

Deb Olin Unferth

Education

M.F.A. in Creative Writing, Syracuse University, August 1998

B.A. in Philosophy, with Distinction, University of Colorado, Phi Beta Kappa, May 1991

Academic Employment

University of Texas, English Department, Associate Professor, 2014 to present

Wesleyan University, English Department, 2009-2014

Associate Professor, 2012-2014

Assistant Professor, 2009-2012

University of Kansas, English Department, Assistant Professor, 2004-2009

Fellowship, Awards, and Grants

Pushcart Prize for "Likable," 2013

Finalist, National Book Critics Circle Award, 2012

Pushcart Prize for "Pet," 2011

Creative Capital Grant for Innovative Literature, funded by the Warhol Foundation, 2009

Yaddo Fellowship, 2009

VCU Cabell First Novelist Award, 2009

MacDowell Fellowship, 2007

Visiting Scholar, New York University, 2005-2007

Pushcart Prize for "Juan the Cell Phone Salesman," 2005

Fellowship in Prose, Illinois Arts Council, 2004

Phi Beta Kappa

Publications

Books

Revolution: The Year I Fell in Love and Went to Join the War (Memoir) Henry Holt
(New York, NY), 2011

Finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award

Vacation (Novel)

Hardcover edition: McSweeney's Books (San Francisco, CA), 2008

Paperback edition: Grove Press (New York, NY), 2010

Winner of the Cabell First Novel Award

Minor Robberies (Collection of stories) McSweeney's Books (San Francisco, CA), 2007

Fiction in Journals and Magazines

“The Walk,” “Decorate, Decorate,” and “The Worst.” *NOON* 15 (2015), forthcoming.
 “Offline.” *Timber* 3 (2013): 80-81.
 “I Think You’re Not Supposed to Be Doing That.” *NOON* 13 (2013): 70-71.
 “Stay Where You Are.” *McSweeney’s* 41 (2012): 94-111.
 “The Magicians.” *Vice Magazine* (June 2012): 58.
 “Likable.” *NOON* 12 (2012): 3-4
 “Want.” *NOON* 11 (2011): 18-21.
 “Blues Story.” *The Milan Review* 1 (2011): 17-18.
 “Welcome.” *Vice Magazine* 17.12 (December 2010): 30.
 “Woman in China.” *Chicago Review* 55.1 (Winter 2010): 78-79.
 “37 Seconds.” *Columbia: A Journal of Literature & Art* 47 (2010): 144-147.
 “My Daughter Debbie.” *NOON* 10 (2010): 3-7.
 “Nicaragua.” (Story collaboration with Clancy Martin.) *Atlas* (January 2010): 33-36.
 “Wait Till You See Me Dance.” *Harper’s* (July 2009): 64-72.
 “Granted.” *McSweeney’s* 23 (2009): 25.
 “The Last Composer.” *Pear Noir* 2 (2009): 92-93.
 “Opera.” *Anthem* 38 (Spring 2009): 101-102.
 “Pet.” *NOON* 9 (2009): 31-43.
 “The World’s Most Amazing Puzzles.” (Story collaboration with Clancy Martin.) *The Lifted Brow* 4 (January 2009): 131-133.
 “Natural Citizens.” *New York Tyrant* 2.1 (2008): 63-74.
 “Limo.” *Washington Square* (Summer/Fall 2008): 108-109.
 “It Could Be as Many as Nine.” *NOON* 8 (2008): 3-6.
 “Minute Lives of Great Composers.” *Columbia: A Journal of Literature & Art* 45 (2008): 1-6.
 “Sickos.” *Unsaid* 3.1 (2008): 24-33.
 “A Kidnapping Story.” *Sleeping Fish* (2007): 17-18.
 “Give Them the Bag.” *NOON* 7 (2007): 47-51.
 “Bride.” *McSweeney’s* 23 (2007): 101-116 .
 “Conversations,” “International Days,” “Brevity.” *Black Warrior Review* 33.2 (Spring/Summer 2007): 132-141.
 “Brevity.” *Notre Dame Review* 23 (Winter/Spring 2007): 220-223.
 “Ax,” “Dog.” *Crowd Magazine* 7.1 (2006): 37-40.
 “Things That Went Wrong Thus Far.” *Boston Review* 31.2 (March/April 2006): 37-38.
 “Managing.” *NOON* 6 (2006): 86-94.
 “Watch,” “Time That Another.” *Denver Quarterly* 40.3 (2006): 129-132.
 “Deb Olin Unferth.” (manifesto) *McSweeney’s* 18 (2006): 241-243.
 “Malaria.” *Conjunctions* 44 (2005): 295-301.
 “La Peña.” *NOON* 5 (2005): 12-15.
 “Egg.” *Willow Springs* 55 (Spring 2005): 12-18.
 “One She Once.” *StoryQuarterly* 40 (2004): 19-20.
 “Maybe a Superhero.” *Fence* 7.1 (Spring/Summer 2004): 77.
 “En Transito.” *3rd bed* 10 (Spring/Summer 2004): 264-5.
 “Frank Lloyd Wright.” *3rd bed* 10 (Spring/Summer 2004): 266-8.
 “Boat.” *NOON* 4 (2004): 23-30.

- “Juan the Cell Phone Salesman.” *NOON* 4 (2004): 31-35.
- “To Do.” *Shenandoah* 53.4 (Winter 2003): 93-94.
- “Mr. Simmons Takes a Prisoner.” *Harper’s Magazine* 307.1839 (August 2003): 86-90.
- “Bad,” “Three.” *Denver Quarterly* 37.4 (Winter 2003): 114-118.
- “The Present of Concern.” *Quarterly West* 56 (Spring/Summer 2003): 31-32.
- “Single Percent.” *Willow Springs* 49 (January 2002): 35-36.
- “The One Fondly Mentioned.” *StoryQuarterly* 37 (2001): 257-58.
- “Vacation.” *StoryQuarterly* 37 (2001): 337-38.
Reprinted in *Swivel* 1 (2004): 87-89.
- “To Be Honest.” *Colorado Review* 28.2 (Summer 2001): 175-76.
- “Twice.” *Colorado Review* 28.2 (Summer 2001): 177-78.
- “The Messenger.” *Hawai’i Review* 56 (Spring 2001): 21-22.
- “The Container.” *The Literary Review* 44.3 (Spring 2001): 472-74.
- “Secondly They Are.” *Quarter After Eight* 7 (2001): 271-72.
- “House-Sitting.” *Blood and Aphorisms* 41 (January 2001): 8-9.
- “Another One.” *NOON* 1 (2001): 64-67.
- “Unlike Jack,” “Soap.” *Washington Review* 25.6 (April/May 2000): 10-11.
- “Relations.” *NOON* 0 (2000): 87-89.
- “Bringing Bato.” *Cream City Review* 22.2 (Spring 1998): 126-38.
- “Call Waiting.” *Mangrove* 5.1 (Fall 1998): 98-101.

Fiction in Anthologies

- “Wait Till You See Me Dance.” *The Vintage Book of New American Short Stories*, forthcoming.
- “Dog.” *Short: An International Anthology of Five Centuries of Short-Short Stories* (New York, NY: Persea Books 2014): 242-3.
- “Stay Where You Are.” *Best of McSweeney’s* (San Francisco: McSweeney’s 2013): 491-505.
- “Likable.” *Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses XXXVII* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton 2013): 379-380.
- “The Diplomat.” *Significant Objects* (Washington: Fantagraphics Books 2012): 49.
- “Pet.” *Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses XXXIV* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton 2011): 450-457.
- “Wait Till You See Me Dance.” *Best of the West 2010* (Texas: University of Texas Press 2010): 215-232.
- “Brevity.” *Here*Now: The Anthology of Prose, Poetry, Found, and Other Hybrid Writings as Contemporary, Conceptual Art* (University of Alabama Press): Forthcoming 2011.
- “Natural Citizens.” *Not Normal, Illinois* (Indiana: University of Indiana Press 2009): 246-254.
- “Maybe a Superhero.” *You Have Time for This* 2008: 20-21.
- “Juan the Cell Phone Salesman.” *New Sudden Fiction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007): 305-309.
- “I Always Go to Particular Places.” (Story collaboration with Gary Lutz.) *The Apocalypse Reader* (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press 2007): 102-105.

- “Alliances,” “Confession,” “Daily,” “Did,” “Dog.” *Encyclopedia 1: A-E* (Providence, RI: Encyclomedia, 2006): 28-29, 159, 180, 212-213, 217-218.
- “Juan the Cell Phone Salesman.” *Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses XXIX* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2005): 440-43.

Essays/Interviews/Book Reviews in Journals and Magazines

- “Cage Fight.” (essay). *Harper’s*, forthcoming October 2014.
- “Neighbors.” (essay). *Harper’s* (August 2013): 37-39.
- “Glory Days.” Review of *Return to Oakpine* by Ron Carlson, *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, August 2013: 13.
- “Lamentations.” Review of *Too Good to Be True* by Benjamin Anastas, *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, November 11, 2012: 44.
- Review of *The Scientists* by Marco Roth, *Chicago Tribune*, 2012.
- “Didn’t You Get the Memo?” Review of *Radio Iris* by Anne-Marie Kinney, *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, July 15, 2012: 22.
- “Strayed Writes a Road Less Traveled.” Review of *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed, *Chicago Tribune*: April 1, 2012: 17.
- “Laurel Nakadate’s The Wolf Knife.” (essay) *The Believer* (March 2012): 2-3.
- “Leaving Egypt, Finding Brooklyn.” Review of *The Arrogant Years* by Lucette Lagnado, *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, September 11, 2011: 23.
- Review of *Leaving the Atocha Station* by Ben Lerner, *Bookforum* (Sept/Oct/Nov 2011).
- “Radical Will,” (memoir) *Harper’s* (January 2011): 23-26.
- “Internacionalista,” (creative nonfiction) *The Believer* (January 2011): 15-18.
- “Abandon Normal Instruments.” (creative nonfiction) *BOMB Magazine* 115 (Spring 2011): 10-11.
- “Grim Innovation.” Review of *In the House* by Lynn K. Kilpatrick. *American Book Review* (32.4 May/June 2011): 16.
- “Interview with Gary Francione.” *The Believer* (February 2011): 67-72, 78.
Partial reprint in *Utne Magazine* (Aug/July 2011): 57-58.
- “Conversation with Christine Schutt.” *The Believer* (May 2009): 66-71.
- “Deb Olin Unferth and Joe Wenderoth Discuss the Conspicuously Shabby Spectacle.” *Gigantic* (2009): 34-37.
- “Death on a Beach.” Interview with me by Renko Heuer. *Lowdown Magazine* (Berlin) 64 (January 2009): 70-71.
- “Translating the Translator.” Interview with Ana Rosa Gonzalez Matute and Conversation with Lydia Davis. *NOON* 3 (2003): 100-133.
- “Victor Gruen and the Corruption of the Shopping Mall.” Essay. *Designer/Builder Magazine* 10.1 (May/June 2003): 43-46.
- “Where the Midwest Is.” Rev. of *The Flatness and Other Landscapes* by Michael Martone. *The Black Warrior Review* 27.1 (Fall/Winter 2000): 153-55.
- “I See What I Can’t See and That Is Me.” Essay. *Salt Hill* 8 (1999): 115-121.

Essays and Interviews in Anthologies

- “Doucet’s Sacred Plotte.” *Drawn & Quarterly*, forthcoming.

- “A Conversation with Christine Schutt.” *Always Apprentices*. McSweeney’s Books, forthcoming.
- “Book.” *The Late American Novel: Writers on the Future of Books*. (New York: Counterpoint/Soft Skull Press 2011): 117-120.
- “Put Yourself in Danger.” (Essay.) *Rose Metal Field Guide to Writing Short Fiction*. (Brookline, MA: Rose Metal Press, 2009): 116-120.
- “A Private History of a Campaign That Failed.” (Essay.) *Living Blue in a Red State*. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2007): 136-144.
- “Don’t Tell It Like It Is.” (Essay.) *Rules of Thumb: Anthology of Writers* (Ohio: Writer’s Digest Books, 2006): 192-194.

Film Options

Film option for *Vacation*, Producer Jacob Daniel Valento, 2011

Film option for “Mr. Simmons Takes a Prisoner,” Tribeca Productions, 2004, 2005

Writing for Film, Theater, Music, Comics, etc.

Trailer for *Revolution*, collaboration with Beacon Projects, 2011

Short Animations with collaborator Scott Bateman:

- *Without George*. For the Creative Capital Foundation, shown at Williams College, 2009, Marylhurst University, 2009
- Trailer for *Vacation*, voices by Maria Bamford. For McSweeney’s, 2008
- *Deb Olin Unferth*. For *Salon.com*, 2007
- “Housepainters” (chapter of a graphic novel with collaborator Scott Bateman), appeared in *Blackbird* (June, 2010)

The Container. Text for short film, from a story in *Minor Robberies*, directed by Dave Murden, Cold Cut Productions, New York, 2008

Collaborations with Roderick Coover:

- *Vacation in Brooklyn*. Text on digital prints, shown at various galleries, 2009
- *Something That Happened Only Once*, 2008. Short film, recorded in Mexico City, shown at various festivals, galleries, and universities
- *The Theory of Time Here*, 2008. Short film, recorded in London, distributed by Video Data Bank, Art Institute of Chicago, shown at various festivals, galleries, and universities

“Spoon,” “Pet,” and other songs. Lyrics for songs performed by Amsterdam-based band *Spoon 3*, CD released 2008.

The Drum Tree. Narrative and libretto for Red Moon Theater, performed in Chicago, 2002

Editorial

Guest Nonfiction Editor for “Innovative Memoir,” *Guernica Magazine*, February 2011

Co-Founder and Co-Editor, *Parakeet*, a literary annual, 2003-2007

Fiction Editor, *StoryQuarterly*, 2002-2003

Editor, *Salt Hill Literary Journal*, 1997-1998
Fiction Editor, *Salt Hill Literary Journal*, 1995-1997

Community Teaching

Creative Writing Workshop. Cheshire Correctional Institution, high security penitentiary, Connecticut, full semester, fall 2012
Tutor, grade-school students, 826 Michigan, summer 2012
Fiction/Nonfiction Workshop. Dzanc Books International Literary Program, Lisbon, Portugal, two weeks, summer 2012

Talks/ Panels/ Papers/ One-Day Workshops/ Public Interviews

“Weird Science,” (panel) AWP Conference, Minneapolis, scheduled
“Weird Girls,” (panel) AWP Conference, Seattle, WA 2014
“Time and Gender,” (panel) Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY 2013
“Significance and Authenticity,” (panel) Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 2013
“The Stealth Memoir,” (panel) AWP Conference, Boston, MA 2013
Class visit and Q&A with students, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, 2012
Emerging Writers Panel, University of San Francisco, 2012
Keynote speaker and short short workshop leader, St. Louis Community College, 2012
Interview with students, Suffolk University, Boston, 2012
Interview with students, West High School, Salt Lake City, UT, 2012
“Writing Dangerously” (panel), Chicago’s Printers Row Literary Festival, 2011
“On Memoir” (talk and workshop), Goddard College, Plainfield, VT 2011
Master Class (talk and workshop), New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, 2011
“On Memoir” (talk and Q&A with students), University of Houston, Houston, TX 2011
Interview with students, University of Missouri, Kansas City, MO 2011
Interview with graduate students, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2011
Demitasse (interview with graduate students), Brown University, Providence, RI 2010
“A Lot Less: Writing a Very, Very Short Story” (workshop) 826Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 2010
“Vacation” (interview and panel) First Novelist Award Festival, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 2009
“On the Short Short,” (talk) Marylhurst University, Summer Writing Program, Portland, OR 2009
“Where Yearning Meets Epiphany” and “Chip off of Philip Roth’s Block” (panels) AWP Conference, Chicago, IL 2009
“In Last Lines Lie Liberty” (talk and workshop), University of Chicago 2009
Opium Live Author Interview Series (interview), Happy Endings, New York, NY 2009
“Why Read?” (roundtable discussion), University of Missouri, Kansas City 2009
“Chicago Authors Talk Chicago,” (roundtable interview) Chicago Public Radio, Heartland Café, 2009
“Endings,” (craft talk) Columbia University, New York, NY, 2008
“Shaping a Short Story Collection,” (panel) AWP Conference, New York, NY, 2008
“Fresh Female Voices,” “The Role of Literary Journals and Small Presses in American

Letters Today,” and “Short Story Writing,” (panels) Midwest Literary Festival, Aurora, IL, 2007
“Cross-Discourse and/or Cross-genre Writing,” (panel) &NOW/Lake Forest Literary Festival, Lake Forest, IL, 2006
“Flash, Sudden, & Other Very Short Fiction,” (panel) AWP Conference, Austin, TX 2006
“The Short Short Story: Poetics and Practice,” (workshop) Northwestern University Summer Writers Conference, Evanston, IL, 2005, 2006
“I See What I Can’t See and That Is Me,” (paper) Hall Center for the Humanities, Lawrence, KS, 2005

Public Readings

2014: Fine Arts Work Center (Provincetown, MA), University of Maine, University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, Salt and Cedar (Detroit), Scarab Club Art Gallery (Detroit)

2013: Bates College (ME), AWP for *Beacher’s Magazine* (Boston), Pratt Institute (Brooklyn), University of Texas (Austin), the Center for Fiction (NYC), 826Michigan benefit (MI), Gainesville Public Library (FL), Western Michigan University

2012: Universidade de Lisboa (Portugal), British Council (Portugal), University of Utah, the New School (NYC), Housing Works Bookstore (NYC), Suffolk University (Boston), University of San Francisco, St. Louis Community College (MO), University of Missouri at Kansas City, Pushcart Prize benefit at Le Poisson Rouge (NYC)

2011: University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Washington University (St. Louis), the New Museum for *Bookforum* (NYC), University of Cincinnati (OH), The Powerhouse Arena (Brooklyn), KGB Bar (NYC), Make Out Room for The Rumpus (San Francisco), Book Passage Bookstore (San Francisco), Kansas City Public Library (MO), The Raven Bookstore (Lawrence, KS), Women and Children First Bookstore (Chicago), Quimby’s Bookstore (Chicago), Word Bookstore (NYC), McNally Jackson Bookstore (NYC), St. Mark’s Bookshop (NYC), Happy Endings (NYC), KGB (NYC), Housingworks Bookstore (NYC), Pete’s Candy Shop (Brooklyn), Brookline Booksmith (MA), Buffalo State University (NY), Trinity College (CT), HBO Theatre (NYC), Prairie Lights (Iowa City), Poison Girl (Houston), New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (New Orleans), Goddard College (VT), Texas Book Festival, Nightingale High School (NYC)

2010: Brown University (RI), Knox College (Galesburg, IL), Wesleyan Summer Writers’ Conference (CT), Pratt Institute (Brooklyn), McNally Jackson Bookstore (NYC), KGB (NYC), 826Michigan (Ann Arbor), Bowery Poetry Club (NYC), Bryant Park Summer Reading Series (NYC), Broadway East (NYC), The Thirsty Frog (Willimantic, CT), HBO Theater (NYC)

2009: Notre Dame University (South Bend, IN), University of Chicago (Chicago), Solas for St. Mark’s Bookshop (NYC), Word Bookshop (Brooklyn), The International Center (NYC), KGB Bar (NYC), Le Poisson Rouge (NYC), Minas Gallery (Baltimore),

Marylhurst Univeristy (Portland, OR), Wesleyan University (CT), Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond)

2008: Columbia University (NYC), New York University (NYC), Border's Books (NYC), Gallery 6 (Lawrence, KS), Nexus Gallery (Philadelphia), University of Iowa (Iowa City), Harry W. Schwartz Bookshop (Milwaukee), Quimby's (Chicago), Family Books (Los Angeles), Electric Works Gallery (San Francisco), Ace Hotel (Portland), Garfield Books (Tacoma), Third Place Books (Seattle), Rainy Day Books (Kansas City), The Raven Bookshop (Lawrence, KS), Happy Endings Reading Series (NYC), Mercantile Library (NYC), Pete's Candy Shop (Brooklyn), KGB Bar (NYC), Brookline Booksmith (Brookline, MA)

2007: The Hammer Museum at UCLA (Los Angeles), MacDowell Colony (Peterborough, NH), Bennington College (Bennington, VT), The National Arts Club (NYC), The Issue Project Room (Brooklyn), Powell's Bookstore (Chicago), Myopic Bookstore (Chicago), School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago), Roosevelt University (Chicago), McNally Robinson Bookstore (NYC), Danny's Reading Series (Chicago), Sip Literary Series, NYC), The Readers Room, Mo Pitkins, (NYC), The Strand Bookstore (NYC), Mercantile Library (NYC), Bluestocking Bookstore (NYC), The Writers' Place (Kansas City), The Cakeshop (NYC), Stain Bar, PEEK reading series (Brooklyn), KGB Bar, Sunday Night Fiction Series (NYC), Klein Gallery (Philadelphia), Magnetic Fields (Brooklyn)

2006: The University of Chicago, Committee on Creative Writing (Chicago), The Readers Room, Mo Pitkins, (NYC), Happy Endings Reading Series (NYC), The Backyard Garden, for *The Believer Magazine* (Brooklyn), The Back Room, Sweet Fancy Moses Reading Series (NYC), University of Central Missouri, for *Pleiades Literary Journal* (Warrensburg, MO), The Kansas City Art Institute, The Bank Gallery (Kansas City)

2005: The Kansas City Art Institute, Art Space Gallery (Kansas City), The Writer's Place (Kansas City)

2004: KGB Bar (NYC), Danny's Reading Series (Chicago)

2003: The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Gallery 1926 (Chicago), University of Eastern Michigan (Ann Arbor), University of Chicago, The Renaissance Society (Chicago)

Courses Taught

(introductory courses through graduate seminars)

Creative Writing:

Fiction Workshop (beginning, intermediate, advanced, graduate)

A Lot Less: The Short Short Story

Techniques of Fiction

Novel Writing I, II, III

Nonfiction/Fiction Workshop

Literature/Interdisciplinary:

Strange Texts

Novel Forms

A Lot Less: Poetics of the Short Short

Writing about Ideas

Innovative Women Writers

Graphic Narrative: Comics, Collage, and Typography