

John Dalton



**Award-Winning Novelist,
Short Fiction Author, University Writing Instructor,
Assistant Professor for University of Missouri-St. Louis
(in the MFA Writing Program)**

Lecture Topic: “Beginnings: Essential Qualities of a Good First Chapter”

Thursday, February 16, 2006, 7-8 PM

Barnes & Noble, 8871 Ladue Road, Ladue 63124

**NOTE: JOHN DALTON HAS KINDLY AGREED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
AND AUTOGRAPH BOOKS AT THIS EVENT.**

For a map, driving directions, and more, visit our [Lectures](#) page
This event is FREE to members and non-members

JOHN DALTON is the author of *Heaven Lake*, a novel, which was awarded the prestigious 2004 Discover Award by Barnes & Noble and the Sue Kaufman Prize for best first fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His short fiction has appeared in *Western Humanities Review*, *Story*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *Natural Bridge*. He has received other awards for his writing, including a Henfield Transatlantic Review Award, Fellowships at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MacDowell Fellowships, and a James Michener / Paul Engle Fellowship.

John was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, the youngest of seven children. Upon graduation from college, he received a plane ticket to travel around the world, a gift from his brother, Jim. So began an enduring interest in travel and foreign culture. During the late 1980's John lived in Taiwan and traveled in Mainland China and other Asian countries. He met his wife, Jen Jen Chang, in Taiwan.

After returning to the U.S., John studied fiction writing at the Iowa Writer's Workshop and completed *Heaven Lake* over the course of eight years while living in St. Louis, waiting tables, working in a bookstore, and teaching writing courses at local universities. Most recently, he has taught fiction workshops at Washington University's Summer Writing Institute, the St. Louis Writers Workshop, and the University of Iowa's Summer Writing Festival. He lives with his wife, a public health researcher and professor at St. Louis University, in St. Louis, Missouri, where he teaches in the MFA writing program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He is currently at work on a second novel.

More About John Dalton:

Curriculum Vitae:

<http://www.stlwritersguild.org/spotlightarchives/2006/JohnDaltonCurriculumVitae.pdf>

Some Reviews of *Heaven Lake*:

Sober and searching yet sublimely comic, this impressive debut about a modern-day missionary in Taiwan charts a journey away from reflexive faith and toward a broader understanding of the world and its ways.
PUBLISHERS WEEKLY (Starred Review)

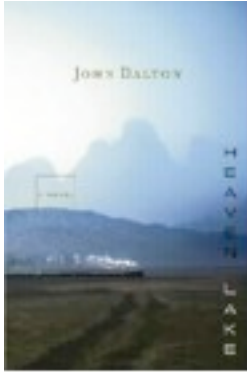
Impressive . . . exhilarating . . . Dalton has an intoxicating ability to infuse simple scenes with considerable depth of human emotion.
L.A. TIMES

"...the book blossoms into an unexpectedly satisfying saga. Vincent's trials attest to an enduring truth: No one of any faith can lay claim to genuine spiritual knowledge without journeying both into the heart of his frail human self and out into the damaged world."
Karen Karbo
ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY (Grade A-)

[Dalton] has written a novel that lets American readers travel thousands of miles to a foreign culture yet still recognize their own sensibilities in a main character who has taken the same journey. For a novelist, "Heaven Lake" is a great place to start; for readers, it is a terrific place to end up.
Dale Singer
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Heaven Lake

HEAVEN LAKE is the story of Red Bud, Illinois native, Vincent Saunders who arrives in Taiwan on a somewhat uninspired Christian mission to offer English and Bible lessons to natives. To supplement his meager ministry income, Vincent takes a second job teaching English to enthusiastic schoolgirls, a job that unexpectedly subjects him to temptation and shame.



To escape the consequences of his transgression, Vincent approaches a businessman, Mr. Gwa, who earlier made him a proposition: Mr. Gwa has offered a large sum of money to Vincent in return for his travel to mainland China where he is to marry a beautiful woman who lives in Heaven Lake. Vincent is to escort her back to Taiwan, divorce her, and deliver her to Gwa who intends to marry her himself.

ISBN: 0641659717

Format: Hardcover, 451pp

Pub. Date: April 2004

Publisher: Simon & Schuster

Vincent, believing in the sacrament of marriage, had initially rebuked Gwa's offer, but now, in his disgrace and confusion, his personal integrity is shattered and his need for occupation and income surpasses his ideals. He accepts Gwa's offer.



What follows is not just an adventure, but also an exploration of Chinese life from the viewpoint of a young American sojourning alone in a strange, sometimes hostile—sometimes terrifying country, whose people all too often do not share his values or respect his race and culture. Vincent's quest has surprising results, which change his goals, his beliefs, and his understanding of love.

ISBN: 0743246357

Format: Paperback, 464pp

Pub. Date: March 2005

Publisher: Scribner

Throughout this mesmerizing story, John Dalton's "exquisite narrative arcs across China as gracefully as it plumbs the human heart."⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Quote take from Heaven Lake website: <http://www.daltonnovel.com/index.htm>.

Awards:

* *WINNER* - First Place - Fiction - Barnes and Nobel Discover Award

http://www.barnesandnoble.com/awards/index_cds2.asp?PID=1527&userid=le3LUnpBgx&cds2Pid=1407&linkid=547711

* *WINNER* - Sue Kaufman Prize for best first fiction of 2004 from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

* *Heaven Lake* chosen for 2004 Best Books of the Year lists by *Publishers Weekly*, *Chicago Tribune*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Pages magazine*, *PopMatters*, and *The Journal News*.

For More Information About John And *Heaven Lake*:

Heaven Lake Home Page: <http://www.daltonnovel.com/index.htm>

About *Heaven Lake* and Urumqi China: <http://www.daltonnovel.com/HLake.htm>

You can purchase *Heaven Lake* on this Website:

In Hardcover:

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?userid=le3LUnpBgx&isbn=0743246349&itm=4>

In Paperback:

<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?userid=le3LUnpBgx&isbn=0743246357&itm=1>

FREE Reading Group Guides for *Heaven Lake*:

- (1) <http://www.simonsays.com/content/book.cfm?sid=519&pid=422786&agid=10>
- (2) http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides3/heaven_lake1.asp

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