

# **The Second Biennial John Updike Society Conference**

## **Suffolk University, Boston, Mass.**

### **June 13-16, 2012**

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### ***The Conference: Updike in Massachusetts***

John Updike left Pennsylvania to attend Harvard in 1950. After graduating in 1954, he spent a year in England and two in New York before moving with his family to Ipswich, Mass. in 1957. He would make his home there, and in two other towns on the North Shore of Boston, Georgetown and Beverly Farms, for the rest of his life. Beginning with “The Blessed Man of Boston, My Grandmother’s Thimble, and Fanning Island” (written in 1960) and “Packed Dirt, Churchgoing, a Dying Cat, a Traded Car” (1961)—which both combine their narrator’s memories of Pennsylvania with his current life in Boston and its North Shore—and continuing through “The Full Glass,” the last story in the last collection he completed before his death in 2009, Massachusetts and New England joined Pennsylvania as the setting for much of his short fiction and many of his novels. *Couples* is located in his fictional Tarbox; he wrote a trilogy on the characters and themes of *The Scarlet Letter*—*A Month of Sundays*, *Roger’s Version*, and *S.*; *The Witches of Eastwick* and *The Widows of Eastwick* are set in Rhode Island; and the Maples followed the Updikes from New York City to the North Shore.

This conference will combine panels with visits to sites connected to Updike’s life and work. While plans are still being developed and finalized, some of the events scheduled at this point include a reception at Harvard University’s Houghton Library, where Updike’s papers have been deposited; a trip to Salem, in conjunction with panels on Updike’s *Scarlet Letter* trilogy; and tours of Updike and sites in Georgetown, Beverly Farms, and Boston—possibly even a side trip to Fenway Park, which celebrates its centennial birthday in 2012.

### ***Proposals and Panels***

We welcome proposals for papers on all aspects of Updike’s life and work, but are particularly interested in papers that focus on *Couples*; stories set in the region such as “The Christian Roommates,” marriage and family stories, and “Tarbox Tales”; the novels in his *Scarlet Letter* trilogy; the *Witches* novels; and relevant poetry and nonfiction. One or two-page proposals/abstracts for 15-20 minute papers should be titled **Updike Conference Proposal** and emailed by **November 8, 2011** to Program Director Bernard F. Rodgers, Jr. at [brodgers@simons-rock.edu](mailto:brodgers@simons-rock.edu). Decisions on panels and panelists will be announced by **December 8**. Papers presented will be considered for publication in *The John Updike Review*.

Moderators are also needed, and members wishing to serve in this capacity should also contact Bernie Rodgers to express their willingness.

To present a paper or moderate a panel at the conference, participants must be members of the John Updike Society and register for the conference. For membership information, please see the Society’s website at <http://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety>. Information on the cost of conference registration and further details will be posted as they become available.