

Zombie author brings humor to campus

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During a zombie outbreak the most important survival tools are clean water, weapons, a bicycle, a plan and an organized group of people, according to **Max Brooks, author of "The Zombie Survival Guide."**

"You're going to be sitting at home, minding your own business and then they will come for you. They just won't come for you in the ones or the twos. They will come for you in the hundreds, in the thousands, in the millions. That is why they are so scary," Brooks said. "The first thing you have to do is disabuse yourself of the myths, fallacies and outright lies that are perpetrated by conventional zombie entertainment."

During his creative writing workshop in the Laurel Forum of Karpen Hall Friday, Brooks discussed his own career and answered questions about the writing process for people of all ages.

Brooks described himself as painfully dyslexic, often jumbling letters and reading words backward.

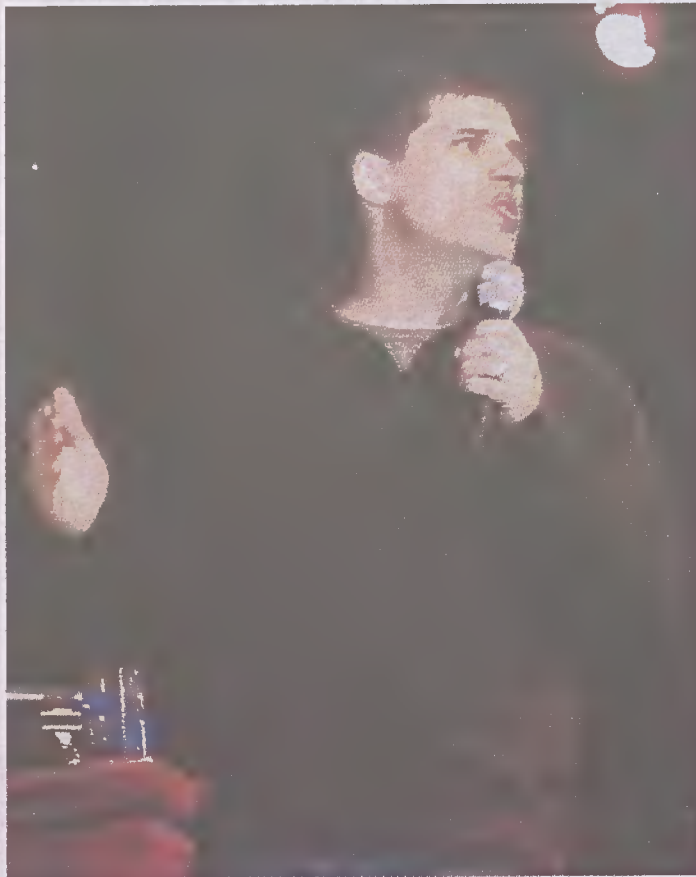
"I had to train myself when I was a little kid to sort of relearn a language, and to this day if I come across a new word, I have to pay special attention to it to make sure I get it right," Brooks said. "I'm kind of the last guy who should have made writing my career. A guy who is dyslexic and wasn't very good in school, I should have gone into politics."

Brooks said he knew he wanted to be a writer at the age of 12 when he wrote his first short story.

"I love being able to get all of my crazy ideas out onto paper and people reading it and hopefully liking it," Brooks said.

Having dyslexia didn't keep him from making a career out of writing. The disability only made him work harder to achieve his goals, Brooks said.

"There's no magic bullet. You just have to work harder. Hopefully if, you're young enough, you can get tutored and learn how to overcome it. It's like any other author. You've got to work hard and persevere and



Dustin Stuart - Asst. Photography Editor

Max Brooks discussed zombie survival techniques Friday in Lipinsky Hall auditorium to a room full of people.

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you've got to be able to deal with rejection, and if it's what you love to do, you just don't give up," Brooks said.

The former "Saturday Night Live" writer said he intended to keep "The Zombie Survival Guide" to himself but agreed to publish it after being approached by a book agent. Brooks said he was ready to write another book after his first was released.

"Zombies weren't out of my system, and I wanted to write another zombie book. For me zombies are big, they're global and I want to answer those global questions. I have always been kind of global in my thinking and I thought, 'All

right, I'm going to write a zombie story from the world's perspective. My story is going to be a story of the human race.' Now that's pretty frickin' ambitious," the author said.

Brooks wrote "World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War" in drafts and spent years doing research to make the content as accurate as possible, trying to back up or disprove his theories.

"The first thing you have to understand, at least for me and a lot of writers I know, is the goal of your first draft, your rough draft, is just to write the end. Don't worry about making it good because if you do, you will never finish. I guaran-

tee it," Brooks said. "Because once you've finished it you're like, 'OK, I'm over that major psychological hump,' which is the empty page. That has killed more potential novels than anything in the world. If you can conquer that and put anything on there then you can go back and say all right, now I can rework it, now I can throw it out. You may completely rewrite it, but there's that one level of ah, gone."

Brooks also suggested ways to introduce creative ideas to the public by using the Internet to post homemade movies and webisodes to Youtube and self-publishing short stories and books on Amazon using the print-on-demand feature. When the book is purchased, only one copy of it prints for that person.

"Take your idea and go do it in some way, shape or form. It will be a lot of work and it will be hard. The truth is, if you have an idea for a movie, you go make it," Brooks said. "What the digital revolution has done is minimize risk."

While working for the British Broadcasting Corp., Brooks lived near a science fiction bookstore in London. He said science fiction filtered in and he learned to write under the genre.

"I read and read and read science fiction," Brooks said. "That's how I taught myself and that's all you need. Guess what, there are also really great science fiction writers who have a lot to say about our society. If you can't learn it yourself, books are out there, just read them and be influenced as I did."

Leighton Carden, who started the on-campus game humans vs. zombies, said he was excited about seeing Brooks speak and predicted a large audience.

"We have a lot of people who are interested in that matter of subject material. The whole zombie apocalypse idea sort of appeals to a survivalist instinct. It tends to be more of a bigger thing in America where we consider ourselves more individualists. Any given person would See **BROOKS** on page 10

Local Events

Thursday, Feb. 10

Jake Shimabukuro
Ukulele Player
8 p.m.
Lipinsky Hall auditorium

T. Colin Campbell
Forks Over Knives
advance screening
7 p.m.
Fine Arts Theatre,
Biltmore Avenue

Friday, Feb. 11

T. Colin Campbell
Meet the Speaker Reception
4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Lipinsky Hall Lobby

Lecture, "Nutrition Is More
Than We've Imagined"
5:30 to 7 p.m.
Lipinsky Hall Auditorium

Miss Sweetheart Pageant
Scandals Nightclub
Doors open at 10 p.m.
Pageant starts at midnight

Saturday, Feb. 12

Asheville Symphony:
Romeo and Juliet
8 p.m.
Thomas Wolfe Auditorium,
Haywood Street

Monday, Feb. 14

Yoga and Meditation Club
4:30 p.m.
HU Room 223

For more
campus
events go to
www.unca.edu/calendar