Florida, Hillsborough Community College, and other places. He has degrees in English, Theology, and Logic and Scientific Method from the University of Bristol; Kings College, London; the London School of Economics; and the University of South Florida. He has published articles in *The Fitzgerald Review* and *The Mailer Review* and is a contributor to *Norman Mailer in Context* (Cambridge UP, 2021).

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