

A Big Flaming Ouch

BY G. MIKI HAYDEN

“He ought to play the front runner, dismiss this stuff, and move on ahead”—TV political analyst.

Those who put their work before the public are subject not only to public scrutiny and public praise, but also, from time to time, to verbal attack. This flaming ouch may arrive in the form of a review online or in print, as comments on an email list or blog, and attributed with the attacker’s real name or not.

What are novelists to do when their work is savaged in a way that seems more malicious than helpfully objective? Here are some thoughts from those in the know.

Define What’s Going on

First of all, understand what’s an attack and what’s not.

“For blogs, newsletters, and lists it’s important to really examine what was said originally, because things can quickly escalate out of control if you are responding just to comments placed by others,” advises Theresa Meyers, president of Blue Moon Communications (Port Orchard, Washington), which specializes in media and promotion services for novelists. “Only respond with fact, and if something is opinion, realize other people are entitled to their opinions, which may significantly vary from yours.”

Author Allison Brennen agrees, saying, “I have no problem with bad reviews but it’s the mean, personal attacks that have no place on a business website.” She cites the online booksellers in particular in this regard and notes that novelists can lose sales from this type of unwarranted assault.

Handle It With Cool

Brennen, whose latest, *Killing Fear* from Ballantine, obviously sells at Amazon, et al., suggests that should a problem seem pervasive a group (such as Novelists, Inc.) might investigate the issue for members. The group can be more objective than the author and can see if this attack will affect others in the organization.

Continued on page 8 ▶

INSIDE

<i>President’s Voice: While You Were Summering</i>	3
<i>St. Louis? Good Heavens, Who Wants to Go There?</i>	5
<i>Ninc Founder Marianne Shock and the Authors Coalition</i>	7
2009 ELECTION BALLOT	9
<i>Cover to Cover: Why They Don’t Understand You</i>	11
<i>Ask the Lawyer: Characters, Corps and Copyrights</i>	14
<i>Writing Is Taxing: Where Will This Madness End?</i> ..	16
<i>View From Here: Thorn Among Roses</i>	17
<i>Bulletin Board</i>	19
eNINK Extra: Creative Recovery, Part 5:	
<i>Anxiety of Not Making Meaning</i>	21
eNINK Extra: Book and Study Group Publishing Survey Findings	22

Novelists, Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1989

Advisory Council

Rebecca Brandewyne*	Linda Barlow	Pat Rice
Janice Young Brooks*	Georgia Bockoven	Anne Holmberg
Jasmine Cresswell*	Evan Maxwell	Jean Brashear
Maggie Osborne*	Victoria Thompson	Vicki Lewis Thompson
Marianne Shock*	Steven Womack	Brenda Hiatt Barber
* Founder	Barbara Keiler	Pat McLaughlin

If you have questions regarding Novelists, Inc., please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

2008 Board of Directors

President: Laura Resnick 9250 Deercross Parkway, Apt. 2-D Cincinnati OH 45236 513-793-2987 LauraNincBox@aol.com	Treasurer: Ruth Glick 10594 Jason Ct. Columbia MD 21044-2242 301-596-5210 ruthglick@prodigy.net
President-Elect: Kasey Michaels 3230 Flatrock Dr. Whitehall PA 18052-3069 610-432-1370 kcmi@aol.com	Newsletter Editor: Cindi Myers 302 Yum Yum Tree Ln. Bailey CO 80421 303-816-6394 CMyersTex@aol.com
Secretary: Charlotte Hubbard 3913 Rustic Lane Jefferson City MO 65109-9148 573-634-8114 cmhubbard@embarqmail.com	Advisory Council Representative: Pat Rice 15222 Strollways Dr. Chesterfield MO 63017-7756 636-778-0075 price100@aol.com

2008 Committees

Anthology Chair: Lillian Stewart Carl Phoebe Conn Garda Parker	Membership Chair: Holly Jacobs NINK Online Index Denise Lynn	Website Co-Chairs: Pati Nagle & Ginger Chambers Blog Coordinator: Patricia Rosemoor Website Volunteers: Denise Agnew Fran Baker Robin Bayne Dara Girard Chris Marie Green Megan Hart Sally Hawkes Elaine Isaak Mary Kilchenstein Joe Narssise Patricia Rosemoor Neff Rotter Patricia Sargeant- Matthews Linnea Sinclair Mary Stella Sasha White
Authors Coalition Reps Deborah Gordon Elaine Isaak	Outreach Chair: Pari Taichert Samantha Hunter Sherry-Anne Jacobs Linda Madl Linnea Sinclair Laurin Wittig	
2009 Conference Co-Chairs: Karen Tintori Katz & Leslie LaFoy Eileen Dreyer Marcia Evanick Sally Hawkes Brenda Hiatt-Barber	Renewals Coordinator Delilah Devlin	
Digital Rights Mgmnt Chair: Tricia Adams Neff Rotter Kristine Smith Judy Gill	Royalty Statement Chair: Allison Brennan Marianna Jameson	
Discounts Chair: Pat McLaughlin	Used Book Chair: Joan Wolf Brenda Hiatt Barber Marianna Jameson Tara Taylor Quinn Randi DuFresne	
Elections Chair: Sylvie Kurtz	Volunteer Jobs List	
Member Retention Chair: Barbara Bretton	Coordinator Mary Glazer	

Central Coordinator:

Tonya Wilkerson, Varney and Assoc.
Novelists, Inc.
P.O. Box 2037
Manhattan KS 66505
Fax: 785-537-1877
ninc@varney.com

Website: ninc.com

Address changes may be made on the website.

For members without Internet access, send changes to the Central Coordinator.

Copyright ©2008 by Novelists, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this newsletter may be used or reproduced in any manner without written permission.

Introducing...

The following authors have applied for membership in Ninc and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 15 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc. For further information or to recommend eligible writers, contact:

Membership Chair Holly Jacobs
P.O. Box 11102
Erie PA 16514-1102
or email HollyJacobs1@aol.com

New Applicants:

Alan Jacobson, Walnut Creek CA
Nicole Seitz, Mount Pleasant SC
Cynthia Pratt, Germantown MD
Maya Bohnhoff, San Jose CA
Deborah LeBlanc, Lafayette Louisiana
Peggy Hillmer, Edwardsville IL
Sue Carey, Knoxville TN
Sandy Curtis, Innes Park Queensland
Nicola Marsh, Rowville Melbourne Victoria
Roxanne Farmer, Wichita KS
Donna Fletcher, Toms River NJ
Jennifer Stevenson, Evanston IL
Judson Roberts, Houston TX
Hank Phillippi Ryan, West Newton MA
Laurie Alice Eakes, Arlington VA
Elizabeth Moon, Florence TX
JT Ellison, Nashville TN
Maxine Sullivan, Altona Meadows VIC Australia
Elizabeth Edmondson, Rome Lazio Italy

New Members:

Marley Gibson, Quincy MA
Kristi Goldberg, Woodway TX
Kathie DeNosky, Herrin IL

Ninc has room to grow...

Recommend membership to *your* colleagues. Prospective members may apply online at ninc.com. Refer members at ninc.com. Go to Members Only, "Member Services" and click "Refer a New Member to Ninc." Take Ninc brochures to conferences. Email Holly with your mailing address and requested number of brochures.

Ninc Statement of Principle.

"Novelists, Inc., in acknowledgment of the crucial creative contributions novelists make to society, asserts the right of novelists to be treated with dignity and in good faith; to be recognized as the sole owners of their literary creations; to be fairly compensated for their creations when other entities are profiting from those creations; and to be accorded the respect and support of the society they serve."

While You Were Summering....

Ninc.com

The new Ninc website is under construction and will launch at Ninc.com by early October! I've given final approval for the designs that website co-chairs Pati Nagle and Ginger Chambers have been working on this summer with designer Tammy Seidick.

We've meanwhile also been streamlining and reorganizing the existing website's content for the new website, as well as creating new sections, pages, and functions that will make the updated and redesigned Ninc.com more useful to Ninc members and more of a magnet for readers and for potential Ninc members.

In fact, we've already implemented one of the new additions, and it's been up and running for just over a month: We've added a Ninc blog to the website.

With 600 multi-published authors in our organization, a public Ninc blog is a great way to showcase the extraordinary breadth and depth of our members' professional writing experience. We anticipate that the blog will be fun for you as a community, a great promotional venue for you and for Ninc, and a source of interest and enjoyment to readers and to prospective Ninc members.

In addition to our own members, we're also inviting various industry professionals to blog on Ninc.com. We hope you will find this an engaging special feature of the blog, and that it will further enhance communication between Ninc members and industry professionals.

If you're interested in becoming a Ninc blogger, please check out the *Nink* Bulletin Board, which is in every issue of *Nink* (including this one), for instructions on how to join the blog. And many thanks to Patricia Rosemoor for serving as Ninc.com's first blogmistress!

Bylaws Amendments proposal coming with 2009 renewals!

We have written the first Ninc Bylaws amendments proposal in six years. I have gone over the proposal in detail with a lawyer whose expertise includes legislation covering non-profit corporations registered in Kansas (that's us), to make sure our proposal complies with Kansas state law. It has all been scintillating beyond my powers of description.

The amendments we're proposing are strictly operational. We're trying to allow more leeway in scheduling the Ninc conference, trying to offer you an online voting option in elections, and so on.

The 2008 Bylaws amendments proposal will be included this year with your due renewals forms, which will be mailed in November. **At least 2/3 of Ninc members need to participate in the voting for the final vote to be valid at all, whether you vote for or against the proposed amendments.**

So when the Bylaws amendments proposal ballot arrives in your mailbox, you probably want to take into account how hard I've worked on this, my well-deserved reputation as the meanest president this organization has ever had, and the fact that I have your home address and know exactly where to find you if you fail to vote.

Outreach

Ninc will lose its Authors Coalition funding, which accounts for a large portion of our annual budget, if our membership numbers fall below 500. (We're currently hovering around 600.) Additionally, fresh faces and new ideas are ▶

vital to the continued vitality of this organization.

So the newly formed Outreach Committee has presented the Ninc Board with a slate of projects which they'll be working on 2008-2009.

One of their projects involves you (yes, you!) and can benefit you (yes, *you!*). You can read about it elsewhere in *Nink*, and I encourage you to participate.

Authors Coalition of America (ACA)

Marianne Shock, who is one of Ninc's five founders and a member of Ninc's Advisory Council, is stepping down after many years as one of Ninc's two representatives on ACA. Ninc appreciates her long and valuable service to this organization; be sure to read the details elsewhere in this issue of *Nink*. The Board also thanks Elaine Isaak, who has agreed to serve hereafter as Ninc's second ACA representative alongside our incumbent ACA representative, Deborah Gordon. (We talked them each into it by assuring them that Ninc will not expect them to serve as long as Marianne Shock has served.)

Ninc Anthologies projects

Tekno Books editor Denise Little and the Ninc Anthologies Committee have continued working on our non-fiction anthologies project over the course of the summer. After months of asking you for it, we finally got a lot of material, and it has taken time to sort and organize it into several well-ordered volumes to take to market as a package.

Now we're developing Ninc's first fiction anthologies project. Relevant information for members interested in participating will be announced here in *Nink*, on Ninclink, and available on Ninc.com.

Meanwhile, if you have no idea what I'm talking about, you've never heard of the Ninc anthologies projects, and you would swear on your pony's grave that I've never mentioned this before... Then, as soon as someone comes along to unchain you from the floor of the subterranean cave that you have evidently been trapped in for a year, I urge you

to go to Ninc.com and visit the Anthology Committee's page.

The Volunteer Jobs List (VJL)

We've gotten a number of new volunteers as a direct result of the VJL, which is coordinated by Ninc member Mary Glazer. We're delighted about this! We thank and welcome-aboard those of you who have volunteered so far, and we urge everyone else to keep an eye on the VJL for Ninc jobs or tasks that might suit your skills, time limitations, or sanity level. (The craziest among you, of course, will become Ninc president.) The VJL will appear quarterly here in *Nink*, monthly on Ninclink, and perpetually on Ninc.com.

Please note: When responding to a job listing, you need to respond to the contact listed for a given job, *not* to VJL Coordinator Mary Glazer. Mary compiles the information and distributes it to Ninc, but she's not the person calling for a volunteer in any of the listings.

2009 Conference

My predecessors tell me that the best thing about being Ninc president is going to a Ninc conference after you are *no longer* president and no longer expected to deal with problems that arise on site. So I'm looking forward tremendously to St. Louis in October of 2009, and I read the monthly 2009 conference column in *Nink* with avid interest. I suggest you go do the same now!

—Laura Resnick

Want to know more about the unique
new 2-for-1
membership deal Ninc offers
you this year?
The time is now.
The details
are in the Bulletin Board
on page 19.
Don't miss out!



St. Louis? Good Heavens, Who Wants to Go There?

Okay, it isn't Santa Fe. Or Manhattan. It's much more affordable than that. And, believe it or not, it has more to do than visit the Gateway Arch—although the Arch is all that and more. But you want to know what else to do...

Ever since RWA came here in 1993, I've been the spokesperson for my city. I'm a native, born and raised. And except for the chance to live on the west coast of Ireland, I'll never leave. But do I *like* it here? Will you? Oh, yeah.

First of all, the basics. You can get here from anywhere. Not only do we have an easy airport, we have Amtrak service, and we're at the intersection of three major highways, 55, 44, and 70. And once you're here, it's a very reasonably priced city. We have all the modern amenities of any major city, with the friendliness of a small town. We're the surprise of the fly-over area.

The weather in early October is some of the best of the year. It's a perfect time to wander the downtown streets, or the zoo, or the Botanical Gardens. The weather is usually still warm, the leaves just turning, and flowers still blooming.

So where can you go? What can you do? In coming months, we St. Louisans will write columns on particular areas: food, music, history, kid's attractions, etc. That kind of thing. I'm just here to whet your appetite.

First of all, food (at least in my heart). We have a great variety of restaurants in St. Louis, from our 4 Star Tony's to the Broadway Oyster Bar, which specializes in Cajun cuisine and jazz, and anything in be-



tween, including food representative of every immigrant group who's come to the city, from the Irish to the Ethiopians (yes, I promise, food is getting its own column.) But when you come to St. Louis, there are three things you particularly need to know (besides the fact that we have the best Italian food west of the Mississippi). Ted Drewe's Frozen Custard. Toasted ravioli. Goopy butter cake. St. Louis inventions you can't leave without trying.

Sightseeing? We have everything from ▶

historical sites to a world renowned zoo, to a variety of museums. Architecture as old as 18th Century French colonial, just south of us, and as new as Frank Lloyd Wright and Buckminster Fuller. A park where the 1904 World's Fair took place. The first Anheuser Busch brewery (with Clydesdales) and the first Busch wildlife preserve, Grant's Farm (with more Clydesdales). Fantastic professional sports facilities.

Oh, and did I tell you we have a collection of very good wineries strung out overlooking the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers? And then there's downtown St. Charles, just a few miles away, from which Lewis and Clark set out, and which doesn't look appreciably different today.

You want music? We have everything from classical to rock to jazz to (my personal favorite) traditional Irish. We even have Chuck Berry, who regularly plays at a neighborhood joint called Blueberry Hill. You want theater? We have something like 15 active theaters. Art? Antiques? We have a great area called Cherokee Street, where antiques are still affordable.

History? We'll need more than one column to cover it. But I'll give you some hints. Daniel Boone. Dred Scott. Charles Fremont. General William Tecumseh Sherman. Charles Lindbergh. Lewis and

Clark. Jesuit Black Robes. 1904 World's Fair. More than enough for any trip, even without the historic Drury Plaza Hotel and the nearby Busch Stadium.

But like I said, we'll be writing other columns to give you specifics. Because you know you want to come. And not just for the round-tables.

— Eileen Dreyer

Ninc Goes Platinum: 20 Years of Excellence

Drury Plaza Hotel, Saint Louis
September 30 – October 4, 2009
Co-Chairs:

Leslie LaFoy, lafey@earthlink.net
Karen Tintori Katz, ktinti@aol.com

***Early Registration Information and Easy-Payment
Plans coming soon***

Business Briefs

Compiled by Sally Hawkes

LA Times Drops Sunday Review Section

July 27 marked the last issue of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Review section. The reviews will now appear in the Calendar section. This controversial decision does not seem to have spilled over on to Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, which will continue without the support of the review section.

Espresso Machines Cross the Atlantic

The first book machine in the UK will be placed by Blackwell. Eleven Blackwell locations worldwide will feature the machines with plans to add them to all 60 locations by fall 2008.

Booklocker and Amazon Duel in POD Case

Suits and countersuits go back and forth in the antitrust lawsuit against Amazon. Booklocker is taking exception to Amazon's insistence that print-on-demand business be done only through the Amazon-owned BookSurge. Amazon filed for dismissal on the basis there was no antitrust case, but Booklocker continues to contend that the new POD criteria brings together several of Amazon's online services and takes advantage of its prominence as an online bookstore. A ruling on the motion to dismiss is expected in early September.

Ninc Founder Marianne Shock and the Authors Coalition

Since 1994 there has been a figure listed under Income in Ninc's Operating Budget with the explanation: Authors Coalition of America. And every year since 1994 that figure has increased, helping Ninc's bottom line, keeping dues affordable, and helping Ninc provide many member services it would otherwise not be able to offer.

And yet, barely any of us has a snowball's hope in Hell of understanding just what the ACA is or does.

But, in 1994, the ACA, and Ninc, and many other American writers organizations, got lucky. They got Ninc Founder Marianne Shock.

As Jasmine Cresswell, another Ninc Founder says, "When we first heard about the Authors' Coalition, most of us at Ninc dismissed it as a wonkish, arcane, hard to understand organization: something like the IRS but supposedly beneficial. For those of us who knew Marianne Shock, we were quite certain there could be nobody better qualified to represent our interests to such a body. We were right. Marianne not only made the Authors' Coalition work for Novelists, Inc, she made it work better for all American authors. We owe her a debt of gratitude and appreciation."

Marianne first attended an ACA meeting in 1994 with then Ninc President Evan Maxwell, as one of the organization's two appointed representatives. She came in, took a look around, thought maybe she had something to contribute and, being an "If you're going to do it, then do it" kind of person, by the end of 1995, Marianne was asked to also take on the job of Administrator for all of ACA in addition to remaining as one of Ninc's two representatives to ACA.

And the rest, as they say in the movies, is history.

In 1994, ten American writers organizations belonged to ACA; there are now twenty member organizations.

In 1994, \$354,000 flowed into the coffers of the ACA. By 2007, that figure was nearly five million dollars. And each year, Ninc gets its proportionate share of that money, based on the number of Ninc members who fill out their ACA forms along with their dues renewal forms each year.

As Ninc members, the majority of us don't understand the How, or even the Why of any of this. What we

do know is what Ninc Founder Maggie Osborne knows: "Every time an American writer's organization receives a check from the Coalition, they should face Michigan and give thanks for Marianne Shock. Marianne's negotiating skills and dedicated commitment to American writers has benefited our writer's organizations to the tune of millions of dollars that they otherwise would not have had. Thank you, Marianne Shock!"

While continuing as Administrator for ACA, after 14 years, Marianne is retiring as one of Ninc's two representatives to the group, and we can't let her go without this look back at all she has accomplished, for Ninc, for all the ACA member groups.

Michael Sullivan, on the Board of Directors of Text and Academic Authors of America, has this to say: "Marianne and I began working together almost 10 years ago as the sole members of the negotiating team for Authors Coalition. This experience has been my pleasure. Marianne is not only smart about business and negotiations, she is also one of the nicest people I've ever worked with. She is fair, fun, serious, but most of all she is a true friend. I am very pleased that Novelists, Inc. will be honoring Marianne for her dedication and service to the organization."

So, while we honor Marianne for all that she has done, we also remember that we, Ninc, have been honored to have Marianne represent us all of these years.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, Marianne Shock!

— Kasey Michaels

Learn more about Authors Coalition of America at <http://www.authorscoalition.org/>

Flaming Ouch

Continued from page 1 ▶

Ken Kessler, author of a trivia book, *You Watch Too Much TV*, explains what happened when his ex-wife began attacking him personally on Amazon. “I immediately contacted Amazon, and her review was removed. She posted again and I had Amazon remove it again.” Eventually her Amazon account was suspended because Kessler was able to show that she wasn’t even referring to material in the book.

Soon, she went on a couple of lists Kessler was on and posted under aliases. When he confronted her directly by email, her attacks eventually stopped.

“I mentioned the incidents in both my newsletters and my blog, letting people know what was going on. I apologized for the attacks that anyone might come across, on either the lists or on Amazon,” Kessler explains. “I didn’t really want to stoop to her level, nor give her any ammunition by attacking her.”

For others in the same situation, Kessler advised, “I’d definitely suggest taking the high road. But you don’t have to ignore it. You can let your readers know what’s going on, since some will probably come across the attacks, anyway. This will only make you look better, increase reader-loyalty, and possibly result in a few more sales....” In fact, Kessler did see a spike in Amazon sales at around that time, though he can’t attribute such to the attacks or his response.

Don’t Be a Perpetrator

Myers advises authors to themselves act professionally and says not to put anything in writing you

don’t want everyone to read. “Remember that anger and hurt last a moment, but the Internet is forever.” She also warns that “words can make you infamous and shred your credibility.”

Brennan also counsels respectful treatment of fellow authors, “For me, it’s a common courtesy. It’s not being stifled, or being ‘shut up’ by an establishment. It has nothing to do with the First Amendment.

“It also has to do with my career. Piss off enough fans of other authors, you won’t have many fans yourself.”

And author Lynda Sandoval, who writes prolifically for both teens and adults and who posts at Goodreads—a site where readers (and authors who read) give their book reviews—states there: “Since I’m intimately familiar with the blood, sweat, and tears that go into producing a book, I will only be listing my 4- and 5-star reads. We don’t all like the same fare (as is evidenced by some of the Goodreads ratings on my own work!), so if I don’t love a book, you won’t see it on my page. I’m not interested in bashing anyone else’s creative efforts or negatively influencing anyone’s reading choices.”

Or, as mystery author Stephen Solomita once said, “We’re all workers in the vineyard.”

G. Miki Hayden’s The Naked Writer is a comprehensive style and composition guide that even advanced level writers can profit from.

Business Briefs

New Buyer at Borders

Jennifer Northcutt moves up from YA buyer to Fiction for the all Borders and Waldenbooks stores.

Shopping for Books with Your Television Remote

A new “product purchase” feature will allow TiVo owners to view products and purchase them using their remote control. Advertisers can show any product sold through Amazon.com on broadcast and cable or through any of TiVo’s advertising features. Any book shown on a talk show or TV ad can immediately be purchased without getting up from the couch.

BALLOT

Member please sign here: _____

Please print name here: _____

Please mail this ballot to:

Election Committee, c/o Novelist Inc., P.O. Box 2037, Manhattan, KS 66505

Ballots must be *received* by **October 15, 2008**.

ITEM 1: Election of 2008 Officers

YES NO

___ ___ Kay Hooper, President-Elect

___ ___ Charlotte Hubbard, Secretary

___ ___ Ruth Glick, Treasurer

ITEM 2: Election of 2008 Nominating Committee Members (Vote for no more than 5)

___ Lou Aronica ___ Holly Jacobs ___ Dan McGert

___ Fran Baker ___ Pam Johnson ___ Michael Sherer

___ Claudia Dain ___ Gail Link ___ David Walker

----- fold here -----

----- fold here -----

Place
Stamp
Here

Election Committee
c/o Novelists Inc.
P.O. Box 2037
Manhattan, KS 66505

Cover To Cover

By Lou Aronica



Why They Don't Understand You

My installment this month is going to be briefer than the last two. It's the beginning of August and my Pavlovian publisher-trained response is to shut down for most of the month. I'll follow this, of course, with my Pavlovian writer-trained response to the beginning of September by dropping something new on my agent's desk because the publishers are back to work. Thinking about this actually gave me the idea for this column. I'm sure most of you encounter some level of communication breakdown with your publishers regularly. This doesn't necessarily happen with your editor (except, of course, when your editor is trying to speak for someone else in the house), but it probably happens relatively often when you deal with anyone else in the company.

I'm sure you feel that they just don't get you. That's because they don't.

For most of the people who work at publishing houses, writers are like some tribe you watch on the Discovery Channel. They're intriguing in their uniqueness, they've come up with clever ways of adapting to their environment, the young ones are kinda cute, if clueless, and they seem mostly harmless. Fascinating creatures, these writers, the thinking goes, but I'd better not get too close to them. I hear they hunt managing editors in the night. And several sales reps have disappeared after entering their village. There are many reasons why they don't understand us. Here are a few:

You get an advance and royalties; they get a paycheck. This isn't exclusive to the writer/publisher communication gap. It's really something that pertains to the gap between all freelancers and salaried employees. The simple fact is that you see the world differently when you're on a salary. I didn't actually understand this until I stopped drawing one. It was then that I realized that I used to be paid the same amount for my bad days as for my good ones. Of course, I knew deep down that if I had too many bad days, I'd stop being paid and if I had a particularly high percentage of good days, there was a real chance that I would be paid more. But on those rare times when I stayed out too late/one of the kids woke up

four times during the night/I started watching "Annie Hall" on AMC at 12:30/the blabbermouth sitting next to me screwed up my 125th-St.-to-Grand-Central mini-nap during my commute, I'd still take home the same amount as when I acquired a surefire bestseller, came up with a breakthrough marketing campaign, developed a winning publishing plan, or made an especially poignant editorial point. Only when I started working for myself did I realize that bad days were, well, bad. That time and money had more than a proverbial correlation. That there wasn't really a "coast time" during my workday (which is not to suggest that I spent part of every day of my corporate life coasting; however, when you're sitting in a reprint meeting and you need to make only one actual decision in an hour and a half, a mental vacation seems warranted).

The upshot of this particular disconnect is that paycheck people tend to look at the world differently from advance-and-royalties people. People who work at publishing houses know that if they don't make the best possible decision on your book their world won't change much. You know that it could have a serious impact on that trip you were planning to ▶

You get an advance and royalties; they get a paycheck. This isn't exclusive to the writer/publisher communication gap. It's really something that pertains to the gap between all freelancers and salaried employees. The simple fact is that you see the world differently when you're on a salary.

Greece (or maybe even that trip you were planning to the supermarket). Publishing people don't understand why everything is so damned important to you. Don't you know that they have half-hearted decisions to make on a dozen other books today? Don't you get the fact that the guy on the train simply would not stop talking, and I need that ten-minute nap in order to be clear-headed?

You're focused on one book; they have to deal with dozens or even hundreds. You go to visit your editor in New York and she takes you around to meet some of the other people on the staff. You have a great conversation with the Associate Marketing Director who not only seems very nice, but has actually read and liked your novel. The two of you chat for a couple of minutes, discover you both have an interest in red-breasted nuthatches (really, they're so much more attractive than white-breasted ones), and she even says, "Let me know if there's anything I can do for you." A month or so later, as you start stressing over whether your new novel is going to be the breakout book you hope, you think, hey, there is something the Associate Marketing Director could do for me. I'm going to call her. She told me to let her know, right? You leave a message and get no response. You leave another and she still doesn't call you back. You think about that nuthatch conversation and decide to send her your favorite birding book along with a note that reads, "I saw this and thought of you. Give me a call when you get a chance so we can catch up. I have some ideas for marketing the new novel." Still nothing. You try email and get a polite response that essentially says that you should really take this up with your editor...oh, and thanks for the bird book, sorry I didn't send you a note about that sooner.

On a typical morning, my three-year-old daughter will come into my office around breakfast time to tell me that she wants a cup of milk. When we get to the kitchen, she'll see the fruit basket and decide she wants a banana. I'll give her the banana and open the refrigerator for the milk. When the refrigerator door opens, she'll see the yogurt and decide she wants some of that. I'll give her this and then go back to getting the milk. While the milk is out, I get myself a bowl of cereal. She sees the cereal and decides she wants that. By the time I hand the milk to her, she looks at me with an expression that says, "Why are you giving me milk?"

A common refrain in publishing halls is, "Authors are children." Publishers say this (many do, at least. I don't recall ever saying it myself, except in one case when I was working with a 16-year-old who was, technically, a child) because we writers sometimes think we're the center of the universe and whine a lot if we don't get our way. We could argue the validity of this label in some non-August month if you'd like. The point I'm trying to

make here is that publishers are also children in that they are very easily distracted and tend to pay attention only to the things directly in front of them. When those things change constantly because the publisher releases dozens or even hundreds of new books a year, the odds of their remembering that they asked for milk (or that they offered to help you in any way they could) go down dramatically. Meanwhile, you keep trying to remind them about the milk and not only can't they think about the milk because they have all of this cereal, yogurt, and banana to get through, but they're completely mystified over how you can worry about nothing but milk for so long.

Nobody's sure who works for who. Very early in my publishing career, I heard someone refer to the house where I worked as a "sales-driven company." At one level, this seemed like the most obvious thing in the world to me. If you don't have any "sales," you don't have any "company." At another level, though—the level where one considered the sales department to be the most important department in the organization—the logic became less obvious. After all, if the sales department doesn't have anything to sell, it isn't going to write very large orders. Therefore, the department that provided the books was the most important, wasn't it? It wasn't as though a sales rep could go into Barnes & Noble and say, "Listen, I don't have any books to sell you this month, but I just picked up this great line of industrial grade power tools that I think you should see." It always seemed to me that book publishers should be, you know, book-driven companies.

This relates to the author/publisher disconnect in that most people at publishing houses can't figure out if they work for you, you work for them, or if all of you work for a shadowy syndicate with questionable motives. Most people who work at publishing houses know they're supposed to make nice with the writers. But are

It wasn't as though a sales rep could go into Barnes & Noble and say, "Listen, I don't have any books to sell you this month, but I just picked up this great line of industrial grade power tools that I think you should see." It always seemed to me that book publishers should be, you know, book-driven companies.

they supposed to do this because writers provide a service and it's good to keep the help happy, or are they supposed to do this because writers indirectly but in a vitally important way pay the bills? You treat your boss differently than you treat the guy at the deli. But who is who when you apply this to publishing?

You're in charge of your business empire; for them, there's always another boss.

My first real job in publishing (if you don't count typing up the minutes of the cover meetings as a real job) was running the science fiction line at Bantam. At the time, Bantam was bloated with bestsellers and the science fiction line was Kate Moss in comparison. Therefore, no one cared about what I did with the science fiction program, as long as I didn't embarrass the company and didn't try to convince Robert Ludlum that he should write space operas instead of international suspense blockbusters. The upshot was that I was in charge of just about everything related to the science fiction program. I got to decide what to put on the covers, I had my own (very modest) marketing budget, I got to talk directly to the sales people, and I even got to communicate monthly with a large number of booksellers. Therefore, when a writer came to me with an idea, I could say, "I love it; let's do that/let me pitch it to the sales people/let me run some numbers on it," or "Nope, it's too expensive/it won't work with the accounts/it doesn't fit with the vision of the program/Bob, I really think your voice is better suited to international suspense." (No, I never had any form of this conversation with Robert Ludlum.)

A couple of years into the program, which at this point was the imprint Spectra, Bantam reorganized sales and marketing. Suddenly, I didn't have control of my marketing budget anymore and I couldn't communicate directly with sales. When a writer came to me with an idea, I had to run it past somebody, who often had to run it past someone else, who then discussed it at a meeting. Most publishing houses run this way and therefore most people who work at publishing houses deal with decisions by passing them up the line.

Now unless you work for some kind of "writer conglomerate" that no one has told me exists, you make all of your own business decisions. This doesn't mean that you're free to do anything you want, but you know the basic parameters of your business and within those parameters, you have the only vote that matters. If someone suggests to you that it might be worth investing in an email blast because it will put your book in front of hundreds of thousands of interested readers, you can quickly decide if the cost makes sense. If someone tells you that writing about puppies will fast-track you onto the best-seller list, you can immediately start developing storylines or you could emphatically announce, "No, nuthatches are my future." This decision-making power, this ability to go from idea to execution rapidly confounds the hell out of most publishing staff—widening the gap between you and them.

There are many other reasons why publishing people don't understand us. If it weren't August and if I didn't have so much important non-work to do, I could easily take this further. In the end, what it really comes down to is that you are a creative entrepreneur and most of them work for a company. That's a Mars/Venus kind of difference. That's a blue state/red state kind of difference. That's a boxers/briefs kind of difference. In many ways, your brains work differently and your goals are different.

Someone should come up with some suggestions for bridging that gap. Hmm, I feel the idea for another column coming on.

Lou Aronica is the author of two novels (under the pseudonym Ronald Anthony) and eight works of nonfiction, including the upcoming book, The Element co-authored with Sir Ken Robinson and coming from Viking in January. Prior to embarking on a career as a writer, Lou was on the other side of publishing for twenty years, most recently as Publisher of Avon Books. Lou and literary agent Peter Miller have recently launched a small publishing house dedicated to commercial fiction called The Story Plant.

You can reach Lou at laronica@fictionstudio.com.

Business Briefs

Read a Book on Your Phone

Fictionwise.com, ebook retailer and developer, has taken advantage of Apple allowing third-party developers to work with the new 3G iPhone. Yes, ebooks are being offered for the iPhone. The Fictionwise e-reader can be downloaded from eReader.com or from the iPhone App Store. Kindle owners have been working with Fictionwise since December 2007, and the company is working on a Blackberry version. The eReader 1.0 doesn't have complete functionality with iPhone, but the upgrade should be ready in fall 2008. Titles are available from major publishers as well as DRM-free and public domain sources.

Characters, Corps, and Copyrights

If an author has created characters in a book or books for one publisher, and the contract with that publisher does not refer to characters created by the author, can the author use those characters in books submitted to a different publisher? If so, are there any restrictions, conditions or considerations to bear in mind? If not, would the answer be different if the current publisher has already rejected the manuscripts the author wants to submit to a different publisher?

The grant of rights to the publisher does not typically convey any rights to the characters.

Once you have satisfied the manuscript delivery and option clause requirements you need only consider the publisher's "Competing Works" clause, which generally precludes the author from publishing any works derived from the author's book without the publisher's approval. It is very rare for a publisher's contracts department to refuse a request (in the negotiation of the contract) to modify such clause by the addition of language similar to the following:

"Prequels and sequels to the Work in which Publisher fails to exercise its option shall not be considered competitive works." or "Author written prequels and sequels are deemed excluded from the provisions of this Paragraph."

Please note, however, that the above would not apply in those very unusual situations where the copyright in the book is to be owned by the publisher.

Note also that my answer is limited to legalities; it does not take into account the likely annoyance of a publisher if the author switches publishers in the middle of a series. I imagine that where the publisher gave the author specific advice about creating unusual characters, the publisher might feel particularly aggrieved if the author left for another publisher. Nevertheless, if the contract specifically gives the author the right to

publish sequels elsewhere, the author will be allowed to do so.

I always hear that it's safest for authors to incorporate in order to protect themselves—and their personal assets. But when I looked into this, it seemed like I was going to have to change so much about the way I do things (setting up a separate bank account, running all monies through it, etc.) that I wimped out based on it creating a number of what would be ongoing inconveniences. Can you discuss the pros and cons (if any) of incorporating, and/or discuss other ways authors can protect themselves if they choose not to incorporate?

Frankly, I have never been able to see any advantage at all in incorporation for writers, other than possible tax benefits (and I'm not even sure about that). Incorporation will not shield the author from the indemnification obligations in a publisher's contract... publishers are wise to that and so require authors to sign "personal guarantee" letters acknowledging personal liability for any default or breach by the author's corporate entity. In addition, if the book libels someone or invades their privacy, the claimant will sue the author, whose name is on the book, as well as the author's "loanout" company.

A possible partial exception might be a claim for copyright infringement: if the book is owned by the loanout company (i.e. the company signed the book contract and the copyright is in the company's name), and if the author has a contract with the company to write the book as an employee of the company, then a copyright plaintiff might have to sue the company rather than the author. However, the plaintiff will certainly sue the publisher as well, and the publisher in turn will look to the author, so ultimately this is not an effective way to dodge liability.

As for cons of incorporating, there are costs involved in incorporation, and in maintaining the corporation on the records of the state.

Alternatives: the very best alternative is to ask your publisher whether it provides author insurance coverage, and, if so, how high is the deductible, how is the deductible shared by the author and the publisher, and what are the limits of the coverage. Most major publishers automatically offer such coverage; you may find it worthwhile to accept a slightly lower advance from such a publisher rather than a slightly higher advance from a publisher which does not offer such coverage.

Lastly, if you have substantial assets to protect (such as an expensive house), and if you anticipate the possibility of claims arising from publication of your book, you can obtain your own “media perils” or “errors and omissions” insurance policy for the book. Premiums (per edition) start somewhere around \$3,000 or \$4,000, and policies require submission from an experienced media lawyer of a letter saying that he or she has read the manuscript and is not aware of any likely legal problems (so that will cost another couple of thousand dollars in legal fees).

I write under a pseudonym but copyright under my real name because I wasn't sure about the legalities of copyrighting under a pseudonym. I know some writers do, though, and my publisher did give me the choice. So my question is, are there any legal issues attached to copyrighting under a pseudonym?

The United States Copyright Act permits, but does not require, copyright notice and registration (there are very serious advantages to both... you may not be able to register a work which did not bear notice, and until you register, neither you nor your publisher can sue infringers... and even then, you cannot obtain damages for infringements which occurred due to the absence of copyright notice). When notice is included, it is supposed to be in “the name of the owner of copyright... or a generally known alternative designation of the owner.”

The instructions which accompany the copyright registration form state:

“If the work is “pseudonymous” you may:

- (1) leave the line blank; or
- (2) give the pseudonym and identify it as such (for

example: “Huntley Haverstock, pseudonym”); or
(3) reveal the author’s name, making clear which is the real name and which is the pseudonym (for example, ‘Judith Barton, whose pseudonym is Madeline Elster’).”

What is the difference? The duration of copyright protection is very different for a pseudonymous work than it is for a work by an identifiable author. Ordinary copyright protection continues for 70 years after the death of the author. Pseudonymous works (as well as “works for hire”, such as books created by authors employed by their loan-out companies) are protected for a term of 95 years from publication (or 120 years from creation, whichever is shorter) ... a much shorter term in the vast majority of cases.

However, the Copyright Act stipulates that even a work which is published pseudonymously will be protected for life plus 70 years if the author’s true identity is revealed either in the copyright application itself or in a separate document recorded in the Copyright Office.

I think it is perfectly safe to use a pseudonym on your book, and in the copyright notice within the book, so long as you or your publisher promptly files a registration application which discloses your actual identity and address (which can be care of your publisher).

Of course, if one considers the number of books published 95 years ago or longer that still have economic value, I suspect that is a very small list... and thus that most authors do not have to worry about their works losing copyright protection a mere 95 years after publication... ▲

— Robert Stein

Robert Stein has over three decades experience in publishing. He has served as legal counsel for Random House, Simon and Schuster, and Warner Brothers. As an attorney with Pryor Cashman, LLP, he represents authors, literary agents, book publishers, and others in publishing negotiations and disputes.

Advice given in this column is general and brief, and is not based upon a thorough review of facts and considerations in any given instance. You should consult an attorney in depth if you need personal legal advice.

For more information about Robert Stein, visit his website, <http://www.pryorcashman.com/attorneys-119.html>

To submit a question for this column, email to CMyersTex@aol.com.



WRITING is TAXING

Where Will This Madness End?

BY DIANE KELLY O'BRIEN

As if income taxes, real estate taxes, sales taxes, and use taxes weren't enough for you to deal with, did you know the assets used in your writing business might also be subject to a property tax? Where will this madness end!

Although some states impose a tax on automobiles, boats, or certain other types of personal property regardless of how the property is used, most jurisdictions tax personal property only if it is used in the taxpayer's business. But, wait a minute, how can there be such a thing as *business personal property*? Isn't that an oxymoron? Nope. But it is undeniably confusing.

All property is divided into two categories:

(1) real property (or realty), which includes land and improvements made thereon, such as buildings, fences, landscaping, etc.; and

(2) personal property (or personalty), which includes all property that is not real property, whether or not the property is used for personal purposes or business purposes.

Is your head spinning yet?

Business personal property generally includes furniture, equipment, machinery, fixtures, supplies, and inventory (such as that case of your books you're using as a footrest).

Although state law imposes the tax, personal property tax is generally collected by and used for the benefit of local governments, such as counties, cities, and school districts. The taxpayer is generally required to file with their county tax office an annual form, often referred to as a "Rendition" or "Property Statement," in which the property is described and the value listed. The form is usually due in the spring, though deadlines vary among the states. A penalty may apply if your form is late, so find out when your particular deadline is and mark your calendar.

Most states require that the property be reported at its current market value. For example, a desk you

bought for \$1,000 two years ago may have a market value of only \$200 now and would therefore be reported at a value of \$200. Other jurisdictions, such as California require the taxpayer to report the actual cost the taxpayer paid for the property rather than its market value. In many jurisdictions, the taxable value is determined as of January 1st, but some jurisdictions use other dates for the valuation. In addition, some states may not require a report every year. For instance, California exempts taxpayers with less than \$100,000 in property from filing an annual report after an initial report is filed.

Leased Property. Though most jurisdictions tax the owners/lessors of leased property, some impose property tax on the lessees or require the lessees to identify the leased property on their reports even if the leased property isn't actually taxed to them.

Mixed Use Property. I know what some of you are thinking – *I use my computer in my writing, but also for bidding on "Gilligan's Island" memorabilia on e-Bay. How do I value property if I use it partially for my writing business and partially for personal purposes?* Unfortunately, the law is pitifully scant on this issue. A call to my local tax office got me the answer "Uh . . . um . . . it's a gray area." Gee thanks, buddy! Call your tax office for advice. Hopefully you'll get a better answer than I got but, if you don't, the less risky option is to report the property at its full value.

Exemptions. Exemptions vary from state to state.

Some states, such as New York, have no personal property tax at all. Other states exempt property if its value is less than a specified amount. For example, in Texas personal property used in a business is exempt if the value of the property in any jurisdiction is less than \$500. Ohio does not require a return if the total reportable value of property is \$10,000 or less.

Some states tax corporations, partnerships, limited liability companies, and other types of business entities, but exempt sole proprietors, such as writers who have not incorporated their businesses.

Some jurisdictions exempt certain types of property used for both business and

Cont on page 18 ▶

The View from Here

By Susan Wiggs



The Thorn Among Roses: Why We Fixate on that One Bad Review

Asking a writer what she thinks of a bad review is like asking a fire hydrant what it thinks of a dog. Your pleasure in all those happy, glowing reviews of your book can plummet when you stumble upon that one blot on your record. It might be a snarky reader comment on a blog or review site. Could be it was in a major print publication—major pain. Your friends, your agent and editor will come to your rescue, reminding you of all those kudos and pointing out that any review, good or bad, helps with publicity.

Putting your fiction out there invites everyone, from the most casual reader to a seasoned reviewer to offer an opinion. Some reviewers delight in spreading snark, and seem to consider it an art form. I'm more partial to *Guardian* critic James Wood. In a recent interview in *Publishers Weekly*, he said, "I think as I get older, I don't know what this is about, but I think as I get older I'm more aware of the danger of being involved in an occupation that hurts people's feelings. I agree that, on the hierarchy of sins, it's not very high, but still, is that what you want to do? I often blithely like to quote the Kingsley Amis thing, and I try to live by it myself, that a negative review should spoil your breakfast but not your lunch. But I know perfectly well that a bad review spoils more than my lunch—my dinner and a few weeks of dinners."

Fancy that—a reviewer with a conscience.

When it comes to bad reviews, there's a peculiar etiquette in publishing. I stick by my mother's advice: "Least said, soonest mending." If a friend gets a bad review, it's not your job to bring it up.

This is probably too obvious, but I'll say it again—Do not commiserate with a friend who's suffered a bad review unless the victim brings it up. I was appalled to see this happen at a writers' conference once upon a time. A

few writer friends were relaxing in the hotel bar. One among us had just received a stink-ass review in a major publication, but either she was blissfully unaware, or she knew and was over it, or she was putting on a good front. In walked an agent who promptly rushed over and said, "Oh, you poor thing. I am so sorry about that horrible review. I hope you'll get over it." The writer's face said it all: *What horrible review?* And the rest of us were like, way to ruin her day, dude.

Not cool. Better to just treat it like a fart in church. Hold your breath for thirty seconds, and the smell goes away. Deep breath...now, hold it! Simple, huh?

Sometimes reviewers speak in code. They often do find fresh ways to critique a novel, but if you read enough reviews, you'll come across certain phrases, again and again. For your convenience, I've compiled this handy glossary of reviewers' terms.

spare – 12 pages long; still costs \$24.95

Sprawling – 624pp of mental vomit

elegiac – see "watching paint dry"

precious – cute, gimmicky

tragic – hit yourself in the head with a hammer; usually

means something small and cute dies

grotesque – ugly people having weird sex

unconventional – incomprehensible; see "impenetrable"

challenging – PhD required

quirky – reviewer didn't get it

irresistible – see "addictive" and "poorly written." It's a

page-turner, but you'll feel dirty after reading it.

deliciously filthy – see above

private tragedy – incest

TV evangelist – always a villain

limned – reviewer learned a new word and wants to try it out



The View from Here

Continued from page 17 ▶

thought-provoking – preachy
religious fundamentalists – loonies

searing – read at arms' length
turgid prose – reviewer was dying to say “turgid”
uncensored – lots of swear words
well-researched – boring
exhaustively researched – really boring
gender-bending – weird sex
leisurely – slow
slow – leaden
charming – slight
with brio – bouncy language
fresh – same old stuff but the review can't help
liking it

Speaking of book reviewing, here's another shout out to one of the most interesting review sites on the Web: <http://www.writersarereaders.com>. Check it out and see what we're really reading. And they've added a new feature—reviewers can post excerpts from their books. Thanks to Katherine Stone and Jack Chase for their innovative site.

I love seeing what other writers are reading. I always peruse the “What's on your nightstand?” memes found in interviews and various magazines. *PW* did one earlier this year with ten debut novelists, asking them who their favorite authors are and what they like to read and

watch on TV, and what's on their playlist. Their favorite authors are Jane Austen (of course), Leo Tolstoy, Marcel Proust....One of them actually said, “I cleanse the palate by reading French or German—Paul Éluard or the Brüder Grimm. Also, Richmond Lattimore's translation of the Gospels...”

Huh? Who are these people?

What I'd really like to see is what people are really reading/listening to/watching:

What are you reading? *Gravity's Rainbow*.

What are you really reading? *High Noon* by Nora Roberts.

What's on your iPod? A John Corigliano concerto and Jaco Pastorius playing bass.

What's really on your iPod? Carrie Underwood's “Before He Cheats.”

What are you watching? *Planet Earth* on the National Geographic Channel.

What are you really watching? *Project Runway*.

What's on your nightstand? – Emmanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, a bottle of Voss water and a pot of Creme de la Mer.

What's really on your nightstand? – The Anthropologie catalog, a can of Tab, an ARC for a book I'm supposed to endorse. I can't manage to get into it but I owe the editor a favor so I'll say something nice.

Susan Wiggs's latest novel is Summer by the Sea, from Mira Books.

WRITING is TAXING

Continued from page 16 ▶

personal purposes. For example, in Texas a vehicle used for both business and personal purposes is exempt from property tax. Other states exempt only certain types of personal property. For instance, California, North Carolina, and some other states

do not assess tax on business inventory. Other states exempt intangible property.

Got a tax question for Diane? E-mail her at Diane@dianeobrienkelly.com. Your question might be addressed in an upcoming issue. For further tax tips, check out the “Tax Tidbits” page on Diane's website, <http://www.dianeobrienkelly.com>.

Business Briefs

Get Ready for Banned Books Week

[The American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression](http://www.bannedbooksweek.org/) and the American Library Association have put together a new web site: <http://www.bannedbooksweek.org/> Banned Books Week will be observed September 27 - October 4. The website's goal is to make it easier to find local events as well as inform the public.

Ninc Bulletin Board

COMPILED BY NANCY J. PARRA

Want to blog?

Join the Ninc authors and industry guests who are already doing so. Signing up is easy. Go to <http://www.ninc.com/blog/> fill out your profile. then send me a notice that you have done so at Patricia.Rosemoor@gmail.com. Don't mail the notice to the list, please. The webmistress will approve you as an author so that you can post to the blog.

To sign up for a date, use the Yahoo calendar at the yahoo/Ninc website: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NINCLINK/cal///group/NINCLINK/?v=2&t=1215072000>

Hopefully you have your yahoo ID and password. If not, you'll need to get them. Note that all the Wednesdays are already reserved for INDUSTRY GUESTS.

Please sign up for M-Tu-W-Th-F first, then sign up for weekends.

Ninc has a brand new promotional brochure. Going to a conference? Giving a talk to a writers group or library? Ask Outreach Chair Pari Taichert (ptaichert@comcast.net) to send you a bundle of Ninc brochures to pass out! Let's get the word out there about Ninc, which has the highest density of professional achievement of any fiction writing organization.

Have you signed up for e-Nink? Be the first to get all the scoop from this newsletter by signing up to have it delivered directly to your email box. The PDF format is easy to read and easy to print out in color or black and white. e-Nink subscribers not only receive the newsletter earlier than snail mail subscribers, they're privy to exclusive e-only features such as Eric Maisel's great series on Creative Recovery—a Novelists, Inc. exclusive. Thank you to all who have already subscribed to e-Nink. Doing so saves Ninc cash that can be used to benefit the membership in other ways, such as more great content for *Nink* and great speakers for our conference. In fact, if the majority of members signed up to receive the newsletter electronically (remember you can print it out and read or save the hard copy) Ninc would save \$10,000 a year.

To sign up, go to <http://www.ninc.com>, log in to the members-only pages, go to your profile and click the box for e-Nink delivery.

Ninc Member Appearances:

If you have an appearance coming up in the next six months, please email Denise Agnew at danovelist@cox.net with the following information for the Ninc website:

- ◆ Date/s of appearance
- ◆ Your name (or pseudonym)
- ◆ Type of appearance (signing, talk, conference)
- ◆ Location (including country!)
- ◆ Time (if applicable)

Recruit 2/get free year's Ninc membership campaign

Objective:

It's easy! Get two of your published friends to join Ninc, and get your 2009 membership free!

Rules:

- ◆ Recruits must be new members, not returning members, unless they have been away from Ninc for at least the previous year. Prospective new members must have published at least two novels.
- ◆ Campaign runs from Sept 1 thru Nov 30, 2008 – this is the time in which your recruits must APPLY to Ninc. Since their application processing takes time, their application will count for your free membership.
- ◆ No two members may claim the same recruit, and no recruit can name more than one sponsoring member.
- ◆ There will be a line on the application form for them to mention your name as their recruiter. This must be filled out.
- ◆ You will fill out a line on your renewal form for your free membership for 2009. This must be filled out.

Go forth and recruit!

Have you joined NINCLINK?

NINCLINK is the email list-serve for Novelists, Inc., a place of lively discussion and a great way to get to know your fellow Nincers. For instance, recent threads have looked at Google Books and Bookcrossing, the merits of website contests, and what spouses can do to occupy themselves while the rest of us are enjoying the Ninc conference in New York. To sign up and join in the discussion, send a blank email to NINCLINKsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Did you read about Ninc's new 2 [referrals] for 1 [yours = free] membership offer?

Read about it this month in
the *President's Column*
[page 3] & the *Ninc*
Bulletin Board [page
19]...then:

Go and Recruit!

You asked for it, you got it! The new super-duper log-in on Ninc.com.

You can Log In with your email address and change your password any time you want.

To Log In to the website, use either your Ninc Membership Number or your email address. Remember, the only email address we have for you is the last one you gave us.

To Change Your Password, click on the "Change Your Password" link found on the Members Only main page, under "Member Services." It will take you to the pertinent spot to make the change.

To Change Your Email Address, simply correct the information in the appropriate area of "Update Your Membership Profile," which is also linked under "Member Services."

If you've forgotten your Ninc Membership Number or your Password, Request an ID/Password reminder and an email will be sent INSTANTLY to your email address with the needed information.

Business Briefs

Amazon Makes Another Move in Used Books

AbeBooks, the Canadian online purveyor of used, rare and out-of-print titles, sold to Amazon this summer. The company has over 110 million titles in its network and will continue to be based in British Columbia. No further details are available at this time.

Kenyon Book Trailer Hits it Big on YouTube

Sherrilyn Kenyon's trailer for *Acheron* ended up on YouTube's most viewed list with 11,300 time viewings the first day and 175,000 by the next week. *St. Martin* sent e-mail links to the Hollywood produced video on YouTube to 90,000 people on July 20 prior to the August 5th publication date. The video was also distributed by Zeighost Media over the web where blogs and other site picked it up and featured it.

NINK a publication of Novelists, Inc.
An Organization for Writers of Popular Fiction
P.O. Box 2037
Manhattan KS 66505

Publishing Services by Huseby Agency, Ltd.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FARGO ND
PERMIT #281

CREATIVE RECOVERY—Part 5

THE ANXIETY OF NOT MAKING MEANING

BY ERIC MAISEL, PH.D.

A person with vitality, passion, and energy—a person who is really alive—possesses roiling thoughts, big ideas, and insistent desires. These inevitably lead to obsessions and compulsions. When these obsessions and compulsions are channeled in a positive direction, so that, for example, a writer is only obsessed about the novel on her mind and her only compulsion is to get that novel down on paper, all is well. Then she is creative, engaged, productive, and alive.

But because a creator can only create for so many hours each day and because creating is anxiety-producing work that she may be inclined to avoid altogether, she is often left with undirected kilowatts of energy to redirect as well as the anxiety of not creating to relieve. Her large energy needing to be expended and her anxiety needing to be eased barrel her headlong toward some other outlet—and the possibility of addiction.

It is excellent if you obsess about your novel. It is wonderful if you feel compelled to write late into the night. Your productive obsessions and compulsions are nothing but the expression of your passionate meaning-making efforts. You should want to feel compelled to write your novel, because, if you do not feel compelled, that is the equivalent of taking insufficient interest in it. You don't want to obsess about your neighbor's untidy lawn but you cer-

tainly do want to obsess about your own creative ideas.

The poet and novelist May Sarton wrote in *At 70*, the journal of her seventieth year: "Perhaps the answer is not detachment, as I used to believe, but rather to be deeply involved in something, to be attached. I am attached in a thousand ways. The price of being attached 'in a thousand ways' is that there is never even twenty-four hours free of pressure, but this year I am clear in my mind that just this is what my life is all about, and what I have to learn (so late!) is to accept the multiple demands and understand that a rich life is bought at a high price in energy. If I can be wiser about not feeling so compulsive about everything, all will be well."

May Sarton

A person with this life energy at her disposal must cultivate the habit of productively obsessing, so

Continued on page 23 ▶

Book Industry Study Group Publishing Survey Findings

Michael Healy, Executive Director of the Book Industry Study Group (BISG), presented the findings of BISG's most recent survey of industry trends at Book Expo America in Los Angeles. The Book Industry Study Group is the book industry's leading trade association for policy, standards and research. They develop standards and practices for the industry and conduct research and gather data on issues affecting the book industry.

One of small publishers' chief concerns is getting brick and mortar retailers to carry their books.

For this study, BISG surveyed both small and large publishers. While the total number of publishers continues to increase, the majority of this growth is in small publishers, defined as those publishers having less than \$50,000 in annual sales.

Between 2006 and 2007, the number of publishers as measured by Bowker, a publishing database, grew 8.4%, from 193,802 to 210,006. This includes small publishers, self-publishing entities, university presses, non-profit publishers — virtually anyone who published a book.

While the number of small publishers grew 16%

from 2006 to 2007, this growth is offset by lower revenues per publisher. In other words, the same pie is being divided into small pieces.

Among small publishers, the trend toward earning revenue from non-book activities (everything from T-shirts to calendars) continues to grow. In 2006, 53% of these small publishers' revenues were from non-book activities, versus 56% in 2007.

76.9% of small publishers' book revenue is from the sale of paperbacks. 89% of the small publishers surveyed use the internet for marketing and sales. One of small publishers' chief concerns is getting brick and mortar retailers to carry their books.

Albert N. Greco from the Institute for Publishing Research, presented his projections for Book Industry Trends. Based on research from a wide variety of sources, ranging from the Bureau of Census and the Department of Labor to the SEC and the National Endowment for the Arts, he predicts a decline in book sales to coincide with an overall decline in consumer spending.

In 2007 publishers realized approximately 4.4 million dollars in sales. BISG predicts this will fall to 2.8 million in 2008 and 2009 before bouncing back to 3.3 million in 2010 and 2011.

Cindi Myers



THE ANXIETY OF NOT MAKING MEANING

Continued from page 21 ▶

that she works hard at her creative efforts. At the same time, she must prevent herself from sending her energy and her thoughts off in directions that harm her, toward slot machines, Internet sex chats, or the next bottle of vodka. And she must temporarily turn off even her productive obsessions, so that, for example, she remembers that she has a child to pick up from school.

When something manages to reduce our core anxiety and provides us with a feeling of well-being, however fleetingly, we want to repeat that feeling. After awhile, we can get hooked on that feeling and that anxiety relief. That something might be chocolate, a wager, an orgasm, a fix, a beer, or a comforting belief. We think about Heaven, reduce or mask our experience of anxiety, and produce pleasure—or at least a respite from worry. We sip our cognac, reduce or mask our experience of anxiety, and feel better. We drive at a hundred miles an hour and, high on adrenaline and thrilled by the ride, produce pleasure and distance ourselves from our worries. Naturally we want that feeling again and again. Who wouldn't?

People want to reduce their experience of anxiety. The body is set up to help in this regard, turning potato chips into chemical pleasure and relaxation, turning an orgasm into chemical pleasure and relaxation, using an hour of computer solitaire to take its mind off its core anxieties, using the raucous hubbub of a bar to distract it from its worries, embracing the adrenalin rush of a big bet, a huge merger, or a fast drive down the highway.

Every body knows these anxiety-reducing pleasures; some bodies become addicted to them. If you

have big drives, big appetites, big challenges, and big anxieties, this dynamic is magnified many-fold.

This is all by way of saying that the obsessive nature of the creative person is not a bad thing, in and of itself, as it allows her to productively obsess about her work. But when that powerful obsessive nature gets a grip on an obsession with drinking or with using drugs as its favorite way to alleviate anxiety, that grip is often an iron one. Obsess all you want: but productively! You don't want to tranquilize yourself out of your productive obsessions; but you do want to avoid the destructive obsessing, arising from anxiety and your difficulties with making and maintaining meaning, that can lead you directly to physical and psychological dependence on drugs, alcohol, food, and the other meaning crutches that are ready and waiting.

Come back next month for more of our discussion. If you have any thoughts or questions, by all means drop me a line at ericmaisel@hotmail.com. For a comprehensive look at the addiction issues that confront writers, please consult *Creative Recovery* (Shambhala, 2008).

Eric Maisel, Ph.D., is the author of more than 30 books, among them Fearless Creating, Creativity for Life, The Van Gogh Blues, and the recently published A Writer's Space. Creative Recovery, the first comprehensive recovery program for creative people, appears from Shambhala in October of 2008. Dr. Maisel lectures widely (including at RWA National in 2008), runs cyber support groups for artists, trains creativity coaches, and maintains a creativity coaching practice. He lives in San Francisco. Please visit Eric at <http://www.ericmaisel.com> or listen to his two shows, The Joy of Living Creatively and Your Purpose-Centered Life, at <http://www.personallifemedia.com>.

