

# N I N K

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## The Seventeen-Year Twitch, or Why I Spent My Wedding Anniversary in Bed with Colin Firth and a Bottle of Champagne

BY MARIANNA JAMESON

Okay, you need to know two things before you read this article: 1) you have no idea how much I enjoyed writing that title, and 2) this post is probably not about what you think it's about.

My seventeenth wedding anniversary was a Friday night a few weeks ago. My gorgeous, wonderful, Irish (the real thing) husband was in England on business. Our children were at a sleepover. I, who never considered myself great at being single when I was single, displayed a marked out-of-touchness when I forgot to make plans with my girlfriends on this oh-so-rare (like discovering-a-new-planet rare) night of solitude and no responsibility. So I did what came naturally. I indulged in some sushi and most of a bottle of Veuve Clicquot, and luxuriated in a surfeit of Colin Firth. As if there could ever be a surfeit of Colin Firth. Please.

Curled up in bed with the sushi on my Wedgewood and the Champers in my Waterford, and a few hand-rolled (by me) beeswax tapers flickering so early-Nineteenth-Century-ish in the candelabra I brought up from the dining room just to set the mood, I turned on the DVD and sat back to watch the six-hour BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice* straight through. I intended, when I'd finished that, to segue seamlessly to the Twentieth Century to watch *The King's Speech*. I didn't make it. Oh, the champagne held out, but I could not. Clearly, I'm not a marathoner. I can't even go the distance for Colin. Or Darcy. Or Bertie.

The late-Friday announcement of this unusual, quirky even, indulgence left a girlfriend questioning why, or maybe how, I could watch the same story over and over and over again. I'm sure I've watched *P&P*—this version—several dozen times since it came out. It was a question answerable with a shrug and a smile, but it made me think about Mr. Darcy and the celebrity and fandom that has come to exist around him, ranging from some rather tame follow-on books to rather racy ones to those describing zombie encounters.

As romantic heroes go, Darcy is an enduring favorite, but...why? He's no bad boy. He's no Regency rakehell open to reformation. He's not a cowboy or a cop. He's not even a self-made man. He's a stiff, moody, blunt, arrogant,

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## Novelists, Inc.

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

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Address changes may be made on the  
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For members without Internet access,  
send changes to the Central Coordinator.

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## 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: JoAnn Grote  
PO Box 5, Le Sueur, MN 56058  
[jaghi@rconnect.com](mailto:jaghi@rconnect.com)

### New Applicants:

Karen Smith (Karen Lee, Ann Jenkins Lee), Broadlands, VA  
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Doranna Durgin, Tijeras, NM  
David Wind (D.M. Wind, David Milton, Monica Barrie,  
Jennifer Dalton), Chestnut Ridge, NY  
Geraldyn Williams (Geraldyn Dawson, Emily March),  
N Richland Hills, TX  
Michele Hauf, Coon Rapids, MN  
Barbara Wallace, Medway, MA  
Cynthia Wright (Devon Lindsay), Lodi, CA  
Thacker Meinhardt (Shelly Thacker), Eagan, MN  
Suzanne Forster, Newport Beach, CA  
Suzanne Cox, Columbia, MS  
Sylvia Mendoza, Encinitas, CA

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Lynn Kerstan, Coronado, CA  
Lorraine Bartlett (Lorna Barrett, L.L. Bartlett), N. Greece, NY  
Katy Cooper, Peabody, MA  
Alicia Rasley, Indianapolis, IN  
Erica Ridley, Tampa, FL  
Kathleen Pynn (Kathleen O'Brien), Maitland, FL  
Christine Fiorotto (Lucy Gordon, Penelope Stratton),  
Northampton, Northants, UK  
Carol Umberger, Bellevue, NE  
Deborah Quattrone (Debbi Rawlins), New Harmony, UT  
April Kihlstrom, Pflugerville, TX  
Randy Ingermanson, Battle Ground, WA  
Pamela Burford, Baldwin, NY  
Sandra Parshall, McLean, VA  
Linda Urbach (Linda U. Howard), Bridgeport, CT  
Marcia Talley, Edgewater, MD

## NINC has room to grow...

Recommend membership to your colleagues.  
Prospective members may apply online at  
<http://www.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 Pari Taichert with your  
mailing address and requested number of booklets.  
[ptaichert@comcast.net](mailto:ptaichert@comcast.net)

## **From Depth Finders to Webinars, Navigating Changing Waters**

I bought a boat this summer. It's used, in good shape, and it's mainly for canal cruising and fishing. It has a canopy for shade and seats about six comfortably. My uncle taught me how to pilot a boat when I was young, but it's been years since I've done it. Naturally, I took a course on boating, mandatory in Jersey, to get my certificate.

I'll admit I was nervous on my first solo voyage, but I made certain I had the Garmin for boats that not only charts my course but beeps if I'm in shallow water. So, off I went on my own, my hands shaking, my heart thumping, and the damn Garmin beeping way too often.

It was nerve-wracking, but in a sense fun and I enjoyed exploring the canals and I even went out to the bay, though not far—that's going to take more practice. What I need lots and lots of practice with is docking the boat—you don't want to know how that turned out—but I'm determined.

You may be asking what does this have to do with writing? While I was cruising the canal, I thought about my first experience piloting a boat. There had been no Garmin or depth-finder to guide me; my uncle taught me how to read the channel and the buoys. That got me thinking about what it was like when I sold my first book, and how that compares to today's publishing industry.

Back then, you learned the channel and buoys in publishing and navigated them. It's not like that anymore. New pathways have opened up, though how to navigate them can be like piloting a boat without a Garmin. There's no distinct path to follow and if you're not careful you can end up getting stuck in shallow water. Not a place you want to be.

So how do writers pilot this new path?

Part of me says "with a wing and a prayer" and the other part says "thank goodness for this year's NINC conference... New Rules, New Tools in St. Pete's October 19–23." Whether you're traditionally published or e-published, or self-publishing backlists or new works, there's something for everyone. There is also another good reason to attend: you get the chance to connect with fellow writers, discuss the current publishing climate, commiserate, and celebrate. Something I believe every writer needs to do at one time or another.

For those who can't attend, we'll be running articles on the various workshops in future newsletters. Those articles will be compiled and offered as a free download from NINC's website.

But we also have something special planned. I'm working with Julie Coblentz, Senior Marketing Manager for Publt on a webinar Publt will host for NINC members this month. You may have already heard about it—I'm writing this in August, when the webinar still in the planning stages so I don't have all the details yet—but, if not, you'll be hearing about it very soon.

I'd love to see NINC do more webinars for members, but we need volunteers for that. We could put together a webinar committee and present three or four webinars a year. If it sounds like something that you'd be interested in chairing or being part of, please contact me at [donna@donnafletcher.com](mailto:donna@donnafletcher.com).

It's been a busy year so far for NINC (I can't believe autumn is around the corner!) and, believe me, we're not done yet.

Until next time,  
— Donna

### **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.



## For Members Only— NINC Night Owls = Afterhours Mini-Conference

BY MELINDA RUCKER HAYNES, NIGHT OWL COORDINATOR

It's time for some great economic news brought to you by the 2011 NINC conference in St. Pete Beach: two conferences for the price of one. From the jam-packed daytime programming with industry professionals to the Members-Only Night Owl Afterhours Mini-Conference that starts at 9:00 p.m. Wednesday night, this year's conference is all about **added value** for NINC members.

After the Welcome Reception on Wednesday evening, the Night Owls Mini-Con kicks off with hands-on workshops, panels, and discussions on electronic and traditional publishing options, marketing and promotions, new ways to relax and recharge, how to enrich life and career with physical exercise and coping with health issues, plus several surprises. As a special bonus, Lori Devoti, creator of *E-book Formatting for the Do-It-Yourselfer*, will give her workshop attendees cards with links to her online e-book formatting videos.

After eight intense hours of Thursday's New Publishing program, it will be time for more relaxed fun at the Night Owls Afterhours Mini-Con, which will start at 8:00 p.m. and run to 11:00 p.m. Workshop choices include how to increase e-book sales, how to lower stress with cat philosophy, how to sell and promote to the library market, belly dancing for fun and more fun, and how to benefit from getting physical. Wear comfortable clothes and bring your favorite refreshment. It's all for fun and as a surprise, author/psychotherapist/professional psychic/tarot reader Lynda Hilburn will drop by to do some free mini tarot readings.

Friday's Night Owls Mini-Con, 8:00 – 11:00 p.m., workshops start with an e-book promotions roundtable discussion. In the same room, photographer/author Sasha White will hold an open call for headshots (\$20 fee paid to photographer at the session.) Next door, JoAnn Grote will lead a discussion on changing up your writing routine. Laura Phillips will share tips, tricks, and tools for living with health issues and staying productive. Finish up your Night Owls Mini-Con experience with a Personal Time Travel® mind trip or get updated on latest successes of the *In Charge Again Co-Op Panel* on author cooperatives.

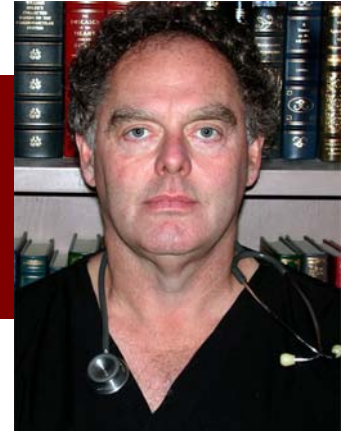
Check the Night Owls Mini-Con program on the NINC website for details on schedule, workshops, and presenters. If you'd like to volunteer to do a Night Owl surprise program such as, but never limited to, a flash mob, Angry Birds tournament, an e-mime act, or how to use your old yearbook photos as e-book covers, please contact Night Owl Coordinator, Mmmmmmelinda. See you Afterhours in St. Pete Beach.



**Exercise Your Membership Rights...Vote Now! See pages 11 and 12.**

## ***Forensic Files***

By D. P. Lyle, MD



# ***Can My Villain-Cook Attempt a Murder Using Contaminated Food?***

**QUESTION:** My villain is a cook and he wants to kill the hero by feeding him tainted food. I want to avoid using a detectable poison, so I thought a deliberately introduced food-borne pathogen, such as ptomaine, botulism, E.coli, or salmonella, or something like those, would do it. But how do I get the bacteria/germs/whatever in the food? What will it do to him? How long would it take him to die, and what steps could the hero take to make sure he survives? What could the villain do to make sure the hero dies?

**ANSWER:** This scenario will work but there are a few problems with it. First of all, using bacteria for murder is extremely unpredictable and most killers prefer a more predictable method. Just because your villain feeds contaminated food to the victim, it does not mean that he will die. Contaminated food rarely kills people; it merely makes them sick. Typically, people survive these types of illnesses. The only way to assure, or at least increase the probability that your victim would die, is to prevent him from reaching medical care.

Infectious processes most often kill by two different mechanisms. The first is that they alter the function of the infected organ. For example, pneumonia can kill by infecting the lungs and filling the air spaces with bacteria and liquids we call “exudates.” This is simply the body’s reaction to the infection, like a weeping wound or one that forms pus. This is what happens in the lungs; it interferes with the exchange of oxygen and the victim can die because the lungs fail. An infection in the kidneys can do the same thing by causing kidney failure, and infection in the gastrointestinal tract, which is what would happen with ingested bacteria, can lead to severe diarrhea and dehydration and death, or severe bleeding and death from that.

But the most treacherous thing associated with any of these infections is the passing of the bacteria from the infected organ into the bloodstream. We call this sepsis or septicemia, big words that mean infection in the bloodstream. When this happens the infection spreads rapidly throughout the body and very quickly the victim can suffer from septic shock—low blood pressure and shock from bacteria in the blood stream. This can lead to death in short order.

So, regardless of which bacterium you decide to use, it would need to be added to the food and the victim would have to ingest it. This would make him ill with gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and perhaps bleeding in either the diarrhea or the vomiting. If untreated, such an infection could then spread to the bloodstream and be deadly. But the key here is that he must be prevented from reaching medical help. Otherwise he would be treated and survive. Left untreated, his chance of survival is dramatically reduced. So you need to figure a way to prevent him from reaching medical care once he develops symptoms. ▶

As for what bacteria to use, both ptomaine and botulism would be very difficult to come by. They are rare and your cook would have no access to this type of organism. He could, of course, damage a can of some food product and leave it sitting in a warm environment and hope that the right bacteria grew but most likely it would not be the bacterium that causes botulism. That's actually quite rare. So there would be no way for him to predict what organism would occur under that circumstance.

On the other hand, things such as E. coli, Salmonella, and Shigella are quite common causes of food-borne gastrointestinal illness. If your chef knew someone who was infected with one of these, perhaps from a recent trip to Mexico where these are not uncommonly encountered, he could then use this individual to supply the needed bacteria. How would he do this? The best way would be to obtain some stool from the infected individual. This could be from contaminated toilet paper or an unflushed toilet. Gross, but that's the way it is. This could then be placed into some food product and allowed to grow, which he could simply do in a closet at home. He could then add some of this bacterial soup to the food product and in this way introduce a large amount of bacteria to the victim. Even better would be if he could find a way to inject this into the victim, but that's not absolutely necessary.

Again, this would make the victim very ill with gastrointestinal symptoms. Then, as I said, you'll need to devise some scenario that prevents him from reaching medical help and, if so, he could easily die from sepsis.

There is an excellent non-fiction book in which a murder is committed exactly like this. It involves the murder of Joan Robinson Hill by her husband Dr. John Hill. It took place in the 1960s in Houston, Texas and is an incredible story. The book is titled *Blood and Money* and was written by Tommy Thompson. If you can find a copy of this, it might help. Dr. Hill apparently grew bacteria in petri dishes at home and infected cream puffs to kill his wife. He then admitted her to a small hospital in the outskirts of Houston and he managed her care, which amounted to preventing her from getting adequate treatment since he did not offer her the treatment she needed. It became a huge and convoluted case that did indeed involve blood and money.

Website: <http://www.dplylemd.com/>

BLOG: <http://writersforensicsblog.wordpress.com/>

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## ***Business Briefs***

Compiled by Sally Hawkes

### **Simon & Schuster and Digital Sales**

The first half of 2011 finds S&S up 13% despite a 3% decline in sales. Digital content is 15% of total sales in the second quarter, which helped with revenue when hardcover commercial fiction and mass market paperback sales were going down. Executives acknowledged that the closing of the Borders chain added to the print decline and S&S is actively working to keep print sales viable. It's interesting to note S&S, along with MacMillan, do not provide e-books to the companies that supply libraries.

*Publisher's Weekly*

### **Give Me Liberty Or...**

In an announcement last week, Liberty Media stated that it has invested \$204 million in Barnes & Noble, which amounts to slightly more than 16% of the company. The deal ended the ongoing discussions of the acquisition of B&N. According to Liberty's website, the firm's other media interests include QVC, Provide Commerce, Backcountry.com, Celebrate Interactive, Bodybuilding.com, Evite, Expedia, Starz, LLC, Atlanta National League Baseball Club, Inc., TruePosition, Inc., SiriusXM Radio, Inc., and minority holdings in Time Warner Inc. and Live Nation.

### **No Stumbling For This Firm**

According to a recent article on ReadWriteWeb, the website StumbleUpon ([www.StumbleUpon.com](http://www.StumbleUpon.com)) has taken the lead in social media referrals from the former leader, Facebook. The article notes that while "StumbleUpon's user experience is fanciful and fun...its traffic power for publishers is quite serious" and calls the site a "quiet success story."

# Nina Paules' Top Ten Suggestions for Authors Considering e-Publishing

BY DARA GIRARD

Note: Dara recently interviewed Nina Paules, co-founder of eBook Prep and ePublishing Works!, for the NINC blog. This article is adapted from that interview.

After a debilitating accident in January 2010 left her “emotionally lost, [and] unable to see or believe in the future,” Nina Paules struggled to find a way to turn her situation around. The golden moment happened when NINC member Mary Jo Putney asked her if she’d be interested in turning *The Burning Point*, the first novel in her contemporary series, into an e-book. Nina didn’t hesitate.

“One *huge* learning curve and a month later, eBook Prep was born in March 2011,” Nina said. Her publishing firm, ePublishing Works!, followed shortly. As of August 2011, eBook Prep has created almost 150 e-books and ePublishing Works! has published more than 100 titles. Here are Nina’s Top Ten suggestions for authors deciding whether to work with a company to format their books for e-publishing.

**10. Make sure you have a quality copy of the title you want to convert to an e-book.** Wrinkled, torn, yellowed, water-damaged, marked/highlighted copies scan poorly and produce a high-error rate. Clean, smooth pages are important. Print quality is equally important. Here’s a good way to check the print quality of a book: Grab the book’s spine with your left hand and turn the long edge of the book toward you. Now, place your right thumb against the pages and fan them. If the lines of text whizzing past occasionally fade then go bold or waggle left and right like a dog with a crooked hind leg, select another copy; preferably one from a different print run, if possible.

**9. Find out if you will have an opportunity to update your story during production.**

**8. Take the time to update your story if your voice has changed or your setting is dated.** If your voice has changed so significantly that your current readership wouldn’t ever believe you wrote that earlier piece, it’s a good idea to invest some time reworking your prose. The last thing you want is your current readership rolling their eyes, unless they’re supposed to roll their eyes. Also consider whether your setting has changed with regard to time and place. Here’s a tip: Imagine that your book becomes a made-for-TV movie. Would it be okay that your heroine loves her big hair and your hero’s cell phone is the size of a brick?

**7. Updating your story can increase sales.** The top-selling ePublishing Works! titles are all part of ePW’s *Special Author’s Cut Edition* imprint. Readers really like those freshened up “older” stories.

**6. Make sure you have input on the cover.** It’s your cover, after all.

**5. Do some research as to what sort of covers are popular in your genre.** Now that e-reader-toting readers no longer need to worry about being judged by the cover of the book they’re reading while munching in the lunch room or waiting with the soccer-moms, covers are getting hotter. Let’s face it, ladies (and gentlemen), most of us do like looking at the beautiful and well-made. We just don’t like *other* people knowing we like looking at the beautiful and well-made. On the other hand, if your readership is (as one of my clients recently put it) “more of the Midwestern type,” a cover that’s too “hot” may get you hosed off those particular e-book shelves. Bottom line: know your readership.

**4. Find out what you’ll be charged for cover art.** My firm charges for art if you want a certain piece of art that we don’t have. If we have in stock what you’re looking for or something similar that you approve, we don’t charge for it.

**3. Find out about the firm’s policies for re-using cover art.** If a client paid for the art, we won’t re-use it for another title. But if the piece was pulled from our stock, free-of-charge, we will reuse it on another cover after altering it to obtain a different look. ▶

**2. Don't be surprised if your review copy has errors in the text.** It probably will. No scan job is perfect. We employ the best scanning equipment and OCR software in the industry, and know how to get the best possible scan for our clients. When clients select our All-Inclusive service, we put the scanned document through a 150-point error check followed by a word-by-word read of the first 30 pages.

If the word-by-word read reveals fewer than three errors, and it usually does, we send the file to the author for story changes, any additional corrections, and approval. However, if you have no plans for story changes or no time to read through the file, eBook Prep has readers on staff to do a word-by-word read and check against the original copy.

**1. Find out how long it's going to take the firm to get your e-books ready to publish.** This actual time will depend partly on how much time you take to review, edit, and return the scanned material, and partly on the firm's production schedule. As of this writing, eBook Prep is running 20 business days out from the time the book is received at our offices and the scanned document is sent to you. If it's a multi-book project, you can expect the next file 15-20 business days later. When the file is approved by you and returned, we can put the e-book into the .mobi and .epub formats and have them in your hands about 10 business days later.

In closing, Nina offers two final suggestions for authors when they've taken the plunge and are ready to take the book to market:

**Remember that selling anything is hard; selling an e-book is getting harder.** There are over two million of them out there. The secret, or at least part of the secret, is packing a quality read inside a well-formatted e-book that looks good on every e-reader device, every app, and every e-reader software program.

**Don't fall for selling your full-length works for \$.99 on Amazon.** Here's why: Amazon charges a delivery fee (\$.15/mb) against royalties. The average fee for a 90K word book is about \$.09, give or take a penny. This means at a \$.99 price point, you'll make about \$.26 per sale, not the \$.35 e-book-selling sensation John Locke reported making in his book. Using these numbers, if all one million of Locke's copies were sold by Amazon, his cut of the royalties was a cool \$256,700. Not bad for five months. However, Amazon made \$733,500 from those sales. Pricing his titles at \$2.99 would have put him in Amazon's 70% royalty category. Selling only a half-million copies at that price would have gotten him royalties of \$1,001,500 in the same five months—and Amazon would have made \$493,500 from the sales. That's about 67% less.

eBook Prep and ePublishing Works! were co-founded in early 2011 by Nina Paules, NINC member Laura Resnick, and a *New York Times*-bestselling author who prefers to remain a silent partner. The companies work with authors to produce electronic versions of their published backlists, as well as never-before-published fiction and non-fiction material. Future plans for the firms include an ePublishing Works! for Reader's blog that will go live in early September, online author interviews, contests, giveaways, the production of book trailers, and, eventually, an online storefront. Additional information about the services offered by the firms is available at <http://www.ebookprep.com> and <http://www.epublishingworks.com>

*Dara Girard is excited about the many different options available for writers. She's a multi-published, award-winning author who hopes to convince fellow NINC members that now is one of the greatest times to be a writer of fiction. If you agree, you can contact her at [www.daragirard.com](http://www.daragirard.com). If you don't, she'll just ignore you.*

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## ***You Might Be Interested In....***

### **A Non-Hotel Place to Stay While Doing Research Away From Home**

The website [www.IStopOver.com](http://www.IStopOver.com) offers listings of short-term home rentals—from one night to a year or more—in more than 16,000 cities worldwide. The site states it has listings for “apartments, villas and even house boats” to fit a wide range of budgets.

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## **WRITING is TAXING**

*By Diane Kelly*

# **A Prescription for Tax Savings**

Several tax benefits regarding healthcare costs could reduce the amount you owe Uncle Sam. Some of these rules have been in place for years, while others are new.

### **Itemized Deduction for Medical Expenses**

The itemized deduction for out-of-pocket medical expenses has existed for years. You can deduct “qualified” medical expenses for yourself, your spouse, and your dependents. These include costs for diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, and the cost for treatments affecting any part or function of the body. They include payments for legal medical services rendered by physicians, surgeons, and other medical practitioners, such as dentists and orthodontists. The cost of supplies, equipment, and diagnostic devices are included, as is the cost of transportation for medical care. The cost of medication is qualified so long as a doctor has prescribed the medication. The only exception to the prescription requirement is insulin. Eyeglasses, contact lenses, dentures, and similar items also qualify.

Be aware that you must reduce the total costs by any insurance reimbursement. Also, expenses providing only a general health benefit, such as vitamins or a day at the spa, are not deductible. The same goes for cosmetic procedures.

As far as alternative treatments, the analysis is basically that if a procedure treats a specific ailment, then it is generally deductible. However, as noted above, costs for alternative procedures or items that simply promote overall health or a general sense of well being do not. Thus, acupuncture qualifies as a medical expense, but massage only qualifies if it is part of a physical therapy program and not simply for general stress reduction. Nutritional supplements do not qualify. Although I researched whether the services of a nutritionist or Reiki practitioner would qualify, I found no definitive statute, regulation, or case law addressing those particular costs. However, since nutritional supplements are not deductible, it would seem to follow that the cost of seeing a nutritionist also would not qualify. In my opinion, Reiki also seems to be more of a general wellness program, so it would not likely qualify.

Qualified expenses include health insurance premiums, long-term care, and a limited amount for long-term care insurance. But remember that self-employed persons may be eligible to deduct their health insurance premiums as an adjustment to income on Line 29 of the Form 1040, which is more beneficial tax-wise.

Unfortunately, the deduction is subject to a 7.5% adjusted gross income (AGI) floor, meaning medical expenses are deductible only to the extent they exceed 7.5% of your AGI. Because of this limitation, those who benefit are generally only those who have suffered a catastrophic health issue, are not covered by insurance, or who suffer from a chronic and expensive ailment. However, if you can control the timing of your medical expenses, you may be able to lump your expenses into a single tax year to achieve a tax benefit that might otherwise be lost.

For more information, see IRS Publication 502 *Medical and Dental Expenses* at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) .

### **Health Savings Account (HSA)**

An HSA is designed to provide additional tax benefits to those with high-deductible health plans. For 2011, a high-deductible health plan is defined as one with minimum deductibles of \$1,200 for individ- ▶

ual coverage and \$2,400 for family coverage, with maximum deductibles of \$5,950 for individual coverage and \$11,900 for family coverage. An HSA may be established by a self-employed person or someone who is employed by another party. A person covered by an employer's flexible spending arrangement or healthcare reimbursement account is normally not eligible for an HSA.

An HSA is established with a trustee such as a bank, insurance company, or other financial institution. Funds up to an annual maximum may be contributed to the account. For 2011, a person with individual coverage can contribute up to \$3,050, while a person with family coverage can contribute up to \$6,150. Contributions can be made for a given year up to the due date of the return for that year (generally April 15). Contributions are reported on Form 8889, which is filed with your tax return. You claim a deduction for your contributions on Line 25 of the Form 1040 as an adjustment to income. Thus, the funds contributed to the account are not taxed. Whoopee! A penalty applies to excess contributions, so be sure not to exceed the annual limit.

So long as distributions do not exceed your "qualified" medical expenses (discussed above), the distributions will not be subject to tax. Account for distributions and expenses carefully. If the distributions exceed qualified expenses, both income tax and a 20 percent penalty (recently increased from ten percent) will apply to the excess.

You are not required to use up the funds in the account every year. The balance may be carried over to subsequent years.

For more info, see IRS Publication 969 *Health Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Favored Health Plans*.

## **Health Insurance Deduction for Children under 27**

There's been some hoopla over the recent healthcare bill, a.k.a. the Affordable Care Act, as well as legal challenges, but it will likely stick. The Act provides tax benefits, such as the ability to obtain health insurance coverage for your child under age 27 tax free. Before the Act, self-employed people could only deduct health insurance premiums for coverage on themselves, their spouses, and dependents. Now, a self-employed person can take a deduction for coverage on a child who has not attained the age of 27 by year end, even if that child does not qualify as a dependent. That's good news for those with older children who haven't yet achieved full financial independence.

You cannot claim the deduction for premiums for any month in which you were eligible to participate in an employer-sponsored healthcare plan, including plans offered by your spouse's employer. In addition, you must have net self-employment income to qualify for the deduction. You cannot take the deduction if you have a net loss.

Voluntary Medicare premiums qualify for this deduction. The deduction is taken on Line 29 of the Form 1040 as an adjustment to gross income.

For 2010, a special rule allowed self-employed individuals to reduce the amount of their business income subject to self-employment taxes (Social Security and Medicare taxes) by the amount of the self-employed health insurance deduction. I'm curious to see whether this reduction will be permitted for future years. Sometimes these "temporary" rules become permanent. Other times they exist for a year or two, then disappear forever.

## **Tax Credit for Small Employers who Provide Health Insurance to Employees**

The Act makes it less expensive for small employers to help provide insurance to employees by effectuating the "Small Business Healthcare Tax Credit." The tax credits are scheduled to increase up to a maximum of 50 percent of the cost in 2014. If you have employees, making contributions toward their health insurance can yield big tax savings. Details can be found on the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

*Diane Kelly's debut romantic mystery, Death, Taxes and a French Manicure, will be released November 1 by St. Martin's Press.*

# Beach...Books...Belly-dancing...Ballots!

The candidate biographies for the slate of 2012 NINC Officers and Nominating Committee appeared in the August 2011 issue of *Nink* and remain available online at the NINC website.

Completed ballots must be received **by** October 31, 2011. If you will not be attending the Annual General Meeting at the conference, please take a moment to complete a Proxy form (See page 12) and submit it to the Central Coordinator before September 15, 2011.

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## Ballot

Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Please print out this Ballot, complete, and mail to:

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

**Ballots must be received by October 31, 2011**

Save Time and a Stamp, and go Green!  
Vote online at  
[www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com)  
In the Members Only section

ITEM 1: Election of Officers for 2012

Yes	No	
_____	_____	Laura Castoro, President-elect
_____	_____	Denise Agnew, Secretary
_____	_____	Trish Jensen, Treasurer

Item 2: Election of the 2012 Nominating Committee (Vote for no more than five [5] candidates)

_____ Delilah Devlin	_____ Ann Josephson (Ann Jacobs)	_____ Ann Roth
_____ Charlotte Hubbard	_____ Ruth MacLean (Stella MacLean)	_____ Lynne Smith (Lynne Michaels)
_____ Elle James	_____ Laura Phillips	_____ Eileen Wilks

# Annual Business Meeting

NINC Bylaws require that an Annual Business Meeting be conducted at the conference. No vote is anticipated at this time, but your presence—in the form of a proxy or physical appearance—is required to ensure a quorum is attained. If you will not be attending the Meeting, please send your Proxy to the Central Coordinator by September 15, 2011.

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## Proxy A

### **To appoint the current NINC Board of Directors as your agent:**

The undersigned hereby appoints Donna Fletcher, Lou Aronica, Denise Agnew, Marci Evanick, Jean Brashear, and Marianna Jameson, each of them as his/her true and lawful agents and proxies with full power of substitution to represent the undersigned on all matters coming before the membership at the Annual Business Meeting of members to be held at the TradeWinds Island Resorts, 5600 Gulf Boulevard, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706 on Sunday, October 23, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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## Proxy B

### **To appoint a fellow NINC member as your agent:**

The undersigned hereby appoints (print member's name) \_\_\_\_\_ as his/her true and lawful agent and proxy with full power of substitution to represent the undersigned on all matters coming before the membership at the Annual Business Meeting of members to be held at the TradeWinds Island Resorts, 5600 Gulf Boulevard, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706 on Sunday, October 23, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

Your Proxy will be distributed at the Annual Business Meeting to the NINC member you have designated.

Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

**Proxy A or Proxy B, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner you directed. If no direction is given with respect to any particular item, this proxy will be voted in favor of the proposals put forth by the Novelists, Inc. Board of Directors.**

Please print out this Proxy form, complete, and mail to:

Proxy c/o Novelists, Inc.

P.O. Box 2037, Manhattan, KS 66505

**Your Proxy must be received by September 15, 2011.**

Save Time and a Stamp, and go Green!

Indicate your Proxy preference online at

[www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com)

In the Members Only section

## The Seventeen-Year Twitch

Continued from page 1 ▶ demanding man whose opinion, once fixed, is supposedly fixed forever; an

occasionally rude aristocrat who flaunts his inherited wealth and flouts convention when it suits him....and he is as sexy as bedamned despite it all.

Although I studiously avoid reading literary criticism (as well as, for what it's worth, Amazon reviews), I pondered this Darcy-fan-girl thing I have going. I'll confess: I've known men, personally and professionally, who are the modern equivalent of the early Darcy. They're the slash-and-burn, scorched-earth type of guys, irrespective of their fields or relationships; the type of guys who refer to themselves as "the talent," and who have a sense of entitlement and sense of self that, truthfully, would put Darcy's to shame. To be Darcy-blunt, I don't like them, these *poseurs*, and I know they never could, never would ever be described as heroic in any sense of the word. It's simply not in them to put themselves out for someone else.

So, sigh, they are what they are and they cannot change. Of course, you (or I) might argue, Mr. Darcy doesn't really change overly much in terms of his character arc. Instead, as Lizzie explains to her new brother-in-law Mr. Wickham, Darcy improves on our closer acquaintance with him. He reveals his humanity, displays the well-hidden compassion that lurks within. Okay, I'll say it: he gets in touch with his feminine side. And *that*, I believe, is why we love him. He's a beta male in alpha-male clothing, when we are so often confronted with the reverse.

The heroes in my three most recent books—*Category 7*, *Frozen Fire*, and *Dry Ice*, eco-thrillers all—are reluctant heroes. They are sort of dragged into the whole save-the-day thing; given a choice, all of them would have a serious dilemma on their hands. I mean, in the first two books, it's *their* world at stake; in the most recent book, which came out in mid-August, it's *the* world at stake. Hey, it's a big decision to get involved in a mess like that. I created the characters, so clearly I love them all, but there's not a Darcy among them. They're dreadfully flawed men, bless their hearts. Luckily for them, and the world, they each have a female counterpart who refuses to allow them the luxury of a choice. The men catch the gauntlet thrown at them by these bold babes and do their duty, and are better men for it at the end of the day—and at the end of the books. (Was that a spoiler?)

Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy didn't have anyone to push him, though. He didn't have to help the Bennetts when Lydia answered Mr. Wickham's pre-automotive, pre-electronic, pre-social-media version of a booty call. Darcy could have left Lizzie in that room at the inn and let his "see ya" moment be it. In fact, if we'd been allowed a peep into his head, I would guess that for a little while there, *he* thought his "see ya" moment really was it. There was no expectation from anyone that he would or should help her. But he did it anyway, and not just to win the girl. In fact, he didn't even want the girl to know what he'd done. Nope, Darcy set out to save the day for no better reason than that's the kind of guy he is deep down. Without fanfare or even a whole lot of forethought, he went from being self-centered to being other-centered, to being a man of leisure to being a man of action. He saved the day, served the villain his just desserts, and got the girl of his dreams as his unsought sign-on bonus for joining the common fray.

And that's why I unapologetically spent my anniversary in bed with Colin Firth—satisfaction was guaranteed.

*Although her full-time job these days is writing novels that keep people up at night, Marianna keeps her edge sharp by freelancing in corporate security and intelligence. Her latest thriller, Dry Ice, was released on August 16 by Tor.*

## Membership Qualifications Updated

NINC is not only changing with the changing times, we are leading the change. The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the membership qualifications presented to the membership last month for review were voted on by the Board and passed. The new language is available on [www.ninc.com/](http://www.ninc.com/). When you login, the link will be on your welcome page: 2011 Proposed Revisions to the Ninc Procedure and Policy Manual Sections Related to Membership. Thank you to the members who provided comments and insight during the review period.

# Not Your Usual Writing Advice — Capturing the Night

BY JOANN GROTE

*“The best thoughts most often come in the morning after waking, while still in bed, or while walking.”*

— Leo Tolstoy



Photo by Sabrina Ingram

I mentioned in previous columns the practice of morning writing I instituted a few months ago. This practice serves my creativity, my work-in-progress, and my life in general well.

I was delighted to recently discover that the internationally respected creativity coach, Eric Maisel, strongly recommends what has become my new writing practice. In fact, he also writes first thing in the morning. Maisel suggests going to your writing space immediately upon awakening, and trying to remain in the half-asleep state as you begin to write.

Why is that state so important? Because the hypnogogic period, that hazy time right after you awake, is prime creativity time according to creativity expert Charles Thompson.

Judy Gill, a NINC member who uses dreams in her writing process, agrees with the importance of staying in the hypnogogic state as long as possible. “If you dream something that feels like a plot, do not speak or allow anyone to speak to you until you have the gist of it written down.”

NINC member Anna Jacobs finds the hypnogogic state “so useful I’ve facilitated and encouraged it. It’s one of my main plotting tools...when I’m half awake, I deliberately turn on my home movie theatre in my head. It must be working, because my 54th novel was released in August!”

Sometimes you won’t recall anything specific from the night before, but the results of the brain’s work are still there in the mind, waiting for you to release them. You may find, as I did, that getting directly to your manuscript first thing in the morning makes the writing easy. The resolutions to plot problems come readily to hand. A scene you couldn’t flesh out the day before falls onto the page swiftly.

Scientists are discovering more about the brain and sleep, and their discoveries can work to our benefit as creative people.

We all follow a regular sleep pattern. The first four hours of sleep are called “deep sleep.” Deep sleep is followed by REM sleep. Non-REM, or NREM, sleep periods fall between periods of REM sleep. The NREM, REM pattern repeats about every ninety minutes.

We dream during REM sleep. People of all persuasions—authors, artists, inventors, scientists, mathematicians, accountants and more—have found answers in dreams.

If we aren’t dreaming during deep sleep and NREM sleep, what are we doing? According to an ABC News segment on January 21, 2004 called “Study: More Sleep, Sharper Brain,” scientists at the University of Luebeck in Germany reported they’d proven the brain works, or solves problems, during NREM sleep. It is during deep sleep that “creativity or problem-solving insight” occur, according to Jan Born, who headed the study. For writers, the “problem-solving insights” often relate to our manuscripts.

In June 2009, BBC News reported on a study at the University of California San Diego that showed “volunteers who entered REM during sleep improved their creativity problem solving ability by almost forty percent.” Since REM sleep follows the hours of deep sleep, this finding appears to verify the German study.

NINC author Ashley McConnell learned the benefit of reaching REM sleep through personal experience. For years, Ashley’s sleep was disturbed by sleep apnea, a common condition in which a person stops breathing while asleep. She now uses a machine called a CPAP to prevent the problem.

“One of the things I learned from having a sleep study done,” Ashley told me, “is that most of my REM sleep happens around 5 to 6 in the morning, after I’ve been asleep for several hours. The apnea was happening only during REM sleep. Apparently my dreams are so enthralling I was holding my breath waiting to see what happened next! I have noticed since using the CPAP that my dreams are more coherent—sometimes with actual plots. And I am more rested, so I can think better.”

If you choose to try the process of accessing your night-time thinking by getting to your story first thing in the morning, you might be tempted to do so by cutting back on sleep and getting up earlier. There’s no problem with rising earlier if you replace the lost sleep by going to bed earlier. If that isn’t possible, try to work in a nap, but don’t give up sleep. In *The Care and Feeding of Your Brain*, Kenneth Giuffre, MD tells us that without a full night’s sleep, concentration drops to 70 percent of the well-rested mind.

One of the simplest things a person can do for their creativity is to make sure they get a good night’s sleep on a regular basis. Our bodies need this; apparently our creative minds need it even more.

NINC’s own Janelle Claire Schneider researched the connection between sleep and creativity. “Whether the [sleep] deficit is an hour or ten, studies have shown that creativity is one of the first things to be impacted.” And sleep deficits are cumulative. “If a writer stays up an hour later each night in order to finish line edits, at the end of the week, her brain will be functioning as if she’d deprived herself of an entire night’s sleep.” If you want your mind to work at night on your story instead of other issues in your life, you might need to change your before-sleep routine. Do you lay awake thinking about bills, how much you need to accomplish in addition to your writing, or whether your current story is ever going to work out? Do you read someone else’s novel or watch television to wind down? Try re-reading the last scene you wrote instead, or asking yourself how your heroine might get herself out of the predicament into which you’ve placed her.

“If I ponder a plot problem right before I go to sleep, the answer comes to me the next morning,” writes former NINC member Mary Kennedy. Former NINC member Jo Ann Ferguson says, “When I’m going to sleep, I concentrate on what I’ve done and what I hope to do in the morning—in other words consider what’s coming next and begin with the ‘what if...’ game. I take that with me into my sleep. I usually don’t consciously dream an answer, but I get this ‘duh/slap up aside the head’ moment when I wake up because the answer is there.”

Let your mind work on your novel while your body rests. In the morning, take time to “listen” for what your mind worked out during the night before you jump into the rest of your day. If possible, “listen” with your work-in-progress in front of you and reap the benefits of capturing the night.

For more information on writers using sleep time for creativity, see “Receiving Inspiration and Guidance through Dreams,” JoAnn Grote, November 2004 *Nink*, and “In Praise of Sleep,” Janelle Clare Schneider, January 2005 *Nink*. The articles can be accessed through the *Nink* archives at [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com). Books you might find helpful include: *Sleep Thinking*, Eric Maisel, Ph.D. with Natalya Maisel, and *Thinking Write: The Secret to Freeing Your Creative Mind*, Kelly L. Stone.

*JoAnn Grote is the award-winning author of 38 books, including inspirational romances, middle-grade historical novels, and children’s nonfiction. Contact her at [jaghi@rconnect.com](mailto:jaghi@rconnect.com).*

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## ***Business Briefs***

### **Made in America...Or Else**

On August 15, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the First-Sale Doctrine applies only to works manufactured in the United States. The court found that a Thai man studying in the U.S. infringed the copyright-holder’s rights when he sold his used textbooks, printed in Asia, on eBay at a profit. The decision could limit the ability of libraries to lend books printed overseas.

*Library Journal*

# The Mad Scribbler

By Laura Resnick



# Hooray for Bollywood

*“I think, as an actor, that your only duty in cinema is to make people forget they're watching a film and make them believe that they are there.”*

— **Rahul Bose, Indian actor**

One of the places I've found inspiration for my craft as a novelist in recent years is via the most successful film industry in the world: Bollywood! The Hindi film industry of Mumbai (the city formerly known as Bombay—hence the derivative term, Bollywood), has an estimated fan base of 3.5 billion people worldwide, and it (not Hollywood) is the most popular dream factory in the world.

Film-going is a national passion in India, which has a population of one billion, and Indian films are popular throughout Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. And as Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) have spread across the globe in the Indian diaspora, their cinema has followed them. In 1997, *Dil Se* (“From the Heart”), in which a Delhi radio journalist becomes obsessed with a mysterious woman he meets in war-torn Kashmir, was the first Bollywood film to break into Britain's top-ten box office charts; it has been followed by many others since then.

The popularity of Bollywood has spread across Europe and into non-Indian communities there. The genre has a huge following these days, for example, among Germans—a people with no ethnic, cultural, or historic connection to India. Bollywood is becoming known to some American audiences, too. (But, no, *Slumdog Millionaire* was not a Bollywood movie; although made in India and using local talent, it was written, produced, and directed by Europeans. Bollywood, by contrast, is homegrown Indian cinema.)

Although this is not the only type of movie made in India, the term “Bollywood” typically refers to a specific form of Indian cinema that is virtually unique to that country. It's characterized by the following qualities:

- ▶ Bollywood movies are produced, written, and directed by Indians, and the films are made primarily for Indian audiences. (However, the international success of Bollywood in recent years means that many of the films are now also aimed at a more global audience.)
- ▶ The films are usually musicals, and they often (though not always) feature a love story, whether they're comedies, dramas, tragedies, action-adventure, or suspense.
- ▶ They're filmed in an Indian language—almost always Hindi if the film is produced in Mumbai (which is the origin of most Bollywood films seen in the West, though several other Indian cities also have big film industries), then subtitled in various foreign languages.
- ▶ The films are long by Western standards; two-and-a-half to three hours is typical.



- ▶ Bollywood films are famously emotional and melodramatic, and the comedy is very broad. Many of the films are described as “masala” movies, which is apt; like the spice mixture, they contain many contrasting flavors in one package: slapstick humor, bloody violence, political intrigue, family drama, and romantic comedy may all be combined in one story, for example. (Then add half a dozen musical numbers!)
- ▶ The sensibilities and traditions of Bollywood films trace their roots to classical Indian story themes and performance structures. The movies also often emphatically promote—but sometimes challenge or dissect—traditional Indian values. (For example, in this sexually conservative society, kissing-on-the-lips on-screen is still very rare—which is why you see lots of almost-kisses when you watch Bollywood.)

The first Bollywood film I ever saw, one which remains a great favorite of mine, was *Asoka*, a historical epic that takes place around 250 B.C. and which is loosely based on the life of one of India’s most famous rulers. I can best describe it as: *King Lear* meets *Singing In The Rain*. It begins as an exotic drama in which ruthless royal princes are plotting each other’s violent deaths while the sickly old king vacillates about choosing his heir ... and the next thing you know, a pretty girl is singing a lively pop tune while dancing beneath a waterfall.

Yes, in a word: *weird*. But since I am a lifelong fan of historical epics and also of musicals, I was instantly hooked and began enthusiastically exploring this genre.

Since then, I have seen well over 100 Bollywood movies. I have also read a number of books about Indian cinema; I found this necessary to help me understand what I was watching, since I was completely baffled by many of the movies I saw as a newcomer to this genre. Fortunately, there are now also many websites to help the intrigued but bewildered foreigner understand these vivid, engaging movies.

My Bollywood addiction has been an enjoyable exploration of a robust and complex set of cultural values and social mores that are completely different from my own, as well as religious convictions and historical perspectives that are largely unfamiliar to me. This is very useful, since my work as a fantasy author often involves writing about characters in cultures, religions, and societies different from my own—and surely that’s true of many novelists, rather than being a genre-specific challenge. I find it creatively refreshing to watch a good Bollywood movie and see whole casts of characters acting on the basis of shared values and assumptions that are completely foreign to me.

I’ve also gotten a lot of food for thought from Bollywood’s non-Western attitudes about relationships. Conflicts between individual love and familial duty are often explored in this genre, for example, and they’re viewed through the lens of a culture where the pursuit of personal happiness (such as marrying for love) isn’t necessarily admirable, and where submission to one’s family (such as marrying someone your parents choose for you) is often portrayed as a sign of maturity.

Thus, in *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* (“Straight From the Heart”), the heroine pines for her soulmate with agonized misery after her parents forbid their union, but she comes to learn the real meaning of love within her arranged marriage. In *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (“The Braveheart Will Carry Away the Bride”), one of the most commercially successful Bollywood films ever made, the hero remains steadfast in his vow that he won’t marry his true love unless he can get her family to approve of the match (a story which in some ways echoes the personal life of the lead actor, Shah Rukh Khan, a Muslim who spent six years convincing his Hindu sweetheart’s family to let him marry her). In *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (“Tomorrow May Never Come”), the protagonist sacrifices his own happiness by securing a more suitable husband than himself for the woman he loves. In *Veer-Zaara*, two lovers tearfully agree never to meet again, because the right thing for the woman to do is to follow through with her impending arranged marriage.

Whether or not I agree with (or could ever live by) the values I see in Bollywood films, I have found it creatively stimulating to become absorbed in portrayals that keep challenging my personal and cultural assumptions about how life should be lived or about how “everyone” *wants* to live.

I’ve also learned a lot about sensuality and sexual tension from Bollywood. The sort of sexually explicit scenes which are common in Western cinema are virtually unknown in Bollywood movies, a genre ▶

where lovers rarely even share a chaste kiss onscreen. Sexual tension in Bollywood is created through glances and gazes, dialogue and silence, songs, dances, a man grasping the corner of a woman's veil, a woman stroking an inanimate object that belongs to her beloved, flower petals falling on dry soil, the spray of a fountain against hot skin, the fleeting touch of two hands, the memory of a lover's shadow on the wall. In *Khamoshi* ("Silence"), a night of unwed passion is portrayed in a choreographed love song where the actors remain fully clothed. In *Paheli* ("Riddle"), the satisfying sex life of newlyweds is conveyed with allusion, attitude, and discreet physical affection. Bollywood has heightened my awareness, as a storyteller, of the infinite possibilities that exist for portraying aching desire and ardent passion.

Finally, above all, Bollywood is tremendous *fun*. It's visually stunning, colorful, and exotic. The music is so addictive that I have by now amassed a sizeable collection of it. The stories are tales of love, war, life, death, loyalty, betrayal, duty, ambition, fate, courage, endurance, and the sundering and reuniting of families, communities, and hearts. The characters are larger than life, and so are the emotions. And all that, after all, is the stuff of popular fiction! Which is why I tell myself that I'm enhancing my craft when I spend a Sunday sitting through a six-hour Bollywood double-feature...

For Bollywood book, website, and movie recommendations, check out this page of Laura's website:  
<http://sff.net/people/laresnick/Excerpts/Bollywood.htm>

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## ***Business Briefs***

### **Self-Publishing Idolatry**

Perhaps the most succinct description of the self-publishing phenomena was uttered by Mark Levine in a recent Shortcuts article in *The New York Times*. Levine, who is chief operating officer of Hillcrest Media Group and author of *The Fine Print of Self-Publishing*, said "Self-publishing is a lot like *American Idol*. A lot of people have been told that they have talent, but they really don't. Everyone has a story to tell, but everyone doesn't have a story to publish."

### **Who's Selling Amazon's Titles? Barnes & Noble!**

When Amazon's fall list came out in early August, booksellers had to consider selling the competition's product. Barnes & Noble will sell Amazon titles if they are provided all the formats of the titles. If there aren't digital versions available, then no print versions of the books will be sold. Amazon has been exclusive on certain e-book titles.  
*Publishers Weekly*

### **HybridBook Project – Print Versions**

Melville House is launching the HybridBook Project to enhance print books by providing digital extras, illuminations, essays, maps, illustrations and primary source materials using QR codes that allow reader to retrieve the information by Internet or e-mail. The first books to receive this treatment are five novellas, all titled *The Duel*, by Anton Chekhov, Joseph Conrad, Giacomo Casanova, Heinrich von Kleist, and Alexander Kuprin.  
*Publishers Weekly*

### **In Defense of Print**

In an August 4, 2011 *Chicago Tribune* Op-Ed piece titled "Time For Book Publishers To Fight Dirty", Aaron Gilbreath, a clerk at Powell's Books in Portland, Ore, asked the questions "Why hasn't America's publishing industry launched an ad campaign as seductive and aggressive as the Kindle's? Not to market front-list titles or authors, but to market the paper book form itself?" Read the piece and his suggestions for combatting the clever television ads for e-book readers at <http://tinyurl.com/3blspps>

### **Facebook Links Up with Publisher to Enhance Communication**

Facebook and Push Pop Press are joining forces to target iPad and iPhone users. The two companies will integrate to provide Facebook users with a new way to communicate. The collaboration won't publish books, but will allow the users "share their stories" in another interactive platform, according to the Push Pop website.  
*Publishers Weekly*

# NINC Bulletin Board

COMPILED BY SUSAN LYONS

Do you have info  
for the Bulletin Board?  
Send it to Susan at  
susan@susanlyons.ca

## Where, Oh, Where Have the Our Websites Gone? (Members, check your links!)

As the person who verifies links listed in Ninc.com's "Directories/Members, Websites," I've discovered *a lot* of the links that are broken and/or dead. So I'm asking all of you to take a couple of minutes—*before* you forget—and do the following:

1. Go to [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com). Click "Member Login." Sign in. (If you don't remember your sign-in info, follow the procedure for retrieving it.)
2. In the middle of the "Welcome" page, find the "Update Your Membership Info" banner and click the first link beneath it, which says "Update Membership Profile now."
3. On the Profile page, scroll down to "Website URLs." To add a link, fill in the blanks and click "Add." To check a link, click on it. In both cases, *make sure that the link takes you to the correct website.* (Multiple site listings are fine as long as they're *all author- or writing-related.*)
4. After verifying that your link works properly, scroll to the bottom of the page and click "Submit Changes."

All finished.

I'll wait a few weeks, then compile a list of still-broken links. You do *not* want to be on that list. So scurry on over to [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com) and check your links!

Finally, do *not* email me with requests to add or fix your links. Not that I wouldn't love to hear from you, but I won't be able to help. The link to your website is *part of your profile*. As such, I have no access to it. If you do run into trouble, contact Pati Nagle, our illustrious Website Committee chair, or someone on the Board for help.

Thanks!

Mary Kilchenstein (Mary Kirk), just a peon, doing her JOT job.

### Adventures on the NINC Website

If you're writing a jock character (as I am), is he going to have sex before a sports event? Maybe he thinks that will "deplete" him and harm his performance out of the sack. Is that true, or might it actually elevate his testosterone, and perhaps make him an even better player?

If you want to separate truth from myth, check out this website: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_misconceptions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_misconceptions). It offers links to a number of common misconceptions. I found this resource on the Reference/Research page of the Reference tab on our website (after you log in as a member).

If you'd like to add a website to the Reference tab, just email [susan@susanlyons.ca](mailto:susan@susanlyons.ca).

### NINC Online

#### Happy Anniversary to NINC's Blog

Our blog is a large part of our online presence and a great way to promote your work. Our anniversary date was July 14 (three years!), and at that point we had almost 370,000 hits. We're averaging about 10,000 hits a month. Please sign up to blog by going to the YahooGroups NINC Calendar. We also feature industry professionals, so pass along suggestions—e.g., your own agent, editor, publicist, website designer, cover artist, etc.

#### NINC on Facebook

Don't forget we're on Facebook, too. Please visit often and share your news and ideas. It's another great place to promote yourself and help expand NINC's public profile.

## You Might be Interested In....

### The Following Websites:

[www.Packabook.com](http://www.Packabook.com) is a clever site aimed at travelers who want to read books about their destinations. The site is set up to allow viewers to click on the name of the country they'll be visiting and scroll through listings that offer thumbnails of the cover and brief summaries---probably the back-cover blurbs. The site also offers author interviews and reader discussion boards. It's worth looking into if you're traveling to someplace new .... or have written a novel set in an interesting place.

[www.JustTheRightBook.com](http://www.JustTheRightBook.com) is an online venture/offshoot of the venerable Connecticut bookstore R.J. Julia Booksellers. The site is a subscription service that provides titles to subscribers based on self-reported reading profiles, and offers separate pages for children, teens, and adults, as well as baby books. The site also offers gift subscriptions.

[www.veryshortlist.com](http://www.veryshortlist.com) is *The Observer's Very Short List* site that provides subscribers with "a free, daily e-mail that points to excellent new (and sometimes vintage) entertainment and media that you may not know about because they haven't been hyped to within an inch of their lives."

And one slightly disturbing (?) website is [www.ebookfling.com](http://www.ebookfling.com), the homepage of which exhorts visitors to "Swap Kindle & Nook e-books for FREE." Taking advantage of the new lending capability on the Nook and Kindle, the website allows "readers across America to borrow and share their e-books." Members list their e-books on the site ("*Your* collection is what makes up *our* collection.") and email the book to anyone who requests it, thereby earning credits to borrow from other members. Those members who have no credits can pay \$2.99 to borrow any book. The site doesn't indicate if the fee is shared with the owner of the loaned e-book.

### Another First in the Wacky World of Publishing

Earlier this year, Shed Simove's book *What Every Man Thinks About Apart From Sex* hit number 44 on Amazon and the author described his reaction to the news as "jubilation...mixed in with a healthy dose of disbelief and abject bewilderment." Why? Because his book "contains two hundred pages and each one has absolutely nothing printed on it." Wonders never cease.

*Real Business*

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