

Peter Gadol

Preliminary Grantee Report — Faculty Development Grant

With the Faculty Development Grant I was awarded in Fall 2012, I was able to purchase a new 13” MacBook Pro, replacing the ailing seven-year-old computer I had been using; I will use the laptop not only for all of my actual writing, but also for project research. Maybe it’s stating the obvious, but as a writer, the computer is my most basic tool; and I’m grateful that I will be able to have a new working laptop set up and ready to go as I embark on my sabbatical semester in Spring 2013. I will be traveling for research, and also spending time at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in Northern California.

My up-coming writing project is a collection of novellas and stories tentatively titled *The Lookout*. While I have published six novels, I’ve only written and published two short stories; but the novella has long intrigued me (I taught a graduate level course in the form in Spring 2012), and while admittedly I’ve never been a great reader of short stories, increasingly I feel as if the special economy of the shorter form eludes my understanding, and so the challenge is to see if I can crack its math.

All of the plots of the novellas and stories I have outlined fall on a continuum of lies, ethical trespasses, and actual crimes. One of the anchoring novellas will be an update and sequel to *Death in Venice* in which a young graduate student in music receives a mysterious score in the mail and decides to plagiarize. A second novella will be about another young man who fails to stop his friend from committing a heinous crime; and while the protagonist’s misprision is not in and of itself a crime, his life is effectively destroyed and he ends up on the road in search of redemption. I also have four short stories sketched out.

I also will begin researching a novel set in the world of professional tennis; more than being about tennis per se, the novel should be about the way sports narratives shape greater cultural and popular discourse on race and sexuality.

At the end of my sabbatical, I will report back with a more complete summary of my progress in both writing and research.

[Rather than offer examples of my writing herein, I would direct interested parties to the Millard Sheets Library; all of my books are now in the collection: *Coyote*, *The Mystery Roast*, *Closer to the Sun*, *The Long Rain*, *Light at Dusk*, and *Silver Lake*.]

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