

COLONEL COMMUNITY

NEWS AND NEED-TO-KNOWS FROM THE WILKES CAMPUS

PROFESSOR EMERITUS J. MICHAEL LENNON, RECEIVES CRITICAL PRAISE FOR MAILER BIOGRAPHY



Brian Scolic, left, head of public services at the Farley Library, gets books autographed for the library's collection by J. Michael Lennon.

J. Michael Lennon, vice president emeritus for academic affairs, professor emeritus of English and co-founder of the graduate creative writing program at Wilkes, is garnering

significant praise and international media attention for his new biography of the late Pulitzer Prize-winning author Norman Mailer. Released Oct. 15 by Simon & Schuster, *Norman Mailer: A Double Life* is described by *The Washington Post* as "a great wallop of a book." Lennon read from the book and held at book signing at Wilkes on Nov. 5.

In the two weeks following the book's release, more than 50 print and online stories and 20 reviews have appeared about the biography, including the Oct. 20 cover story of the *New York Times Book Review* by *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter, who says, "There's not a paragraph in this enormous book that doesn't contain a nugget of something you should have known or wish you had known." The following week, Lennon's biography received the *New York Times* Editor's Choice pick.

Lennon also has conducted 10 broadcast interviews in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baton Rouge, La., and national broadcasts on National Public Radio, MSNBC and The Jewish Channel TV.

In what *Publishers Weekly* refers to as a "meticulous authorized biography," the book reflects Mailer's dual identities: journalist and activist, devoted family man and notorious philanderer, intellectual and fighter, writer and public figure. *The Miami Herald* describes Lennon's depiction of Mailer as "an extraordinarily complex personality who thrived on turbulence."

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NEW NURSING SIMULATION CENTER TO HOLD OPEN HOUSE

The campus community will be able to visit the Clinical Nursing Simulation Center in its new location in Stark Learning Center on Dec. 13 from 2 to 5 p.m. The center moved to its new location over the summer and features an expanded and completely remodeled facility for students. The patient rooms in the simulation center stress medical-surgical care since that is the primary focus for undergraduate nursing students. One of the patient rooms is set up as a critical care suite. This room offers opportunities for the students to learn and practice skills for basic and advanced cardiac support. Another is set up as a high-fidelity pediatric and obstetric suite. The simulation rooms give students hands-on experiences in a safe, risk-free environment. All the rooms employ life-like manikins which can be programmed with changes to pulse, breathing and to simulate a variety of conditions.

In the center, instructors can observe students interacting with patients via one-way glass. The exam rooms are outfitted with cameras and microphones that allow the demonstrations in the hospital room and in the pediatric room to be broadcast to the center's classroom. Since much of health care today is provided outside of hospitals, in clinics or homes, an assessment room and a home health suite are part of the new CNSC. The home health suite replicates a small apartment, similar to ones students may visit when they do their home health rotation. The assessment room gives students opportunities to practice in a clinic setting. The assessment room also has a smart classroom adjacent to it. Students can learn in a small classroom setting and walk through a door and practice what they learned. There is also a computer lab and four iPads are available in the simulation rooms. The new equipment is in addition to the life-like manikins that already are a standard part of the students' clinical simulation experience.

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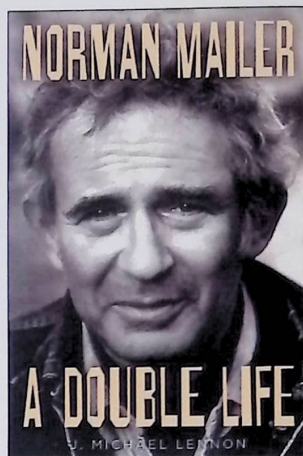
As Mailer's authorized biographer, Lennon was given access to thousands of letters, interviews and other materials. Integrating the streams of material became the most difficult part of the biography project for Lennon.

Included in the plethora of papers were over 45,000 letters written to and by Mailer, unpublished journals and interviews with Mailer, his friends and family. One of Lennon's chief challenges was ensuring that Mailer and his private life were accorded as much exposition and analysis as the public man. *The Wall Street Journal* says that Lennon "marshals an impressive amount of research and deploys it deftly."

Lennon describes how he got to know the late author. "In 1971, right after he got into a tussle with Gore Vidal on the *Dick Cavett Show*, I wrote him a letter of support, and also passed on some of my theories about his recent nonfiction books, which were changing the way major events were reported," Lennon says. Mailer was one of the leading voices of the New Journalism during the 1960s. This literary genre is a writing technique that combines fictional story telling with reportage.

After corresponding, Lennon and Mailer met in fall 1972 at Western Illinois University. Mailer had presented a reading from his account of the 1972 elections. Over time, they grew closer as Lennon began editing books by and about Mailer. In 1986, after reading Lennon's book, *Critical Essays on Norman Mailer*, Mailer asked him to serve as one of his literary executors.

By Bill Schneider MA '13



FIRST-YEAR ORIENTATION A TEAM EFFORT FOR STAFF, FACULTY

When Wilkes freshmen come to campus for Welcome Weekend at the start of the fall semester, they've already had a glimpse of life at the University. First-Year Student Orientation during the summer months is a time when incoming freshmen come to campus, often for the first time, to get a taste of what the next four years will be like.

But few may be aware of the planning done by staff in Student Affairs and University College to prepare for the two sessions in late June and early July.

For University College Coordinators Mary Beth Mullen and Gretchen Yeninas, work begins in early spring when they confirm students are registered for a session, have selected a major and class preferences. Next, they contact departments to see which faculty members are serving as advisers for incoming freshmen. Approximately 75 faculty and staff work at orientation.

"Once we have advisor names, Gretchen and I split the list," Mullen says. "Gretchen takes the humanities, business and education. I have all the College of Science and Engineering, nursing and pharmacy."

Dean of Student Affairs Mark Allen says orientation allows students to get to know their advisors.

"Because of our online presence, we're able to populate their courses so that the faculty advisor's role can be to get to know

the student more in terms of who he or she is, why they're interested in a major, what their goals in life are," Allen said.

Associate Dean of Student Development Phil Ruthkosky says orientation also is a chance for current students to step up as leaders, the most notable being E-mentors. This group, supervised by Sharon Castano, student development coordinator, are upperclassmen who work with the incoming class during orientation, Welcome Weekend, and throughout the fall semester. E-mentors coordinate events such as Casino Night, take students to different sessions and community service sites, and answer any questions the incoming freshmen may have.

There is a student coordinator for orientation, a role that was served in summer 2013 by Adoma Yeboah, a junior biology major. Other students work as resident assistant coordinators.

Civic Engagement Coordinator Megan Valkenburg, organizes community service activities. All freshmen participate in service during orientation, working at a variety of assignments, which include packing food at the Commission for Economic Opportunity, planting trees with the Forty-Fort Shade Tree Commission and working at Blue Chip Animal Rescue. Jill Price, adventure education coordinator, also offers activities.

By Christine Lee



Many Wilkes faculty and staff make first-year orientation possible. Pictured here are staff from student affairs and student development, from left, Philip Rutkovsky, student Adoma Yeboah, Melissa Howells, Sharon Castano and Kayla Cauthon.