

News

Jewish Studies hosts Dubner as speaker



PHOTO BY PATRICK BRASWELL

Stephen Dubner, best-selling author, tells an audience of his experiences as a Roman Catholic raised by once-Jewish parents.

Justin Wolf
Staff Writer

UNCA's Center for Jewish Studies hosted a standing-room-only crowd of Asheville's Jewish community Nov. 14 in the Owen Conference Center. The gathering was to hear best-selling author Stephen Dubner discuss his book, "Turbulent Souls: A Catholic Son's Return to His Jewish Family."

The book is based on Dubner's life growing up as a boy in a Roman Catholic family, only to find out

later that his parents were once Jewish. After years of deciphering the story of how and why the transformation took place, Dubner said he converted back to Judaism.

"My parents did not surrender all of their past when they converted from Judaism to Catholicism," said Dubner. "This intrigued and inspired me to figure out what this whole Jewish thing was all about."

Dubner's book was once a cover story written for *New York Times Magazine*, a story that later became one of the most widely discussed stories in the history of the publication, according to Richard Chess, the director of UNCA's Center for Jewish Studies.

"This writing is passionate and inspiring for anyone who is searching for a truth or on a journey," said Chess. "It touches on an important choice that many of us deal with, the choice of religion."

The realization that his own personal story might be appealing to the public was something that Dubner said he did not recognize until well into his writing career.

"It was not until I was working at *The New York Times* when all this came about," said Dubner. "I was writing profiles on people like Steven Spielberg and Paul Simon. I did not even realize that my most interesting story was my own family."

Dubner's visit to UNCA was made possible by a gift from Rosalie Schrier, in memory of her husband Earl Schrier, a leader in the Asheville Jewish community and a founder of UNCA's Center for Jewish Studies, according to Chess.

"We really appreciate the generosity of Schrier for bringing this whole event together," said Chess. "Earl was the founder of this area's Jewish community, and, more importantly, a great leader in the Jewish community."

Along with a majority of the elderly crowd, around 10 students came to hear Dubner speak as well.

"It is important the Jewish community be represented in this area," said Allan Tryber, an undeclared sophomore. "I know a couple of Jewish students around here and they love their religious upbringing very much. It was a great speech by Dubner."

Dubner is an accomplished journalist, and has served as editor of *New York Times Magazine* and *New York Magazine*, according to Chess. Dubner has a master's degree from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University, so he is familiar with this area.

"Asheville was the first place I visited outside of the small farm town I grew up in," said Dubner. "It is wonderful to be back, but I had no idea there were so many Jews in the mountains."

UNCA author obtains Thomas Wolfe award

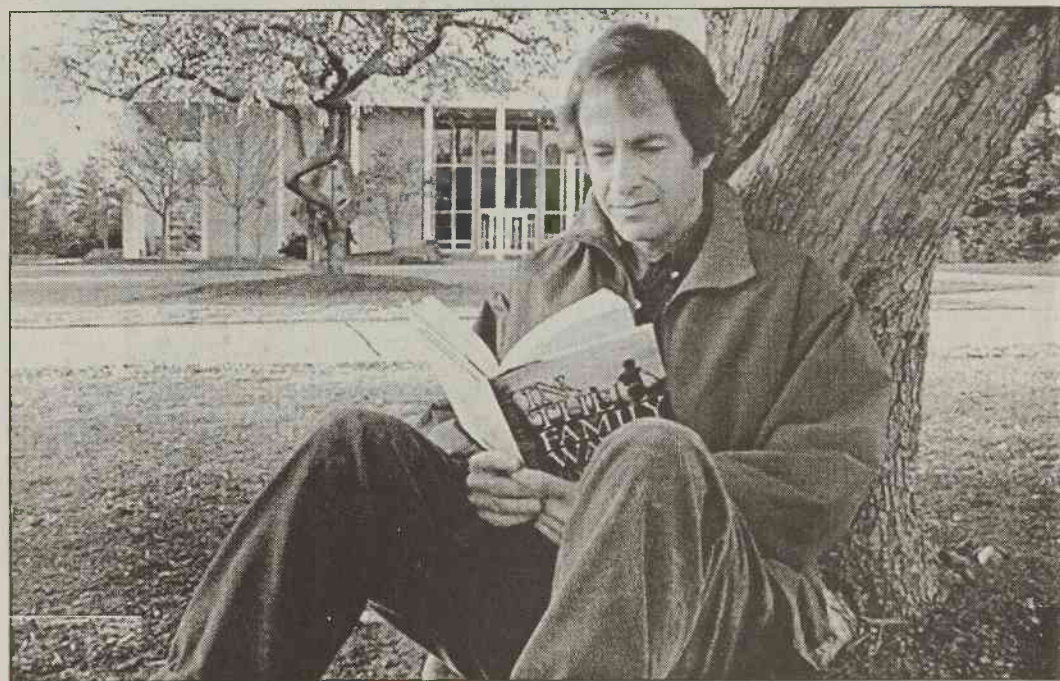


PHOTO BY SARAH LACY

Tommy Hays, a creative writing instructor at UNCA, wrote "In The Family Way" in 1999.

Lauren Owens
Staff Writer

Tommy Hays, a creative writing adjunct instructor at UNCA, received the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award for his 1999 book, "In the Family Way." The novel describes the experiences of growing up in a Southern town in the 1960s with issues like racism and the threat of nuclear war.

"I wanted to get across to the reader how my own personal feelings about racism and nuclear war threats came to bear on a little boy," said Hays. "The balance of writing the book was to write about something emotionally important, but not be bound by it."

The award is given every year by the WNC Historical Association to a book related to the area, or is written by someone who lives in this area. The winners are presented with a silver engraved cup and a \$500 award, according to Hays.

"The money comes from Mr. and Mrs. E. Frank Edwinn because of a friendship they had with Lewis Lipinsky and Thomas Wolfe," said Hays. "They put the money aside so they can have this award every year."

"In the Family Way" is the second book published by Hays. His first published novel is "Sam's Crossing," and both novels represent personal terrain and place, said Hays.

"I started writing 'In the Family Way' at the time my eight-year-old, Max, was born," said Hays. "Having a child started making me think about what it was like for me to grow up in the 1960s."

The novel is a first-person story about a 10-year-old child growing up in Greenville, South Carolina in 1963. Hays said the family in the book is very similar to his own family.

"I made a death happen in the beginning that did not happen in my family, and, by doing that, I made all the characters their own people rather than trying to stick to an autobiography," said Hays. "I

also included a death early in the book because I wanted to consider how a 10-year-old boy would handle it."

While Hays is a professor, he is also the director of the Great Smokies Writing Program, an organization between UNCA and writers in the community. The program has monthly readings off campus, and its goal is to blend UNCA and the community together.

"We are fortunate to have Hays on our faculty as an adjunct instructor and now as the director of the Great Smokies Writing Program," said Rick Chess, chair of literature. "We know there is a hunger in our community for classes in creative writing for serious writers. Writers whose ambitions are to write great works of art."

Hays also teaches an advanced fiction writing class for the Great Smokies Writing Program.

"Tommy is the perfect person to direct this program," said Chess. "His prose is eloquent, his voice is deeply engaging, and his vision is expansive."

The Blue Banner Weather

Seven Day Forecast

THURSDAY
Rain / Showers
High: 49 Low: 28

FRIDAY
Rain is Likely
High: 47 Low: 40

SATURDAY
Sunny & Cool
High: 43 Low: 26

SUNDAY
Flurries Possible
High: 44 Low: 32

MONDAY
Clearing Late
High: 46 Low: 31

TUESDAY
Partly Cloudy
High: 45 Low: 29

WEDNESDAY
Partly Cloudy
High: 48 Low: 27

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Local Almanac Last Week

Day	High	Low	Normals	Precip*
Wednesday	73	58	62/37	0.08"
Thursday	66	52	61/37	2.23"
Friday	53	38	61/37	0.00"
Saturday	58	34	61/37	0.00"
Sunday	61	28	60/37	0.00"
Monday	58	31	60/36	0.04"
Tuesday	50	34	60/36	Trace

Precipitation for the week 2.35"
Normal precipitation for the week 0.84"
Departure from normal for the week . . +1.51"
Precipitation for the year 31.43"
Normal precipitation for year to date . . 42.15"
Departure from normal for the year . . -10.72"
* Precipitation includes snow converted to rainfall

North Carolina Recreational Forecast

A cold front will move through the immediate area over the next couple of days, bringing a likely chance of rain in the process. Temperatures will be well below normal for this time of year, as high temperatures will be 10-15 degrees below normal. Highs will only be in the mid to upper 40s through the entire forecasted period. Lows will generally be in the upper 20s to lower 30s. There even will be a slight chance for some flurries during the day on Sunday. Next week brings high pressure back into the picture and this is going to be your best chance for any recreational activities.

Sun/Moon Chart This Week

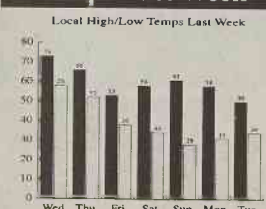
Lst Qtr	Day	Sunrise	Sunset	Moonrise	Moonset	1st Qtr
11/18	Thu	7:07 a.m.	5:23 p.m.	10:15 p.m.	11:57 a.m.	12/3
	Fri	7:08 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	11:23 p.m.	12:46 p.m.	
	Sat	7:09 a.m.	5:21 p.m.		1:29 p.m.	
	Sun	7:10 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	12:30 a.m.	2:07 p.m.	
	Mon	7:11 a.m.	5:20 p.m.	1:36 a.m.	2:41 p.m.	
	Tue	7:12 a.m.	5:20 p.m.	2:40 a.m.	3:13 p.m.	
	Wed	7:13 a.m.	5:20 p.m.	3:42 a.m.	3:45 p.m.	

National Weather Summary This Week

The tail end of a cold front will move through the Southeast as we head into the weekend. Heavy rainfall amounts are possible along the Gulf Coast as a result. A series of upper level areas of low pressure will move into the Great Lakes and the Ohio River Valley states in the next few days. These lows will keep plenty of clouds in the picture and create a chance of snow as well. High pressure will settle in across the western United States, allowing for beautiful weather and temperatures to return to near normal values for this time of year. A powerful cold front will move in off of the Pacific by the end of next week, creating a likely chance of rain in much of the Pacific Northwest. Snow will fall in the higher elevations of the Cascades.

Nov. 16, 2000

Temps Last Week



Weather Trivia

What was the most costly drought in the history of the United States?

To find out the answer, log onto <http://www.accessweather.com/theblue-banner.html> to find today's trivia answer and previous Weather Trivia answers.

Weather History

Nov. 18, 1955 - An early season cold spell ended on this date. Helena, Mont. had experienced 138 consecutive hours of subzero temperatures, including a reading of 29 below zero. Salt Lake City smashed their previous November record with a low of 14 below. Total crop damage from the cold wave was estimated at 11 million dollars.

Nov. 19, 1921 - The Columbia Gorge ice storm finally came to an end. Fifty-four inches of snow, sleet and glaze blocked the Columbia River Highway at The Dalles. All transportation between the cities of Walla Walla, Wash. and Portland, Ore. came to a standstill.

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Sherlock Holmes story performed at Pack Place

The Health Adventure will host the Autumn Players in a readers' theatre-style presentation of "A Scandal in Bohemia," the first story in the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes as printed in *The Strand Magazine* in July, 1891.

A wine and cheese reception will be offered. Cost is \$5 for members of The Health Adventure and \$6 for non-members. For more information, call (828) 254-6373, ext. 300.