

# DEBRA SPARK

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## EDUCATION:

M.F.A. University of Iowa, 1986. Creative Writing (fiction).

B.A. Yale University, 1984. Philosophy.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

2003-  
2000-05, Professor of English, Colby College, Waterville, ME  
08-  
1996-2003 Director Program in Creative Writing, Colby College, Waterville, ME  
1995-1996 Associate Professor, Colby College, Waterville, ME  
1996- Assistant Professor, Colby College, Waterville, ME  
2002 Fiction Faculty, Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers, Asheville, NC  
Instructor, Graduate Program in Writing, Antioch College, OH  
Thesis Advisor, Bates College, Lewiston, ME  
Thesis Reader, MFA Program in Creative Writing, Texas State University  
1989-94 Lecturer, Tufts University, Somerville, ME  
1989-1993 Lecturer, Emerson College, Boston, MA  
1992-1994 Lecturer, Museum School, Boston, MA  
1992 Visiting Writer, University of Lowell, Lowell, ME  
1990 Visiting Writer, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE  
1988 Instructor, Wheelock College, Boston, MA  
1987-1988 Visiting Writer, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI  
1986-1987 Wisconsin Institute Fellow, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI  
1985-1986 Graduate Teaching Fellow, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA  
1995-2009 Workshop Leader at Haystack, Stonecoast Writers' Conference, Cleveland  
State University, Vermont Studio Center, Maine Writers & Publishers Retreat,  
Voices of the North Country, Elgin Community College, Worcester Young  
Writers' Conference, Bennington Summer Writing Program,

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

1996-2002 Contributing Editor, Graywolf Press, St. Paul, MN

1988- Freelance Editor, Writer and Researcher.  
Projects include work for Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc; American College  
Testing Service; Editorial Inc.; Document Development, Inc.; *Ploughshares*  
Magazine; *Art New England* Magazine; Faber and Faber; Phil Johnson  
Associates; Federation of American Research Networks; the University of Iowa  
Department of Education; the University of Massachusetts Press; Bedford Books;  
Adoption Network; and *Agni Magazine*, among others

## AWARDS AND HONORS

2009, Finalist, ForeWord Book of the Year Award—General Fiction Category  
2009, Finalist, Narrative Magazine Story Award  
2008, Winner, Michigan Literary Fiction Prize, University of Michigan Press  
2008, Finalist, Narrative Magazine First Person Narrative Prize  
2006, Finalist, Anna Akhmatova Award for Excellence  
2002 Finalist, Binghamton University John Gardner Fiction Book Award  
1995 John Zacharis First Book Award  
Fellow, Bunting Institute, Radcliffe College, 1992-3  
National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, 1990  
Wisconsin Arts Board Grant, 1988  
Wisconsin Institute Fellowship, University of Wisconsin, 1986-7  
Teaching-Writing Fellowship, University of Iowa, 1985-6  
Judge, Hopwood Program, University of Michigan, 2007  
Judge, Tara M. Kroger Award, The Ohio State University, 2004  
Judge, The Constance Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts, fiction grant, 2002; nonfiction grant, 2006  
Juror, 2000, 2001, 2002 Massachusetts Cultural Council Artists' Grant  
Judge, 1999 Baltimore ARTSCAPE Literary Arts Awards  
Judge, 1998 Massachusetts Cultural Council Artists' Grant  
Judge, 1995 Loft-McKnight Awards in Creative Prose  
Judge, 1992 Syracuse University Prize (Creative Writing Program)  
Judge, 1988 National Institute of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Wash D.C. Young Writers Award  
Judge, 1987 Scholastic Writing Awards (Senior Division)  
1993 Cohen Award for best nonfiction in *Ploughshares*, volume year 18  
Hugh J. Luke Award, *Prairie Schooner*, 1991  
Million Writer Award, Notable Stories of 2005  
Noted in list of "100 Distinguished Stories" in *Best American Short Stories* in 1987; 1992; 2004  
Noted in "100 Distinguished Essays" in *Best American Essays* in 1993  
Essay included in *Pushcart Prize, Best of the Small Presses 1996*  
Pushcart Prize, Special Mention list in 1987; in 1989; in 2001; in 2005; in 2007; 2009  
Resident at Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997: 2006  
Resident at The MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, NH, 2006  
Resident at the Ucross Foundation, Ucross, WY, May 1988

## PUBLICATIONS:

### Books

*The Pretty Girl*. Novella and stories. NY: Four Way Press, 2012.

*Good for the Jews*. Novel. Winner Michigan Literary Fiction Prize. MI: University of Michigan, 2009. 2010.

*Curious Attractions: Essays on Writing*. Nonfiction. MI: University of Michigan, 2005.

*The Ghost of Bridgetown*. Novel. MN: Graywolf, 2001.

*Coconuts for the Saint*. Novel. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994

London: Faber and Faber, 1996.

NY: Avon, 1996.

Received 1995 John Zacharis First Book Award from Emerson College/*Ploughshares*.  
Barnes & Noble BookSense Selection.

*On the Tail of the Dog Star*. Short fiction. Japan: Chikuma Shobo, 1990

*Twenty Under Thirty: Best Stories by America's New Young Writers*. Fiction anthology. Scribner's, 1986.

London: Penguin, 1987.

Italy: Loganesi, 1987.

Japan: Shobun Sha, 1987.

Spain: Edicions 62, 1987.

Reissued as *Twenty Under Thirty: Early Works from Today's Influential Writers* NY: Scribner's, 1996.

## Stories

"I Should Let You Go," *Freight Stories*, winter 2008

"Conservation," *Massachusetts Review*, summer 2006; reprinted in Jennifer Rosner (ed.), *The Messy Self* (Colorado: Paradigm Press, 2006)

"A Wedding Story," *narrativemagazine.com*, fall 2005. reprinted in Wes McNair (ed.), *Contemporary Maine Fiction*, Down East Books, Fall 2005

"The Pretty Girl," a novella, *Ginkgo Tree Review*, Fall 2004

"Lady of the Wild Beasts," *Ploughshares*, Fall 2004; reprinted in Scott Miles (ed.) *The Best Underground Fiction, vol 1* (Chicago: Stolen Time Publishing, 2006),

"The Revived Art of the Toy Theatre," *Agni*, Fall 2003

"Poor Millie," *The Green Mountain Review*, Winter 1999-2000

"The Ghost of Bridgetown," *Ploughshares*, Summer 1998

"Winter Light," *Passages North*, Fall 1994

"Maria Elena," *The Boston Globe Sunday Magazine*, May 1, 1994; reprinted with essay in Peter Turchi and Andrea Barrett (eds.), *The Story Behind the Story: Contemporary Writers and How They Work* (NY: Norton, 2003)

"First Memory," *Epoch*, Winter 1995

"The Second World," *Agni*, Winter 1994

"The Spruce Tree," *New Letters*, Fall 1991

"The Year of Our Father," *Prairie Schooner*, Fall 1991

"The Language of Strangers," *The Cream City Review*, Winter 1989

"At Night, On the Island, In the Dark," *The Madison Review*, Fall 1988

"Grandfather's Business," *Sundog: The Southeast Review*, Fall 1987

"The Incorrect Hour," *The North American Review*, Summer 1986. Reprinted in *The New Generation* (New York: Doubleday, 1987) and *Waseda Bungaku* (Japan, 1989)

"The Summer of the Dead Frogs," *Esquire Summer Fiction Issue*, 1985. Reprinted in *SWITCH Magazine*, (Japan, 1986) and *The Esquire Fiction Reader, Vol II* (MA: Wampeter Press, 1986)

## Essays and Articles

"Maine Art, Maine Color," *Maine Home+Design*, Sept 2010

"Modern Craftsman," *Maine Home+Design*, Sept 2010

"Excerpt from 46," *Seattle Review*, Spring/Summer 2010

"Total Transformation," *Maine Home+Design*, July 2010

Rockport Victorian," *Maine Home+Design*, July 2010

"Bold Stewardship," *Maine Home+Design*, June 2010

"Standing Grand," *Maine Home+Design*, May 2010

- “Seaside Sophistication,” *Maine Home+Design*, March 2010  
 “Long-Distance Design,” *Maine Home+Design*, March 2010  
 “Fireplace Artistry,” *Maine Home+Design*, Jan/Feb 2010  
 “New At Mere Point,” *Maine Home+Design*, Nov/Dec 2009  
 “The Moss Manse: Taking John Calvin Stevens to Boothbay,” *Maine Home + Design*, Sept 2009  
 “Stranger Things,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, September 2009  
 “A Family Affair: Designing for Generations,” *Maine Home + Design*, August 2009  
 “Wrestling With Style,” *Maine Home + Design*, June 2009  
 “Now You’re Cooking!” *Maine Home + Design*, May 2009  
 “Scared” in Luke Reynolds (ed.), *Dedicated to the People of Darfur: Writings on Fear, Risk and Hope* (NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009)  
 “Hail to the Chief,” *Maine Home + Design*, March 2009  
 “A Beacon of Green Design,” *Maine Home + Design*, March 2009  
 “Vivian Gornick: The End of the Jew as Metaphor,” *Radcliffe Quarterly*, Summer 2008  
 “Dining Down East: Azure,” *Down East*, May 2008  
 “Rituals: Traditions Off the Beaten Path for a Jewish Christmas,” *New York Times*, 12/14/07  
 Andrew Scott, “Interview with Debra Spark,” *Writers Ask/Glimmer Train*, Fall 2008, Winter 2008 and forthcoming  
 “Size Matters,” *POST ROAD*, no. 15, 2007  
 “And Then Something Happened,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, Oct/Nov 2007  
 “Dining Down East: Apollo’s Bistro,” *Down East*, June 2007  
 “Mind of Winter,” *Architecture Boston*, winter 2006  
 “Writing as Parlor Game” in Bret Anthony Johnston (ed.), *Playing with Fire and Other Writing Exercises* (NY: Random House, 2007)  
 “Confessions from a Dinner Party,” *Living Without*, Spring 2006  
 “Wedding Cake Exercise” in Sherry Ellis (ed.), *Write Now* (NY: Penguin/Tarcher, 2006)  
 “Staunch the Mush” in Susan Neville and Michael Martone (eds.), *Rules to Live By* (NY: F&W Publications, 2006)  
 “I Remember: Mary Berry,” *Down East*, May 2005  
 “Stand Back,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, May/Summer 2005  
 “Digging Up Maine’s Best Recipes,” *Food and Wine*, August 2005  
 “Thomas Moser’s Home,” *Yankee*, April 2004  
 “On Bernard Malamud,” in Mark Windegardner (ed.), *3X33: An Anthology of Short Fiction* (Boston: Heinle, 2004)  
 “Dining Down East: Ribollita, Portland,” *Down East*, Nov 2003  
 “What Writers Read Their Kids,” *Previewport.com*, fall 2002  
 “Cheer Up—Why Don’t You?” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, Oct 2002  
 “The Harraseeket Inn, Freeport,” *Down East*, May 2002  
 “Interview with Monica Wood,” “paperback edition of Monica Wood’s *Secret Languages* (NY: Bantam, 2002)  
 “Fairy-Tale Cottage,” *Yankee*, September 2003  
 “Specialty of the House,” *Yankee*, November 2003  
 “Dining Down East: Street Smarts,” *Down East*, January 2002  
 “Fiction Exercises,” *Previewport.com*, October 2001  
 “Fresh-Picked Flavor,” *New England Travel & Life*, Fall/Winter 2001  
 “Nature: A Passion for Berries,” *New England Travel & Life*, Spring/Summer 2001  
 “Dining Down East: Hugos,” *Down East*, Mar 2001  
 “On the Trail of Vermont Shepherd,” *Yankee*, October 2001  
 “Little Women Writers,” *Previewport.com*, October 2000  
 “Cry, Cry, Cry: Handling Emotion in Fiction,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, December 2000  
 “Down East Delicacies,” *New England Travel & Life*, Fall 2000  
 “The Maine Event,” *Food and Wine*, November 2000  
 “Legacy: Soul Survivor,” *Food and Wine*, August 2000  
 “Career Crossroads,” *Continental*, July 2000

- “Aspects of the Short Novel,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, May 1999
- “Recollection,” Tom Grimes (ed.), *The Workshop: Seven Decades of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop* (NY: Hyperion, 1999)
- “The Trigger—What Gives Rise to a Story,” *Creating Fiction: a complete guide from great writers and teachers of AWP* (Ohio: Story Press, 1999)
- “Is Your College-Bound Teen Headed for a Lifetime of Debt?” *Coastlines*, July/Aug 1998
- “This New England: Where It Snowed in July,” *Yankee*, July 1998
- “The Waters Run Even in Winter,” *New York Times (Travel Section)*, 2/22/98
- “In Bed With a Book,” Michael Dorris and Emilie Buchwald (eds.), *The Most Wonderful Books: Writers on the Pleasures of Reading*
- “Hiking in the Emmental,” *New York Times (Travel Section)*, 7/7/97
- “Getting In and Getting Out: First Words on First (and Last) Words,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, 5/97; reprinted in Charles Baxter and Pete Turchi (eds.), *Bringing The Devil to His Knees* (Univ of Michigan Press, 2001)
- “Curious Attractions: Magical Realism’s Fate in the States,” *The Writer’s Chronicle*, Dec 1996
- “Traveling with Adult Siblings,” *New York Times (Travel Section)*, 11/13/94
- “Last Things,” *Ploughshares*, Fall 1994; reprinted in *Sister to Sister* (Doubleday, 1996); *The Pushcart Prize XX* (Pushcart, 1996); *A Broken Heart Still Beats: After Your Child Dies* MN: Hazelden Publishers, 1998, 2000); *Life Studies* (Boston: Bedford Books, 2001); *Sorrows Company* (Beacon Press, 2001); *Healing* (NY: Tarcher/Putnam, 2001)
- “The Lure of the West,” *Ploughshares*, Winner of 1993 Cohen Prize, Winter 1992

### **Instructors’ Manuals**

for *Life Studies*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed; *Life Studies*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed; *Life Studies*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition and *The Springfield Reader* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2001)

### **Translations**

co-translator of Valery Shevchuk's "The Moon's Cuckoo from the Swallow's Nest," *Glas: New Ukrainian Writing*, 11/96

co-translator of Lei Luu's *A Time Far Past* (Univ of Massachusetts Press, 1997)

### **Book reviews:**

*Red Hook Road* by Ayelet Waldman, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7/11/10

*The Invisible Bridge* by Julie Orringer, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5/09/10

*Asta in the Wings* by Jan Elizabeth Watson, *Down East*, Jan 2010

*Day After Night* by Anita Diamant, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10/05/09

*East Hope* by Katharine Davis, *Down East*, April 2009

*The Piano Teacher* by Janice Y.K. Lee, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1/25/09

*Sonata for Miriam* by Linda Olsson, *Lilith*, Summer 2009

*Wrestling with Angels* by John Clayton, Jbooks.com, April 2008

*When to Walk* by Rebecca Gowers, *San Francisco Chronicle*. 11/09/07.

*You Never Call! You Never Write! A History of the Jewish Mother* by Joyce Antler. *Women’s Review of Books*, March/April 2008

*Shining at the Bottom of the Sea* by Stephen Marche. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8/5/07

*Generation Loss* by Elizabeth Hand. *Down East*, Sept 2007

*I Think of You* by Adhaf Souief. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4/10/07

*View from a Burning Bridge* by Sarah Goodyear. *Down East*, May 2007

*Human Traces* by Sebastian Faulks. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9/20/06

*I Remember Running: The Year I Got Everything I Ever Wanted—And ALS* by Darcy Wakefield. *Down East*, June 2006

*Out of Joint* by Mary Felstiner, *Body Politic* by Limi Sinton, and *All in My Head* by Paula Kamen. *The Women's Review of Books*, May/June 2006  
*The World to Come* by Dara Horn. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1/22/06  
*Wicketts' Remedy* by Myla Goldberg. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10/02/05  
*The Testing of Luther Albright* by MacKenzie Bezos. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8/07/05  
*The Bright Forever* by Lee Martin. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6/05/05  
*Heir to the Glimmering World* by Cynthia Ozick. *Ms.*, Winter 2004/5  
*Beautiful as the Moon, Radiant as the Stars: Jewish Women in Yiddish Stories* edited by Sandra Bark. *Women's Review of Books*, Fall 2004  
*Finding Annie Farrell* by Beth Harpaz. *Down East*, April 2004  
*Love Among the Greats* by Edith Pearlman. *Radcliffe Quarterly*, Summer 2003  
*The Caprices* by Sabina Murray. *Ploughshares*, Winter 2002  
*Come Up and See Me Sometime* by Erika Krouse. *Ploughshares*, Winter 2001  
*Horse Heaven* by Jane Smiley. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4/9/2000  
*The Ladies Auxliary* by Tova Mirvis. *Washington Post Book World*, 12/12/99  
*The Voyage* by Philip Caputo. *The Chicago Tribune*, 11/7/99  
*Waiting* by Ha Jin. *The Boston Book Review*, 12/1999  
*The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* by Haruki Murakami. *Publishers Weekly*, Fall 1997  
*Emerald City* by Jennifer Egan. *Baltimore City Paper*, 4/96  
*Walking on Air* by R.S. Jones. *Baltimore City Paper*, 5/96  
*But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism* edited by Nina Felshin (ed). *Baltimore City Paper*, 11/95  
*Polite Society* by Melanie Sumner. *New York Times Book Review*, 4/16/95  
*The Flight of Andy Burns* by Alice Mattison. *Boston Review*, 6/1993  
*Plan B for the Middle Class* by Ron Carlson. *Washington Post*, 9/92  
*Marine Life* by Linda Svendsen. *Ploughshares*, Winter 1993  
*The Lover of History* by Jonathan Dee. *Ploughshares*, Fall 1992  
*Growing Up Western* by Clarus Backus. *Prairie Schooner*, Winter 1991  
*Sarah Canary* by Karen Joy Fowler. *The Boston Sunday Globe*, 10/91  
*Shadow Play* by Charles Baxter. *Harvard Review*, Winter 1993  
*Wanting Only to Be Heard* by Jack Driscoll. *Harvard Review*, Spring 1993  
*Black Dogs* by Ian McEwan. *Harvard Review*, Winter 1993  
*The North China Lover* by Marguerite Duras. *Harvard Review*, Winter 1993  
*The Living* by Annie Dillard. *Harvard Book Review*, Fall 1992  
*The Writer on Her Work, Vol 2* edited by Janet Sternberg and *Inter/view* edited by Pearlman and Henderson. *Harvard Book Review*, Spring 1991  
*The House on Alexandrine* by Stephen Dobyns. *Harvard Book Review*, Summer/Fall 1990  
*Friend of My Youth* by Alice Munro. *Harvard Book Review*, Win/Spring 1990  
*A Farm Under the Lake* by Martha Bergland. *Hungry Mind*, Fall 1989  
*Cold Feet* by Patricia Weaver Francisco. *Hungry Mind*, Fall 1987  
*Ellen Foster* by Kaye Gibbons. *Hungry Mind*, Fall 1987  
*Fast Lanes* by Jayne Anne Phillips. *Hungry Mind*, Summer 1987  
*Then She Found Me* by Elinor Lipman. *The Boston Phoenix*, 9/90  
*The Expendables* by Antonya Nelson. *The Boston Phoenix*, 1/90  
*Ordinary Time* by A.G. Mojtai. *The Boston Phoenix*, 12/89  
*The Storytellers* by Mario Vargas Llosa. *The Boston Phoenix*, 11/89  
*Pretend We Never Met* and *Bend This Heart* by Jonis Agee. *The Boston Phoenix*, 8/89  
*In the Music Library* by Ellen Hunnicutt. *The Wisc Academy Rev*, Fall 1988