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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly English Professor to Celebrate Memoir Release With Jan. 31 Reading

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly English Professor John C. Hampsey will launch the public release of his memoir, "Kaufman's Hill," with a reading at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31, in the Performing Arts Center's Philips Hall on campus.

"Kaufman's Hill" explores boyhood in the early and mid-1960s in Pittsburgh, Pa. Set in a middle-class Catholic neighborhood dominated by a family of bullies, the narrative occurs just before the heavy influences of the counterculture take hold, at a time when suburban society begins to encroach on Kaufman's Hill, the boy's sanctuary and the setting for many of his adventures.

The boy's world is a mix of exhilarating freedom — due to the absence of parents, teachers and priests — and imminent dangers. His home life is a mix of personal and social struggles during a time of racial animosity and racially related urban violence.

"'Kaufman's Hill' is among the most touching, sensitive and spellbinding memoirs I've encountered in many years," said Tim O'Brien, renowned author of "The Things They Carried." "Beautifully and exactly written, this book will surely reach into the hearts of its readers. I was deeply moved."

Hampsey has published more than 30 stories and essays in such publications as The Gettysburg Review, The Midwest Quarterly, The Boston Globe and the Antioch Review. Hampsey's previous book, "Paranoia and Contentment: a Personal Essay on Western Thought," was the first book to view paranoia in a positive light. He currently is working on an existential novel titled "Soda Lake."

The reading is free and open to the public. The reading is sponsored by the Cal Poly English Department's WriterSpeak series.

Links

- John Hampsey's Website: www.johnchampsey.com

- English Department: english.calpoly.edu

- College of Liberal Arts: cla.calpoly.edu

About the Cal Poly English Department

The Cal Poly English Department promotes the study of literature, language and rhetoric in an effort to better understand the human condition. Undergraduate and graduate students learn to read carefully and deeply, to think critically and creatively, and to write clearly and persuasively. The department produces several publications each year that showcase student writing, including Byzantium: A Literary Annual and "Fresh Voices: Composition at Cal Poly."

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