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V I T A

Bill Stott
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EDUCATION

Yale College, 1958-62, B.A. in English (magna cum laude)
Yale University, 1962-63, Carnegie Teaching Fellow in English
Stanford University, 1963-64, Woodrow Wilson Fellow in English
Yale University, 1968-71, M.Ph. (1970) and Ph.D. (1972) in American Studies

TEACHING

Yale University, 1962-63, Carnegie Teaching Fellow in English
Stanford University, 1963-64, teaching assistant
Dakar University, 1965-66, occasional lecturer in American Studies and English
The Moroccan National University, Rabat, 1967-68, lecturer in American
Civilization and English
Yale University, 1969-71, assistant instructor in American Studies
The University of Texas at Austin, 1971-2001
Visiting Professor, The Polytechnic of Central London (England), 1980-81
Walt Whitman Chair in American Civilization, Leiden University, the Netherlands,
1986-87

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Non-Equity Actor, Williamstown Summer Theater, 1958; Berkshire Playhouse, 1959
Washington Summer Intern, the office of Senator Jacob K. Javits, 1962
Foreign Service Officer, the U.S. Information Agency, 1964-68; served in Dakar,
Senegal (1965-66), and Fez (1966-67) and Rabat (1967-68), Morocco
Critic, Columnist, Proofreader, *The Santiago Times* (Chile), 2005---

HONORS AND GRANTS

Carnegie Teaching Fellow in English, Yale, 1962-63
Woodrow Wilson Fellow in English, Stanford, 1963-64
N.D.E.A. Title IV Fellow in American Studies, Yale, 1968-71
University of Texas Research Institute grants, 1973, 1978, 1980, 1986

Gladys Borchers Lecturer, Department of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin, April 1976

USIA/Department of State/Fulbright Senior Specialist lecturer and American Studies consultant, Brazil, February 1976; northern West Germany, October 1980; Denmark, March 1981; Tunisia, April 1981; Turkey, May 1981; southern West Germany, May-July 1982; Costa Rica, June 1984; Mexico, January 1985; Poland, August 1985 and 1988; Spain, April 1986; Belgium, August 1986; Turkey and Sweden, April 1989; Czechoslovakia, August 1990; Israel, January 1994; Chile, June-July 1997, December 1997, April-May 2002; Serbia, November 2003; Finland and Estonia, February 2004; Croatia and Italy, January-February 2006.

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellow, 1978

Fulbright Lecturer, London, England, 1980-81; the Netherlands, 1986-87

Named Best Professor at the University of Texas at Austin in *Lisa Birnback's College Book* (1984); President's Associates Teaching Excellence Award (\$5000), The University of Texas at Austin, 1985; Eyes of Texas Award Recipient, 1999; see Addendum

BOOKS

Documentary Expression and Thirties America, Oxford University Press, 1973; paperback, 1976; second edition, with retrospective afterword, University of Chicago Press, 1986 (now in fourth printing)

Walker Evans: Photographs from the "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" Project (booklet), ed. William Stott and David Farmer, Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, 1974

On Broadway, performance photographs by Fred Fehl, text by William Stott and Jane Stott, The University of Texas Press, 1978; London, Thames & Hudson, 1979; paperback, Da Capo Press, 1980 (out of print)

Write to the Point: And Feel Better about Your Writing, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1984; second edition, hardback and paperback, with a foreword by Clifford Stoll, Columbia University Press, 1991 (now in sixth printing)

Remembering America: A Sampler of the WPA American Guide Series, edited by Archie Hobson, introductions by Bill Stott, New York, Columbia University Press, 1985; paperback, Collier Macmillan, 1987 (out of print)

John Lee, with Bill Stott, *Recovery: Plain and Simple*, Health Communications Inc., 1990; second edition, iUniverse, 2004

John Lee, with Bill Stott, *Facing the Fire: Experiencing and Expressing Anger Appropriately*, Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1993 (now in fifth printing); German trans.: *Richtig Wütend: vom Umgang mit einem explosiven Gefühl*, Knauer, 1994

Translation (with Jane Stott), Claire Chevrillon, *CodeName: Christiane Clouet*, Texas A&M Press, 1995

FILM

(Co-screenwriter and -producer, actor) *Olympia*, King Films Production, 1998.

REPRESENTATIVE ARTICLES

"Greenbelt and Futurama: The Heavenly Cities of the 1930s," *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas*, IV (1973), pp. 18-29

"Commentary: Visions of America," *Harper's Magazine*, February 1974, p. 81; reprinted as "A Photographer Laureate?" in *Photography Annual 1975*, p. 4

"Walker Evans, Robert Frank and the Landscape of Dissociation," *artscanada*, December 1974, pp. 83-89; reprinted as "Documentary Photography in the 1960s: A Note on Robert Frank," in *Younger Critics of North America*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz, Tom Montag/Margins, 1976, pp. 109-11

"Donald Barthelme and the Death of Fiction," *Prospects*, I (1975), pp. 369-86; reprinted in *Critical Essays on Donald Barthelme*, ed. Richard F. Patteson, G.K. Hall & Co., 1992, pp. 70-84.

"Shahn and Shahn," *Afterimage*, February 1976, pp. 1-3

"Endnote: Boorstin Considered," *Bookletter*, 7/5/76, pp. 16-15

"Other People's Images: A Case History," *Fair Use and Free Inquiry: Copyright Law and the New Media*, ed. John Shelton Lawrence and Bernard Timberg, the Communications and Information Science Series, Ablex Publishing Company, Norwood, N.J., 1980, pp. 61-67; second edition, 1989, pp. 72-78

"America Revisited," *The Harvard Business History Review*, Winter 1980, pp. 533-35

Memoir of Richard Kostelanetz in his *Autobiographies*, Erasmus Editions, Mudborn Press, 1981, p. 250f

"Death by Injection Needs Rethinking," *The Texas Observer*, 11/12/82; reply to letters, 12/24/82

"Walker Evans," *Contemporary Photographers*, ed. George Walsh, St. Martin's Press, New York; Macmillan, London, 1983, pp. 228-30

"Introduction to a Never-Published Book of Dorothea Lange's Best Photographs of Depression America," *Exposure*, Fall 1984, pp. 22-30

"Hard Times and Happy Days: The Visual Iconography of Depression America," Weible, Museum of American Textile History, North Andover, MA, 1985, pp. 185-89

"Manship's Once and Future Reputation," *Paul Manship: Changing Taste in America*, Minnesota Museum of Art, Saint Paul, 1985, pp. 113-25

"Documentary Expression Revisited," *Exposure*, Spring 1986, pp. 7-12

Comment on radical politics in the 1930s, *The Roosevelt New Deal: A Program Assessment Fifty Years After*, ed. Wilbur J. Cohen, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, 1986, pp. 67-69

Afterword to *Itinerant Photographer: Corpus Christi, 1934*, ed. Sybil Miller, University of New Mexico Press, 1987

"De volkscultuur is Amerika's bindmiddel" ("Popular Culture: America's Social Glue"), *NRC Handelsblad*, 5/26/87, p. 8

Afterword to Joe Jaworski, *Panna Maria: The Image of Polish Texas*, Dorsoduro Press, 1991

"Getting Rid of Anger," letter to the Editor, *NYTimes*, 9/11/93

Comment on James Agee in *Remembering James Agee*, second edition, ed. David Madden and Jeffrey J. Folks, George University Press, 1997, pp. 100-22

Entries on James Agee, John Fischer, and Clinch Calkins, in *The American National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2000

“Advice from the Best: Members of UT’s Academy of Distinguished Teachers Let Us in on the Secrets to Good Teaching,” *Texas Alcalde*, Jan-Feb 2001, pp. 37-39.

Interview with Sybil Miller to accompany her photographs, “Facing the Capitol,” *Camera Arts*, April/May 2005.

“Golden Moments, Twisted People,” special issue on the “Documentary Imagination,” *Michigan Quarterly Review*, Winter 2006.

“Eleanor Roosevelt,” *The Green Mountain Trading Post*, August 2006.

“Heaven,” *The Green Mountain Trading Post*, October 2006.

HUMANITIES CONSULTANT

Alabama: 40 Years On, dir. Carol Bell, BBC-TV, 1979; retitled *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men -- Revisited*, with an epilogue dir. Ken Fink, Blue Ridge Films, for *The American Experience*, WGBH, first PBS telecast November 1988

America Lost and Found, dir. Lance Bird and Tom Johnson, funded by NEH and WNET-TV, first PBS telecast April 1980

"At Work: Corpus Christi in 1934," NEH- and TCH-sponsored exhibit and symposium, curator Sybil Miller, Corpus Christi, February 1983

"Images and History: Documenting the Community with Photographs," NEH- and TCH-sponsored symposium in conjunction with "Austin Seen" exhibition, Austin History Center, 4/28/84

An NEH-sponsored exhibit and videotape on the American sculptor Paul Manship, the Minnesota Museum of Art, 1985

Russell Lee: Photographer, a TCH-sponsored film, dir. Ann Mundy, 1986

Images of the Depression, 1930-1940, an NEA-sponsored film, prod. Robert Wagner and George Stoney, 1991

To Render a Life, an NEH-sponsored film inspired by *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, prod. Ross Spears, premiered 1/24/92

D.W. Griffith: Father of Film, American Masters, first broadcast on PBS 3/24/93

INTERVIEWEE

Filmmaker Errol Morris and I discuss documentary ethics and the work of Walker Evans: <http://morris.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/22/the-case-of-the-inappropriate-alarm-clock-part-5/>

PRINCIPAL SERVICE

Assistant Director and Undergraduate Adviser, American Studies Program, 1971-75

Associate Dean, Division of General and Comparative Studies, 1975-77 (Acting Dean, April-August 1977)

Member, Planning Committee, Board of Foreign Scholarship's Fulbright International Education Conference, 1976

Acting Director, American Studies Program, Fall Semester 1976

Graduate Adviser, American Civilization Program, 1979-80, 1992-93

Director, American Studies (undergraduate) and American Civilization (graduate) Programs, 1981-85

Member, Committee A (Humanities), University Research Institute, 1982-85

Member, Nice Exchange Review Panel, 1982-84; Leiden Exchange Review Panel 1989-96; University of East Anglia Review Panel, 1990-92; Fulbright Review Committee, 1992-96

Member, International Committee, American Studies Association, 1984-90

Vice President and Program Chairman, American Studies Association of Texas, 1984-5; President, 1985-86

Member, Study Abroad Office Advisory Committee, 1988-96

Member, Media Planning Grants Panel, NEH, 1988, 1990, 1996, 2000

March 2006 ADDENDUM

Gail Caldwell, the Boston Globe's chief book reviewer (her criticism won a Pulitzer Prize in 2001), was a grad student in American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin in the early 1980s and has portrayed our department and faculty in her recently published memoir, A Strong West Wind. To my astonishment, the longest portrait is of me. I am introduced as a "middle-aged teacher of literature . . . known to tap-dance on the seminar table to wake lethargic students"--a misremembering of what happened when one afternoon I got up on the table to do a Lindy step and show one way to put it into words ("a toe-in, ankle-out pivot"). Then, ten pages later:

Gail Caldwell, A Strong West Wind

Random House, 2006, pp. 124-27.

Just as the Fool figures prominently in the tarot and Puck holds the secrets to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the tap-dancing madman of Garrison Hall would have his due in showing me the break in the hedge [to get out of graduate school]. Simmons was an English professor who had wandered into American Studies because, as was the case for most of its faculty, the program's peculiarities mirrored his own. He spoke with the melodious enthusiasms of an Elizabethan actor, but his fractured smile disguised his love of literature and made you think he was making fun of it all—the students, the novels, the entire universe—every time he spoke. His seminars were filled to capacity, both for the guaranteed knowledge within and the anticipated show, and Simmons worked this atmospheric pressure like the performer he

was: He once broke into a resounding chorus from the musical *Oklahoma!*—“Oh, the farmer and the cowman should be friends!”—to make a point about de Crevecoeur’s eighteenth-century classic *Letters from an American Farmer*. During class he addressed each student with formalities—Mr. Peters, Ms. Miller—and yet he could make even courtesy sound ludicrous. It was hard to get and keep your footing in dialogue with the man; the uninitiated couldn’t tell if they were being praised or mocked.

My first exposure to his magniloquence came during a seminar on major American writers, with a reading list devoted entirely to novels by white men. Because it was the late 1970s, Simmons’s curriculum was still standard fare. When a female student questioned his selections at the first class meeting, he obligingly, almost theatrically, added Edith Wharton to the list. He revealed no gender affinities, though, when it came to his students, each of whom he treated, beyond the mordant veneer, with an oddly precious regard. Deviating from the coolness cultivated by most senior faculty, he insisted at the beginning of each term that his charges explain why they were in attendance; if you gave an answer deemed vague or coy, he pressed mercilessly until he got the deeper truth he sought. So it was there that I publicly muttered that I wanted to write—“Yes, Ms. Caldwell, and what, pray tell, do you wish to write?”—and there, too, that he bestowed upon us the splendor of *Light in August*, the cranky reveries of Flannery O’Connor, the manic labyrinths of *Moby-Dick*. Simmons grasped and even applauded the mad sacrifices of creative fire, and he led us through the provinces of literary history as though we were scouts on our camping expedition, with him our merry leader.

Some days this gusto could be crippling: You could summon only so much vigor about Puritan sensibility or Cooper’s Natty Bumppo. But if the class seemed indifferent, Simmons got worse, railing and insisted we share what we know or intuited. One afternoon he was half swooning in his delivery of the onslaught of modernism, assuming we would join in his homage. His students, glassy-eyed one and all, refused to budge. Where, Simmons implored, can we locate the origins of modernism in the novel? No takers, though it was a standard American Studies question. The silence grew mortifying. Finally I blurted out what half the students must have known. “Uh, *Ulysses*,” I said. “Joyce’s use of stream of consciousness.” Simmons, of course, had been teaching for decades, and he was hard to rattle—he knew someone would take the bait, would crumple under the discomfort he had had spawned. “Yes, Ms. Caldwell!” he cried, grateful but unbowed. “Take us there!”

For a couple of years afterward, this became a departmental refrain, the joke summoned whenever anyone needed to know anything. “Take us there, Ms. C.!” And yet I remember it now with something kinder than the amusement we shared at Simmons’s expense. He knew, with that simple

navigational imperative, that in fact there was somewhere to go—knew that literature was just a world over, like Wakefield's old neighborhood, from our own third dimension, and that it was his task and joy to show us the way.

Simmon's reputation for class antics sometimes obscured the heartfelt teacher he was; in his commentaries on the essays we gave him, his in-class formalities gave way to more intimate monikers. He addressed me in these written notes as Clever Girl, a reversal of my initials but also his friendly nudge that facility was not the answer for a writer—that one could be clever at the expense of anything deeper. Had I any doubt of this barbed-wired-and-honey interpretation, I was reminded of it explicitly several years after I had left Texas, when he sent me a copy of his book on writing that had just been published. Buried there within his fussy discourses on usage were the exact words he had written on one of my essays. He had changed my initial for publication, but not my epithet, and he had included a passage in which he accused me of wiseacre acrobatics. "There is too much cleverness in the world," he quoted himself telling a Ms. R., "and too little truth. Let's try to have more truth."

Rediscovering his advice all this time later, I didn't know which was more impressive: that Simmons would so precisely deliver the lesson I had needed, or that he could be so maniacal in his forethought. The book was proof that he had photocopied all his handwritten responses to students for years on end. So! What we had been getting was a calculated generosity that instructed us and served him. This seemed hilariously in keeping with the tap-dancing Fool—Puck, after all, understands the power of his elixir. But it also told me something invaluable about the writer's soul: Even when dispensing fairy dust, take notes. Clever Man.