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UNH Writers Series Welcomes Marilyn Johnson Oct. 24

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October 18, 2007

DURHAM, N.H. – The UNH English Department Writers Series presents a reading by Marilyn Johnson, author of *The Dead Beat: Lost Souls, Lucky Stiffs, and the Perverse Pleasures of Obituaries*, Wednesday, Oct. 24, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. in Hamilton Smith Hall, Room 127. This reading is free and open to the public.

Johnson wrote *The Dead Beat: Lost Souls, Lucky Stiffs, and the Perverse Pleasures of Obituaries* after writing obituaries for Katharine Hepburn, Princess Diana, Jackie Onassis, Johnny Cash, Bob Hope, and Marlon Brando for *Life* and other magazines. She has been a staff writer for *Life* and an editor for *Esquire*.

The Dead Beat is the story of how stories get told in the obituary pages. Johnson sought out the best obits in the English language and interviewed the people who spent their lives writing about the dead to reveal the cult and culture behind the obituary page. The result is a rare combination of scrapbook and compelling read, a trip through recent history and the unusual lives we don't quite appreciate until they're gone.

From *The Dead Beat*:

The New York Times comes each morning and never fails to deliver news of the important dead. Every day is new; every day is fraught with significance. I arrange my cup of tea, prop up my slippers. Obituaries are history as it is happening. Whose time am I living in? Was he a success or a failure, lucky or doomed, older than I am or younger? Did she know how to live? I shake out the pages. Tell me the secret of a good life!

Johnson lives in Briarcliff, New York, and is working on a book about librarians and archivists in the digital age.

Links of Interest

UNH English Department Writers Series: <http://www.unh.edu/english/index.cfm?id=08E8ECFF-EB2E-E5C4-E4A9423FF73FA5E5>

Marilyn Johnson: <http://www.marilynjohnson.net/>



